

## ED 472 Issues in Modern American Education

Instructor:

**Dr. Patti Bishop**

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**Text:**

**Noll, J. (2007) Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Educational Issues 14<sup>th</sup> Ed. Guliford: Duskin/McGraw Hill.**

### **Course Description:**

Through a critical analysis of contemporary issues in American education, students will consider historical, sociological, and philosophical foundations affection problems and issues that presently confront the teaching profession.

The Department of Education has a goal to educate **Reflective Educators**. This course supports the development of Reflective educators through readings, assignments, and class discussions that allow students to engage in:

Course Objectives:

**Reflection on self as an emerging, developing, and maturing professional-** This course will identify the major problems and issues in modern American education at all levels. Students will develop and understand the effect of important educational issues on teachers and administrators. They will analyze the implications of the proposed resolutions for American society/schools and the teaching profession. This course will facilitate the reflective process through the development of a reflective learning community, identified readings, and individual and group presentations.

**Reflection on student differences-** This course will provide opportunities for students to examine the issues in modern American Education. Investigations will involve identifying the cultural and social characteristics that students bring to the school community.

**Reflection on methods and materials-**The classroom readings and discussions allow students to become aware of, and reflect on issues surrounding the development of the school curriculum and methods of teaching.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Attendance:**

Attendance is required. More than two unexcused absences per semester are considered excessive. Professional courtesy dictates that you should inform the course instructor in advance if you cannot attend a class session. The content of missed class sessions is your responsibility. Excessive absences or tardiness may result in a reduction in your course grade.

#### **Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities may identify themselves voluntarily to the Service for Students with Disabilities Office (SSWD) to request accommodations. The office is responsible for assisting in arranging accommodations. Morgan Hall, Rm 150, phone 670-1010.

**Class Discussion:**

Interaction of class members with each other in analyzing educational issues, examining related ideas or concerns and evaluating tentative conclusions is an important element of the class. Active involvement and participation in class discussion is expected.

**Assigned Reading:**

The reading for this course provides a common basis for the class discussions. Completion of readings before the identified date will enhance your ability to relate the reading and the issues presented by the author to your personal experience and to participate in the class discussions.

**Learning Log:**

Based on the notion that learning occurs when students understand, assimilate, and apply what they have learned, individual learning logs will be required. The learning log should contain:

- **Summary of Information for Specific Issues from the Textbook Information (see handout)**
- **Summary of Available Research Related to the Specific Issue (see list of Periodicals/Journal ideas on ERIC site)**
- **Evidence of how information can be applied by giving “real school” examples of the application of an issue.**

**Please summarize each of the 21 issues in the Textbook.**

**Book Reviews:**

Each person should select two books on the reading list to read independently and write a short 1-2 page review. Students may select books not on the list and have them approved by the instructor. Two book reviews are required for an “A”. The Reviews must include:

- 1) identification of the major theme or problem;
- 2) analysis of arguments and persuasive strategies;
- 3) evaluation of overall effectiveness and utility of the book;
- 4) a short class presentation of one of the reviews is required.

Graduate students are required to write two book reviews.

**The presentation of Book Reviews should involve:**

Organizing research for the problem or issue both pro and con.

Conducting an in-depth analysis of findings.

Synthesizing findings in terms of tentative conclusions.

Planning a presentation on the problem or issues

Preparing appropriate class handouts and transparencies or other material for leading a class discussion on the issue.

Preparing a summary of the work for the course instructor.

**Course Evaluation will be based on the following:**

Daily Participation	10%
Book Reviews (two required for an “A”	40%

**Tentative Course Schedule**

Course Introduction

Self-Reflective pre-test on core beliefs on controversial issues in Education

Basic Approaches to Analyzing Controversy

Sign up for Book Review presentations

Issue 1 Should Schooling Be Based on Social Experiences?

Issue 2 Should Curriculum Be Standardized for All?

Issue 3 Should Behaviorism Shape Educational Practice?

Issue 4 Is Constructivism the Best Philosophy of Education?

Issue 5 Can the Public School Produce Good Citizens?

BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS

Issue 6 Has Re-segregation Diminished the Impact of Brown?

Field Trip to Brown v. Board of Education Museum

Issue 8 Can Federal Initiatives Rescue Failing Schools?

Issue 9 Do High-Stakes Assessments Improve Learning?

Issue 10 Should “Public Schooling” be Redefined?

Issue 11 Has the Supreme Court Reconfigured American Education?

Guest Speaker on School Finance

Issue 12 Can Charter schools Revitalize Public Education?

BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS

Issue 13 is Home schooling a Danger to American Society?

BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS

Issue 14 Is full Inclusion of Disabled Students Desirable?

BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS

Issue 15 Is Size Crucial to School Improvement?

Issue 16 Should Bilingual Education Be Abandoned?

BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS

Issue 17 Does School Violence Warrant a Zero-Tolerance Policy?  
Issue 18 Should Homework Be Abolished?

**BOOK REVIEW PRESENTATIONS**

Issue 19 Do computers Negatively Affect Student Growth?

Issue 20 can Merit Pay Accelerate School Improvement?

Issue 21 Should Alternative Teacher Training Be Encouraged?

**LEARNING LOGS DUE**