



**College of Education and Human Development  
Elementary Education**

**EDUC 200 (Sec 001) LIFE– X098-054**  
*Introduction to Education: Teaching, Learning and Schools*  
**Fall 2021**  
**3 Credits**  
**Location: 204 Krug Hall/Online Synchronous**

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Class Meetings: Tuesdays 4:30-7:10  
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**Prerequisites/Corequisites:** None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Introduces educational issues related to learning, schooling and teaching. Examines roles of teachers and nature of American schools and learners. **Requires 10 hours of field experience using videos during the course during.** *This course fulfills the Mason Core Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement.*

**Expanded Course Description:** N/A

**Course Overview**

This course is designed to introduce students to the foundations of our system of American public education. Students will reflect critically upon and critique their own educational experiences and articulate their own beliefs and values about teaching, learning, and schooling. Students will also examine current and historical roles, expectations, stereotypes, and characterizations that define teaching as a profession.

*This course fulfills the Mason Core Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement and addresses the following learning outcomes:*

1. Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors;
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs;
3. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.

### **Course Delivery Method**

This course includes a variety of teaching and learning approaches: whole and small group discussions, text-based/multi-media interaction with course materials, interactive and full-body engagement activities, individual and group reflective practices, collaborative learning groups, workshop approaches, online discussions and activities, and instructor-led and student-led lessons/activities.

### **Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Explain how individuals, groups, and institutions are impacted by the educational system.
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs related to teaching and learning.
3. Describe U.S. schools and some of the issues, challenges, and rewards of teaching and learning, and the roles that teachers play within them.
4. Identify the qualities and dispositions of effective teachers.
5. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, principles, terminology, and theories to analyze from multiple perspectives the role of the teacher, goals of education and schools, and teacher effectiveness.
6. Discuss and critically reflect on the role of student ideas and learning needs in relationship to standards and curricula.
7. Reflect on professionalism, intellectualism, personal and professional growth, and potential to make meaningful contributions to the field of education.

### **Professional Standards**

Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Students will be introduced to the INTASC professional standards: <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/licensing/intasc.pdf>

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and 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, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .**

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

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

#### *Academic Integrity and Inclusivity*

- This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences. That means, we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e. we may disagree without being disagreeable. <http://oai.gmu.edu/>

#### *Student Privacy Policy*

- George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records.
- Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/>

#### *E-Mail Policy*

- Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback.
- Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

### **Required Texts/Resources**

- Nieto, S. (2015). *Why we teach now*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- *Additional required readings will be posted in Blackboard*
- Journal or Notebook for writing weekly reflections

### **Course Grading and Evaluation**

- Students are expected to submit all assignments **on time** in the manner outlined by the instructor. Blackboard will be used for uploading assignments. **Late assignments will automatically lose 1/2 of the total points. For example, if it is worth 10 points, the grade will be 5 points prior to grading for content.**
- Grades will be assigned as follows:
  - A: 93.00-100%
  - A-: 89.5 – 92.49%
  - B+: 87.00-89.49%
  - B: 83.00-86.99%
  - B-: 80.00-82.99%
  - C+: 77.00-79.99%
  - C: 73.00-76.99%
  - C-: 70.00-72.99%
  - D: 60.00-69.99%
  - F: 0-59.99%

### Course Assignments

Assignment	Due Date	Total Points
Class Participation	Ongoing	15
Weekly Reflections	Ongoing	15
Education in the News (group assignment)	September 14 <sup>th</sup> , September 28 <sup>th</sup> , October 19 <sup>th</sup> , November 16 <sup>th</sup> , November 29 <sup>th</sup>	15 (group) 5 (individual)
Interview Teachers and/or Learners	November 9 <sup>th</sup>	20
Letter to My Future Self in Education	November 29 <sup>th</sup>	10
Field Experience and Reflections	December 7 <sup>th</sup>	20
		<b>100</b>

#### *Class Participation*

The expectation is you will attend each class. Every unexcused absence will incur the loss of 1 point. Every unexcused tardy or early dismissal will incur the loss of ½ point. Please notify me beforehand if you will be tardy or will have to miss class to avoid losing points. In class, you are required to actively participate in individual and group, class discussions and any other activity as assigned by your professor. Failure to participate will result in the loss of participation points.

Element	Points allotted
Attendance: attends each face-to-face and online class session. Has no unexcused tardies or absences.	___/5
Contributions: actively engages in all class assignments and discussions	___/10
Total	___/15

#### *Weekly Reflections*

Every week the last 10-15 minutes of class will be devoted to reflecting about that day’s lesson/topic. Most reflections will be guided by a quote, picture, or video pertinent to the topic of the day. You should handwrite your reflection and turn it in before leaving class. If we are meeting online you should email your reflection. All reflections should be between 200-250 words and should reflect your personal connections to the readings, class discussion and/or assignments. I will write comments on your reflections but will not grade it, per se. **Please hold onto all of your reflections throughout the**

**semester.**

***Education in the News***

Part of becoming a professional educator is reading and seeking out new information in an effort to get smarter and become more aware of what's going on in the field of education. There are plenty of hot topics and debates happening in education all the time: teachers going on strike, guns and schools, the rise of charter schools, test-and-standards-driven culture, teacher evaluations tied to student performance, disappearing recess and play...

To facilitate this your professor will assign you randomly to groups of 3-4 you will locate two news articles that have to do with teaching, child development, learning... anything relevant to the field of education. Your group will then plan and lead the class in a 20-25 minute interactive discussion or activity based on your chosen topic. Your group will also prepare a one-page handout of information for the class, including a list of references (minimum of three sources APA style), thoughts on the major issues being discussed, provocative questions, and potential solutions for consideration. Links to news articles should be made available ahead of time so your peers can complete the reading.

Individually, you will create a meme to reflect your group's topic. It can be funny, thought provoking or even sarcastic. Please refrain from foul language and inappropriate memes. When in doubt, ask me! You can email me your meme on the day of your Education in the News Group presentation. You can use a meme generator like <https://memegenerator.net> or <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>

<b>Element</b>	<b>Points Allotted</b>
Presentation was clear, informative, interactive, and thought provoking.	_____/10
Presentation included a useful handout with a reference list in APA format with at least 3 sources and included provocative questions and potential solutions to promote expansive thinking.	_____/5
Meme reflected some aspect of the group topic	_____/5
Total	_____/20

***Interview of Teachers/Learners***

You will choose a topic in education of YOUR interest. It could be anything from school choice, assessment, teacher burnout; student motivation... the list goes on and on. Please email me your topic by October 19<sup>th</sup>.

You will interview two people (teachers and/or learners), asking for their opinion. The two people could be 1) two teachers or 2) teacher and a learner (i.e. a student of any age level).

*Prior to the interview*, create a list of 6-8 open-ended questions around your educational topic. For example if you wanted to know more about K-12 curriculum, a sample question could be asking a teacher: "How do you decide what to teach in your class?" This will encourage an answer while *you take*

*detailed notes.* It is highly recommended to *record the interview.*

Ask follow-up questions that delve farther into the essential issue – and you might learn about a topic that wasn't your original focus. Avoid asking a series of disconnected questions that don't lead anywhere or fail to give you important insight.

When you have completed the interviews, write a **3-page essay** about what you learned about your topic in terms of the interview and your knowledge from class, using at least three citations. The citations can be from class readings but do not have to be – feel free to research more if you would like. Note: Do **not simply** write what the teachers/learners said... tell what *you learned about the topic*. Your paper should make clear connections between what was learned in the interviews and what you are learning/have learned in class.

Use at least **3** citations, either from class readings, books, or your own research. Include a reference list and an appendix of your interview questions at the end of the paper. (You do NOT need to include the answers from the interviews – just the questions.)

Element	Points Allotted
Thoroughness: portrays multiple perspectives on the educational topic. Use three or more citations. Includes reference list and appendix with interview questions.	___/15
Thoughtfulness: Includes an element of personal reflection/synthesis communicating the implications for future practice.	___/10
Mechanics (i.e capitalization, punctuation and spelling, proper APA formatting)	___/5
Total	___/30

### ***Letter to My Future Self***

You will write a letter to yourself, 10 years in the future. You can include any details you'd like, but it must include the following:

- What is your current role in education? You could be involved in education in a variety of ways. As a:
  - Teacher
  - Parent
  - Administrator
  - Volunteer
  - School Board Member
  - Politician
- What do you hope for yourself in whatever role you have become? What would you tell yourself are the most important things to remember about education?

- What article or video from this class would you have yourself go back and read/watch? And why?
- What will you hope has changed by then?
- What advice will you give your future self?

Feel free to include any other information. There is no page requirement for this assignment.

Letter demonstrates thoughtful reflection and makes connections to topics learned in class. Letter references class material.	___/8
Mechanics (i.e capitalization, punctuation and spelling)	___/2
Total	___/10

***Field Experiences and Reflections***

You are required to observe 10 hours of videos of classroom teaching. I suggest you space the videos out during the semester so 1) you are not waiting until the last minute and 2) so you can reference the observations in your assignments. You will keep track on the Field Hours Log (located under Field Hours tab on Blackboard). You will also include reflections. You may choose to reflect after each video, in groups of videos, or at the end of all 10 hours of videos. Your reflection should be about 100 words per video and should reference class assignments, class readings, videos and discussions, and/or personal experience.

**Course Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings/Assignments Due</b>
<b>August 24<sup>th</sup></b>	204 Krug Hall	<b>Unit I: What is effective teaching?</b>  Course Overview Introduction to Teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why teach?</li> <li>• The self who teaches: reflections on identity and integrity</li> </ul>	Read Through the Syllabus



<b>August 31st</b>	204 Krug Hall	<p>Effective Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is it?</li> <li>• What is it not?</li> <li>• Lessons from your past teachers</li> </ul>	<p>Nieto (2015), Part I- Introduction and Chapter 1</p> <p><a href="#">Ripley (2010) Reading</a></p> <p><a href="#">The elements of effective teaching</a></p>
<b>September 7<sup>th</sup></b>	Online synchronous	<p>Learning Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building trust and community</li> <li>• The role of care</li> <li>• Classroom management</li> </ul>	<p>Nieto (2015) Part II (select one chapter to read)</p> <p><a href="#">Johnson (2018) Reading</a></p> <p><a href="#">Classroom Management</a> (select one article to read)</p>
<b>September 14<sup>th</sup></b>	204 Krug Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying as a teacher</li> </ul>	<p>Nieto (2015), Part III (Select one chapter of your choice)</p> <p><a href="#">Green (2010)</a></p> <p><b>Education in the News Group 1</b></p>
<b>September 21st</b>	Online Synchronous	<p><b>Unit II: What is being taught</b></p> <p>Effective teaching and InTASC standards for teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What teachers need to be able to do?</li> <li>• What's missing from these?</li> <li>• What do they seem to emphasize?</li> </ul>	<p>Nieto (2015), Part IV (Select two chapters of your choice)</p> <p><a href="#">InTASC Standards</a></p>
<b>September 28th</b>	204 Krug Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards based instruction</li> </ul>	<p>Neito (2015), Part V (Select 1 Chapter of your choice)</p> <p><a href="#">Standards-based schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Standards-based instruction</a></p> <p><b>Education in the News Group 2 due</b></p>

<b>October 5<sup>th</sup></b>	Online Synchronous	NCLB and ESSA	<a href="#">NCLB Overview</a> <a href="#">NCLB Pros and Cons</a> <a href="#">Hursh (2007)</a> <a href="#">ESSA Overview</a> <a href="#">ESSA Pros and Cons</a>
<b>October 12<sup>th</sup></b>	No class; Monday classes meet on Tuesday		
<b>October 19<sup>th</sup></b>	204 Krug Hall	<b>Unit III: Teaching</b>  Purpose of Education	MLK (1948) <a href="#">The Purpose of Education</a> Strauss (2015) <a href="#">What's the Purpose of Education in the 21st century?</a> Horn (2021) <a href="#">Begin With The End...</a>  <b>Education in the News Group 3</b>
<b>October 26<sup>th</sup></b>	Online synchronous	Who are our students?	Darling-Hammond (1998) <a href="#">Unequal Opportunity: Race and Education</a>  Costley (2012) <a href="#">Who Are Today's Students in a Diverse Society</a>  <a href="#">Facts and Figures</a>  <b>Interview Due</b>
<b>November 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Online synchronous	Educating All Students	Zuckerbrod (2007) <a href="#">1 in 10 schools are 'dropout factories'</a>  Gorski (2008) <a href="#">The Myth of the Culture of Poverty</a>  Maxwell (2012) <a href="#">Raising Latino Achievement...</a> OR Ladson-Billings (2011) <a href="#">Boyz to Men: Teaching to Restore Black boys' childhood</a>  <a href="#">Educating All Learners</a> (skim the categories)

<b>November 9<sup>th</sup></b>	Online Synchronous	Assessing Schools, Teachers and Learning	<a href="#">Badger &amp; Quely (2017)</a> <a href="#">Apple (n.d)</a> <a href="#">5 Ways to Improve Teacher Evaluation Systems</a> <a href="#">Snelling (2021)</a>
<b>November 16<sup>th</sup></b>	204 Krug Hall	Motivating Learners	<a href="#">The role of motivation in learning</a>  Reading TBD  <b>Education in the News Group 4</b>
<b>November 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	Thanksgiving	No class meeting	
<b>November 29<sup>th</sup></b>	Online synchronous	Teacher Language	Readings TBD  <b>Education in the News Group 5</b> (if necessary)
<b>December 7<sup>th</sup></b>	204 Krug Hall	Putting it all together Final Reflections Your Why	Readings TBD  <b>Field Experiences and Reflections</b>

\*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.