

# Syllabus

## EDU 6528 Studies in the Teaching of Elementary Social Studies

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**Textbook:** Maxim, W. E. (2006). Dynamic social studies for constructivist classrooms. (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). NJ: Pearson.

**PREREQUISITE/COREQUISITE:** Graduate Standing

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to provide an analysis of several significant areas and issues within the area of elementary education. The composition of topics will vary as new issues or research developments emerge.

### RATIONALE

To meet the pressing needs of a changing society, John Dewey proposed that the work of our schools was to guarantee social efficiency. The curricular area of social studies is the major school experience responsible for promoting social efficiency. Social studies can be both stimulating and inspiring, capturing the wonder and exploration young children naturally bring to the enterprise of unlocking the mysteries of their growing social world. The methods of presenting are as important as the content in actively engaging students in thinking and doing as they develop civic competence. As educators, we must help young people develop the ability to make informed decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Define social studies and look at the current status and relevance of social studies education in terms of curriculum, student attitudes, materials, and trends as well as history of controversy and confusion related to the field. **(INTASC 1,2) (NBPTS 3)**
- Examine the social studies curriculum framework for the state of Mississippi. **(INTASC 1) (NBPTS 3)**
- Define the different disciplines, which make up the social studies. **(INTASC 1) (NBPTS 3)**
- Scrutinize the ten themes that serve as organizing strands for the social studies. **(INTASC 1)**
- Explore the roles of textbooks, spontaneous happenings, and thematic units in planning social studies instruction. **(INTASC 1,7)**
- Investigate a variety of instructional approaches, methods, activities, media, and materials for developing skills in social studies with an emphasis on group activities, cooperative learning, problem solving, and inquiry and critical thinking skills. **(INTASC 2,3,4,5) (NBPTS 1,4, 6,7,8)**

- Examine the content sources for social studies—the language arts link integrating the expressive arts, geographic education, history in the classroom, and the allied social studies. **(INTASC 4,6,7) (NBPTS 3)**
- Identify supplementary instructional content through current affairs instruction, global education, environmental education, and multicultural education. **(INTASC 2,4,5,7)(NBPTS 2,5,6)**
- Construct model activities and lesson plans for elementary social studies at various grades with emphasis on short- and long-term goals and objectives and integration of their subject areas. **(INTASC 1,4,6,7) (NBPTS 3)**
- Implement various authentic assessment practices in the social studies. **(INTASC 8) (NBPTS 9)**
- Develop thematic units for the social studies using technology. **(INTASC 4,6)**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the social studies and a positive enthusiastic and professional attitude toward the teaching/learning of the social studies. **(INTASC 1,2) (NBPTS 3)**
- Reflect and evaluate one’s own teaching performance on social studies. **(INTASC 9) (NBPTS 10)**
- Work with colleagues, parents, and other agencies to promote and support students’ learning. **(INTASC 10) (NBPTS 11)**

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

It is expected that a student attending Mississippi College will be scrupulously honest. Therefore, plagiarism and cheating will be dealt with in accordance with the policies of the university. These policies are defined in the *Mississippi College Catalog*.

### **COURSE TOPICS**

- The National Council of Social Studies’ definition of the term social studies
- Major disciplines contributing to social studies instruction:
- Anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology
- Ten thematic strands for the social studies curriculum
- Recommended content for the social studies curriculum
- Patterns for organizing social studies content for instruction
- Integrated curriculum and social studies
- Themes, competencies, and skills included in the Mississippi State Curriculum Guide
- Commendations and criticisms of textbooks used in the social studies
- Roles and sources of spontaneous happenings
- Thematic units of study for social studies
- Roles and problem solving, inquiry, and authentic learning in the social studies classroom
- Active methods and the need for hands-on experiences
- Rationale for critical thinking in the social studies
- Major approaches to values education in the elementary schools
- Appropriate strategies for presenting values-laden issues in the classroom
- Character education in the social studies curriculum

- Rationale for using cooperative learning in the social studies in the classroom, as well as the teacher's role and principles for managing a cooperative classroom
- Instructional strategies to meet the unique needs of individual students, including group work, learning centers, and computer-assisted instruction
- Whole language and language across the curriculum and examining genres of literature suitable for the social studies
- Roles of speaking, listening, and writing in the social studies
- Visual arts such as murals, mosaics, collages, illustration, and dioramas; and music, creative movement, dance and drama as sources for cross-cultural and multiple intelligence learning
- Five fundamental themes of geography and appropriate activities
- Map reading skills
- Six themes of any study of history and appropriate lessons
- The allied social sciences: economic education, political science, anthropology, sociology and activities to enhance their learning
- Topics of current interest, such as global education, strategies for learning about the environment, effective multicultural learning experiences, as well as recommendations for establishing a bias-free program, approaches to sensitive topics such as AIDS, and a rationale for drug and alcohol education in the elementary school
- Assessment purposes, perspectives and strategies such as performance assessment, portfolios, teacher-made tests, and the distinction between formative and summative evaluation

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

A combination of lecture, class discussion, and demonstrations will be used in class. Time will be devoted to discussion of outside readings and presentations of learning activities and workshops for the social studies curriculum. Some sessions will be supplemented with group work involving critical/creative-thinking activities.

## **ASSUMPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS**

1. This class will offer students the opportunity to examine literacy in the middle grades. As a member of a professional learning community, you will be expected to conduct yourselves in a professional manner during class.
2. You will be expected to come to class prepared with readings, papers, and all other assignments completed as assigned.
3. It is important for you to attend class EVERY class session, on time, and fully prepared. If you must be absent for a legitimate reason, please notify me in advance. As a teacher, your attendance will influence how adequately you meet the needs of your students, which is very difficult to do if you are absent from school. Your attendance for this class should reflect your commitment to teaching. .

## **EVALUATION**

All assignments are due on time, and no make up credit will be allowed. Ten (10) points will be deducted for every class period the assignment is late.

**Grading for the course is as follows:**

- A = 94 – 100
- B = 85 – 93
- C = 75 – 84
- D = 70 – 74
- F = below 70

**Attendance and Participation:**

In the Mississippi College Catalog, “ Class attendance is an essential part of university education, and students are expected to attend regularly and punctually all classes and laboratories for which they are registered. Cumulative absences may result in a lowered grade or loss of credit for the course. Tardiness is also subject to penalty. Although some specific requirements may vary according to the nature and structure of the course, class attendance is required and accurate records are kept.”

The student will receive points for attendance.

If you arrive late for class, please let the instructor know (at the end of the class) so the absence can be changed to a tardy.

**Class Buddy:** It is strongly recommended that you exchange contact information with one or more students in class to assure that you have the information necessary to be successful. You may reach the instructor by cell 601.209.9502 or email [coco@mc.edu](mailto:coco@mc.edu).

**Student Responsibility:** Students are responsible for reading the textbook and supplemental materials assigned PRIOR to class. Each class period will have activities that require you to be prepared to discuss and participate in related activities. A class summary is to be turned in at the beginning of each class period reflecting the important issues outlined and discussed in the textbook.

**Additional Course Information:**

**Late Assignments:** All assignments must be submitted as scheduled.

Assignments submitted late will result in lowering of points/grades.

The only assignments that cannot be made up are the class Reflections.

**All Assignments:** (1) All assignments must be stated in Standard English, with proper punctuation and correct spellings. Please type in the top right hand corner of the assignment your name and date. In the center of the paper, place the title. (2) Assignments must be typed, stapled in the left corner, 1-inch margins and double-spaced (**use a Times Roman 12 FONT size**). (3) All assignments must adhere to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA manual for writing style.

**Other Pertinent Information:**

- ***Cell Phones:*** Limit conversations to emergencies-take calls outside of class for a brief time. **NO TEXTING**
- ***Student Laptops:*** Welcome, but **must be used for taking notes/assignments** for this class.

- **Absences:** Attendance is required as per Mississippi College attendance policy. If any student missing one-fourth of the semester classes, will automatically earn the grade of **F**.
- **Children:** A college classroom is not the best environment for young children. Therefore, it is necessary that students make arrangements for childcare.

### Essential Questions

1. How do I prepare and continue to grow as a professional educator? (INTASC 9,10)
2. Is teaching an art or a science? How does research enhance the work of educators? (INTASC 1)
3. What is my responsibility as an educator to respond to the changing demographics of my classroom? How are the students different? How are they the same? (INTASC 2, 3, 6, 7c)
4. What do we know about learning? Do all people learn the same way? How does age, sex and culture affect learning? What do you do when students are not learning? (INTASC 2, 3, 4, 5)
5. How are teaching and learning related? How does a teacher teach a group of diverse students? What can I do when students do not want to learn? What will be my approach to instruction? What style of teaching do I want to have? (INTASC 4, 5, 6)
6. How can a teacher create a positive learning environment that will encourage students to do their best? (INTASC 5, 6, 10)
7. How do you assess and evaluate learning and students? How does assessment and evaluate affect students? (INTASC 8)

