Course Description:

Number and Title:

EDUC 2110 (CRN 89875) Section (03)
Investigating Critical Contemporary Issues

Credit Hours:

3.0 semester credit hours (3-0-3)

Catalog Description:

This course engages students in observations, interactions, and analyses of critical and contemporary educational issues. Students will investigate issues influencing the social and political contexts of educational settings in Georgia and the United States. Students will actively examine the teaching profession from multiple vantage points both within and outside the school. Against this backdrop, students will reflect on and interpret the meaning of education and schooling in a
diverse society and examine the moral and ethical responsibilities of teaching in a democracy.

**Computer Requirement:**

Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the student’s academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to:


**Software Requirement:**

To properly access the course content you will need to download the following free software:

**Computer Skill Prerequisites:**

- Able to use the Windows™ operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word™ word processing
- Able to send and receive e-mail using Outlook™ or Outlook Express™
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to use a Web browser.

**In-class Use of Student Notebook Computers:**

Student notebook computers will occasionally be used in the classroom in this course. Surfing or completing work from another course are not permitted during class meetings. Computers will be required to access course materials and to communicate with your instructor.

**GeorgiaVIEW Desire2Learn (Online Classroom):**

On-line activity will take place in Desire2Learn, the virtual classroom for the course.

You can gain access to Desire2Learn, by signing on to the SWAN portal and selecting :“GaVIEW” on the top right side. If you
experience any difficulties in Desire2Learn, please email or call The HUB at TheHub@mail.clayton.edu or (678) 466-HELP. You will need to provide the date and time of the problem, your SWAN username, the name of the course that you are attempting to access, and your instructor’s name.

Program Learning Outcomes:

The content of this course syllabus correlates to education standards established by national and state education governing agencies, accrediting agencies, and learned society/professional education associations. Please refer to the course correlation matrices located at the following web site:

http://www.clayton.edu/teachered/standardsoutcomes

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Investigate and describe contemporary schools and the interplay of school and society via selected social, historical, political, economic, philosophical, and cultural issues that influence those schools.
2. Discover, explore, and describe current issues and trends in schools (e.g., bullying, curriculum mandates, vouchers, privatization, testing and evaluation, federal and state policy, reform initiatives, standards, and changes in curriculum) using disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields and the lenses of analysis, critique, and interpretation.
3. Analyze their legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities as future teachers.
4. Explore their core values and reflect on how their values influence their beliefs about “good” teaching and schooling in democratic contexts.
5. Develop and refine a philosophy of teaching for contemporary schools by exploring who they are as a potential teacher (e.g., examining their own agendas and prejudices as they relate teaching and learning) and what dispositions they have for teaching diverse students in current Georgia and U.S. school contexts.
6. Analyze the implications, benefits, and challenges concerning the use of technology in contemporary Georgia and U.S. classrooms.
7. Discover, explore, and describe current issues and trends in schools (e.g., bullying, curriculum mandates, vouchers, privatization, testing and evaluation, federal and state policy, reform initiatives, standards, and changes in curriculum) using disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields and the lenses of analysis, critique, and interpretation.
8. Analyze their legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities as future teachers.
9. Explore their core values in the pursuit of developing a more reflective practice as they move into the public school classroom.

Term:
Instructor Information:

Instructor:

Dr. Charles J. Elfer
phone: (678) 466-4884
fax: (678) 466-xxxx
email: charleselfer@clayton.edu
internet: http://faculty.clayton.edu/celfer

Office:

Arts & Sciences, Room 110P

Office hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Other times by appointment

Class Meetings:

Classroom:

Clayton Hall, Room 112

Class times:

5:00-7:45 PM - Thursday

Textbook Information:

Text:

- Additional readings for the course will either be made available electronically in .pdf form via the course web portal or, in some instances, handed out during class as hard copies.
- Students are asked to bring all readings/notes to class for reference and to better facilitate class discussion.
Evaluation:

1. Selected Book Reaction Paper (15%):
Acceptable topics for the book review are numerous and may touch on any number of the themes addressed throughout this course (e.g., diversity & multiculturalism, high stakes testing, bullying, educational history, etc.). In addition to a thoughtful appraisal of the book’s thesis, etc, students are asked to offer an assessment of the book in terms of becoming a teacher and strengthening understanding of contemporary issues facing the field of practice. You may select a book from the list provided by your instructor (or offer an alternative). The paper will be written outside of class, must be typed and appropriately formatted, and will be presented in class. 5-7 pages. Students are encouraged to start early!

2. Reaction/Reflection Papers (15%):
Based on the readings, students are expected to prepare a brief reaction/reflection paper (approximately 1 page, Times New Roman, single spaced, 1-inch margins). These papers are to conclude with two “burning questions” raised in reaction to the readings or the topic(s) for the week. As soon as placements are received, students might work to incorporate into their reactions their thoughts on the intersection between the readings and field experiences and how each works to contribute to the student’s developing practice and philosophy of education. The average score of the reaction papers will be used to compute final reaction paper grades. Reactions are due most weeks and should be posted on GeorgiaView in the appropriate submissions box (unless otherwise noted). It is strongly recommended that students bring an additional copy to class for reference, but this is not a requirement.

3. Poster Session (10%):
Each student will create an electronic, conference-style poster on an assigned dimension of current educational policy (GACE, Race to the Top, Teacher Keys, etc.) in an effort to increase our collective understanding of the legislation that impacts each of us. Posters will be presented in class and all students will be asked to formally evaluate the work of their peers.

4. Chapter Presentations (10%):
You will work with a group to present a chapter and lead the discussion on one chapter from the Spring (American Education) text. This does not excuse you from reading the entire text! Activities/exercises to engage the class community are expected and can be designed with the assistance of the instructor where warranted. For our purposes, lecture-style
PowerPoint presentations are somewhat discouraged, although not disallowed.

5. Field Experience – 10 hours documented observations required (10%):  
Students will be expected to participate in a field experience which should juxtapose course themes and educational practice. Upon completion of the field experience, each student will present his/her observations to the class in a 3 – 5 minute presentation. A 3-5 page essay will accompany the presentation. A series of prompts will be provided throughout the semester to guide the assignment further.

6. Participation/Attendance (10%):  
Students’ participation grade will reflect every facet of their engagement in the course. In other words, participation in this course is not limited to what is said, or not said, during class sessions. This class is largely discussion-based. Accordingly, every class member is expected to contribute to the conversation we will continue throughout the semester. Participation in this course should reflect the same professional standards exhibited in the schools; that is, a student’s manner should be responsible, open-minded, thoughtful, and earnest. These dispositions suggest far more than “just talking” in class or on-line, but speak instead to a type of engagement that includes speaking, listening, critiquing and demonstrating concern for the learning of others in the class. Thus, students responsibilities as members of this class extend to more than simply making sure each meets the individual course requirements. Students also have responsibilities to their colleagues in this class, so that we might come together as a community of educators working to better understand teaching and learning through mutual, supportive, critical inquiry. Punctual attendance is required at each class meeting, as is responsible class participation. Repeated absences, for whatever reason, will hurt the overall participation grade. Please notify the instructor personally or via email if there are any occasions in which you will not be able to meet these expectations. See attendance policy below.

7. Critical Film Reviews (15%):  
This assignment requires students to view three films containing themes explored through EDUC 2110. The assignment asks students to unpack and explore themes pertinent to course topics as encountered. Details and film lists will be provided once the semester begins. Each review will be accompanied by a prompt and student essay of 3-5 pages.

8. Midterm and Final (15%): There will be a traditional midterm and final in EDUC 2110. All readings, presentations, lectures, films, and reflection prompts will be potentially incorporated into the exams.

Book Reaction Paper 15%  
Reflection Papers 15%  
Poster Session 10%  
Chapter Presentations 10%
Grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 - 89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 - 79%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60 - 69%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
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Mid-term Progress Report:

The mid-term grade in this course, which will be issued on September 30, reflects approximately 30% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term, which occurs on October 4. Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link.

The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is Friday, October 4, 2013.

Course Schedule:

A topical course schedule for EDUC 2110 is outlined below. Be advised that the schedule is tentative and slight deviations may be announced as the semester progresses. A more detailed schedule will be provided weekly to students.

**Week One (August 12-16): Introduction to course, Reading & Thinking Critically**
- Reflection One – Due Friday via GaView
- Readings: Body Ritual Among the Nacirema

**Week Two (August 19-23): History & Purposes of Public Schooling I**
- Reflection Two – Due Wednesday at Midnight
- Readings: Spring, Chapter 1; Assigned Supplement via GaView
Week Three (August 26-30): History & Purposes of Public Schooling II
Reflection Three – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Assigned Supplement via GaView
Critical Film Review #1

Week Four (September 2-6): Education & Equality of Opportunity
Reflection Four – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring, Chapter 3; Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Five (September 9-13): Race, Gender, & Special Needs
Reflection Five – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring, Chapter 4; Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Six (September 16-20): Multicultural & Multilingual Education
Reflection Six – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring, Chapter 5; Assigned Supplement via GaView
Critical Film Review #2

Week Seven (September 23-27) – Midpoint Week
Midterm

Week Eight (September 30 – October 4) – Midpoint Transition &
Local Control, Charter Schools, & Home Schooling
Critical Film Review #3

Week Nine (October 7-11) – Power & Control at State and National Levels
Reflection Eight – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring, Chapter 7; Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Ten (October 14-15) FALL BREAK – No Class
(October 16) WORK DAY – Check in on-line.
(October 17-18) Elfer at GCSS, Athens, GA & National Rural Education
Association, Branson, MO

Week Eleven (October 21-25) – Complicating notions of Testing
Reflection Nine – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Twelve (October 28-November 1) – Critical Book Reviews
All book review essays are due Wednesday, October 30th

Week Thirteen (November 4-8) – Textbook, Curriculum, Etc.
Reflection Ten – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring, Chapter 9; Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Fourteen (November 11-15) – The Courts and the schools
Reflection Eleven – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring, Chapter 10; Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Fifteen (November 18-22) - The Profession of Teaching
Reflection Twelve – Due Wednesday at Midnight
Readings: Spring Chapter 8; Assigned Supplement via GaView

Week Sixteen (November 25-29) – Field Experience Week
All field reports and Paperwork due Thursday, November 28th

Week Seventeen (December 2-6)
December 2nd, Last day of class
Final Exam – Monday, December 9th

Course Policies:

General Policy
Students must abide by policies in the Clayton State University Student Handbook, and the Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities.

University Attendance Policy
Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students’ ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

Course Attendance Policy
Attendance is expected for all class periods. Attendance is required for quiz and examination periods. Any absence must be accompanied by a written excuse from a doctor or other competent authority.

Missed Work
Without a valid excuse, a grade of zero points will be assigned for the missed work. If a valid excuse is provided:

- Make-up quizzes and make-up examinations will be given only if they are taken before solutions are posted/grades entered, etc.
- The final examination must be taken. Students missing the final examination should contact their instructor concerning the applicability of an Incomplete grade.

Academic Dishonesty
Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating and plagiarism. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs.
Disruption of the Learning Environment
Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

A more detailed description of examples of disruptive behavior and appeal procedures is provided at:

http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/5/DisruptiveClassroomBehavior.pdf

Writing Assistance
The Writers’ Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing consultants about your writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your paper, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a consultant or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember: you, not your consultant, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit.

Aside from meeting with consultants one-with-one, you can also participate in consultant-led writing workshops. In these workshops, consultants will guide you in discussions and activities important to academic writing topics. Consultants and student-writers will collaborate on ways to apply writing concepts and strategies to specific writing situations. You will be identify, analyze, integrate, and synthesize writing principles through a series of writing exercises. Remember that we are here to collaborate with you as you develop your own experiences as a student-writer.

http://www.clayton.edu/arts-sciences/english/writersstudio

Other Policies
1. Each student is expected to come prepared to class having completed assigned readings. Punctuality is expected.

2. Turn your phones off. Don’t search the net during class.

3. If an issue arises, contact the instructor sooner rather than later. Most concerns can be resolved with adequate and timely communication.

4. Be nice.
Operation Study
At Clayton State University, we expect and support high motivation and academic achievement. Look for Operation Study activities and programs this semester that are designed to enhance your academic success such as study sessions, study breaks, workshops, and opportunities to earn Study Bucks (for use in the University Bookstore) and other items

Important dates:

Last day to withdraw without academic penalty: **Friday, October 4, 2013.**

Final Exam: **Thursday, December 5th – 2:45PM**