

EDUCATIONAL STUDIES 348
Methods of Teaching Social Studies
Winter 2012
Tuesday/Thursday 1:15-3:00pm
Willis 203

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Office hours by appointment

Course Description

This course is focused on teaching in the social studies classroom. As such, it will explore the particular nature of teaching this subject matter, with emphasis on developing discipline-specific skills among students. We will wrestle with a number of questions, including what the various social studies are, what it means to be literate within multiple disciplines, how various kinds of disciplinary thinking are unique from each other, and how the various social studies interrelate.

The primary assignment for the term is the creation of a cohesive unit of instruction. Drawing on the “backward mapping” model of Wiggins and McTighe, as well as course readings, you will design a multi-faceted unit that promotes thinking in discipline-specific ways while supporting student literacy development. You will have numerous opportunities to reflect on your work alone and with peers.

Learning and mastering the teaching of social studies is a career-long endeavor. This class is designed to equip you to begin that work.

Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers

This course meets the specific requirements for teachers of social studies, as detailed in Rule 8710.4800 at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=8710.4800>

This course meets the Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers, summarized below and detailed in Rule 8710.2000 at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=8710.2000>

Standard 1, Subject Matter:

A teacher must understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines taught and be able to create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

Standard 2, Student Learning:

A teacher must understand how students learn and develop and must provide learning opportunities that support a student's intellectual, social, and personal development.

Standard 3, Diverse Learners:

A teacher must understand how students differ in their approaches to learning and create instructional opportunities that are adapted to students with diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities.

Standard 4, Instructional Strategies:

A teacher must understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage student development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

Standard 5, Learning Environment:

A teacher must be able to use an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Standard 6, Communication:

A teacher must be able to use knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

Standard 7, Planning Instruction:

A teacher must be able to plan and manage instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals

Standard 8, Assessment:

A teacher must understand and be able to use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the student.

Standard 9, Reflection and Professional Development:

A teacher must be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community, and who actively seeks out opportunities for professional growth.

Standard 10, Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships:

A teacher must be able to communicate and interact with parents or guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support student learning and well-being.

Course Expectations

1. Readings: Do the assigned readings prior to class discussions and be prepared to ask and answer questions in class. Expect to read several articles or chapters for each class meeting.
2. Participation in class: Participation in discussion, group work, and email is important in this class as a way of deepening your understanding of the main ideas of the course and practicing key skills. Participation means both listening and talking; it means expanding, refining, and enhancing your own ideas, as well as those of others. Participation in a methods course also means taking concrete steps to develop your own identity as a teacher.
3. Attendance: Attendance is a requirement; missing more than two classes will require instructor consent.

*While you will not be explicitly evaluated on these course expectations, failure to meet them will adversely affect your ability to fully contribute as a member of the class and, consequently, your grade.

Grading and Assignments

The major assignments for the course are as follows:

School Observations: Each week for the first seven weeks of the course, you are required to observe social studies classrooms for roughly two hours. You may do this at one of a number of different schools, which we will discuss.

Reading Guides: Reading guides are just what they sound like—guides to the week's reading. Due at the beginning of each class, these guides have two purposes. First, they are intended to help stimulate your thinking about the readings. No less importantly, however, they are intended as the beginning of your professional portfolio, which you will continue to build throughout the year and which, hopefully, you will continue to build throughout your career.

Each guide should outline the main points of the readings. Equally important, in each successive week, your reading guide should reference previous readings, reflecting your developing thinking about the field of teaching social studies. Feel free to make connections with other things you know, but be sure that you draw on the reading from that week for a substantial part of your evidence or ideas or examples. You are highly encouraged to make connections to the classroom observations you will be doing each week—what is working, what isn't, etc.

You can keep them in a hardbound journal or email them as Word documents, but keep them together. Shoot for 300-500 words each. These will be graded as completed/not completed.

Teaching a Skill Lesson Plan: For this assignment, you will create a lesson plan designed to teach a disciplinary way of thinking. Teaching students to think requires making ways of thinking and knowing visible and explicit. Students need models and examples of historical reading, questioning, and thinking. More specific instructions will be given in class.

“Opening Up the Textbook” Lesson Plan: For this assignment, you will create a one or two-period lesson plan that challenges student notions about textbook authority. Rather than the last word on historical truth, the textbook will become a springboard and foil for questioning the past and what we know about it. More specific instructions will be given in class.

Scaffolded Lesson Plan: For this assignment, you will create a lesson that has multiple points of access and multiple levels of challenge. The aim in doing so is to create a classroom environment in which all students are able to grow. More specific instructions will be given in class.

Unit Plan: For this assignment, you will create a plan for a unit of instruction. Your unit should be roughly five classes long. See the end of the syllabus for more specific guidelines about this assignment.

Mini Lessons: You will teach several mini lessons in class or in real K-12 classrooms. For mini lessons in our class, you are required to bring 2-4 friends with you to simulate the classroom environment. More specific instructions will be given in class.

Philosophy of Teaching: Drawing on your work in the course (including your reading guides, your mini lesson, and the development of your final unit), write a philosophy of teaching that specifically considers the nature of teaching social studies (and the various disciplines that constitute it). It will be graded as completed/not completed.

*Late work for all assignments will be graded down one-third of a grade (i.e. A→A-) for each day it is past due.

Course Texts

Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding By Design*
Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*

All of your other readings for this course are available on Moodle. You should either print them out or use a program that allows you to annotate your readings. Further, you should bring your annotated readings—hard copy or digital—to the class meeting for which they are due.

Classes and Readings

* Readings should be completed for the day under which they are listed

Week 1

Jan. 5: What do we want students to learn (in Social Studies)?

- Minnesota History and Social Studies Standards,
<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/fiscal/files/ssstand.pdf>
- Wiggins, "The Futility of Trying to Teach Everything of Importance"

Week 2

Jan. 10: What do we want students to learn (in History)?

- Wiggins & McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, introduction and chapter 1
- Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*, chapters 1 and 2
- Essays by Richard White, Eric Foner, Marshall Sahlins

Jan. 12: What do we want students to learn (in History)?

- Shulman, "Those Who Understand: Knowledge Growth in Teaching"
- Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*, chapter 3
- Bain, "'They Thought the World Was Flat?' Applying the Principles of How People Learn in Teaching High School History," in *How Students Learn: History, in the Classroom*

Week 3

Jan. 17: What do we want students to learn (in Economics and Civics)?

- Voluntary National Standards in Economics
- Bartlett and King, "Teaching Economics as a Laboratory Science"
- National Standards for Civics and Government
(<http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=stds>)
- Hahn, "Citizenship Education"

Jan. 19: What do we want students to learn (in Geography and interdisciplinary work)?

- Hausmann, "Prisoners of Geography"
- McNeill, "The World According to Jared Diamond"
- Thornton, "Geography in American History"
- The U.S. Constitution

Week 4

Jan. 24: Lesson planning (the big picture)

- *Understanding By Design*, chapters 2-5
- Holt, *Thinking Historically*, chapters 3-4
- Schneider, "Is Columbus Day about 1492 or 1892?"

Jan. 26: Activities, projects, and adapting curriculum in the Social Studies classroom

- World History for Us All lesson plan
- National Constitution Center lesson plan
- Teaching Economics as If People Mattered lesson plan
- Choices lesson plan
- **Due Jan. 26:** Teaching a Skill lesson

Week 5

Jan. 31: Textbooks and OUTs

- FitzGerald, *America Revised*, p. 8-47
- Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, introduction and chapter 2
- Excerpts from *A People and a Nation* and *The Americans*
- <http://teachinghistory.org/best-practices/teaching-with-textbooks/19438>
- The Battle of Little Bighorn Lesson Plan

Feb. 2: Lecture, debate, and discussion in the History/Social Studies classroom

- <http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/21731>
- Structured Academic Controversy Handouts
- Lincoln SAC Lesson Plan
- Stacy, "The Guide on the Stage: In Defense of Good Lecturing in the History Classroom," *Social Education* (2009)
- Gray, "Putting Minds to Work: How to Use the Seminar Approach in the Classroom," *American Educator* (1989)
- Hess, "Discussion in Social Studies: Is It Worth the Trouble?" *Social Education* (2004)

Week 6

Feb. 7: Mini teaching day (teach OUT plans)

- **Due Feb. 7:** "Opening Up the Textbook" lesson
Revisions of Teaching a Skill lessons

Feb. 9: Multimedia and technology in the History/Social Studies classroom

- Seixas, "Confronting the Moral Frames of Popular Film: Young People Respond to Historical Revisionism," *American Journal of Education* (1994).
- Woelders, "Using Film to Conduct Historical Inquiry with Middle School Students"
- Schneider, "To Blink or Not to Blink: the Cuban Missile Crisis"

Week 7

Feb. 14: Teaching writing in the History/Social Studies classroom

- Beyer, "Using Writing to Learn in History," *The History Teacher* (1980)
- Lehning, "Writing about History and Writing in 'History,'" *The History Teacher* (1993), 339-344
- Fitzhugh, "The State of the Term Paper," *Education Week* (2002), <http://www.npe.ednews.org/Foundation/StateOfTermPaper.htm>
- *Understanding By Design*, chapters 7 and 8
- Examples of student papers

Feb. 16: Meeting the needs of different learners in the History/Social Studies classroom

- Willingham, *Why Don't Students Like School?* chapters 7 and 8
- **Due Feb. 16:** Scaffolded lesson

Week 8

Feb. 21: In-school teaching day

Feb. 23: Discussion of teaching experience

- **Due Feb. 23:** Reading Guides

Week 9

Mar. 1: Mini teaching

- Sam Wineburg, "Models of Wisdom in the Teaching of History," in *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts* chapter 7

Mar. 3: Mini teaching

Week 10

Mar. 8: Final wrap-up

- **Due Mar. 8:** Unit plans and Reflections

Mar. 14: Final exam block

Unit Plan Assignment

Your primary assignment this semester is the preparation of a Unit Plan. For this assignment, which you will complete as a pair, you will synthesize what you have learned by preparing one week of instruction (five fifty-minute class sessions) for the history classroom. The purpose of this assignment is to bring together answers to the “big questions” we have addressed during our time together. Some of these questions concern the discipline of history:

- How is historical knowledge made and who gets to make it?
- Where does information in textbooks come from and how do we evaluate its reliability?
- How is every interpretation reflective of its origin, time, and author?
- What is “critical reading” in history?

Other questions concern the actual teaching of historical thinking:

- How can we engage young people in the questions that lie at the heart of the discipline?
- How can you identify and assess students thinking and understanding?
- How can you scaffold students’ work to build sophisticated reading and thinking?
- How can you teach students to use evidence in formulating historical arguments?

A unit plan organizes and connects instruction between individual class sessions into a coherent framework. You should utilize the “backward mapping” approach of Wiggins and McTighe, starting with an essential question and any enduring understandings that you want students to learn, then designing your assessment, and finally designing instruction that squares with your goals.

Your final Unit Plan should include the following:

1. Table of Contents (one page, single spaced)
2. Unit Rationale (roughly one page, single spaced)
3. Learning Route (roughly two pages, single spaced)
4. List of Resources (two-to-three pages, single spaced)
5. Calendar (roughly two pages)
6. “Opening Up Textbook” Lesson (two-to-three pages, single spaced & any documents)
7. Two Mini-Lessons (one-two pages each, excluding documents)
8. Performance Assessment (five-to-six pages, with rationale, prompt, and rubric)
9. Philosophy of Teaching (one-to-two pages, single spaced)

Rationale: The rationale explains the purpose and vision of your unit of instruction. Why should this unit occupy curricular time? Does this unit address questions that lie at the heart of the discipline? How does this unit develop students’ historical reading and thinking skills? A strong rationale should also include:

- An overview of your goals as a teacher as informed by class readings
- A discussion of the beliefs and misconceptions that students might bring to the material
- A discussion of how your unit will help students of multiple skill levels to understand how new historical knowledge is made and justified
- (Essential) Unit Question, Enduring Understanding(s), and Learning Targets (link the unit to the MN Standards)

Learning Route: We invariably end up teaching things we have not studied (or not studied in detail). Once you have decided on a topic, you will need to get smart quick. That will mean heading first to the web. Keep track of where you travel, what you read, and how you develop an understanding of your topic. You will need to describe the route you took to learning your topic.

But being a teacher means not just taking shortcuts, but also modeling lifelong learning. So, the second part of your learning route should be in the library. Identify a scholarly book or monograph on the topic that you will use to increase your content knowledge. You don't need to read the whole book; a chapter, or even *part* of a chapter, will suffice. Discuss your thoughts about the book in your "learning route," and compare this part of your learning to what you learned in your effort to get smart quick.

One way of approaching this assignment is to do it as an annotated bibliography. Provide a list of all the works you consulted as you executed this assignment. Write annotations that include the following: topic/focus of resource; type of resource (e.g. website, monograph, primary source collection, etc.); what you learned from the resource; how this resource could be useful.

List of Resources: You may want to share with your students some of the resources you used to learn about your topic. But you should also work to find resources that are age-appropriate and that will spark questions. You may even want to use sources of questionable reliability (think about "opening up the textbook," for instance) as a means of encouraging students to think critically. Try to incorporate at least one non-text resource for students: a film clip, an interactive website, a set of images, a series of maps, etc. List these resources, explain where you found them, and briefly describe why you think they are useful for instruction.

Calendar: The calendar should list the goals you have for each day, the corresponding content you will teach on each day, and the kind of activities you see yourself using. The calendar should demonstrate an understanding of a range of classroom activities as well as an understanding of how to sequence and scaffold them. At a minimum, your calendar must include the topic, the content and skill goals for each day, instructional activities, resources, and due dates for all student assignments.

Opening Up the Textbook Lesson: One day of your plan must include an "Opening Up the Textbook" lesson, which should include:

- a historical question that will guide the lesson
- goals for student learning
- the sequence of activities (including timing)
- how you will "see" student thinking
- a copy of the textbook selection (no more than two pages)
- supplementary materials (e.g., primary sources, other textbook selections, secondary sources, or handouts)

Two Mini-Lessons: These mini-lessons should be a part of your larger unit lesson. They are “mini-lessons,” however, because they can also be taught outside of the unit as a whole. In fact, you *will* be teaching at least one of them outside of the unit as a whole as a final demonstration. Each member of your partnership is responsible for one of these mini-lessons.

Each mini-lesson should incorporate multiple kinds of activities: primary documents (one of which should be visual), some kind of student writing, discussion, and brief lecture.

Performance Assessment: We will focus in class on developing a culminating writing assignment that requires students to engage with original evidence (e.g., textual, visual, statistical). You will construct the assessment, determine what students will need to know and be able to do to complete the assessment, explain how your learning activities prepare students for the assignment (i.e., scaffolds), and create a rubric for evaluating it.

Philosophy of Teaching: This is your opportunity to consider your future career as a teacher. What ideas from this course have changed your already evolving notion of yourself as an educator? How do you think of content in relation to teaching? How do you see teaching *social studies* differently (or not) from teaching an abstract or unknown subject matter?

Some Helpful Sources

American History

<http://teachinghistory.org>

[National History Education Clearinghouse]

<http://historicalthinkingmatters.com>

[Historical Thinking Matters – a site with complete lesson plans]

<http://sheg.stanford.edu/?q=node/45>

[Reading Like a Historian curriculum]

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/amhome.html>

[American Memory, Library of Congress; a great collection of primary documents]

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>

[Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History; a lot of good resources]

<http://docsteach.org/>

[Docs Teach, from the National Archives]

http://www.gilderlehrman.org/historynow/09_2010/index.php
[History Now, from Gilder Lehrman]

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/>
[Edsitement, a project of the National Endowment for the Humanities]

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>
[History Matters, from George Mason University]

<http://www.withoutsanctuary.org/>
[History of lynching in the U.S.; an impressive site, difficult to witness]

<http://www.authentichistory.com/>
[Primary sources and American popular culture; excellent audio of famous speeches]

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/>
[PBS's American Experience is a gold mine]

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/>
[100 important documents in American History]

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>
[The National Geographic Society has many great resources including online maps]

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/history_culture.html
[The Smithsonian's website has some very good lesson plans and other resources]

World History

<http://worldhistoryforall.sdsu.edu/>
[San Diego State's portal, run with UCLA's National Center for History in the Schools]

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/whm/whmfinding.php>
[George Mason's World History portal]

<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/education/index.html>
[The British Museum's education page has many links to world history sites]

<http://www.besthistorysites.net>
[A good all-purpose portal with links to world and US sites]

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.html>
[An excellent portal for modern World History]

Economics

<http://ve.councilforeconed.org/features/lessons.php>

<http://www.fte.org/teacher-resources/lesson-plans/>

<http://ecedweb.unomaha.edu/lessons/lessons.cfm>

Geography

<http://www.ncge.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3314>

<http://www.ncge.org/files/public/SpatialThinkingHistory.pdf>

<http://maps.nationalgeographic.com/maps>

Government/Civics

<http://www.crf-usa.org/>

<http://www.constitutioncenter.org/>

<http://www.civicyouth.org/>

<http://new.civiced.org/>