Course Description and Objectives:

Mexican Americans/Chicanos/immigrant students as well as Hispanics in general are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. In the last thirty-five years, efforts to improve upon the educational experiences of this group, enormous problems continue: While Latinos enter the university in large numbers, not all finish. What’s more, many more do not achieve at adequate levels in the public schools. The course reexamines some of these concerns. A general objective then is to provide the student (whether or not one is an education major) with resources and information regarding the schooling experiences of Mexican/Chicano youth. To that end, we will examine key definitions and concepts related to educating youth in a multicultural society. Our examination will take us through a critique of education in the U.S., key issues reflecting the experiences of Latino youth and what teachers need to know in order to provide sound pedagogy in the 21st century. While the course is helpful for future teachers here on the border, much of the conceptual information is useful to future counselors, human service professionals and anyone interested in our global society.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Through readings, lecture, and discussion, the student will understand the concepts of citizenship education and diversity, culture and its relationship to society, the ability to identify the school as a cultural institution and be familiar with the historical educational experiences of Chicano/Latino students.

2. Students will know the responsibility of being a teacher or human service professional.

3. Students will analyze and discuss the relationship of concepts such as race, ethnicity, culture, language, and socioeconomic status and their relationship to schools.

Evaluations:

Final grades will be based on a point system and is broken down as follows: 100-91: A; 90-81: B; 80-71: C; 70-61: D; 60-51: F.
GRADUATE CREDIT FOR THIS COURSE: In order to obtain graduate credit for this course, you must satisfactorily complete a graduate level project with a topic and parameters approved beforehand by the course instructor.

Assignments are as follows: 1) Midterm (30 points); 2) a short writing assignment (20 points); and 3) a final writing assignment (40 points). Other Requirements: 4) Class participation will be worth 5 points. Participation means the student’s active role in class discussions, commentary and analysis of reading materials. 5) Regular attendance will be worth 5 points, but please note three (3) or more unexcused absences will result in the student being dropped.

Method of instruction: The class is listed as lecture-discussion. There will also be occasional videos, small group discussion and possibly assigned oral presentations (which will count as part of your class participation points).

Readings: - The Struggle for Inclusion (2011), Carlos F. Ortega, Editor, can be purchased through the publisher.

Course drop deadline: April 6

Recommendations for Technology Use

UTEP supports the use of technology for learning process. However, I expect students to use laptops, for example, conscientiously. That is, for related classroom note taking. Show respect and do not use laptops for playing games, communicating with friends or doing homework for another class. If these activities are so important, it’s probably better that you drop the class, or be dropped. The same goes other wireless devices such as PDA’s, MP3 players, phones, and beepers. Again, it’s a simple matter of respect. Be here because you want to be, because you want to learn and not because you are controlled by technology. Sadly, it has come to this because of people who take things for granted. UTEP has followed the lead of other campuses around the country in having to deal with the misuse of technology in classes.

Students with Disabilities

If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to self-identify. You can do so by providing documentation to the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located in the Student Union Building East, Room 203, or by phone at 747-5148, or by email at dss@utep.edu. If you have a condition that may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of Disabled Student Services.
Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is prohibited by the university and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP). It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, possession of unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person’s as one’s own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and is addressed by the Dean of Students. Please consult the Handbook of Operating Procedures at http://hoop.utep.edu for the complete University policy on academic dishonesty. You may also consult with the Associate Dean of Students at the Student Union West, RM 102 or by calling 747-5648

Themes

January 21

1. Overview of Course

   Screen: Taking Back the Schools (1996)

January 28

2. Perspectives on Chicano education. The readings take off from where last week’s film leaves off. It is historical I nature so you can get a sense of what writer’s in the 1960s and 70s came to understand about the Mexican-origin population in school.


February 4/11

3. Cultural Diversity and Demographics. An examination of diversity concepts such as language and culture, race and ethnicity, class, gender, ethnocentrism, acculturation, assimilation and pluralism will demonstrate how each of us is shaped by various experiences tied to those concepts. The readings, in particular, utilize demographics to help us understand the issue of achievement of Chicanos and Latinos.

February 18/25

4. The Courts and Education. The Brown decision is heralded as the Supreme Court decision that ended school segregation. Few are aware that the legal arguments, which made Brown significant were developed in two court cases involving Mexican American Students: Mendez v. Westminster and Delgado v. Bastrop. What led to the cases was a history of segregation in Mexican communities in the Southwest. An examination of segregation as policy will precede the discussion of the court cases.


Vaca, Nicolas. Who’s the Leader of the Civil Rights Band?

Screen: Mendez vs. Westminster

March 4/18

5. Bilingual and Bicultural Education. This section examines the role of bilingual education in its historical sense, as policy, and its resulting controversies. Missing in the discussions of bilingual education is the role of biculturalism. What is it and why is it necessary in order to create cultural democracy in the classroom? Also examined are new programs such as Dual Language which may take the place of bilingual education in the future.

Reading: Soltero, S. (2008). Immigrant, Latinos and Education in the United States


March 11 Spring Break

March 25

6. Midterm

April 1

7. Higher Education. How have Mexican-origin students fared at community colleges and universities? What do students face as they adapt to college life? An examination of these questions through readings, demographics and discussion will attempt to answer these questions. Moreover, graduation rates at UTEP, as one example, will be examined; especially the implications of these rates to state policy.
First Paper Assignment distributed

April 8/15/22

8. Border Issues. The above topics will set the stage for an examination of school issues on the border. First, how does poverty on the border impact the Mexican-origin community, especially as it relates to schooling. Students will learn about colonias. Next, what are school issues that exist and that impact on achievement? Finally, what is being done to address these concerns. Here the Mother-daughter Program based at UTEP will be examined.

Peterson, B. (2004). Teachers Tour U.S.-Mexico Border
Harrison, T.S., J. Lee-Bayha and E. Sloat (2003). La Frontera
Screen: Forgotten Americans

April 29

9. Where are we today? After 45 years of reforms, changes and struggle, what stands out and, how far do we still have to go?

10. What teachers should know about reform and teaching practices designed to promote achievement. Since there are no easy answers students will learn of practices that have met with success and that as a career choice, students must make a commitment to think outside the box in order to help a diverse clientele in the classroom.

Hollandsworth (2010). Leave it to Bea

May 6