

## **FNED 346: Schooling in a Democratic Society**

8-12 sections each semester

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### **Catalog Description**

An interdisciplinary approach is used to examine the social and cultural forces that affect schools. Attention is given to diversity and equity.

### **Expanded Description**

Public schools continue to be one of the most controversial institutions in American society. Schools have always been “contested sites” where questions of cultural, social, economic and personal meaning are played out in a diverse and multicultural society. In this course, we will engage in a critical examination of schooling in a democratic society. The course is concerned with how people make meaning of schools, where that meaning comes from, whose meanings get heard, and how meanings are contested in school spaces.

This class is designed to help you think about schooling in a democratic society through the lens of “intersectionality” — race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, age, status (and the like) all intersect as pieces of our subjectivity. Therefore this class does not separate talk of diversity into distinct units that engage these issues individually. Rather we will examine multiple and overlapping axes of diversity (in ranging texts — theory, application, film, literature) as they play out in schools through school structure, curriculum, climate and pedagogy.

### **Relationship to the Professional Program**

This course is required for all undergraduate teacher education programs. This course is part of the professional studies component of the teacher education program and addresses the need for a solid foundation in educational theory and pedagogy in preparing teachers for working in diverse social contexts. This course provides an introduction to the social and political history of the American school and engages students, as reflective practitioners, in the process of theorizing about educational purposes. It also includes a fifteen-hour service learning component that may count towards the twenty-five hour community service requirement for undergraduates in FSEHD.

### **Relationship to the Conceptual Framework of the FSEHD**

This course is intended to help students develop the habit of reflective practice by utilizing a constructivist, discussion-based format which encourages students to not only come to an understanding of the contexts of public schooling in a democratic society, but also to challenge those contexts, their “necessity,” and the power relations they convey. Students are challenged to reflect upon and interrogate the way public schooling is done in America at the classroom, school, district, community, state and national levels. The underlying aims of such study are to enhance educators’ understandings of and responsiveness to the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, clients, and families, to ensure that educators develop strategies for combating prejudice and advancing educational equity, inclusion, and intercultural understanding. The hope is that, as a result of this course, students will choose to participate in the larger social discourses

regarding public education and do so from a position that thoughtfully integrates theory and practice as well as from research and experience.

## Assessments:

All faculty who teach this course design their own assignments; however, we each create assignments to ensure that students across all sections are assessed in each of the following four areas:

**(RA) READING ACCOUNTABILITY:** These assignments can include but are not limited to tests, quizzes, blog entries, in class writing, papers or other projects that show students have read and critical understood the course texts.

**(R) RESEARCH:** These assignments can include but are not limited to research papers, presentations, activities and events that expand a students' knowledge and understanding of the historical and contemporary contexts of schooling.

**(CR) CRITICAL REFLECTION/ANALYSIS:** These assignments can include but are not limited to reflections on self, school and society related to the Cultural Competency Assessment Tool or other reflective writing.

**(SL) SERVICE LEARNING:** These assignments can include but are not limited to journal entries, papers, individual or group projects that address the 15 hours of tutoring students conduct in an urban, public school setting.

## Course Objectives/Outcomes:

Learning Objective	FSEHD	RIPTS	Sample Assessments
to reflect upon the role of history, politics, and culture in shaping current American educational policy and practice	General Knowledge, Knowledge of Contexts	1.1, 1.4	<i>Think Pieces</i> (RA) <i>Talking Points</i> (RA) <i>Promising Practices</i> (R)
to question assumptions about the purpose of schooling, the student-teacher relationship, and the role of schools in promoting or hindering the democratic way of life	Knowledge of Contexts, Professional Ethics	5.2	<i>In Class Writing</i> (RA) <i>Cultural Competency Paper</i> (R, CR) <i>SL Project</i> (SL) <i>Midterm Letter</i> (CR)
to think critically about educational issues, developing well-reasoned opinions on central issues in education and educational reform	Knowledge of Contexts, Collaboration & Advocacy	5.2, 5.4, 7.1 8.3, 8.4	<i>Think Pieces</i> (RA) <i>Talking Points</i> (RA)
to engage in service learning activities in approved public K-12 schools or other educational institutions serving diverse populations in order to gain insight into the perspectives and experiences of minority students	Knowledge of Contexts, Cultural Diversity, Collaboration & Advocacy	3.2, 3.3 4.1, 4.2 6.1, 6.2 10.2, 10.4	<i>SL Project</i> (SL)
to acquire an appreciation of the culture, history, and group differences of major American racial/ethnic subcultures with implications for schools and classrooms	General Knowledge, Cultural Diversity	1.1, 1.4 4.2 6.2	<i>Talking Points</i> (RA)
to examine their own attitudes and approaches to civic responsibility, ethnicity, race, social class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and exceptionality	Professional Ethics, Collaboration & Advocacy	11.1, 11.4	<i>SL Project</i> (SL)
to acquire the skills necessary to become a better critical reader and writer	General Knowledge	1.1 8.1, 8.3	<i>In Class Writing</i> (CR) <i>Talking Points</i> (RA) <i>SL Project</i> (SL)

As these objectives demonstrate, we will focus primarily on the theoretical and conceptual aspects of schooling in a democratic society. While the practical aspects of implementing a structure, climate, curriculum and pedagogy that is attentive to issues of diversity will also be addressed, this class begins with the premise that educators must acquire a

conceptual foundation in order to best integrate theory and practice.

## Texts:

Many faculty who teach this course use book chapters, journal articles and other materials placed on Electronic Reserve, accessible through the Adams Library website ([www.ric.edu/adamslibrary](http://www.ric.edu/adamslibrary)). All students need to have a RIC ID activated at the library, and have access to the internet to find these article.

## Sample Grading Criteria

➤ Attendance and Participation	15%
➤ “Think Piece” Writing (reading accountability)	10% (5% each)
➤ Cultural Competency Paper (research, critical reflection)	10%
➤ Talking Points and other Blogging (reading accountability)	25%
➤ Midterm Letter (critical reflection)	5%
➤ Promising Practices Conference (research)	10%
➤ Service Learning Project (service learning)	25%

\*Satisfactory completion of all of the assignments is the minimum expectation of this course. To earn above an average grade of “C”, you must exhibit excellence in both effort and skill.

## Minimal Requirements for Sample Assignments

### 1. Attendance and participation (15%):

You are responsible for coming to class prepared to engage in discussion. Your physical and intellectual presence is required. If you cannot be in class for a given emergency, I expect you to let me know BEFORE class — by phone or by email. Your attendance directly affects your final course grade (see below). *More than 4 absences will jeopardize your ability to pass this course.*

I expect you to read all required texts each week, and to BRING THE TEXTS TO CLASS WITH YOU. Take notes when you read — underline, highlight, write in the margins. Note the key concepts, unfamiliar vocabulary, points of confusion/frustration, “ah-ha” moments... strive to see the details and the big picture. In addition to these active reading strategies, you must also prepare in advance to discuss the texts in class. The TALKING POINTS you post to your blogs each week will help you do this. *Please keep in mind that your participation and attendance represents 15% of your final course grade.* Even if you are shy, or do not feel comfortable speaking in front of the class, I expect you to challenge yourself to speak at least once each class period. See me if you would like help working on this skill.

SCORE	Participation
15	Always talks and listens well in class
13-14.75	Often talks and listens well in class
11.5-12.75	Sometimes talks in class
10-11.25	Rarely talks in class

< 10	Never talks in class
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BONUS PTS.	
+1-2	Other forms of active participation (office hours, email, group work, etc)
-1	More than 1 absence

**-2**

More than 2 absences

**-3**

More than 3 absences

## 2. “Think Piece” Writing (10%):

We will begin the thinking work of this course with two informal, low-stakes writing assignments that I call “Think Pieces” (borrowed from Peter Elbow, a leading scholar in the field of teaching writing). Your Think Pieces are a chance for you to work out your ideas, impressions, confusions and thoughts before you come to class. These writing assignments should be **two full, double-spaced, typed pages long**. While you should pay attention to basic writing conventions, you will not be assessed on grammar, style, organization or structure. All I want you to do is think on paper. What is this article about? What do you make of it? What do you think the main ideas are? What parts did you like? What part didn’t you like? Use your own voice, draw from your personal experience and think about the issues that the author raises. Just fill the paper with your thoughts and don’t stop writing until you hit the end of two pages. The strongest papers refer directly to the text and show me how you are trying to relate to the issues at hand. These papers will be assessed on a 3-, 3, 3+ basis.

## 3. Cultural Competency In Context (10%):

*The culturally competent teacher should be able to account for, demonstrate awareness of, and respond to the sociocultural distinctiveness of her or her students, families, and communities when planning for and delivering instruction.*

One of the ways you will be assessed throughout your experience of becoming a teacher in the FSEHD is in the area of cultural competency. We want to make sure that each and every person who graduates from RIC’s education programs has all the proficiencies he or she needs to be a culturally responsive teacher. In your practicum and student teaching experiences, you will be assessed using a Cultural Competency Tool. I am introducing you to this tool now, in FNED 346, so that you can begin to work on the areas of assessment now and throughout your FSEHD experience. I will hand out the full CCT in class, but for this assignment, I am asking you to focus on AREA #1.

As you begin your SL Project, I want you to get to know the space you are working in and think about what it would mean to be a culturally competent teacher in this space. In this 3-5 page paper, describe the school and surrounding community. What is the neighborhood like? What do you see when you walk in the school building? Describe the cultures, languages, and other sociocultural characteristics of the students in the classroom in which you are tutoring. Investigate the statistical data about the school provided by the RI Department of Education or other databases. You can find this on the web at [[www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2009/default.asp](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2009/default.asp)] (After you have selected your SCHOOL REPORT, select “Using Information” under Learning and Achievement). Does this classroom reflect awareness of these characteristics in the space (posters, books, decorations), teaching style, curriculum, etc? Describe what you see in specific detail. How do the demographic (race, ethnicity, class, language) influence the relationships between students, teachers, parents and community? How do the demographics influence *your* experience, if at all?

#### 4. Talking Points: Blogging Your Way to Understanding (25% ):

Sometime in the first two weeks of classes, you will create your own blog at a site called [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com). I have posted full instructions on how to do this on my blog that you can find at:

[www.FNED346fall10.blogspot.com](http://www.FNED346fall10.blogspot.com)

Beginning in the 4<sup>th</sup> week of class, you will prepare brief “Talking Points” on the reading assignments each week; you will post each assignment as a unique entry on your personal blog. (I will read them each week, comment on them periodically throughout the semester, and will check all of them at the end of the term.) This is not a busy work assignment; rather it has two goals in mind. First, it will help you become familiar with a form of technology that could be useful to you in your own classroom someday. And second, it is designed to teach you how to prepare for class each week, and to help you come ready to participate confidently in our discussions. (This is a useful model to use to prepare for any college class). You must post the assignment before midnight on the Sunday night *before* class each week they are due. These are short, informal entries that should not exceed 500 words.

At the end of the semester, a complete blog will include *at least* the following components:

- 10 Talking Points posts — including one of each of the options on the next page (see syllabus for dates)
- At least 1 external link in *each* of those 10 posts
- 2 additional miscellaneous posts on your thoughts related to class discussions or issues
- 3 comments on the blogs of your peers EACH WEEK
- At least 1 link to a Youtube video that relates to our class topics

Each of your blog posts must include the following three things:

##### 1) Name of Author and Text

##### 2) Choose *one* of the following options each week. LABEL YOUR POST CLEARLY

- ARGUMENT: Describe the author’s argument in a short statement that begins, “This author (name) argues that…” Follow it with a paragraph explaining that argument in your own words. The argument is not a summary of ideas but a short explanation of the author’s most significant contribution or idea. What is his/her main point here?
- QUOTES: Choose three quotes from the text and explain what they mean and their relevance to the text.
- CONNECTIONS: Use the reading to make connections to two other readings we have done in class. Discuss the texts in relation to one another.
- HYPERLINKS: Discuss the issues the author raises in the text in relation to real world concerns by creating links to articles, videos, and other websites that illuminate the issues at hand. Discuss both the text and the hyperlink in detail to fully explain the connections.
- EXTENDED COMMENTS: Use someone else’s blog post as the center of your own. Discuss their points and engage in dialogue with that person and the text at hand. Feel free to agree or disagree with the points your peer raises. (Make sure to leave that person a comment so they know you wrote about them!)
- REFLECTION: Much like your Think Piece writing from early in the semester, write about your personal connections to this text. What does it make you think about? How does it relate to you?

##### 3) Questions/Comments/Point To Share: (1-2 paragraphs)

At the end of each of your blog posts — no matter which option you have chosen — please write out one point you can share in class. This can be a question or comment that you intend to raise in our class discussion. I hope preparing in advance will help you build confidence and best prepare to participate in class discussions.

*Your complete blog will be assessed using the following criteria:*

Grade	Points	Engagement with Text	Connections	Personal Thoughts	Technology	Overall
3+	9 - 10 points	Exceptional thought and effort; Indicates careful reading practices and includes specific notes from the text. Shows consistent engagement over the whole semester and improvement over time.	Reflects your struggle to make sense of the readings <i>in relation to</i> the course themes and concepts, citing other course authors and texts as they relate.	Includes evidence of your own thought process, questions to consider, and personal wonderings.	Blog is visually appealing and easy to read. Works to use all aspects of the technology including posting of links and other resources. Uses at least 1 external link in each post.	10 required blogs posted.
						At least 3 comments each week are posted.
						All blogs well labeled.
						All 6 options completed.
						All posts are posted by the midnight deadline on the date due.
3	7.5 - 8.5 points	Moderate thought and effort; Reflects general engagement with the text but lacks specific details that indicate careful reading. Little improvement over time.	Includes few if any connections to other texts.	Little evidence of your own thought process.	Blog is functional and covers the basic materials. Moderate attempts to take advantage of the blog technology. Uses at least 1 external link in most posts.	At least 9 required blogs posted.
						At least 3 comments are posted most weeks.
						Most blogs are labeled.
						At least 5 options completed.
						Most posts are posted by the midnight deadline on the date due.
3-	6 - 7.25 points	Very little thought or effort. General notes without any reflection or specific citations from the text.	Does not include connections to other course themes and texts that would indicate a consist understanding.	Notes seem disconnected from any personal thought process, and thus don't show how you personally make sense of the materials.	Difficult to read. Does not use any of the technology options available. Blog serves as a mere list of text assignments. Rarely uses external links in posts.	More than 3 missing or late postings or comments. General lack of attention to assignment options and deadlines.

#### 5. Midterm Letter (5%):

At the midpoint in the semester, I will ask you to write me an anonymous letter about your experiences in the course thus far. You will receive full credit for turning it in on time, and no credit if you do not.

#### 6. Promising Practices Conference (10% )

On November 6, 2010 Rhode Island College will host the thirteenth annual Promising Practices Conference. I am asking each of you to attend this conference as a part of the course because it fits perfectly with our curriculum. Keynote speaker Dr. Dennis Shirley should be a perfect fit for the work we do this semester. The conference meets from 8-2, so I am giving you time off from class the first week of November and during the Thanksgiving week to buy you back some of your time that you will give to this event. You will need to register for the conference and pay the \$10 registration fee. You will choose two workshops to attend on that day — the earlier you sign up, the more likely you will be to get your first choice in workshops. For more info, go to [www.ric.edu/promisingpractices](http://www.ric.edu/promisingpractices). After the conference, you will write up a 3-5 page narrative about your day: what sessions did you attend, what did you learn, how does it connect with our course themes. I will give you more details on this assignment in class.

#### 7. Service Learning Project (25% ):

Each student in this class must plan and complete a Service Learning Project that entails working with K-12 students from diverse racial, economic, social and/or cultural backgrounds for a total of 15 hours over the course of the semester. A handout will be passed out in class detailing the requirements for this assignment.

#### 8. Portfolio of all Course Work:

On the last day of class, you will need to hand in a portfolio of all of the work you have completed in this course. Please submit this in a soft, 2-pocket folder with the cover sheet I will provide attached.

### A Note on Academic Integrity

The Rhode Island College Student Handbook offers the following policy regarding academic integrity. I expect that you will follow these guidelines diligently in all of your written work.

#### Plagiarism

Any attempt to present someone else's work as one's own, on quizzes, examinations, reports, or term papers, constitutes plagiarism, an act closely analogous to the theft of money or goods or to any form of swindling or fraud, and in the academic world, just as deplorable. There are various forms of plagiarism of which the following are most common:

- 1. Word-for-word plagiarism.** This includes (a) the submission of another student's work as one's own; (b) the submission of work from any source whatever (book, magazine, or newspaper article, unpublished paper, or thesis) without proper acknowledgment by footnote or reference within the text of the paper; (c) the submission of any part of another's work without proper use of quotation marks.
- 2. Patchwork plagiarism.** This consists of piecing together of unacknowledged phrases and sentences quoted verbatim (or nearly verbatim) from a variety of sources. The mere reshuffling of other people's words does not constitute "original" work.
- 3. Unacknowledged paraphrase.** It is perfectly legitimate to set forth another author's facts or ideas in one's own words, but if one is genuinely indebted to the other author for these facts or ideas, the debt must be acknowledged by footnote or reference within the text of the paper...

*In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Rhode Island College is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities. Students with any special needs should register with the Student Life Office (CL 127 — 456-8061) and make arrangements to meet with me as soon as possible.*

*I will make all appropriate accommodations to ensure that this is a valuable class for you.*

## Course Schedule

### Week #1:

#### Introductions

#### Ideology, Power and Privilege: S.C.W.A.A.M.P.

*Reading:* Johnson, "Introduction," "Rodney King's Question," and "We're in Trouble" and "The Trouble We're In" from *Privilege, Power and Difference*

*In Class:* S.C.W.A.A.M.P.

*Assignment:* \* Think Piece #1 on Johnson due Th in class

*Assignment:* \* Complete Criminal Background Check (8/31-9/3 or 9/20-9/24)

See <http://www.ric.edu/feinsteinSchoolEducationHumanDevelopment/bci.php>

<b>UNIT ONE: Theories, Concepts and Vocabulary</b>
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### Week #2

#### History In Context: A Nation at Risk to NCLB

*Assignment:* Joel Spring, from *American Education*

*In Class Tue:* VIPS Service Learning Orientation and Placements

<p><b>NOTE:</b> Mandatory meeting for all students interesting in applying to the <i>Secondary Education</i> or <i>K-12</i> programs in FSEHD. Wednesday, September 15 • 12:30 – 1:50 • Gaige Auditorium</p>
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### Week #3:

#### The Culture of Power

*Readings:* Delpit, "The Silenced Dialogue"

*In Class:* Barna: The Rules and Codes of Power

*Assignment:* \* Think Piece #2 on Delpit due Tue

<p><b>NOTE:</b> Mandatory meeting for all students interesting in applying to the <i>Elementary Education</i> and <i>Early Childhood</i> programs in FSEHD. Wednesday, September 22 • 12:30 – 1:50 • Gaige Auditorium</p>
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### Week #4:

#### Naming Social Structure: Individuals vs. Institutions

*Readings:* Kozol, from *Amazing Grace*; McIntosh, "White Privilege;" Muwakkil, "Data Show Racial Bias Persists;" Parker, "For the White Person Who Wants to Know How to be My Friend"

*Assignment:* \* Talking Points #1 on Kozol or McIntosh (post to blog by Sun@midnight)

### Week #5:

#### Voices and Silences: Language is Power

*Readings:* Rodriguez, "Aria;" Collier, "Teaching Multilingual Children"

*Assignment:* \* Talking Points #2 on either text (post to blog by Sun@midnight)

*Assignment:* \* Cultural Competency paper due on Thursday

**Week #6:**

*Readings:*

*In Class:*

*Assignment:*

**Centers and Margins: The Normalizing Community**

Carlson, "Gayness, Multicultural Education and Community"

*It's Elementary*

\* **Talking Points #3 on Carlson** (post to blog by Sun@midnight)

**Week #7:**

*Readings:*

*In Class:*

*Assignment:*

**Education Beyond the Classroom: Media Literacy**

Christensen, "Unlearning the Myths That Bind Us"

Media Literacy videos

\* **Talking Points #4 on Christensen** (post to blog by Sun@midnight)

**Week #8:**

*Readings:*

*Assignment:*

*Assignment:*

*Reminder:*

**Service Learning: Planning the Project**

Kahne and Westheimer, "In the Service of What?"

\* **Talking Points #5 on Kahne & Westheimer** (post to blog by Sun@midnight)

\* **bring all SL journals and a copy of your log of hours to class Tue**

\* **TECH COMP EXAM is next Wednesday 10/27!!**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNIT TWO: Schooling and Democracy</b></p>
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**Week #9:**

*Readings:*

*Assignment:*

*Assignment:*

*Assignment:*

**Teaching After Brown vs. Board of Education**

Wise, "Between Barack and a Hard Place" (see my blog for video link)

\* **Talking Points #6 on Wise** (post to blog by Sun@midnight)

\* **Midterm Letter due in class on Tuesday**

\* **TECH COMP EXAM:** All students in this class who have not yet taken (or are not planning to take) INST 251 will be taking the technology competency exam on Wednesday, October 27 from 12:30-1:50 in HM 182.

**Week #10:**

*Readings:*

*Assignment:*

**Teaching After Title IX**

Spend one hour online researching Gender and Education. What key issues exist in 2010 around equity for boys and girls in schools? Post data, pictures, links and other information that would teach your peers about this issue.

\* **Post gender and education info (post #7) to blog by Sunday@midnight**

