

**THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY**

CPED 6608
Spring 2021
Tuesday 5:010-7:00

Dr. Erica Brown
240-449-0449 (cell)
ericabrown@gwu.edu

DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY

COURSE PURPOSE:

We are studying issues of diversity at a critical time in our country's history and will be using your experiences and our readings to shed light on current events, framing them within an existing body of literature. This course is designed to help graduate students gain an understanding of the broad nature of diversity found in today's schools and education-related organizations. Both educator and student diversity will be our focus, particularly as identity is shaped by biography, race, class, politics, gender, and family structures. We will think out loud about the implications of diversity for curricula, pedagogy, educator–student interactions, and student achievement. The course primarily attends to three of the four conceptual constructs that underpin graduate studies in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development. By examining *Research and Scholarship* that center on issues of diversity, the course will highlight the interaction of research and *Reflective Practice* in schools and educational organizations. Through readings, discussion, and assignments, graduate students will be better placed to understand how K-12 school and out-of-school settings position themselves as part of a broader platform of *Community Service*.

It is impossible to do more than a superficial study within the limited course of a semester, and there will be many major issues on diversity that we will not touch upon at all. My hope is to communicate some of the richness of these critical conversations and to spark enough curiosity that you engage in further study on your own. Our research will use a variety of books that you must purchase and supplemental articles and book chapters which will be available through Blackboard. I will be uploading material over the course of the semester so please make sure to check for additions before every class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students who attend the course regularly, do their readings and class work and participate in class discussions will:

- Examine the personal and professional background of an educator – namely, themselves - and how this influences biases and interpersonal and instructional interactions among the educator and her/his students.

- Discuss the role of diversity in its broadest forms and its impact, historically and present-day, on student success in formal and informal educational settings.
- Identify characteristics of success and the hurdles when educating students from a broad range of backgrounds, taking into the consideration the uniqueness of each setting.
- Delineate strategies and resources for promoting optimal education in urban and metropolitan schools.
- Identify ways in which educators can build strong connections to students' lives in neighborhoods and communities that have direct influence on students' success within formal educational settings.
- Feel comfortable reading, questioning, interpreting and applying the key ideas from our readings on diversity within their own teaching practice.
- Develop the capacity to use the reflective exercises done during instruction time within their own classrooms and educational settings.
- Be able to analyze material from memoirs on race and class, construct their own autobiographical narratives and consider how educators can use this as a way to catalyze conversations on race and class in their own practice.
- Learn with and from a cohort of colleagues in a safe and diverse classroom and as peer mentors to each other.

PREPARATION:

This class includes 110 minutes of direct interaction per week and a minimum of @200 minutes of independent learning a week. More information about GW's credit hour policy can be found at: provost.gwu.edu/policies-forms or provost.gwu.edu/files/downloads/Resources/Assignment-Credit-Hours-7-2016.pdf (form).

GRADING:

A) Attendance at all class sessions, full reading preparation which includes weekly writing assignments, and active participation in class discussions (20%)

B) Identity paper (20%)

C) Identity Presentation (10%)

D) Final paper (50%)

A = 100-94%

A- = 93-90%

B+ = 89-86%

B = 85-83%

B- = 82-80%

C = 79-70%

F = Below 70%

ASSIGNMENTS:

Identity paper (20%)

Due February 2

In class we will explore our own biographies and how these may influence our interpersonal and pedagogical interactions with students who both share and do not share the same biographical background. After constructing an 'educator biographical map' in class and reading several pieces on educator identity, students will write a short essay (5-6 pages, double-spaced, font size 12, APA style) about their own identity, and the possible impact of this identity on their roles as educators. Clear biographical maps are to be added to the end of your 5-6 pages of writing.

Interview Presentations (10%)

April 6/13

Using your identity papers and the readings, students will conduct a recorded zoom interview of no more than 7 minutes duration with someone who works on issues of diversity or has been a victim of prejudice or hate and is willing to discuss their experience. The teacher will identify possible interviewees if the student cannot find a partner for this assignment. The presentation will conclude with 3 minutes of Q & A from class colleagues.

Final paper (50%)

Due April 20

You will be given more information about the final paper later in the semester. Expect to write a paper of approximately 12-14 pages in length, which will synthesize memoir reading from this course, other research, as well as address your evolving personal education.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. (2015). *Between the World and Me*. Spiegel and Grau.

Amico, Robert. (2016). *Exploring White Privilege*. Routledge.

Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life. 2nd Edition with an Update a Decade Later*. University of California Press.

Lewis, A. (2003). *Race in the Schoolyard. Negotiating the Color Line in Classrooms and Communities*. Rutgers University Press.

CHAPTERS PROVIDED FROM...

Wilkerson, Isabel. (2020). *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*. Random House.

Lipstadt, Deborah E. (2019). *Antisemitism: Here and Now*. Schocken Books.

Additional readings will be provided and uploaded on to the course on Blackboard.

OUR LEARNING COVENANT:

1. Studying diversity, no matter how objective that study is, is hard to do in a state of neutrality. It can raise many issues, scholarly and personal. I am here and available to you this semester and beyond. You are always welcome to contact me. If you call in the middle of the night, I will not answer. Other than that, please drop me an email any time you wish to speak by phone or meet in person, and we will arrange a mutually convenient time: ericabrown@gwu.edu. In addition, the best learning happens in a dialogical relationship so please take the time to introduce yourself to me and to each other early in the semester. As the German philosopher Martin Buber (1878-1965) once wrote in *I and Thou*: “Every real relationship with a being or life in the world is exclusive... This does not mean nothing else exists; but that all else lives in its light.”

2. The material we will study together is immersive in nature and requires an undistracted mind. Studying on Zoom has presented some unique learning challenges for me as an educator. It is hard to compete for your attention with emails, e-bay purchases and video games. Please know that I can tell when you are elsewhere even if you think you are a fabulous actor. I commit to being fully engaged as your instructor this semester in exchange for your full commitment as a student. That way we can best learn with and from each other.

3. I do not take class attendance, but expect attendance and engagement in every class. I do not lecture, and an interactive classroom requires your full involvement. If you miss a class you are still responsible for the material in that class and are free to ask for notes from a fellow student. Part of your grade is determined by participation.

4. I will start on time. I expect you to arrive on time. I do not penalize students who arrive on time by waiting for those who do not. That means that you should arrive with enough time to settle and be prepared for learning at the required hour. If you do not come on time, you will have to wait outside for ten minutes and then the stragglers can come in together. Later than that – without contacting me in advance – you can no longer join us. Sorry. The good news is that if I’m late by ten minutes, you can all leave.

5. Assignments have a due date. If you have a reasonable excuse and contact me in advance, we can negotiate that date. If you do not let me know, then I will assume you have not completed it and will discount your grade. If it is more than a week late, I will not take it. It impacts the turn-around time of all the material. I, in turn, will take grading seriously and will read your papers thoroughly and within the week of receiving them unless otherwise indicated. If you feel that you deserve a better grade – and I mean deserve – then please bring that to my attention.

6. The final exam is as scheduled for everyone in the class unless you have an extenuating circumstance that you let me know about in advance.

7. Please use APA guidelines for documentation and references.

http://www.apastyle.org/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAyszSBRDJARIsAHAqQ4okumVsxVspo7H041ne567FuMJEUoLMQ9wYmiMJbIxu_-ZqdBB3krAaAjc1EALw_wcB

8. Students are expected to adhere to GW's Code of Academic Integrity. It states: "Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." For the remainder of the code, see: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>. Academic dishonesty is a serious and punishable university offense. Should you have any specific questions related to plagiarism, please contact me directly.

9. In order to receive accommodations on the basis of disability, students with special needs must give notice and provide proper documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services, Marvin Center 436, 994-8250. For additional information see, disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/. Any student requiring mental health services can contact the University's Mental Health Services 24/7 at 202-994-5300. Services are absolutely confidential. More information can be obtained at: counselingcenter.gwu.edu/.

10. In accordance with university policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy, see: students.gwu.edu/accommodations-religious-holidays.

11. In the unlikely event of an emergency, students should shelter in place and follow, if necessary, evacuation procedures for the building.

12. In the event of inclement weather, our class will follow the university policy. During this strange semester, this should not matter. If the university is closed, we will not be meeting. If the university is open, but you are unable to attend due to inclement weather, please contact the instructor.

CLASS SCHEDULE, TOPICS AND READINGS

DATE & TOPIC

Class #1: January 12, 2020

Introductions: What's in a name?

Review of syllabus, assignments, course

Written exercise on diversity: How to be an Anti-Racist

The Educator Self – Who we are influences what and how we educate

Class #2: January 19, 2020

Educator as cultural agent

Biographical influences on teaching

Articles 1, 2, & 3

Influences of family life and parenting structures on education

Class #3: January 21, 2020

Review of *Between the World and Me*
and Professional Mapping

Coates/Entire Book

Class #4: February 2, 2020

Review of *Exploring White Privilege*

Amico/Entire Book

Class #5: February 9, 2020

Social and Cultural Capital Development
Concerted Cultivation – Natural Growth
Class, Race, and Language

Lareau: Chaps. 1-7

Class #6: February 16, 2020

Structured Racism and
Race as Construct
Guest lecturer

Wilkerson: Chaps. 4-6

Class #7: February 23, 2020

School, Race, Culture and Identity

Lewis: Chaps 1-7

Diversity beyond race, culture, and class...

Class #8: March 2, 2020

Is Your Classroom Politically and Linguistically Safe?
Introduction/Chapter 1 *The Political Classroom*
Antisemitism: Here and Now- chapters 1, 2, 6

Class #9: March 9, 2020

Guest Lecture on Islamophobia in the Classroom
Ethical development of children
Using literature to promote ethical development

Articles 8, 9, 10 & 11

March 16 –No Class/Spring Break

Class #10: March 23, 2020

Linguistic background and literacy
Challenges and strategies
Sexuality in schools
What can or should we talk about in school?
Are Tomorrow's Teachers Ready?
The 2013 National School Climate Survey

Articles 4, 5, 6 & 7

Articles 12 & 13

Class #11: March 30, 2020

Diverse and equitable schools for all students – how?

Commitment and Equity in Public Schools
Economic Diversity in Urban Schools

Posey-Maddox: Chaps. 1, 2, 7

Article

Class #12: April 6, 2020
Student Presentations

Class #13: April 13, 2020
Student Presentations

Class #14: April 20, 2020
Dreaming of a Different Future
Debriefing the semester
Final paper due

Final Paper Structure and Topics

The final paper should use the books (at least one) and articles (at least five) completed during the semester as a way of framing an understanding the educational struggles and victories of those in one of the following memoirs that demonstrate the difficulties of diversity from a lived perspective:

- *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League* by Ron Suskind (New York: Broadway Books, 1999).
- *My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor (New York: Vintage, 2014).
- *Hillbilly Elegy* by J. D. Vance (New York: Harper, 2016).
- *Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family* by Amy Ellis Nutt (New York: Random House, 2016).
- *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* by Wes Moore (New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2011).