

**ENG 776-01: Approaches to the Teaching of Writing  
Critical Pedagogy  
Course Syllabus: Fall 2014  
Dr. Tabettha Adkins**

**Class space:** Hall of Languages 201  
**Class Time:** Monday 4:30-7:10PM  
**E-mail Address:** Tabettha.Adkins@tamuc.edu  
**Office phone:** 903.886.5269  
**Office Location:** Hall of Languages 229  
**Office hours:** M 3:30-4; T 1:30-3; W by appointment; R 1:30-5

**Course Information**

**Textbooks Required:**

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*  
Henry Giroux, *On Critical Pedagogy*  
Ira Shor, *Empowering Education*  
bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*  
Lisa Delpit, *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*  
John Dewey- *Schools and Society*  
Jonathan Kozol, *Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America*  
James Gee, *The Anti-Education Era: Creating Smarter Students through Digital Learning*  
Mike Rose, *Why School?*

**Articles Required:**

For weeks 9 and 10 available on Learning Studio (formerly known as eCollege)

**Course Description:**

Three semester hours. Methods and daily problems inherent in teaching composition to specialized college audiences with stress on basic writers, the learning disabled, and students being tutored. May include measurement of writing, administration of writing centers, and tutoring practices.

In this section of ENG 776, we will study the concept of Critical Pedagogy. The course will begin with a study of theorists who founded Critical Pedagogy. We will then study specific applications of theory-driven pedagogy. Finally, we will study some problems in education and apply a critical pedagogical lens to these problems.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to define and describe critical pedagogy.

2. Students will be able to write critically about texts written by critical pedagogy scholars.
3. Students will be able to analyze current problems in education using a critical pedagogical lens.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the history of critical pedagogy and the scholarship that has followed.

## Course Requirements

### Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

#### Attendance Policy:

Since you are all graduate students, I assume you want to be here and will attend all classes. If you cannot attend a class due to illness, family emergency, etc., please try to let me know in advance, and be sure to e-mail me before you return to class so you will be up-to-date with class activities. More than one absence (since this is a once-a-week class) will reflect on your grade. Tardiness will be reflected in your participation grade.

#### Assignments:

**Unit Response Papers (30% of final grade. 3 papers at 10% each)** At the end of each unit, you will complete a response paper responding to the readings in that unit. Because these are unit response papers (rather than weekly), I expect these response papers will be thought-out, critical, carefully written, and reflect an understanding of texts read throughout the unit. **Due dates: October 6, November 3, and November 24 always in hard copy at the beginning of class.**

There are specific guidelines for each unit:

Unit 1: In the vein of a traditional “Literacy Narrative,” write an Education Narrative reflecting on your experiences as a student (at any level) using the texts from Unit 1 as a lens to examine those experiences. When I say “using texts from Unit 1 as a lens,” I mean that I expect you to analyze your experiences and cite the critical texts from this unit. This unit response paper, then, will be part narrative/personal experience and part theoretical analysis of that experience. (5-7 pages) **Due October 6 at the beginning of class—hard copy.**

Unit 2: In Unit 1, we built a foundation for better understanding Critical Pedagogy. Unit two complicates this foundation with specific, theoretically driven pedagogical approaches. In this response paper, focus on an issue or theme from this section and take a position on that issue or theme. You may use this paper to try out ideas for your final paper, identify arguments you see missing from the discussion, etc. Like the Unit 1 response paper, I expect quotes from the text and representation of texts throughout the unit—not just one text. Also, be sure that this text shows you are developing a knowledge base that begins with the foundation of Unit 1. (4-5 pages) **Due November 3 at the beginning of class- hard copy**

Unit 3: This response paper asks you to synthesize and apply everything we have learned so far in this class. Given what you have learned in the readings and presentations, what do you see as important issues to take up on critical pedagogy and language/literature/writing education? These issues may be the result of gaps you find in the current scholarship, outdated information you find in the current scholarship, or issues that have been completely ignored. You may use this response paper to think through your final project. (4-5 pages) **Due November 24 at the beginning of class- hard copy.**

**In-class discussion & participation (20% of final grade)** Since this is a graduate seminar, I expect graduate students to engage in class discussion each week and come prepared to discuss texts. Being “prepared” means that students complete all assigned reading, clarify questions (like terminology, for example) whenever possible, and come prepared with questions, arguments, and ideas concerning the texts. Of course, you can only earn in-class discussion credit when you attend class regularly and participate in discussion.

**Presentation (20% of final grade)** Each of you will present on a book, theoretical position, or theorist not formally assigned to the rest of the class.

There are eleven presentation topics:

Ivan Illich and Deschooling Movement  
Derrick Bell and Critical Race Theory  
Sexuality and Schooling  
Eco-pedagogy  
Social Action Research  
Service Learning  
Critics of Feminist Pedagogy  
W.E.B. Dubois, especially *The Souls of Black Folk*  
John Dewey’s *Democracy and Education*  
Diane Ravitch, especially *Death and Life of the Great American School System*

For this presentation, you are to assume that your classmates have not read your assigned text or about the concept. In your presentation (which must not be simply read to your classmates and should include a visual and/or interactive element) you will:

- Briefly summarize the main arguments of the text(s)/theory/theorists (BRIEFLY—notice that this assignment is not titled “book report”)
- Contextualize the text(s)/theory/theorists within the other texts for the class
- Talk about the ways in which the text(s)/theory/theorists connect to the text the class read for that class period
- ...and texts that we have already read this semester
- Emphasize the “take away” from the text(s)/theory/theorists or show how the argument(s) and/or findings could be used to help understand and/or approach problems in education or...
- ...how the text could be used as a lens to analyze a problem
- when possible, show how the theories and/or arguments in the text might connect to a current or recent issue in education (in the news, for example)

In other words, you are expanding your classmates' knowledge of critical pedagogy by teaching them about these scholars/texts/theories/theorists in a way that they can apply these ideas to their final projects or future endeavors. **Due on date you select at beginning of semester.**

**Final paper (25% of final grade)-** This paper should be 18 to 20 pages long (with standard font & margin size) and represent the culmination of your work in this class. You will submit a **proposal** for this paper (**5% of final grade- due November 10**) (This paper should illustrate that you have achieved the learning outcomes for this class, including: ability to define and describe critical pedagogy, ability to write critically about texts written by critical pedagogical scholars, ability to analyze current problems in education using a critical pedagogical lens, and ability to demonstrate understanding of the history of critical pedagogy and the scholarship that has followed. **This paper is due Monday, December 8 at noon via the Dropbox on Learning Studio (formerly known as eCollege).** You may choose to write on the following topics or select another:

1. Identify and discuss a topic appropriate for a scholarly journal similar to *The Harvard Educational Review*, *College English*, *JAC*, or other journals that have published articles about critical pedagogies. This paper should be argument-driven, relevant to the course concepts, and arise from the work you have done this semester.
2. Analyze a current problem in education (not necessarily American education, though I realize this has been the focus of texts this semester) using a critical pedagogical approach to view that problem. As Ravitch argues in *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, we should be skeptical of “pedagogical fads, enthusiasms, and movements.” I am not asking you to create one of these fads, enthusiasms, or movements. Rather, I want you to use the texts (and potentially others when appropriate) as a lens to examine important problems in education.
3. Take on a service learning project that synthesizes and applies the work from this course. Upon completing the project, you will write a reflection on your work that details your contributions, how these contributions reflect the intellectual work of critical pedagogy, and what scholars who come after you need to know in order to continue your work.

**Deadlines:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>deadline</b>
Presentation	Date you chose on 8/25
Unit 1 response	Monday October 16 at 4:30 PM
Unit 2 response	Monday, November 3 at 4:30 PM
Proposal for final project	Monday, November 10 at 4:30 PM
Unit 3 response	Monday, November 24 at 4:30 PM
Share final project in progress	Monday, December 1 4:30-7:10
Final project	Monday, December 8 at noon via eCollege/ Learning Studio

## Grading Scale:

90-100	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
69-60	D
59 and below	F

## Technology Requirements

You will need access to the Internet and a printer.

All assignments, including Unit Reading Responses, Proposal, and Final Paper must be typed.

You may need access to library databases to conduct research for some assignments.

Class website can be found on Learning Studio (formerly known as eCollege).

## Communication and Support

The very best way to contact me is to send me an e-mail at [Tabetha.Adkins@tamuc.edu](mailto:Tabetha.Adkins@tamuc.edu)

I am also available for meeting during my office hours (listed at the beginning of the syllabus) and by appointment. My office is located at HL 229. Appointments scheduled through e-mail are appreciated.

I can be reached via telephone during my office hours. The number is (903) 886-5269.

## Course Policies and Procedures

### Academic dishonesty/ Plagiarism:

Professors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University- Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3]).

I promise to *never* use turnitin.com or other proprietary tools like it because these programs make money off your work without compensating you. Here's how it works: A university pays turinit.com for its services (with your tuition dollars). Teachers place student papers in the program's "bank," and the program compares that paper with other papers existing in the bank. At that point, the student's paper becomes part of the bank. Therefore, turnitin.com and other tools are making money from this bank full of papers written by uncompensated students. For more information on this issue, see this article in the Chronicle of Higher Education: <http://chronicle.com/article/Plagiarism-Detection-Tool/29885>.

I also promise, however, that I take academic dishonesty very seriously. *If I catch a graduate student committing plagiarism, that student should expect to fail my course and be reported to the director their graduate program.* You're in graduate school, folks; no excuses.

### **Grievance Procedure:**

If you have concerns about the class or about me as an instructor, please speak to me about those concerns. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of our conversation, the next person in the chain of command is the Department Head of Literature and Languages, Dr. Hunter Hayes.

### **Other course policies:**

1. I do not accept late work.
2. You must turn in all assignments in order to pass the course.
3. Please be courteous to me and to your classmates; come to class on time. See attendance policy for more information.

## **University Procedures**

### *ADA Statement*

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 132  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-  
5835

Fax (903) 468-8148  
[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)  
[u](#)  
[Student Disability Resources &  
Services](#)

### *Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

## Course Calendar

This schedule may be adjusted to accommodate for student learning needs.

Class Meeting Date	Be Prepared to Discuss:
W1 August 25	Begin unit one- Critical Pedagogy: Definitions, Beginnings, and Foundations
W2 September 1	No class- Labor Day
W3 September 8	Freire- all Hooks (chapter 4) Giroux (chapter 8)  [Presentation: Augusto Boal (especially <i>Theatre of the Oppressed</i> )- if more students enroll in class. If not, professor will give this presentation.]
W4 September 15	Giroux (except Chapters 3 & 8)  Presentation: Ivan Illich and Deschooling
W5 September 22	Shor, <i>Empowering Education</i> chapters 1-4  Presentation: ecopedagogy
W6 September 29	Shor, <i>Empowering Education</i> - chapters 5-end  Presentation: sexuality and schooling
W7 October 6	Unit 2- Specific Topics in Pedagogy  hooks- <i>Teaching to Transgress</i>  Presentation: Derrick Bell & critical race theory  <b>Unit 1 response paper due in class (hard copy)</b>

W8 October 13	Delpit, <i>Other People's Children</i>  Presentation: W.E. B. Dubois, especially <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>
W9 October 20	Articles in Learning Studio (formerly known as eCollege): Carter Johnson, et.al Rivers & Weber  Presentation: social action research
W10 October 27	Articles in Learning Studio (formerly known as eCollege): Walkerdine Ropers-Huilman Golden Wright Bauer Ellsworth  Presentation: critics of Feminist Pedagogy
W11 November 3	Unit 3- Pedagogy and the Problems of Education Today  Dewey- <i>Schools and Society</i>  Presentation: Dewey, especially <i>Democracy and Education</i>  <b>Unit 2 response paper due in class (hard copy)</b>
W12 November 10	Kozol, <i>The Shame of the Nation</i>  Presentation: Diane Ravitch  <b>Final paper proposals due in class.</b>
W13 November 17	Gee, <i>The Anti-Education Era</i>  Presentation: Service Learning
W14 November 24	Rose, <i>Why School?</i>  <b>Unit 3 response paper due in class (hard copy)</b>
W15 December 1	Share final projects

W16	No final exam for this class. <b>Final papers due Monday, December 8 at noon via Learning Studio (formerly known as eCollege).</b>
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