

SE300 Constructing Curriculum in Secondary Social Studies

Spring 2012

2:00-3:15 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays; Carnahan 101

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Office Hours
T/ Th, 11-12
W, 10:30-11:30
By appointment

SS300 Website: <http://cstl-cla.semo.edu//dfridley/ss300/index.htm>
(Access directly; There is no need to go through *MySoutheast*)

Method means that arrangement of subject matter which makes it most effective in use. Never is method something outside of the material.

- John Dewey, *Democracy in Education*

Catalog description and credit hours

Practical combination of the aims, skills, and knowledge of the history and the social sciences with the best practices derived from pedagogical research for the purpose of constructing meaningful units and courses appropriate for secondary social studies classes. (3 credit hours)

Pre or corequisite: GH315

Course Objectives

Upon completion of SS300, a teacher candidate should have demonstrated the ability to:

1. predict potential consequences of specific social studies curricular decisions (DESE 1.2.9-10);
2. demonstrate the ability to make curricular decisions that incorporate social studies pedagogical content knowledge;
3. explain how the backward design process, as defined in *Understanding by Design* increases the probability of student learning;
4. demonstrate the ability to plan social studies curriculum using the concepts and practices of *Understanding by Design*, (e.g. understandings, big ideas, essential questions) (DESE 1.2.2.4, 1.2.3.1, 1.2.4.1);
5. identify potential uses of action research and describe similarities between it and backward design.
6. select/create meaningful social studies learning goals (DESE 1.2.1, 1.2.4);
7. justify selected learning goals using classroom, institutional, and disciplinary sources;
8. write enduring understandings that can serve as legitimate foundations for learning goals;
9. analyze previous classroom experiences in order to identify teaching practices that might have been altered if the teacher had been teaching with a specific assessment tool in mind;
10. develop criteria for valid and reliable assessment of learning goals (DESE 1.2.8);
11. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various types of assessment tools (DESE 1.2.8.1);
12. design and justify simple authentic assessments (DESE 1.2.8.1);
13. construct a curriculum plan for a social studies course that demonstrates meaningful integration of individual units (DESE; NCSS 1.1-10; 3.1);
14. find resources to assist in making particular curricular decisions and explain the value of each (1.2.9.2);
15. reflect, orally and in writing, upon experiences designing curriculum in order to identify strengths and weaknesses;
16. complete teaching-related tasks in a manner that demonstrates a level of organization, responsibility, and collegiality commensurate with the professional expectations of a practicing teacher (DESE 1.2.9, 1.2.10).

Expectations of Students

In order to be successful in this class, you will need to:

- regularly check the online course calendar in order to keep informed about assignments and deadlines;
- prepare for class discussions and activities by completing assigned readings and activities;
- participate actively in discussions and other class activities;
- demonstrate an ability and willingness to engage with peers in the critical evaluation of ideas and information;
- exhibit the ability to accomplish tasks independently by completing all out-of-class assignments;
- demonstrate professional attitudes and behavior appropriate for teaching professionals.

Course Policies and Procedures

Course Calendar

Reading assignments and activities for each class session will be posted on the online calendar (accessible from the course website.) Deadlines for all course assignments will also be posted there. Be sure to check the calendar regularly.

Preparation for Class

Prior to each class, you will be provided with activities (readings, questions, short projects, etc.) intended to help you prepare for class. It is imperative that you complete these assignments. While I do lecture some, I focus mainly upon drawing connections between ideas and events to which these preparatory activities will introduce you. In addition, our discussions will be based upon the critique and interpretation of ideas and knowledge, so you will be unable to participate meaningfully in those discussions if you do not complete the assigned activities prior to class meeting.

Attendance/Participation

Rationale. It is essential for you to be in class. First, what we discuss and do in class will form the foundation of the skills and knowledge on which you will be assessed. If you don't know what's going on in class, you are less likely to understand the concepts and skills upon which you will be assessed. Secondly, if you are not in class, you can't ask questions. You will have reading assignments for which you will be responsible. If your reading engenders more questions, you'll need to be in class in order to ask them—and to assist your classmates in answering *their* questions. Thirdly, your attendance and participation reflect your interest in this course, in its topic—curriculum development—and in the field of teaching, in general. Missing more than one or two class sessions indicates an indifference to all three.

In addition, I'm willing to spend extra time helping students who show an interest. Don't miss several classes, though, and then expect me to help you climb out of the hole you dug for yourself. Lastly, your attendance and participation will make the class better than it would be without you. You have experiences and perspectives that nobody else has, so our inquiry into teaching social studies will be weakened without your input. Two (or three, or fourteen) heads are better than one.

Because it is so important that you actively participate in class activities, your "participation" grade will be worth about 20% of the final grade in this class.

Missing Class. If you need to miss class, please inform me that you will be absent prior to class. I ask you to do this, in part, so that I can make adjustments to class based upon who is going to be in attendance. In addition, however, this class is part of a professional preparation program. As a teacher, you will be expected to inform your administrator in advance of any absence. It's best to get in the habit now of behaving according to professional standards. If you miss a class, check the online course calendar and/or contact classmates to find out what you missed. Please do not ask me to "tell you what you missed." If you have more questions, after having spoken to your classmates, I will be more than willing to answer them.

Assignments

Due Dates. I will publish assignment "due dates" on the online calendar. While I do reserve the right to make adjustments in the course schedule, you will be notified in advance when this happens.

Submitting Assignments. Assignments should be submitted in the online DropBox (which can be accessed through the class web page) unless otherwise noted. All assignments should be typed in 12-point font on pages that use the default Word settings (top/bottom—1 inch; left/right—1.25 inches.) Most importantly, be sure to carefully follow all directions.

Quality of Writing. All writing submitted should meet common university-level expectations. Essays should include introductions and conclusions and be organized using paragraphs. Paragraphs should include topic sentences and focus on a single major idea. Grammar and spelling should conform to common academic standards. Any writing assignment that does not meet these criteria may be returned, ungraded. The assignment may be revised to correct writing errors, but it will be treated as a "late assignment".

Late Assignments.

- No assignment submitted after the stated deadline can earn a grade of A (90%).
- The final score of any assignment submitted after the stated deadline will be reduced by 11-15%, depending upon the number of points an assignment is worth. For example, if a student were to earn full credit on a 100 point assignment but submitted the assignment late, the final score would be an 85. If a student earns full credit on a late 15 point assignment, the final score would be a 13.
- **No assignment will be accepted later than one week from the original deadline.**

Incident Weather. In the event that the University cancels classes on a day on which an assignment is due, the assignment is still due. Since all assignments in this class are to be submitted through DropBox, our not meeting as a class should not affect your ability to turn in your work.

Civility

We all share responsibility for creating and maintaining a climate of mutual respect and an environment free from harassment. In general, I ask that you treat the others in the class with respect, and that includes thinking about how your actions might affect your colleagues. In light of this:

- Please turn off all electronic devices during class. When your cell phone rings, for example, it distracts others and may throw a great discussion off course.
- If you need to leave the room, try to reduce the distraction as much as possible.
- When we have class discussions, don't attack people but, instead, constructively and reflectively respond to ideas. One of the important reasons for teaching social studies is the development and maintenance of a democratic society that requires frequent thoughtful, public debate. We, as teachers, are unlikely to be able to help our students meet that goal if we are not able to engage in that kind of civil dialogue ourselves.

Additional issues regarding expected civil behavior are explicitly identified in the Student Code of Conduct (<http://www6.semo.edu/stuconduct/Code%20of%20Conduct%20Summer%202011.pdf>). Judicial Affairs is responsible for addressing disciplinary matters related to breaches of accepted civility and harassment standards. Information about this process is available at: <http://www6.semo.edu/judaffairs/>.

Academic Honesty

The Undergraduate Bulletin defines academic dishonesty as "...those acts which would deceive, cheat, or defraud so as to promote one's scholastic record...", and states that "[v]iolations of academic honesty represent a serious breach of discipline and may be considered grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the university". You are expected to understand and abide by the rules governing academic honesty. The official statement about academic honesty, including plagiarism, may be found in the undergraduate bulletin.

<http://www.semo.edu/bulletin/pdf/2006Bulletin.pdf>.

A common example of academic dishonesty is plagiarism, defined in the university Code of Student Conduct as “the act of passing someone else’s work off as one’s own” and, additionally, as “using the essential style and manner of expression of a source as if it were one’s own.” If you submit an assignment that fits either of these descriptions, **you will, at the least, receive a zero on that assignment with no opportunity to re-submit it.** If you have *any* questions about what might qualify as academic dishonesty, please ask me. This is definitely one case in which you’re better off asking permission rather than forgiveness.

Accommodations

I (and Southeast Missouri State University, in general) am committed to improving access to educational opportunity for every student. Please contact me if you have special needs that I might reasonably address. In addition, many services are available for students with various types of disabilities. You may obtain official information about disabilities from Learning Assistance and Disability Support Services (<http://www.semo.edu/cs/services/lec.htm>).

Student Feedback

This course is a waste of your time if the activities do not meaningfully contribute to your understanding of the processes involved in curriculum development and your ability to engage in those processes competently. In order to increase the potential for us to meet this goal, I need to hear from you. I will make adjustments based upon your suggestions and critiques. That doesn’t mean that I will toss out assignments just because you don’t want to do them, but I am willing to consider your concerns. However, I do make a serious effort to ensure that everything I ask of students in this class has a strong educational rationale. Be sure that course alterations you suggest have been similarly considered.

Comments critical of me or the course will never affect your grade. My goal is to have no surprises on student evaluations at the end of the semester. There will probably be some negative comments at that point, but I hope to make you feel comfortable enough sharing your concerns during the semester that the written evaluations will just echo what you have already said in person.

Course Materials

- Textbook (can be rented from Textbook Rental): Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J. *The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High Quality Lessons*. 2011.
- Additional book to be purchased (required): Scardino, F. *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to U.S. Government and Politics*
- Additional resources:
 - Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Social Studies Course Level Expectations. <http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/GLE/SScle.html>
 - National Council for the Social Studies. Expectations of Excellence: Standards for the Teaching of Social Studies. Washington, D.C.: NCSS, 1994. (You should have purchased this book during SS200).
 - Other short reading materials provided by the teacher

Basis for Student Evaluation

Grades and Assignments. Course grades are based upon the degree to which students meet course objectives. Each assignment is designed to assess one or more of the course objectives, and scores are assigned based upon criteria related to those objectives. Your final grade will be determined by dividing the total points earned on all assignments by the total points available on all assignments.

Calculating “Close” Grades. While I reserve the right to consider intangible factors, such as quality of participation or initiative, when assigning a final grade, I usually allow math to determine the outcome. On occasion I will decide that a

student's contribution to the class is worth the few points necessary to move from a C to a B or from a B to an A, but students should not assume that grades will be "rounded up." (e.g. from a 69.2% to 70%)

Extra Credit. I do not believe in extra credit (and, therefore, do not offer any). Complete the assigned work - when it's assigned and according to the directions - and you won't be in a position to need extra credit.

Grading Scale. The following scale provides the numeric criteria that will be use for determining final grades in the course:

<u>Grading Scale</u>
90 – 100 A
80 – 89 B
70 - 79 C
69 and below –
No credit toward B.S. Ed. in Secondary Social Studies. Teaching social studies is probably not the best career choice for you.

Alignment between Course Objectives and Assessments* (See course website for descriptions of these assignments.)

Assessment	Objective(s) Assessed	Points Possible
Gatekeeping Assignment	1	25
Backward design essay	3	25
Stage 1 Plan	2, 4, 6, 7, 8	50
Stage 1 Reflection	15	25
Stage 2 Plan	2, 4, 10, 12	50
Stage 2 Reflection	15	25
Full Unit Plan	2, 4, 6, 7, 8	100
Course Plan	2, 4, 9, 13	50
Class discussion	5, 11, 15	0 (specifically, but tied to participation grade)
"Teach to the Test" Essay	9	25
Website Review	14	25
Article Review	14	25
Participation grade	16	100
Disposition Evaluation	16	0 (but will be used to evaluate progress in the Teacher Education Program)

*** I reserve the right to add or subtract assignments, or alter the worth of an assignment, with appropriate prior notice. Specific instructions for the above assignments will be posted on the course website*