

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**EDLE 895 Emerging Issues in Education
Spring 2006**

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Schedule Information

Location: Robinson B 118

Meeting Times: Wednesday, 7:20-10:00 p.m.
1/25/06 – 5/3/06

Course Material

We will not use a textbook for this course. Instead, we will rely upon journal articles, federal and state reports, professional publications (e.g. Chronicle of Higher Education), the popular press, etc... These readings will be posted on blackboard, available in the library or available on identified websites.

Outside-of-Class Resources: All candidates are expected to have access to a personal computer that is linked to the Internet and the ability to use basic word processing, e-mail, and appropriate websites.

Course Description

Goals & Objectives

1. Understand and describe the ways in which new issues end up on local, state, or federal policy agendas.
2. Establish a framework to identify and study emerging issues.
3. Build a resource base for identifying emerging issues.
4. Understand the impact of particular emerging issues on local, state, and federal education systems.
5. Prepare briefing materials for decision makers on one or more emerging issues.

General Requirements

1. Consistent attendance.
2. Complete all required readings before class.
3. Participation in individual and group assignments during class.
4. Presentation of doctoral level work in terms of scope, depth, writing mechanics, appearance, and APA style (see expectations for written work).
5. All assignments must be handed in on time. Late assignments will not be given full-credit. If a student has an emergency situation, she or he should contact the instructor as soon as possible to qualify for an exception.

Nature of Course Delivery

A variety of instructional methods are used in this course including: large-and small-group instruction, cooperative learning activities, Internet assignments, lectures, guest practitioner presentations (if possible), individual presentations, case studies, role-play, and written and verbal assignments.

Course Assignments

1. **School Board Meeting Summary:** Attend a meeting of a local school board and write a summary of the issues discussed at the meeting. Which, if any, of the topics discussed suggest new or emerging issues? If not, why not? You must attend the meeting in person and include an original copy of the meeting's agenda with your paper. As an alternative, you may interview a senior decision maker on what she or he sees as emerging issues. The alternative paper must be approved in advance.

(20 pts) **DUE DATE: March 15**

2. **Media Coverage:** Weekly discussion of issues and/or policies that have been covered in local, state, national, or international media. Bring or post (on Blackboard – Discussion Board) your source for the issue that you have selected.

(30 pts) **DUE DATE: Every Class!!**

3. **Policy Recommendation and Presentation:** Each student will engage in the policy process. That is, each student will identify and define an emerging “educational issue,” which they will then investigate and formulate into a policy recommendation. The end results of these efforts will be a formal paper “Policy Recommendation” (See “The Formal Paper”) and a “Policy Presentation” (See “Presentation Rubric”).

The presentation will be shared with classmates in the form of a one-page policy briefing (See sample paper).

(15 pts) **PRESENTATION DUE DATES: April 5, April 12, April 26** (35 pts) **(WRITTEN PAPER DUE DATE – April 26)**

Tentative Class Outline

| DATE | TOPIC | ASSIGNMENT |
|-------------|--|--|
| January 25 | Introductions; review of class expectations; review and consideration of modifications to syllabus; issue identification | <i>For February 1:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on national news) (2) Read Policy Process Hand-out (3) Blackboard “Documents” – Reading Assignment (NCES Report) |
| February 1 | Educational Achievement | <i>For February 8:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on state-VA, rather than national news) (2) Blackboard Reading Assignment (Hearing Testimony) |
| February 8 | No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) - highly qualified requirements for special education teachers | <i>For February 15:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on local news – county or school system) (2) Select an article or information related to local school issues |
| February 15 | Local School Issues | <i>For February 22:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on international news) (2) Select an article or information related to the impact of globalization on education |
| February 22 | Globalization and Education | <i>For March 1:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on legal news) (2) Select an article or information related to role of federal courts in education |
| March 1 | Role of Federal Courts in Education | <i>For March 8:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on policy) (2) Read Against the Undertow – article in library (on reserve) |
| March 8 | Bilingual Education—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow | <i>For March 15:</i> (1) Media coverage (2) Blackboard Reading Assignments (Educating Migrant Children and <i>Plyler v Doe</i>) |
| March 15 | Equal Educational Opportunity Assignment Due: School Board Meeting Summary | <i>For March 22:</i> (1) Media coverage (focus on school reform) (2) Read Reforming... Schools – article in library (on reserve) |
| March 22 | School Reform | <i>For March 29:</i> (1) Media coverage (2) Read Am. S.B. No.12 (Amend to Ohio Revised Code – in library (on reserve) (3) Find out what policy agendas are being formulated |

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| March 29 | Policy Agenda | For April 5: (1) Media coverage (2) Reading Assignment TBD |
| April 5 | Remaining topics TBD based on collective needs & interest of class Policy Presentations (2 students) | For April 12: (1) Media coverage (2) Reading Assignment TBD |
| April 12 | Topics TBD based on collective needs & interest of class Policy Presentations (2 students) | For April 19: NO READING ASSIGNMENT – NO CLASS ON APRIL 19 |
| April 19 | NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK | For April 26: (1) Media coverage (2) Reading Assignment TBD |
| April 26 | Topics TBD based on collective needs & interest of class Assignment Due: Policy Recommendation (Formal Written Paper) Policy Presentations (2 students) | For May 3: (1) Media coverage (2) Reading Assignment TBD |
| May 3 | Topics TBD based on collective needs & interest of class | LAST CLASS |

Grading Scale

- A+ = 100 points
- A = 95 - 99 points
- A - = 90 - 94 points
- B+ = 85 - 89 points
- B = 80 - 84 points
- B - = 75 - 79 points
- C = 70 - 74 points
- F = 69 points or below

Absence From Class:

Candidates are expected to attend every class for its entirety. Emergencies sometimes arise, however. If you need to be absent from class, you are expected to notify the instructor in advance by telephone or e-mail. If you miss more than one class, you will lose participation points. If you come to class more than 30 minutes late or leave more than 30 minutes early, your participation points for that session will be reduced.

Grade Appeals:

Candidates must presents grade appeals in writing and must put forth a reasonable written explanation that supports their request for a grade change.

Expectations for Written Work:

Use appropriate grammar.
Writing should be the caliber of a graduate student.
Use Times Roman or Arial 12-font.
Include a cover page with name, date & assignment.
Limit the use of "I" in your writing.
Follow APA Guidelines.

Spell correctly.
Type all work.
Write clearly.
No binders, or plastic covers.
Find a good proofreader!
Avoid Plagiarism!!!!

Classroom Climate:

A positive climate depends on cooperation among all students and with the instructor. Candidates need to work together to ensure that everyone has the confidence to participate honestly and energetically. Every candidate is expected to:

1. be fully prepared for each class session;
2. be attentive to others and respond thoughtfully and respectfully;
3. work toward a common purpose;
4. persevere through the common challenge of understanding education law; and
5. affirm one another's successes and help one another overcome weaknesses.

Statement of Expectations

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects all students to abide by the following:

Responsible Use of Computing

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Plagiarism

Students must avoid plagiarizing the work of others. Specifically, when referencing a source or author, students must give appropriate source documentation; and when using direct quotes, students must use quotations, provide page numbers, and ensure that credit is given to the author of quoted material. If a student's work contains plagiarism, the student will receive no credit for the assignment.

Disability Resource Center

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

MISCELLANEOUS WEB SITES

National School Boards Association

Legal Clips – Free service of NSBA Office of General Counsel

Look specifically @School Law Issues

<http://www.nsba.org/cosa/>

Education Law Association

Phone: 937-229-3589

e-mail: ela@udayton.edu

Website: <http://www.educationlaw.org>

(Student membership available)

National School Board Association

www.nsba.org/cosa/

Education Law Web Sites

<http://www.access.digex.net/~edlawinc/>

http://lawinfo.com/legal_research/legal_research_invds.html

<http://www.lawinfo.com/links/federal>

<http://www.lawinfo.com/links/federal/constitution.html>

<http://www.law.cornell.edu>

Tracking Current U.S. Legislation: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

United States Constitution: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/constitution.overview.html>

United States Code: <http://uscode.house.gov/search/criteria.shtml>

Public Laws: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Congressional Record: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Code of Federal Regulations: <http://law.house.gov/80/cfr.htm>

GPO Access: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/multidb.html>

Special Education Focus

<http://www.cec.sped.org>

<http://www.pacer.org/legislation/index.htm>

<http://www.transitionlink.com/>

<http://www.cast.org/>

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html>

<http://www.nichcy.org>

<http://prenhall.com/murdick>