



**EDCI 500.41E Issues in Education
Course Syllabus for Spring 2013**

HB 2540. According to State of Texas HB 2504, this syllabus is submitted prior to the first day of classes. Therefore, this is to be considered a preliminary syllabus only. The official syllabus will be available on the first day of class. Although the official syllabus will most likely be similar to this preliminary version, the instructor has the right to modify this version as well as the official syllabus at any time now or during the academic term provided (1) changes are reasonable substitutions, (2) students are given ample notification, and (3) changes do not disadvantage students from the version posted on the first day of class.

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CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on major philosophical and ideological beliefs and their impact on the organization and structure of American education.

FOCUS: In this section of EDCI 500, we will discuss the socially and politically motivated mandates in K-12 education; positive outcomes and unexpected consequences. The course is a lively discussion, both pro and con, of topics such as but not limited to No Child Left Behind, inclusion, bilingual education, state mandated testing, scripted curriculums, home schooling, and charter schools. Grading is based on active involvement, ability to examine issues from multiple perspectives, and participation in class discussion.

Required Materials

No Textbook is required. You will be studying web-based materials as directed as well as materials you will obtain on your own via the internet or library.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the completion of the course the student should be able to:

1. Identify some of the major issues that are controversial in educational, academic, economic, and/or political circles that directly impact K-12 education.

2. Know the parties and literature associated with each side of the issues.
3. Discuss theoretical, academic, and political underpinnings of these controversies and objectively articulate both sides of the discussion.
4. Develop your own research-based position on the controversies and articulate your plan for influencing the thinking of those within your sphere of influence.
5. Propose your plan for working within the system to accommodate the mandates in a way that also allows you to maintain the integrity of your personal beliefs.

Course Components

This course is mostly online with 4 face-face meetings as designated.

Summarized below are the main components of the course along with projected weight values.

1. Read Professional Materials (40% of the course grade). You will read and reflect on current social, political, and educational issues that impact K-12 education. Some reading materials will be provided, others are student research from professional articles, conference papers, US Dept. of Education documents, excerpts from professional books, and sources obtained via the internet.
2. Discuss issues with classmates (40% of the course grade). The course requires serious conversation with your peers, achieved via conversation venues such as e-College Threaded Discussion & interactive discussion/debate during face-face meetings. Your discussion posts should reflect research on the issue and cite sources of information, while responses to peers can be your opinions.
3. Position Statement (20% of the course grade). Prepare two final research supported written statements about the positions you now hold, how those position have been influenced through the course, and your action plan for influencing your peers and leadership.

COMMUNICATIONS

Virtual Office

You can contact me via Virtual Office any time 24/7. It is a great way to ask questions that others might need to ask as well. I address answers to all students in the class with the same or similar questions. I check Virtual Office daily and respond, in most cases, within 24 hours. Questions about course materials, expectations, requirements and assignments are submitted to Virtual Office.

Email

Just click on the "email" tab in eCollege, click on my name to move it into the address box, type your message and submit. If that fails, send it to me at gilbert.naizer@tamuc.edu. Always include your first name, last name, course number and Campus ID at the end of all emails. Otherwise, I may not know which of my classes you are in.

Submitting assignments: All assignments are submitted through eCollege. Asynchronous threaded discussions are conducted in the Discussion session of each unit as directed. Other assignments are submitted in the eCollege Dropbox. Click on the Dropbox tab, locate the folder for the assignment you wish to submit, attach your assignment and submit.

Schedule of Assignments:

Pay close attention to the Schedule of Assignments and instructions in eCollege. All assignments have due dates and late work results in loss of points.

Announcements: Announcements are posted on the home page of the course. In some cases I send announcements to you via the eCollege email system inside of the course.

NOTE: It is very important to go online several times each week to: (1) check for announcements, (2) check your Leo-Mail, (3) review assignments, (4) check the Schedule of Assignments, and (5) communicate as needed with your instructor and class members.

GRADING: All assignments are graded on a scale of from 5 (highest grade) to 0 (lowest grade) based on the following criteria:

5 - Exceptional – Exceeds Minimum Expectations in All Areas Addressed: Well above average in thought, language structure, and word choice; extremely well organized; shows thorough understanding and assimilation of concepts; excellent sense of unity; polished transition between concepts or thoughts; frequent sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; virtually free of errors.

4 - Above Average – Meets Minimum Expectations in the Majority of Areas Addressed and Exceed Expectations in Some Areas. In general command of thought, sentence structure, and word choice; organized; shows some understanding of concepts; good sense of unity; good transition between concepts or thoughts; some sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; writing that demonstrates a level expected of graduate students; few if any errors.

3 -Average - Adequate In some Areas and Inadequate in Others. Problems in some of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organized and formatted appropriately; good unity, sequence, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

2 – Below Average - Inadequate in Several Areas. Problems in several of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing below a level expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

1 -Unacceptable - Inadequate in Many Areas. Problems in many of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing below a level expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

0 - Not Turned In - turned in too late or not accepted by instructor.

Late Work: It is critical that all assignments are turned in on time. Timely discussion posts are essential since delays influence your classmates ability to complete the assignment as well as your own. As I consider all assignments valuable and know that they contribute to your learning, I do accept late work; however late assignments will result in loss of points. Late discussion posts are severely penalized. All work is due by the deadline indicated in eCollege.

Final Grade in the Course

Your final grade in this course is based on your performance on all of the requirements.

The number of assignments in the table below is an estimate and will be adjusted by the end of the semester. Although the number of assignments are tentative, it is the prerogative of the instructor to alter the number of assignments, grading procedures, and other requirements during the course of the semester provided the class is given due notice and such changes in no way create more disadvantages for students than the syllabus posted at the beginning of the course.

Assignments	How many	Point Value	Total Possible	Percent of Total
Reflections on reading	4	10	40 Pts	40%
Research Based Group Discussion	4	10	40 Pts	40%
Position Statement	2	10	20	20%
			Total Points Possible - 100	100%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/HONESTY STATEMENT

This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course, or be brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library, Room 132. Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835. Fax (903) 468-8148. Email address, StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu