

**Southwest Minnesota State University
Marshall, Minnesota 56258
Graduate Education Program**



The Vision:

The SMSU Professional Education Unit is a community of learners dedicated to the continuous development of quality practice, personal/professional growth, and leadership.

The Mission:

The mission of Professional Education at SMSU is to create communities of practice where each learner is an active participant in the development of learning, teaching, and leadership processes by engagement in inquiry, critical reflection, and study of educational theory, research, and practice in pursuit of excellence.

**ED 633: Current Issues in Education, 3 Cr.
Spring 2011**

**Communities of Practice Investigating Learning and Teaching
Southwest Minnesota State University
Graduate Education Program**

ED 633: Current Issues in Education – Three Credits

Spring 2011

Type of Grading: A - F

<i>Instructor:</i> Dr. Tanya McCoss-Yerigan	<i>Class Days:</i> Weekends
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Course Description:

Students will research and review literature on a variety of current issues, trends, and reform efforts in education.

Required Text:

Noll, J. W. (2007). *Taking sides: Classing views on educational issues* (15th ed.). Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill.

Course Standards and Web Addresses:

National Board of Professional Teaching Standards: <http://www.nbpts.org/about/coreprops.cfm>

National Partnership for Excellence & Accountability in Teaching:

<http://www.southwestmsu.edu/CampusLife/GraduateOffice/Index.cfm?Id=2717>

Objectives/Outcomes	NBPTS	NPEAT	Addressed
1. Form a historical and current perspective on issues in education.	1, 2, 3	1, 2, 7, 8	Week 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
2. Explore effective research-based alternatives in dealing with these issues.	1, 5	3, 4, 6, 8, 9	Week 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
3. Evaluate, analyze, and take an informed position on a controversial issue in education.	1, 4, 5	3, 5, 7, 9,	Week 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

Date(s):	Topic(s): BS=Book Study, P=Presentation, D=Debate	Instructional Activity Checklist:	Assessment Checklist:
Week #1 January 10-14	Issue #1: Poverty (BS) Issue #2: Movement (P) Issue #3: Parent Involvement (P)	<input type="checkbox"/> Book Study <input type="checkbox"/> Issue Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #2 January 17-21	Issue #4: Brain Gym (P) Issue #5: Technology (P) Issue #6: Sleep, Nutrition & Performance (P) Issue #7: Disruptive Students (BS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Book Study <input type="checkbox"/> Issue Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #3 January 24-28	Issue #8: Schooling & Social Experiences (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 2-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #4 January 31- February 5	Issue #9: Standardized Curriculum (D) Issue #10: Behaviorism & Educational Practice (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debates, Noll pages 16-30, 31- 47	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #5 February 7-11	Issue #11: Economy & Electives (P) Issue #12: School Dress Codes (P) Issue #13: Learning & Forgetting (BS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Book Study <input type="checkbox"/> Issue Presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #6 February 14-18	Issue #14: Constructivism (D) Issue #15: Global Competition & School Reform (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debates, Noll pages 48-63, 64- 82	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #7 February 21-25	Issue #16: Schools & Good Citizens (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 84-99	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #8 February 28- March 4	Issue #17: Federal Initiatives & Failing Schools (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 115-131	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Spring Break March 7-11	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Week #9 March 14-18	Issue #18: High Stakes Assessments & Learning (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 132-153	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #10 March 21-25	Issue #19: Alternative School Formats (P) Issue #20: Write to Learn (P) Issue #21: Workplace Stress & Conflict (BS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Book Study <input type="checkbox"/> Issue Presentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #11 March 28- April 1	Issue #22: Redefining Public Schooling (D) Issue #23: Full Inclusion & Disabled Students (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debates, Noll pages 154-180, 231-247	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #12 April 4-8	Issue #24: HS Reform & Curtailing Dropouts (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 248-264	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #13 April 11-15	Issue #25: Intelligent Design & Curriculum (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 265-285	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #14 April 18-22	Issue #26: Education of Boys (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 286-307	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Week #15 April 25-29	Issue #27: Homework Abolishment (D)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Issue Debate, Noll pages 308-323	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues Reflection Log <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Synopsis <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics
Finals May 2-6	Issue Action Project -Due	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Action Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Action Project <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Assess w/Rubrics

Assessment Methods:

Issue Reflection Logs (27 @ 10 points/each)	270 points	27%
Resource Synopsis (27 @ 10 points/each)	270 points	27%
Self-Assessment w/Rubrics (55 @ 5 points/each)	275 points	28%
Issue Action Project	180 points	18%
Total	995	100%

Portfolio Components: Artifacts and/or assignments from this course or field experience may document proficiency with standards in the program portfolio.

Grading Scale:

100% A+	92-89 B+	82-79 C+	72-69 D +
99-96 A	88-86 B	78-76 C	68-66 D
95-93 A-	85-83 B-	75-73 C-	65-63 D-
Minimum competency for a graduate class is 73%			62- F

Class Policies:

Collaboration - All class members are expected to use professional and ethical interactions to support a positive learning environment. The instructor wants open, honest, and supportive communication.

Academic Honesty – As stated in the SMSU Student Handbook, any form of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, and plagiarism, is prohibited.

Disabilities – If you are a student with a documented disability and wish to discuss your academic accommodations, please make an appointment with the instructor. You may also wish to contact the Coordinator of Disabled Student Academic Accommodations in the SMSU Learning Resources, IL 220, 537-6169.

Attendance Policy – Attendance is an important aspect of professionalism. You will need to have high, consistent attendance (including timely arrival and departure) in your role as a professional; therefore, attendance is expected in this course. You may miss class once but missing more than this will result in a lower grade. If you must be gone, please call the instructor. If there are extenuating circumstances for missing class, we will discuss alternative measures for correcting the absence. If the attendance policy poses a problem, you may appeal first of all to the chair of the department, and if you are not satisfied with this, you may appeal to the education department.

Appeal Process - The Education Department appeal process is available in the Education Department Office. Refer to the Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) Student Handbook for additional policies.

Bibliography

- Gatto, J. (2001). *A different kind of teacher: Solving the crisis of American schooling*. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Hills Books.
- Garman, R. & Wellman, B. (1992). *Adaptive Schools in a Quantum Universe: How to make presentations that teach and transform*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Kohn, A. (1999). *The schools our children deserve*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Rothstein, R. (1998). *The way we were? The myths and realities of America's student achievement*. New York: The Century Foundation Press

Journals/periodicals

- Clabaugh, G. (2004, Winter). *No flower shall wither; or, horticulture in the kingdom of frogs*. Educational Horizons, 99-101.
- Freire, P. The politics of education. *The Act of Study*, 1-4.
- Jacobsen, W. (1999, December/2000, January). Why common ground thinking works. *Educational Horizons*.
- Kohn A. (2004, November). Challenging students and how to have more of them. *Phi Delta Kappan*.
- Kohn, A. (2004, April). Test today, privatize tomorrow: Using accountability to 'reform' public schools to death. *Phi Delta Kappan*.

ED 633: Current Issues in Education

Issue Reflection Log

The weekly issue reviews serve to improve your expertise in each of the current issue areas. The analysis and response portions of this assignment call on higher order thinking strategies to improve your literacy and expand your knowledge in the topic area. A further purpose is to develop a cadre of professional resources from scholarly references.

Content

After attending the class session or reading the issue debate, write a two-paragraph reflection that covers the following ideas: explanation of the strategies/theories obtained, areas you feel were overlooked, explanation of the relevance/applicability to your own practice and explanation of if and how you will incorporate the analyzed strategy/theory into your practice.

Question

After careful reflection on the issue, develop one question that would promote further understanding of the issue. For the question, conduct the necessary research and create a thorough response.

Sample Issue Reflection Log:

Issue Reflection Log	
Issue:	
Reflection:	
Question:	
Answer:	

ED 633: Current Issues in Education

Evaluation Rubric: Issue Reflection Log

Educator: _____ Week: _____ Topic: _____

Criteria	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Issue Reflection	Does not analyze or reflect an understanding of the issue	Shows basic understanding of the issue; inadequate analysis	Adequate understanding of the issue; adequate analysis	Expert understanding of the issue; scholarly analysis
Issue Content Analysis	Inadequate explanation of knowledge attained; inadequate explanation of applicability; insufficient explanation of how the writer will apply the knowledge; or any of the above criteria missing	All criteria are addressed; basic explanation of knowledge attained, applicability and plan for application	All criteria are addressed; adequate explanation of knowledge attained, applicability and plan for application	Thorough explanation of knowledge attained; complete reflection of how it's applicable; complete explanation of how the writer will personally apply the knowledge
Question Development & Response	Question and response are cursory or incomplete	Question is present but response is basic and summative	Questions is present; response is analytical and satisfactorily complete	Question is well-written; response is thorough, scholarly and analytical.

Weighted Scale:

- Level 0=0 points
- Level 1=1 points
- Level 2=2 points
- Level 3=3 points

One additional point will be given for a perfectly clean (free of errors) log.

TOTAL POINTS EARNED <i>Add up points in the POINT column.</i>	TOTAL POINT POSSIBLE	Grade Dr. Yerigan will fill in this box.
	10	

Resource Synopsis Assignment Summary

For each issue you will need to use the Internet as your search tool. You must search for and identify one website for each topic. The purpose of completing this assignment is to provide a framework for basic research using the Internet, locate a range of resources to assist in the integration of key course themes, and assist you in identifying resources, organizations, papers, conference proceedings, etc. that will support your ongoing growth and development in the topic areas.

Step One: General Information

For each resource synopsis you must include the following information: weekly issue, the resource title, and website address. Please double-check your link to ensure it accesses the site.

Step Two: Synopsis

For each resource, you will need to write a synopsis/summary that describes the website's overall focus and relevance to the topic material. The synopsis must be a minimum of 50 words but not exceed 75 words.

Step Three: Personal Reaction

You are expected to rate the value of the website as a professional development resource tool. In this reaction please be sure to specify how this website might be useful to you or your colleagues in enhancing professional development in this topic area.

SAMPLE FORMAT:

Resource Synopsis	
Issue:	Online Learning
Website:	University of Baltimore
Resource Location (re: website link):	http://ubmail.ubalt.edu
Synopsis:	This website had several links that could be accessed from the original site. One link was particularly useful (http://ubmail.ubal.edu/harsham/interactiv.htm) since it leads to an interactive education page. The author explores the impact of the Internet on learning and teaching.
Personal Reaction:	The website offered the above link, which highlights the changes in education because of the dynamic of offering it online. It inadvertently points out areas that would be worthy of evaluation. This is interesting to me because much of my master's program requires internet research. Information on this site will help validate research done online.

ED 633: Current Issues in Education

Evaluation Rubric: Resource Synopsis

Educator: _____ Week: _____ Topic: _____

Criteria	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
General Information	Weekly topic is not identified; website title is not given; website address is not given; address not accessible	N/A	N/A	Weekly topic is identified; website title present; website address given; website address accessible
Synopsis	Website does not reflect the overall focus of the topic and is not relevant; the synopsis is less than 50 words in length	Website is roughly related to the topic and is basically relevant; the synopsis meets the minimum length and is less than 75 words long	Website is satisfactorily related to the topic and is relevant; the synopsis meets the minimum of 50 words and is not more than 75 in length	Website closely reflects the topic and is highly relevant; the synopsis is thorough and meets the minimum length and does not exceed 75 words
Personal Reaction	Personal reaction is cursory or incomplete	Personal reaction is basic and summative	Personal reaction is analytical and satisfactorily complete	Personal reaction is thorough, scholarly and analytical

Weighted Scale:

Level 0=0 points
 Level 1=1 points
 Level 2=2 points
 Level 3=3 points

One additional point will be given for a perfectly clean (free of errors) synopsis.

TOTAL POINTS EARNED <i>Add up points in the POINT column.</i>	TOTAL POINT POSSIBLE	Grade Dr. Yerigan will fill in this box.
	10	

ED 633: Current Issues in Education

Final Issue Action Project

Issue

The function of the Issue Action Project is to move from abstract theory and research to practical application of strategies explored. For one issue you are expected to develop and implement a plan of action stressing the topic and building professional development through collaboration. Feel free to generate your own concept for a project but be sure it is action-based. The following are some ideas for action projects:

- ❑ **Interview Colleague:**
Develop a questionnaire and structure a formal discussion with a colleague. The purpose would be to ascertain the colleague's knowledge of the topic and his/her opinion on how strategies related to the topic are or could be incorporated into his/her working environment.
- ❑ **Create a Binder:**
The purpose of a binder is to create a reference source for colleagues, administrators, etc. that can be placed within your place of work. The binder would need to be substantial, professional in appearance and contain a variety of scholarly resources related to the selected issue.
- ❑ **Conduct Mini In-service:**
Either through personal arrangement or by assignment by an administrator, you will conduct a mini in-service on one of the course issues for at least one other professional. This in-service must include an agenda/outline and handouts.
- ❑ **Poster Presentation:**
A poster presentation will be designed for display in the faculty lounge or department office in your place of employment. This is a stand-alone visual project that will provide an in-depth and concentrated view of the issue.
- ❑ **Newsletter:**
The newsletter is a project opportunity to creatively present relevant information about the issue as it relates to your district. Format counts and a variety of scholarly resources need to be utilized.
- ❑ **Graphic Organizer:**
A graphic organizer can be created to visually represent the essential elements of the issue. This project requires visual representation of the abstract strategy or theory. Depending on the topic that this project is utilized for, you may elect to create more than one organizer. A graphic organizer differs from a poster presentation because it represents ONLY key concepts and critical details of the topic. Although a poster presentation is visual, it is not a graphic organizer.

ED 633: Current Issues in Education

Evaluation Rubric: Issue Action Project

Educator: _____ Week: _____ Topic: _____

Criteria	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fit of Topic to Selected Project	Project idea does not lend itself to application of the topic; poor project design	Topic is ill-fitted to the project design; design of the project does not reflect graduate-level standards	Acceptable fit of topic to project choice; project is sufficiently scholarly	The project design is well-suited to the topic; the project design is impressive
Professionalism	Disorganized; lacks eye appeal; missing elements; spelling and/or grammatical errors	Acceptable level of organization; missing eye appeal; all elements included; free of spelling and/or grammatical errors	Appropriately organized; visually appealing; contains all elements; free of errors	Superior level of organization; creative and appealing; contains all elements; free of errors
Practicality of Application	Application is not feasible for the environment presented	While impractical, application is feasible as presented	Application is practical as presented in most circumstances	Could easily be applied as presented

Weighted Scale:

Level 0=0 points
 Level 1=20 points
 Level 2=40 points
 Level 3=60 points

TOTAL POINTS EARNED <i>Add up points in the POINT column.</i>	TOTAL POINT POSSIBLE	Grade Dr. Yerigan will fill in this box.
	180	