

Abstract:

Recent events have re-centered attention on the role of race and identity in the public sphere, personal safety, democratic practices, and the extent to which systemic and institutional racism works in insidious ways to create a permanent and marginalized second class. While street-level protests, proposed national and/or state laws, and a host of other initiatives portend change, the role of education, and more specifically teacher-education programs, can never be underestimated.

Indeed, the work that teacher education programs do is essential in helping develop the next generations of socially-conscious and ethnographically literate teachers. Yet many teacher education programs offer few, if any, opportunities for our largely white and female student body to delve into the challenges, opportunities, and precarities of the students who populate public schools.

The implications of a linear and predominantly white-oriented curriculum are both clear and cause for concern. Indeed, as Antonio Gramsci noted over 100 years ago, monolithic cultural/educational terrains are fertile grounds for the slow but sure elimination of competing concepts. More importantly, as he suggested, the absence of dissent – alternate perspectives and attention to the other – is the vehicle for manufactured and common (although false) narratives that promote single identities that alienate rather than embrace differences.

Given that educational politics is, in fact, the process of making meaning from and among competing ideas, it is crucial that these competing concepts be brought into contact so that they can be discussed, clarified, and negotiated.

With this in mind, a new EDUC course, titled *Critical Studies in Education: Race, Culture, and Politics*, will introduce teacher-education candidates to the histories of marginalized communities and examine the underlying political, social, and cultural structures that serve to reproduce rather than eliminate educational, political, and economic disparities.

By examining, from a non-white perspective, the histories of public education in the United States, relationships between and among social, political, economic, and educational spheres, and educational disenfranchisement, this course will be influential in developing socially conscious educator who can meet head-on the challenges associated with public education.

- Course learning objectives
- An understanding of critical theory as it relates to educational practice, reproduction theory, differential attainment among ethnicities, and the history of education in the United States
 - An understanding of educational politics as it relates to contemporary determinants of curriculum, pedagogy, and educational success.
- An understanding of the cultural determinants of curriculum and educational policy.
 - The role of ethnological studies in shaping educational policies and practices.
 - An understanding of and a capacity to use inclusive language.
- An enhanced capacity to engage in conversations and discussions about racism, sexism, and ableism.
 - An understanding of the role of education and schooling in perpetuating cultural and social normative behaviors and expectations.

Work Completed:

The course proposal was presented to faculty in the Educational Foundations and Exceptionalities Department (EFEX) in early fall, 2020. Following a short comment period, the proposal was uploaded Curriculog and vetted by the College of Education Curriculum Committee. Minor changes were recommended and made.

Outcomes:

I am still awaiting notification as to the course's status. I have asked about progress on numerous occasions but have not received replies.