

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Ph.D. in Education Program

EDUC 865.001 – Curriculum Theory & Practice - CRN 21655
3 Credits, Spring 2023
Wednesdays/4:30-7:10
Location: Research Hall 202 on Jan 25, March 1, April 5, & May 3
Online Synchronous or Asynchronous for other class meetings

Faculty

Name: Nancy Holincheck, Ph.D.

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

Admission to the Ph.D. in Education program, or permission of instructor.

University Catalog Course Description

Examines theories and practices of the design, deliberation, and analysis of curricula across subject matters and learning contexts. Surveys key concepts, principles, methods, and theories of curriculum thought in both U.S. and international contexts. Analyzes philosophical perspectives underlying curriculum theory and practice. Explores the consequences of curriculum decisions for educators and learners. Offered by School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.

Course Overview

As a survey of the fields of curriculum studies and curriculum theory, this course is designed to familiarize students with various concepts, principles, methods, and theories of curriculum as enacted in formal and informal spaces of learning (i.e. schools, museums). Course topics, readings, and assignments will enable students to synthesize different conceptions and approaches to curriculum across diverse social and cultural contexts and schooling practices. Students have opportunities to design, develop, evaluate, and/or critique different examples of curriculum.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a hybrid online and face-to-face seminar format. As a doctoral seminar, the course will be taught using approaches that require whole class and small group discussions and activities. Relevant texts, media and data sources will be reviewed. Discussions will be facilitated by both the professor and course participants. All materials should be read prior to the class date in order to engage in a meaningful discussion. Some course content may be delivered, accessed, and produced in online spaces (e.g. Blackboard). We will use Zoom for our synchronous online class meetings.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operating systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Zoom web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least two times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words*. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

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

1. Interpret the history of competing movements, theories, & scholars across different paradigms of curriculum thought in the United States
2. Differentiate and deconstruct the cultural and institutional contexts shaping how curriculum is designed, deliberated, and transmitted in places of learning
3. Recognize and evaluate various factors influencing curriculum development across local, national, and international systems of education, learning, and teaching
4. Apply contemporary conceptual lenses from curriculum theories to specific examples of curriculum practice
5. Identify and analyze curriculum discourses and practices applicable to specific school subject areas and disciplinary knowledges across curriculum
6. Demonstrate and narrate a significant curriculum controversy within a specific curricular area, school subject matter, or discipline of knowledge
7. Design and construct an applied curriculum inquiry, such as a proposal for an academic conference, a topic for professional development, or a curricular recommendation for a school board

Required Texts

Full APA style 7th edition citations in format required for all assignments in course.

Links to these readings (i.e. peer-reviewed journal articles, reports, and chapters from books) will be made available online adhering to all copyright guidelines through George Mason University's University Libraries.

- Anyon, J. (1981). Social class and school knowledge. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 11(1), 3-42.
- Apple, M. W. (2019). *Ideology and curriculum* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Apple, M. W. (2014). *Official knowledge: Democratic education in a conservative age* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Asher, N. (2005). At the interstices: Engaging postcolonial and feminist perspectives for a multicultural education pedagogy in the South. *The Teachers College Record*, 107(5), 1079-1106.
- Asher, N. (2009). Chapter 5: Decolonization and education: Locating pedagogy and self at the interstices in global times. *Counterpoints*, 369, 67-77.
- Askins, A. D. (1926). Trends in the high-school curriculum. *Educational Research Bulletin*, 5(7), 146-148.
- Au, W., Brown, A.L., & Calderón, D. (2016). *Reclaiming the multicultural roots of U.S. curriculum: Communities of color and official knowledge in education*. Teachers College Press.
- Burke, K. J., & Segall, A. (2011). Christianity and its legacy in education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43(5), 631-658.
- Carlson, D. (2004). Narrating the multicultural nation: Rosa Parks and the white mythology of the civil rights movement. In M. Fine, L. Weis, L.P. Pruitt, & A. Burns (Eds.). *Off white: Readings on power, privilege, and resistance*, (pp. 302-14). Routledge.
- Cowdery, J. (2014). Way down yonder in the pawpaw patch: Resiliency in Appalachian poverty. In P. C. Gorski & J. Landsman (Eds.), *The poverty and education reader: A call for equity in many voices* (pp. 79-85). Stylus Press.
- Deng, Z., & Luke, A. (2008). Subject matter: Defining and theorizing school subjects. In F.M. Connelly, M.F. He, & J.I. Phillion (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Curriculum and Instruction* (pp. 66-68). Sage Publications.
- Eisner, E. W. (2002). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs* (3rd ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Flinders, D. J., & Thornton, S.J. (1986). The null curriculum: Its theoretical basis and practical implications. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 16(1), 33-42.
- Gaztambide-Fernández, R. (2006). Regarding race: The necessary browning of our curriculum and pedagogy public project. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 3(1), 60-65.
- Gilbert, A., & Byers, C. (2020). Enacting wonder-infused pedagogy in an elementary science methods course. *Innovations in Science Teacher Education*, 5(1), 60-65.
- Gonsalves, A. J. (2014). "Physics and the girly girl--there is a contradiction somewhere": Doctoral students' positioning around discourses of gender and competence in physics. *Cultural Studies in Science Education*, 9, 503-521.

- Kedley, K. E. (2016). The teacher as a text: Un-centering normative gender identities in the secondary English Language Arts classroom. In s.j. Miller (Ed.), *Teaching, affirming, and recognizing trans and gender creative youth* (pp. 107-119). Palgrave.
- Kissling, M. T., & Bell, J. T. (2020). Teaching social studies amid ecological crisis. *Theory & Research in Social Education, 48*(1), 1-31.
- Kliebard, H. (2004). *The struggle for the American curriculum, 1893-1958*, (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Kridel, C. (Ed.) (2010). *Encyclopedia of curriculum studies*. Sage Publications [**some entries will be posted from this digital encyclopedia; please cite/reference accordingly**]
- Krueger, J. (2019). To challenge the settler colonial narrative of Native Americans in social studies curriculum: A new way forward for teachers. *The History Teacher, 52*(2), 291-318.
- Ladson-Billings, G., & Brown, K. D. (2008). Curriculum and cultural diversity. In F.M. Connelly, M.F. He, & J.I. Phillion (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Curriculum and Instruction* (pp. 117-224). Sage Publications.
- Levin, B. (2008). Curriculum policy and the politics of what should be learned in schools. In F.M. Connelly, M. F. He, & J. I. Phillion (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Curriculum and Instruction* (pp. 7-24). Sage Publications.
- Noddings, N. (2008). *Critical lessons: What should our schools teach?* Cambridge University Press.
- Popkewitz, T. S. (2018). What is ‘really’ taught as the content of school subjects? Teaching school subjects as an alchemy. *The High School Journal, 101*(2), 77-89.
- Saathoff, S. (2019). Radical literacy: Building curriculum on Mexican American youths’ lived experiences. In T. R. Berry, C. A. Kalinec-Craig, & M. A. Rodríguez (Eds.), *Latinx curriculum theorizing* (pp. 77-96). Lexington Books.
- Sandlin, J. A., Stearns, J., Garlen Maudlin, J., & Burdick, J. (2011). “Now I ain’t sayin’ she a gold digger”: Wal-Mart shoppers, welfare queens, and other gendered stereotypes of poor women in the big curriculum of consumption. *Cultural Studies & Critical Methodologies, 11*(5), 464-482.
- Schmidt, S. J. (2012) Am I a woman? The normalisation of woman in US History. *Gender and Education, 24*(7), 707-724.
- Shelton, S. A. (2018). Ripping back the veil: Examining how trans visibility shapes understandings of gender and instruction. *Journal of Curriculum & Pedagogy, 15*(3), 297-311.
- Stapleton, S. R. (2020). Toward critical environmental education: A standpoint analysis of race in the American environmental context. *Environmental Education Research, 26*(2), 155-170.
- Tuck, E., & Gaztambide-Fernández, R. (2013). Curriculum, replacement, and settler futurity. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 29*(1), 72-89.
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society, 1*(1), 1-40.
- Xiang, X. (2018). My future, my family, my freedom: Meanings of schooling for poor, rural Chinese youth. *Harvard Educational Review, 88*(1), 81-136.

Recommended Texts

- Morris, M. (2016). *Curriculum studies guidebooks: Concepts and theoretical frameworks* (Volumes 1 & 2). Peter Lang.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, presentation).

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time through digital submissions on Blackboard.

Assignments

Assignment	Points
Participation & Professionalism <i>(includes "From Where Do I Know?" Introductory Video)</i>	15
Curriculum Archaeology	10
Proposed Curriculum Deliberation	10
Curriculum Perspective Analysis	15
Applied Curriculum Inquiry	20
Curriculum Controversy Paper & Presentation	30
Total	100

Participation & Professionalism

Class participation and professionalism include multiple aspects of engagement in our course content, including: in-class experiences, article discussions, in and out of class work to advance the course objectives, reflective journaling, and peer evaluation and support in critical friends groups. Weekly readings represent different types of research from different threads in science education. We will discuss each reading and you will be required to talk about the articles in a scholarly manner. In addition to being present in each class, this part of your grade also includes quality participation in class discussions and professionalism in all communication with your professor and your peers. This course operates under the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed, and the most meaningful learning opportunities include those where learners have the opportunity to offer and explore diverse perspectives with peers. It is expected that you actively build upon your prior knowledge, as well as your personal and educational experiences to connect, question, and extend class discussions.

"From Where Do I Know?" Introductory Video: Post a short 4-5 minute video for the instructor and classmates to view on Blackboard responding to the prompts on the "From Where Do I Know?" talking points pdf posted on Blackboard. **Although the pdf directions say 10 minutes, please aim for 4-5 minutes!*

Curriculum Archaeology

Select a curriculum object or “artifact” with personal significance to you (e.g. a textbook, novel, film, curriculum standards, an assessment/project, an event/program, a report or document) and write a one-page “museum gallery label” describing this object or “artifact” and its perceived significance and purpose as if educational historians 100 years from now are explaining this significance of this piece of curriculum. Write a brief (1-2 page) explanation and submit to Blackboard. Present the artifact in a Gallery Walk during Class Session 3.

Proposed Curriculum Deliberation

Work with your partner to read and summarize your assigned chapter from the Noddings (2008) reading on “critical lessons.” Prepare a 15-minute presentation summarizing what Noddings proposes schools should teach with your assigned curriculum example and deliberate the affordances and constraints and strengths and limitations of her proposal.

Curriculum Perspective Analysis

Choose one of the three perspectives studied in Class Sessions 6, 7, 8, 9 (race, class, sexuality, gender) from which to analyze a curriculum topic of your choice. Write a 4-6 page double-spaced paper in which you analyze your selected curriculum topic through a raced, classed, gendered, or intersectional lens. Discuss ideas from the assigned readings to support your claims.

Applied Curriculum Inquiry - (may be completed independently or in groups of 2 or 3)

With guidance from your course instructor, apply some aspect of ideas, theories, or concepts from the course in a curriculum inquiry you design to meet your own needs. Examples of a curriculum inquiry could include writing a proposal for an academic conference on a curriculum-related topic; designing a presentation to present as a professional development session to educators; writing a white paper or working paper discussing some aspect of curriculum policy; drafting a proposal for a school board to take action on a particular aspect of curriculum; or conducting a curriculum audit and analysis for a school. The final product for evaluation will be a written document of around 2,000 words (e.g. a proposal, paper, etc.)

If you choose to complete this assignment in a group of 2 or 3, each person should write a separate ½ - 1-page document that explains the contributions of each group member. The contributions document should be completed independently and must be unique to the author, not constructed collaboratively. Each person in the group should submit the final group product and their individual contributions document. Individuals who complete the assignment as a group will not earn credit for this assignment if the contributions document is not submitted. Students who complete the assignment individually should not submit a contributions document.

Curriculum Controversy Paper & Presentation

Select a historical or contemporary controversy within a selected disciplinary area or school subject area of your choice (e.g. the California “math wars,” the Kanawha County textbook controversy, MACOS controversy). Write a 6-8 page double-spaced paper in which you present the historical, cultural, and political context of this controversy, discussing how it has affected scholarly thought and/or educator practice within your field, and incorporate ideas and references from course readings as applicable. Prepare a 12-minute presentation of your research to present in class during our final class meeting.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance is expected for each class session. Students should notify the instructor in advance, when possible, of any expected absence. Students are expected to arrive at each class session prepared to engage with the assigned course materials for that session and to actively partake in class discussions, participate in small group activities, and fully engage with all class content.

- **Grading**

| 95-100=A | 90-94=A- | 86-89=B+ | 83-85=B | 80-82=B- | 70-79=C | Below 70=F |

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

[Additional course or program specific language may be added.]

CLASS SCHEDULE

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

Class Session & Topics	Class Location	To Complete Before Class	Task Due
Week 1 - Jan 25: What is curriculum? <i>How do we define curriculum?</i>	Research 202	1. Read syllabus on Blackboard course	N/A
Week 2 - Feb 1: Who is curriculum for? <i>Whose interests does the curriculum serve?</i>	Zoom	1. Read Eisner (2002) 2. Read Flinders & Thornton (1986) 3. Read Levin (2008) 4. Read Ladson-Billings & Brown (2008)	Post “From Where Do I Know?” Introduction Video (not scored)
Week 3 - Feb 8: What do schools teach? <i>How do schools, teachers, and other stakeholders negotiate and deliberate on what is included and excluded in curricula?</i>	Zoom	1. Read Popkewitz (2018) 2. Read Askins (1926) 3. Read Kliebard (2004) 4. Read Deng & Luke (2008)	Submit Curriculum Archaeology & Present Artifact for Gallery Walk During Class
Week 4 - Feb 15: What could or should schools teach? <i>How can schools prepare students for real life? What should students learn in schools that is rarely addressed today?</i>	Zoom	1. With your partner(s), read your assigned chapter from Noddings (2008) and prepare a 15-minute presentation that summarizes the proposed curriculum in the chapter and facilitate the class in deliberating the strengths and limitations of the curriculum	Present Proposed Curriculum Deliberation with Partner(s)
Week 5 - Feb 22: Curriculum & ideology <i>How do diverse ideological perspectives influence the theory and design of curriculum?</i>	Zoom	1. Read Apple (2014) 2. Read Apple (2019) 3. Read Burke & Segall (2011) 4. Complete Schiro’s <i>Curriculum Ideology Inventory</i> and have results ready to discuss in class	
Week 6 - March 1: Curriculum & race <i>How do race and racialized ways of knowing influence the theory and design of curriculum?</i>	Research 202	1. Read Au, Brown, & Calderón (2016) 2. Read Carlson (2004) 3. Read Gaztambide-Fernández (2006)	Submit Applied Curriculum Inquiry Topic to Bb by 3/1, 4:30 pm

<p>Week 7 - March 8: Curriculum & class <i>How do class differences and divisions influence the theory and design of curriculum?</i></p>	<p>Zoom</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Saathoff (2019) 2. Read Sandlin et. al. (2011) 3. Read Anyon (1981) 4. Read Xiang (2018) 5. Read Cowdery (2014) 	<p>Complete Midterm Course Feedback Survey to Bb by 3/8, 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 8 - March 15: Curriculum & sexuality <i>How do diverse sexualities and sexual orientations influence the theory and design of curriculum?</i></p>	<p>No class meeting</p>	<p>Choose e-book to read from list provided in class Zotero (or select your own). Respond to peers in class Google Doc.</p> <p><u>Mason's Spring Break</u> <u>This is an asynchronous week.</u> <u>No synchronous Zoom session.</u></p>	<p>Submit topic for Curriculum Controversy Research to Bb by 3/15, 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 9 –March 22: Curriculum & gender <i>How do diverse genders and gendered perspectives influence the theory and design of curriculum?</i></p>	<p>Zoom</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Kedley (2016) 2. Read Schmidt (2012) 3. Read Gonsalves (2014) 4. Read Shelton (2018) 	
<p>Week 10 - March 29: Decolonizing, transnational, and indigenous curriculum perspectives <i>How do decolonizing, transnational, and indigenous ways of knowing influence the theory and design of curriculum</i></p>	<p>Zoom</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Tuck & Gaztambie-Fernández (2013) 2. Read Tuck & Yang (2012) 3. Read Asher (2005) 4. Read Asher (2009) 5. Read Krueger (2019) 	<p>Submit Curriculum Perspective Analysis by Saturday 4/1, 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 11 - April 5: Work week</p>	<p>No class meeting</p>	<p><u>Local school spring break.</u> <u>This is an asynchronous work week.</u> <u>No synchronous Zoom session.</u> Work on Applied Curriculum Inquiry and/or Curriculum Controversy Paper</p>	
<p>Week 12 - April 12: Work week</p>	<p>No class meeting</p>	<p><u>AERA Conference in Chicago.</u> <u>This is an asynchronous work week.</u> <u>No synchronous Zoom session.</u> Work on Applied Curriculum Inquiry and/or Curriculum Controversy Paper</p>	<p>Browse sample curriculum frameworks posted on Blackboard</p>

Week 13 - April 19: Deliberating curriculum through ecological and environmental perspectives <i>How do concerns for ecology and the environment influence the theory and design of curriculum?</i>	Zoom	1. Read Stapleton (2020) 2. Read Kissling & Bell (2020) 3. Read Hicks & Stewart (2020) 4. Read Gilbert & Byers (2020)	Submit Applied Curriculum Inquiry by Sat 4/22, 11:59 pm
Week 14 - April 26: Places and praxis for curriculum-related work <i>Where are places to publish, present, and engage in curriculum scholarship?</i> <i>What do we imagine our future work looking like with curriculum theory, practice, design, & deliberation?</i>	Zoom	1. Read website descriptions and profiles of professional curriculum organizations (AERA, ACSD) 2. Read entries from Kridel (2010)	
Week 15 - May 3: Final class session Presentations on Curriculum Controversy Projects	Research 202	1. Prepare to present Curriculum Controversy research to class	Present Curriculum Controversy 5/3 Final course evaluation
May 10 - Final exam date	No class meeting		Submit Curriculum Controversy papers by 5/10

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/>.

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/>).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .