

# Education and Communities: Applied Critical Pedagogy

TED 3330, CRN 12242

University of Texas at El Paso

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## **Disclaimer:**

This syllabus is a draft outline of the course for this semester. Modifications will be implemented as class and community discussions develop throughout the course.

## **Course Description:**

Welcome to TED 3330, Education and Communities: Applied Critical Pedagogy. The purpose of this course is to help educators become reflective practitioners by introducing them to critical ways of thinking about the social processes that shape schooling both in the United States and México. To understand these processes, we will engage in the scholarly study of societal aspects that shape the identities of both educators and the institutions they serve.

## **Course Objectives:**

Through readings of education theorists and practitioners, this course invites educators to reflect on and discuss how societal power arrangements within our communities influence the cultural, structural and institutional dynamics relevant to educational politics, policies, and educators' perspectives.

In other words, the purpose of this course is to introduce you to ways of thinking about schooling as one component of the complex social process that shapes students' lives, and to begin your journey to becoming a reflective educator. We will do this through a scholarly study of identity, paying close attention to how it impacts teaching and learning.

## **Students in Critical Pedagogy are expected to:**

Read, reflect, discuss, and write about the fundamental concepts and principles of critical pedagogy, taking in consideration the impact of issues concerning race, social class, gender, sexual orientation [...]

Be able to identify authors, theories and concepts in the critical pedagogical tradition.

Conduct and participate in informed class discussions and presentations, with concern for the involvement of all participants.

**Required Texts:**

1. Freire, P. (2014) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury.
2. Giroux, H. A. (2016). *On Critical Pedagogy (Critical Pedagogy Today)*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury.

Other Readings (will be provided by instructor):

1. Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap two sides of the same coin?. *Educational Researcher*, 39(1), 59-68.
2. Vavrus, F., & Cole, K. (2002). "I didn't do nothin'": The discursive construction of school suspension. *The Urban Review*, 34(2), 87-111.

Multimedia:

1. Peters, W. (1971). *A class divided*. Doubleday.  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/class-divided/>
2. Koughan, F. (2012). *Dropout Nation*. WGBH.  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/dropout-nation/>

**Texas Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards Alignment:**

This course gives you early field experience, along with the tools to observe and interpret what you see. Learning the principles of educational anthropology and multicultural approaches to pedagogical practice will aid you in aligning your teaching practice with all of the following standards:

**Standard I:** The teacher designs instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment.

**Standard II:** The teacher creates a classroom environment of respect and rapport that fosters a positive climate for learning, equity, and excellence.

**Standard III:** The teacher promotes student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high-quality feedback.

**Standard IV:** The teacher fulfills professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

## Q&A:

OK, schooling is part of a larger social process...But what about that *critical pedagogy* part?

Let's start with the word critical. It has many meanings. Here are two that we will use in class:

- Characterized by careful, exact evaluation and judgment: a critical reading.
- Social theory that focuses on critiquing and changing society as a whole. Critical theory is about making the world more just and more inclusive. It's different from traditional social theory that just tries to explain social phenomena.

### References:

Shor, I. (1993). Education Is Politics: Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy, pp. 8-24, in *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*; McLaren, P., and Leonard, P., eds. London: Routledge.

And what about that word pedagogy?

Well, the Greek root, *ped-* refers to children (you've seen that it in the word pediatrician) and *-gogy* means to lead. Pedagogy is the art and science of being a teacher. The Latin word for pedagogy, education, is more commonly used in the U.S. today. Critical pedagogy refers to the work of Paulo Freire, one of the most important educators of the 20th century. Freire was from Brazil, and that is where he developed an approach to teaching that used learners' life experiences as the educational context, and had as its goal, the transformation of individuals and the social inequities that oppress them.

OK, but I just want to be a teacher...

Schooling is more than what happens in the classroom. We will look at schooling as a social process that is embedded in communities and in nations. Our focus is on the ways in which culture and power impact schooling. We will pay special attention to schooling as it is contextualized in local communities, and we will talk about and practice ways to bring students' knowledge and experiences into the classroom.

But why do this?

Because the things you will learn in this course will help you describe and interpret what is happening in the classrooms you observe, and later, what is happening to you as a teacher. You will learn to see things both on the micro-level (your own classroom experiences) and the macro-level (your school, its community, and schooling as a social process). The educational process is a primary means by which the individual and society are constructed (Shor, 1993). This course will also help you develop as a teacher, because it will show you ways to become more aware of yourself as an individual and as a social being. Awareness is the key to becoming a great teacher.

Authentic teaching is watchfulness, a mindful watching flowing from the heeding of the call in the pedagogical situation that the good teacher hears. Indeed, teachers are more than they do; they belong to that which is beyond their doing; they are the teaching (Aoki, 1990:16).

Teachers are professional learners, and the things you learn in this class will help you deepen the ways in which you learn, preparing you to become a reflective practitioner.

References:

Aoki, J., & Aoki, T. (1990). Silent voices of teaching. *Voices of teaching, 1*.

**University Policies:**

Attendance: Every class meeting is vital. As a major emphasis is placed upon classroom discourse and collaboration in this course, attendance is mandatory. Full credit can still be earned with one absence. University policy allows for student withdrawal if a certain number of classes are missed.

Academic honesty: Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

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 Office of disabled Student Services located in Union E Room 203. Students who have been designated as disabled must reactivate their standing with the Office of Disabled Student Services on a yearly basis. Failure to report to this office will place a student on the inactive list and nullify benefits received. If you have a condition which may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or which may cause an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of Disabled Student Services. You may call 747-5148 for general information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

**Grading**

Points earned from 100 possible points will determine your grade in the course. Students who complete each assignment should not assume that full credit is given. The quality, more than the quantity of the assignment, is the most important consideration for grading purposes. Included in the quality of the assignments are such attributes as organization and neatness, correct citation (APA), spelling, and critical thinking (well-supported, with examples).

1. Impromptu Participation:

Your participation matters. I acknowledge that participation grades often favor extroverts, therefore the class is structured so that there are opportunities to participate in different ways. We only have around 10 group sessions, so it's imperative that you attend each class. You will get points for participating in each class, and more for asking as many questions as you like (especially to your colleagues), how easy is that?

## 2. Prepared Participation:

Just as teachers need to be prepared for the classes they teach, so do university students. Reading and reflecting are essential to being successful in this course. You need to read the required texts in order to participate actively in class. Most weeks you'll prepare to discuss an assigned reading. Remember that discussions involve much more than the repeating of facts, your prepared remarks are a starting place in our classroom conversation. These exercises are intended to inspire you to read and to be prepared for class.

## 3. Midterm and Final Integrative Essays:

We will agree on the criteria for the midterm and final essays as a group. These academic exercises will likely require you to synthesize and integrate ideas from several of the readings and from our discussions in class, as well as the multimedia pieces we examine, overall they will be graded in two academic dimensions, Research & Analysis.

## Calendar and Assignments

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topics &amp; Activities</b>	<b>Assignments Due Before Class</b>
1	Monday, August 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Syllabus</li> <li>• Course Overview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to class</li> </ul>
	Monday, September 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labor Day</li> </ul>	
2	Monday, September 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are we privileged?</li> <li>• How are we oppressed?</li> <li>• Watch "A Class Divided"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Chapter 1 on Freire, P. (2014) Pedagogy of the Oppressed.</li> </ul>
	September 13th, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Census Day</li> </ul>	
3	Monday, September 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided Reading: Vavrus &amp; Cole (2002) The Discursive Construction of School Suspension.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Chapter 2 on Freire, P. (2014) Pedagogy of the Oppressed.</li> </ul>
4	Monday, September 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Chapters 1, 2, and 3 on Freire, P. (2014) Pedagogy of the Oppressed. –Mad points!</li> <li>• Discussion/agreement of midterm's requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Chapter 3 on Freire, P. (2014) Pedagogy of the Oppressed.</li> <li>• Watch "Dropout Nation" <a href="http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/dropout-nation/">http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/dropout-nation/</a></li> </ul>
5	Monday, October 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: The achievement gap and the discipline gap, two sides of the same coin? –Mad points!</li> <li>• Schedule One-on-ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Gregory, Skiba &amp; Noguera (2010) "The Discipline Gap and the Achievement Gap..."</li> <li>• Midterm Essay!</li> </ul>
6	Monday, October 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one discussions</li> </ul>	

7	Monday, October 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one discussions</li> </ul>	
8	Monday, October 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Critical Pedagogy, the legacy of Paulo Freire. –Mad points!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: “Rethinking Education as the Practice of Freedom: Paulo Freire and the promise of critical pedagogy”; Chapter 8 in Giroux, H. A. (2016). On Critical Pedagogy.</li> </ul>
9	Monday, October 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Critical Pedagogy as a matter of context, ethics, and politics. –Mad points!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: “The promise of Critical Pedagogy in the age of Globalization: towards a pedagogy of democratization”; Chapter 4 in Giroux, H. A. (2016). On Critical Pedagogy.</li> </ul>
	November 3rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Drop Deadline</li> </ul>	
10	Monday, November 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Critical Pedagogy and the promise of democratization. –Mad points!</li> <li>• Discussion/agreement of final’s requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: “No bailouts for youth: education and pedagogy in an era of responsibility”; Chapter 5 in Giroux, H. A. (2016). On Critical Pedagogy.</li> </ul>
11	Monday, November 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End-of-course discussion and evaluation.</li> <li>• Schedule One-on-ones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Neoliberalism and the politics of public pedagogy”; Chapter 7 in Giroux, H. A. (2016). On Critical Pedagogy.</li> <li>• Final Essay!</li> </ul>
12	Monday, November 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one discussions</li> </ul>	
13	Monday, November 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-on-one discussions</li> </ul>	