EDUC 6311
Issues and Trends in Curriculum & Instruction

University of St. Thomas
School of Education

Professor
Dr. J. Barrio

E-Mail
barrioj@stthom.edu (preferred method of communication)

Telephone Number
832-226-9691

Place and Time
Wednesdays 5:00 – 8:00 KC23 (Spring Branch HCC) Room 711

For Assistance
UST Education Department: Ms. Dyla Gutierrez, 713-525-3544; Malloy Hall
UST IT Help Desk: 713-525-3544

REQUIRED TEXTS
No Book(s). All articles to be read can be found posted on Black Board.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

EDUC 6311 Issues and Trends in Curriculum & Instruction. This course emphasizes analysis and appraisal of curriculum reform in efforts to study persistent and critical issues in education that affect the teaching/learning process. Opportunities are provided to study current trends and social issues impacting Curriculum & Instruction with reference to various specialities of students enrolled.

Issues and Trends in Curriculum & Instruction is intended to guide students in the process of identifying and analyzing emerging and developing issues in curriculum design, curriculum development, curriculum implementation, and curriculum evaluation. Such curricular issues include but are not limited to state/national academic standards, demographics and diversity, 21st century technology, high stakes testing and assessment, innovative programs, and state and federal legislation. The course includes other issues such as identifying curriculum sources, trends that influence curriculum, the impact of curricular trends on student achievement, and what professionals such as principals, supervisors, curriculum developers, teacher-leaders, and teachers must be aware of to promote and improve student learning.

COURSE TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED

Social impacts on Curriculum & Instruction
The purpose(s) of curriculum & high stakes testing
Implementing curricular changes
Curriculum and critical thinking
Curriculum and impact on student learning
Curriculum and instructional approaches for diverse school settings
Curriculum, instruction, and contemporary issues
Curriculum assessment and evaluation
Curriculum and technology
Curriculum and demographic changes
SPECIFIC COURSE COMPETENCIES

Based on these competencies, students will work successfully:

**COGNITIVE GOALS**

Students will:

- read, summarize, and critically analyze journal articles, book chapters, and books related to specific educational topics examined in the course;
- increase their general knowledge of curricular educational issues, including outside factors that affect implementation of curriculum, assessment strategies, education for all, and other recent developments;
- increase their general knowledge of recent educational innovations and alternatives, including (but not limited to) school choice, school finance, multicultural education, technology, social issues, differentiated issues in school systems;
- increase and demonstrate his or her skill in critical evaluation of educational trends; and
- demonstrate preparation for active discussion of educational issues through notes, lists of questions, outside research, careful analysis of reading materials, research papers, etc.

**AFFECTIVE GOALS**

Students will:

- actively participate in discussions related to educational innovations, issues, and alternatives;
- develop an appreciation for a variety of educational philosophies and agendas;
- recognize and encourage diverse opinions and suggestions;
- work cooperatively and collaboratively with peers in large and small group settings;
- volunteer to share knowledge gained through outside readings relevant to the issues discussed in class;
- collaborate in group activities to develop, maintain, and reinforce peer learning and professional development; and
- understand and appreciate the perspectives of colleagues who teach across various grade levels and content areas.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

On successful completion of this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Identify and analyze the sources of curriculum as a means of understanding and applying emerging trends and initiatives to improve student learning;
- Evaluate current theories and approaches in curriculum and teaching to determine the effectiveness of various instructional methods and classroom practices;
- Compare and contrast learning theories and curriculum practices that promote student learning and achievement;
- Develop a rationale for specific curriculum programs and instructional methods for such audiences as at-risk students, diverse learners, disadvantaged students, the disabled, and others;
- Adopt evaluation and assessment methods and practices that are reliable and valid means of determining the effectiveness of curriculum programs and instructional methods;
- Explain and discuss the emerging policies and regulations that influence curriculum design, development, implementation, assessment, technology and evaluation;
- Construct a personal and professional approach to identifying and analyzing future trends and issues in curriculum; and
- Demonstrate an ability to investigate, analyze, and express yourself professionally in terms of the issues and trends likely to emerge in the field of curriculum.
BLACKBOARD USE

This is a face-to-face course with some online delivery and participation via Blackboard. However, the essence of the course is face-to-face. Because of the condensed nature of this class, your presence is mandatory to pass it. Course announcements, documents, assignments, and email communications will be delivered online via Blackboard. Internet access is therefore essential.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following assignments are required to have been accepted as master’s level work in order to receive at least a B- in this course. The professor expects all assignments are submitted when required by the syllabus unless otherwise renegotiated in writing with a student.

A fundamental value in this course is that students want to learn for learning’s sake and for professional development and that students pursue education for its own sake, not only for grades, prestige, or any other external motive.

Attendance, Readings, and Engagement

Students are expected to be present for and participate in all class discussions. All modules/readings are expected to have been completed at the designated time according to your schedule. Students are expected to be engaged in the class (and group Black Board conversations/postings when required). The assignments and the final examination are designed in such a way that students will be able to achieve master’s level work only when they have completed all reading assignments on time and have engaged in conversations/discussions during class (or Black Board conversations/postings conversations) with other students and the professor in every Learning Module (LM).

Absence

This is a condensed class. Therefore, your presence at every meeting is of the upmost importance to gain credit for your assistance and your full participation in the classroom assignments. After one absence, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the class. Again, if a student is absent once the student will be administratively dropped from the course. If the time has passed when an administrative withdrawal can take place, unless students with one absence can be withdraw from the class, the grade for the class will be a failure. This is UST policy.

Assignments

1. Curriculum Autobiography (10%). You will write an expository piece (text) of your ‘life story’ in a creative manner. The following should be part of your text: 1. Who are your people or where do you come from? 2. How did you get here? 3. How are you raced, gendered, classed? In other words, how do you identify yourself and why? 4. What is your philosophy of Education? 5. What/Who are your influences in who you are today? 6. What are your current or future goals? 7. How do you think you will help others in their road towards an education? This is intended to encourage the creation of a community of learners and scholars willing to share and wonder about the lived experience of curriculum and its impact on you today. The seven points listed above serve as your rubric. If you address each one, you should do well. You can add other information, pictures, diagrams, art, etc. you feel pertinent but minimum are the seven points listed above.

Due on Week 3.

2. Issues & Trends Paper (20%). a) You will identify an issue in our schools you have seen and would like to explore. This issue can be poverty, technology, gang activity, teacher apathy, high stakes testing, Teacher Shortage, English Language Learners, Special Education students, etc.; b) you will do research on your topic/issue and have at least 7 resources from which you can draw your information. These seven sources will be in the text as well as in your reference page; c) you will then organize your paper by headings and subheadings. Your headings and subheadings are the things you want to bring out and present to the reader; d) you should address how this issue has an impact on curriculum, on teaching, on learning, on school climate, etc.; e) what trends do
you see based on your literature? You will write these trends out; and last f) what recommendations do you make to address this issue and trends and its impact on Curriculum. You are required to use APA format in organizing your paper and for any citations.

Due on the last meeting.

3. Journal Curricular Issues (20%). Curricular issues are constantly addressed in the news. Families often see educators as authorities and may ask about topics they see in the popular press. For this project you will browse through books, journals, magazines, newspapers, popular press magazines/media or websites, for articles related to curriculum and instruction in relation to students, theory, practice, program, innovation, testing, evaluation, etc. Select a different topic from that of #2 above for your paper and find at least two popular press articles on different topic. Write a one-page summary of each and submit with article or provide link where I can access it. Please address the following questions as best you can: What information in the article was important to you? What surprised you? What did you agree with? Disagree? What disturbed you or was troubling? What would you like to learn more about after reading this article? Do you think the information was accurate? How do you know? How does this article relate to what you are learning in this class and/or other classes? Was this information helpful to you as a current or future educator? If so, how?

Due on Week 5.

4. Final Exam (40%). The Final Exam covers all the course material. There will be no regurgitation of what students have learned. Application of content and process as experienced in this course will be expected. Cases, dialogues, and reflections can also be part of the essays. The domain of this course will be integrated into the essays. Integration, creativity, and depth are indications of graduate level work.

5. Participation/attendance (10%). Your 10% will be based on how well you participate during class assignments and the thoughtful contributions made.

All assignments (except the Curriculum Autobiography) will be written in APA style, using Word, double spaced, and 12-point Times New Roman. Students can submit hard copies of written assignments or email them as attachment on the day they are due according to the schedule.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Class assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Autobiography</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation/attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues and Trends Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Curricular Issues</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All assignments will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

Grading and Point Equivalents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unusual and superior achievement

Satisfactory achievement

Below Standard
D+ = 1.3 Unsatisfactory
D = 1.0
F = 0.0 Failure
IP = 0.0 Incomplete (research in progress). Failure to complete research within one semester will result in automatic grade change to “F”. No audits are permitted at the graduate level.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd
Best practices and assessment framework:
http://www.just4kids.org/bestpractice/self_audit_framework.cfm?sub=tools
Curriculum Theory and Practice – Infed Encyclopedia,
http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-curric.htm
Curriculum Ideas - Eisenhower National Clearing House
http://www.goenc.com/
Curriculum Resources - Education for a Lifetime (Home-schooling information)
http://www.k12.com/
Curriculum Center – Kathy Schrock’s Guide for Educators
http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/
The Integrated Curriculum – Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory,
http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/8/c016.html
Internet Resources/Sites that help Classroom Teachers and Administrators
APA Format
http://www.apa.org
The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
http://www.ccsso.org
American Educational Research Association (AERA)
http://www.aera.net
The National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME)
http://www.ncme.org
The National Center for Fair and Open Testing (Fairest)
http://www.fairtest.org
Achieve, Inc.
http://www.achieve.org
The Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL)
http://www.mcrel.org
The ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation (ERIC/AE)
http://www.ericae.net
WestEd
http://www.wested.org
The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL)
http://www.nwrel.com
The Buros Institute of Mental Measurements
http://www.unl.edu/buros
Performance Assessment Links in Science (PALS)
http://www.pals.sri.com
The U.S. Department of Education
http://ed.gov
Council for Exceptional Children
www.cec.sped.org
Council for Learning Disabilities
www.cldinternational.org
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
www.ascd.org
Master’s Level Work is substantively and qualitatively more complex than Bachelors Level Work. It is never “from a book,” for example, demonstrative of having memorized lists or thoughts unchanged from a book. It shows depth, integration, and creativity. Depth requires showing understanding of complexity, comfort with ambiguity, or understanding uncertainty. Master’s Level Work integrates the domain of the course with students’ lived experiences both personal and professional. Creativity is demonstrated when students enhance scenarios or call up lived experiences related to the issues under consideration. Master’s Level Work demonstrates the ability to look within oneself, for example, reflecting on one’s own culture and how it influences one or engaging in meta-cognition regarding the history of oppression, privilege, racism, sexism, etc.

Incompletes are given only at the discretion of the professor for reasons that are serious. Only hospitalization or other equally serious life experiences can postpone a final examination. Again, the final decision rests on the professor of record.

PEDAGOGY

EDUC 6311 Issues & Trends in Curriculum & Instruction uses a Freirian model as its pedagogy. Consequently, the professor believes students and professor have equal responsibility for the success of this course. Our roles are different; our responsibilities are equally significant. In addition, the professor believes life experiences brought to the table in conversation are essential contributions to the development of the knowledge, abilities, and skills needed to succeed in this course. The role of the professor is to come to class prepared and to facilitate conversation, pace the class, and keep the conversation on topic. The role of students is to come to the table having completed and pondered the readings in order we can have a scholarly conversation with their classmates and professor and can integrate the readings with their professional lives and lived experiences.

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

The University of Saint Thomas values the speaking of one or more than one or two languages. The Masters programs at the University of Saint Thomas are especially sensitive to issues of language diversity, both on behalf of students for whom English is not their first language and in preparation to work with students for whom English is not their first language. The Tutoring Center is always available to assist students who might need help with written English. In addition, it is recommended that students who are monolingual, bilingual or multilingual bring these gifts to the table in their journey through this course and the Master of Education Program.

RETENTION

For retention in EDUC 6311 Issues & Trends in Curriculum & Instruction and the School of Education at the University of Saint Thomas “candidates must continue to demonstrate academic qualities, personal and social qualities, and physical and mental health indicators of fitness for the profession” (University of Saint Thomas School of Education Catalog 2006-2008, p. 4)

This class functions on the honor system. Students are expected at all times to meet the requirements of the honor system. The professor has the discretion to fail students who violates the honor system.
Integrity is the most important quality for success in this class and in the School of Education at the University of Saint Thomas. Integrity requires students to be authentic and honest in all academic, professional, and affective work. Integrity implies students become familiar with and practice at all times the Codes of Ethics of their professions.

Professionals perform their service in an environment of trust. They have the potential to do great good and great harm. Integrity is absolutely essential for the adequate performance of their profession. Consequently, the professor has the discretion to fail in this course or dismiss from this course students who violate their integrity. Dismissal is not limited to academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is taking credit for any thought, idea, written or spoken work that does not come from the student. When writing any paper, reference information, websites, books, etc., if a student paraphrases, then the reference must be given. If a student quotes, quotation marks plus reference and page number(s) must be given. There must be a one-to-one correspondence between what is cited in the body of the text and what is placed on the reference page. It is very tempting to copy and paste works from the internet, borrow the work of friends, rephrase another paper that students have written in the past, or change a few phrases here and there. Students are required to meet the standards explained in the APA Manual (2010) regarding avoiding plagiarism.

Copying a paragraph or more and changing words here and there is also plagiarism. Paraphrasing a paragraph or more is also plagiarism. Paraphrasing an idea with proper citing is not plagiarism. To avoid plagiarism close all sources while writing. Master’s Level Work requires integration of information. Plagiarism is a serious offense that will result in students’ failing the course, being dismissed from the School of Education as well as from UST. Plagiarism is a serious violation of integrity. It is not tolerated in the School of Education. Students who engage in plagiarism have demonstrated that they do not have the moral standards necessary to be trusted. Students who engage in plagiarism will be dismissed from the School of Education as well as the University.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the professor will make all possible and reasonable adjustments in policies, practices, services, and facilities to ensure equal and optimal educational programs and activities. Whenever a special accommodation is necessary in order to ensure access to full participation by students with disabilities, the student must inform the professor of any disability or needed accommodations.

The University Office for ADA Compliance may ask to seek proof of disability and specify accommodations as requested by students. Students contact the professor immediately if they have needs. All information is confidential. Students can see the professor before or after class or request another time to discuss any matters. Any student with documented special needs requiring academic adjustments or accommodations for enhancing potential for success in this course is requested to speak to me during the first two weeks of class. In addition, students with special needs will contact the Office of Counseling Services for Students with Special Needs by calling 713-525-3162 or 6953. The accommodations will become official when the professor received word in writing from the officer in charge of ADA compliance.

TOPICAL OUTLINE-Subject to change on short notice

**These readings are expected to have been completed at the time class begins. These readings include those posted on Blackboard in the Course Documents.**

WEEK 1
Read: Power and Influence in Organizations
Read: Political Dimensions of Curriculum Decision Making
WEEK 2
Read: Validity and Accountability in High-Stakes Testing
Read: The New Demography of America’s Schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act

WEEK 3
Read: Education and Poverty: Confronting the Evidence
Read: Diversity & Inclusion: Toward a Curriculum for Human Beings
Curriculum Autobiography Due!

WEEK 4
Read: Using Curriculum Assessment to Strengthen Classroom Practices
Read: Does Teacher Preparation Matter? Evidence about Teacher Certification, Teach for America, and Teacher Effectiveness

WEEK 5
Read: The Wrong Solution to the Teacher Shortage
Read: Texas Strategic Plan to Address Teacher Shortage
Journal Curricular Issues Paper Due!

WEEK 6
Read: Issues and Trends: Integrating the Curriculum
Read: Trends that Will Shape the Future of Curriculum
Read: Global Trends in Education

WEEK 7
Read: Trends in Curriculum: Three Educational Scenarios for the Future
Issues and Trends Paper Due!
Final Exam