

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING PROGRAM**

**EDUC 661 C02  
Teacher Empowerment and Policy (Credits: 1.5)  
Summer/Fall 2016  
August 3 – September 5**

**PROFESSORS:**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Prerequisites: Admission into the MEd Curriculum and Instruction concentration in Transformative Teaching program; completion of the EDUC 655 Teacher Research Methods course and the EDUC 657 Teaching for Democracy and Social Justice course.
- B. Provides advanced study on topics and emerging issues in American and/or international education with particular attention to developing policy solutions.

**DELIVERY METHOD:**

This course will be delivered online using synchronous and asynchronous formats via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before “@masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password.

**EXPECTATIONS:**

- **Course Participation:** Active and consistent participation in the course as described in the individual course syllabus is extremely important for online courses. Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Online courses will, at a minimum, have weekly requirements for student participation that can be documented by any or all of the following methods:

- > Submission/completion of assignments as specified by the professors
- > Communication with the professors
- > Active, meaningful, and respectful communication with peers

Expect to log in to this course **at least 3 times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. Students must also regularly check their GMU email for communications from the instructors. Remember, this course is **not** self-paced.

There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

- **Written Assignments:** All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation. (Formal assignments do not include Blackboard discussions, class/course feedback, in-class reflections or journaling) The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style guide should be followed for formal written assignments. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support. Students will do the following:
  - Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
  - Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
  - Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
  - Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
- **Sessions:** Because our online courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our session will generally **start** on Wednesday and **finish** on Tuesday. Synchronous meetings will be arranged as needed.
- **Technical Competence:** Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course.
- **Technical Issues:** Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly.
- **Mentoring/Advising:** If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues, and you are unable to come to the Mason campus, we can meet via telephone or web conference. Send an email to your instructors to schedule your one-on-one session and include your preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:** Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. We suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** We will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructors.

## **LEARNER OBJECTIVES:**

**This course is designed to enable students to:**

1. Analyze and articulate differing policy arguments and perspectives regarding education.
2. Develop a critical understanding of collaboration and cooperation in working with stakeholders.
3. Exercise teacher agency and voice in efforts to enhance student learning in multiple domains and across multiple need levels.

## **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:**

This course fits with the core values of the College of Education and Human Development, which include collaboration, research based practice, innovation, ethical leadership, and social justice.

This course is designed to meet the following professional teaching standards:

- GMU Dispositions for a Career Educator I, IV, and V
  - Commitment to the Profession
  - Commitment to Being a Member of a Learning Community
  - Commitment to Democratic Values and Social Justice
- Teachers College Columbia Teacher Expectations II, III, and IV
  - Learner-Centered Educators
  - Effective Collaborators
  - Advocates of Social Justice and Diversity
- NBPTS Propositions 1 and 5
  - Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning
  - Teachers are Members of Learning Communities

## **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

View, J.L. & Gorski, P. (2014, May/June). Whites and *Brown*. Urban Education: Issues and Solutions, Season Five. George Mason University Television.  
<https://vimeo.com/channels/urbaneducation/115079655>

Matthews, J. (July 3, 2016). Why so many black, Hispanic and poor kids miss out on gifted education, The Washington Post. <http://wpo.st/hUCk1>

St. George, D. (June 23, 2016). Civil rights complaint alleges inequity in schools' language immersion programs, The Washington Post. <http://wpo.st/BZCk1>

Balingit, M. (March 20, 2016). Separate but equal? Wealthy county's plan would concentrate low-income, Hispanic students, The Washington Post.  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/separate-but-equal-loudoun-plan-would-concentrate-poor-hispanic-students/2016/03/20/db6f2cca-e7a8-11e5-b0fd-073d5930a7b7\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/separate-but-equal-loudoun-plan-would-concentrate-poor-hispanic-students/2016/03/20/db6f2cca-e7a8-11e5-b0fd-073d5930a7b7_story.html)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act  
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html>

Education Policy Analysis Archives, available on line <http://epaa.asu.edu>

Relevant texts, websites, articles, etc. related to your policy issue

\*Please Note: Additional articles, chapters, PowerPoint presentations, and media will be distributed and/or posted on Blackboard as needed.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: (aligned with outcomes/objectives)**

### **1. Assignment descriptions**

- Micro Power Map (Assesses objectives 1, 2 and 3)
  - Guidelines distributed in the summer session
- Macro Power Map (Assesses objectives 1, 2 and 3)
  - Guidelines distributed in the summer session
- Personal Leadership Profile (Assesses objectives 1, 2, and 3)
  - Guidelines distributed in the summer session
- Policy Brief – PBA (Assesses objectives 1, 2, and 3)
  - See guidelines below (Section 4: Selected performance-based assessment)

### **2. Assignment weighting (percentages, points)**

Class Participation (5 points per Bb discussion)	10 points
Micro Power Map	20 points
Macro Power Map	20 points
Personal Leadership Profile	20 points
Policy Brief	30 points

### **3. Grading policies (and grading scale appropriate for UG or GR level)**

#### **Grade Distribution**

95-100	A
90-94	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
75-79	C
74 and below	F

### **4. Selected performance-based assessment**

#### Policy Brief.

Students will perform three tasks in the completion of this PBA:

1. Using the issue you identified in the summer for our power maps, research the positive and negative impacts this had on your local community (using 8 or more sources).
2. Write a policy brief of 3 pages articulating your position on the issue and proposed solutions.
3. Share your policy brief with the Virginia Education Association (VEA) and one of the other entities you identified in the “Power Mapping” activity. Send these by email and cc the Transformative Teaching faculty.

### **TK20 Performance-Based Assessment submission Requirement**

There is no TK20 requirement for this course.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- d. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- e. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- h. The Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community (<http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>) and the staff will follow up with the student.

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].**

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

<b>Session</b>	<b>Topic/Learning Experiences</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Session 1 (Aug. 3 – Aug. 16)	Bb Discussion on Urban Education viewing, racial identity development and leadership in school-based policies (see Bb Discussion #1 guidelines)	Have viewed Urban Education: Whites & Brown <a href="https://vimeo.com/channels/urbaneducation/115079655">https://vimeo.com/channels/urbaneducation/115079655</a>  Due Aug. 10: Micro Power Map
Session 2 (Aug. 17 – Aug. 30)	Bb Discussion on taking a critical stance (e.g., language emersion, giftedness, school boundaries, etc.)	Readings:  Washington Post articles by Matthews, St. George, & Balingit  Due Aug. 24: Macro Power Map
Session 3 (Aug. 31 – Sept. 5)	Teacher Empowerment/Policy Reflections	Due Sept. 5: Policy Brief; Personal Leadership Profile

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC:**

The PBA will be assessed according to the professional standards and the specific assignment guidelines using the following rubric:

**Teacher Empowerment and Policy**  
*Assignment rubric*

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>Beginning (Does not meet standards) 1</b>	<b>Developing (Meets standards) 2</b>	<b>Accomplished (Exceeds standards) 3</b>	<b>Exemplary (Exceeds standards) 4</b>
<b>Imagination and Creativity (GMU I, TC II)</b>	Beginning to articulate possibilities for teacher leadership	Generates multiple possibilities for teacher leadership	Expresses creative problem-solving possibilities, divergent and convergent thinking, and tenacity as a teacher leader	Metacognitive and innovative thinking about teacher leadership and practice derived from creative problem solving that sparks more questions, possibilities, and creativity for self and students. Overcomes social and material obstacles.
<b>Critical Consciousness (GMU V, TC IV, NBPTS 1)</b>	Emergent understanding of personal and/or social power in own experience	Emergent understanding of personal and social power from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts	Consistent understanding of personal and social power from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts and how power connects to perspectives, marginalization, cultural capital, social justice, and achievement.	Analyzes personal and social power from multiple perspectives in diverse contexts, including institutional and societal contexts, and how power and privilege connects to worldview, marginalization, cultural capital, social justice, and achievement. Uses critical consciousness as framework in formulation of theory and practice in teaching and learning.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Listens to others and	Listens to others and	Consistently listens to others	Listens to others, considers multiple

<b>(GMU IV, TC III, NBPTS 5)</b>	contributes ideas.	contributes ideas and theories. Sporadic involvement in planning and implementation of change project.	and contributes ideas and theories. Actively involved in research, planning, creative problem-solving, and implementation of change project.	viewpoints, and contributes constructive ideas and theories. Actively involved in research, planning, creative problem-solving, and implementation of change project. Helps team to reach fair decisions and follows through in a timely manner.
<b>Communication Skills (GMU IV, TC III, NBPTS 5)</b>	Expresses no ideas about ways to effectively collaborate with others as a teacher leader	Expresses minimal ideas about ways to effectively collaborate with others as a teacher leader	Expresses multiple ideas about ways to effectively collaborate with others as a teacher leader	Expresses multiple complex ideas about ways to effectively collaborate with others as a teacher leader
<b>Background research</b>	No background research is included	A minimum of eight sources and two policy entities are included	More than eight resources and more than two policy entities are included	A diverse range of sources and entities are included and includes meaningful interaction with policy maker(s)
<b>Articulating a position</b>	Does not articulate a position	A weak position was articulated with some organizational and grammatical issues	Solid position was articulated – well organized and representative of multiple perspectives	Strongly persuasive articulation of a position, highly organized and representative of multiple perspectives, anticipates counter arguments