

EDUC 6013- X20 Trends and Issues in Learning and Teaching
Midwestern State University
Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
Class Meets: Online January 21-May 16, 2025

Instructor/Contact Information:

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11AM-1PM, Wednesday 9AM-10AM, Thursday 11AM-1PM.

Appointments are recommended to avoid conflicts. Zoom appointments also available for other times outside of office hours- contact by email to discuss times.

Instructor Response Policy

The best way to contact me is via email. I will check my email between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM Mon-Fri. I will attempt to contact you within 24 hours; however, this does not apply on weekends or holidays. Once you contact me via email, we can then set up a virtual, phone, or in-person meeting, depending on your needs.

Course Description

A study in contemporary issues relating to ways students learn and best practice in instruction. Emphasis will be placed on a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Materials and reading will be supplied in D2L.

Students must have access to a current (7th Edition) APA Publication Manual and to professional education journals. (These are best accessed via the Moffett Library Research Data Bases.). Computer and internet access is also required.

Standards

Content and methodological standards for this course are held by West College of Education (WCoE), American Educational Research Association (AERA), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and the Midwestern State University Graduate Catalog. Ethical standards are those required by HSRC/OHRP. Manuscript style is set by the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition. Although the C&I program does not lead to NBPTS certification, all courses are aligned with the following NBPTS Core Propositions.

WCoE Master's degree candidates...

are committed to students and their learning;

know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students;

are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning;

think systematically about their practice and learn from experience;

and are members of learning communities.

Objectives and Assessments

Objectives	Assessments
Students will relate contemporary issues concerning teaching and learning to their teaching practice	Online discussions, written responses
Students will explore the philosophical and theoretical foundations of contemporary school reform efforts	Online discussions, reading summaries, written responses, position paper
Students will investigate recent school reform movements	Article summaries
Students will investigate the role of educational research in school reform	Online discussions, article summaries, written responses, position paper
Students will explore the role of teachers and educators in school reform	Online discussions, article summaries,
Students will participate in professional dialogues focusing on "trends and issues in teaching and learning"	Online discussions, written responses position paper

Table 1 – Points for assignments and assessments

Assignments	Points
Article Summaries 20 points each	120
Written Responses 20 points each	120
Position Paper	100
Total Points	340

Table 2- Grading

Percentage of total points will determine final grade.

Percentage of total points	Grade
90%-100%	A
80%-89%	B
70%-79%	C
60%-69%	D
59% or less	F

Assignments/Activities/Assessments

Written Responses

Formal written responses to the assigned readings are due on the date shown on the online assignment tool. The calendar on the syllabus also contains this information. The objective is to demonstrate what you have learned from the reading and make a personal connection. If you choose, use the double-note journal format. Examples are available in the course documents. There is a lot of reading; your double-note journal should be reflective of all of the reading, but you are not responding to every single thing in the text. Pick out what is meaningful to you and respond. When responding to multiple chapters you may decide that it is easier to create a double note journal for each chapter separately, but you may also complete all three in one. Again, using the double note method is up to you.

Article Summaries

Articles should relate to the issues and topics from the text and of course interest you and your field of study. These should be ones published in peer reviewed professional journals. All documentation should be formatted using the APA Publication Manual 7th ed. Online sources are not acceptable unless they are peer reviewed online journals or were previously published in a peer reviewed journal and you can provide appropriate documentation (reference statement). Articles from the popular media (magazines and newspapers) are not acceptable.

Head each article summary with the following information in APA style:

- Title of article or book
- Author (s)
- Publisher (or name and volume number of journal)
- Copyright (or publishing) date

The article summaries should include an introduction, body, and conclusion.

- The introduction should introduce and contextualize the article.
- The body should be a complete and accurate summary paraphrase of the article.
- The conclusion should reflect on the reading/course topics and relate the content/tone to your personal and professional lived experience. You may want to include if you agree or disagree with stance if applicable.

Article summaries should be 1-2 pages in length double-spaced, in twelve point, Times New Roman font.

Position Paper

This is a 3-5 page essay (double-spaced, in twelve point, Times New Roman font) supported by at least 5 properly documented, peer reviewed sources. Choose one of the many current trends or issues addressed by the course. APA style and rules must be followed for text citations and references. You may use any of the articles from the Literature Review Summary articles to include; however, they must be relevant to your

position and cited within the paper. This paper should have an introduction, body and conclusion.

Again, make sure all of your writing is free from grammar and punctuation errors and that you are using standard English.

Course Structure

Module 1

1. Read Chapters 1 Classical Philosophy: Socrates, Chapter 2 Classical Philosophy: Plato & Chapter 3 Classical Philosophy: Aristotle
2. Written Response- Double Note Journal
3. Article Summary: (see instructions) Any article related to the reading assignment and/or the following questions:
 - a. What are the current trends in curriculum and instruction and how are they influencing your teaching? How are you made aware of these trends?
 - b. What qualities may be used to define "best practice" in teaching, no matter the subject you teach? What is best practice as it relates to the subject or subjects that you teach? How well does this describe typical practice in your school?
 - c. Describe the efforts your school or district is using to bring about meaningful instructional reform. What should they be doing?

Module 2

1. Read Chapter 4 Enlightenment Philosophy John Locke & Chapter 5 Enlightenment Philosophy Jean Jaques Rousseau
2. Written Response- Double Note Journal
3. Article Summary: (see instructions) Any article related to the reading assignment or the following questions:
 - a. Why is anything related to schools and teaching so difficult to change? How might real and meaningful changes be brought about?
 - b. How are schools and teaching different in the city, in the suburbs, and in the country? Why?

Module 3

1. Read Chapter 6 Karl Marx, Chapter 7 John Dewey, & Chapter 8 Paulo Freire
2. Written Response- Double Note Journal
3. Article Summary: Any article related to the reading assignment and/or the following questions. See instructions.
 - d. Should curriculum be standardized? Should all schools across the nation study the same curriculum?
 - e. Should current conceptions of public school be redefined, re-imagined, totally overhauled?

Module 4

1. Read Chapter 9 Colonial America, Chapter 10 American Revolutionary Era, & Chapter 11 Early National Era
2. Written Response- Double Note Journal
3. Article Summary: Any article related to the reading assignment and/or the following questions. See instructions.
 - a. What does a democratic classroom look like? Is this important?
 - b. What is the purpose of public schools and how is current curriculum satisfying this purpose?
 - c. What is the essential role of public schools? What does it include? What does it not include?

Module 5

1. Read Chapter 12 Post Civil War and Reconstruction & Chapter 13 The Progressive Era
2. Written Response- Double Note Journal
3. Article Summary: Any article related to the questions or readings. See instructions.
 - a. Under what circumstances (if any) should certain children not be allowed to attend public schools?
 - b. To what extent should the public schools be responsible for the health, welfare, and continuing development of young children?
 - c. How do private and charter schools differ from regular public schools?
 - d. What are the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion programs for students with special needs? How about more traditional segregation or "pull out" programs? Is RTI the solution?
 - e. What can be done to reduce the number of school dropouts?
 - f. Should the public schools include specific religious doctrine such as intelligent design in the curriculum?
4. Position Paper: Begin writing a 3 to 5 page position paper developing a position on a critical issue studied in this course. Include citations and references to at least 5 scholarly sources (articles, books, etc.). Use APA style and conventions. See additional instructions above and in D2L folder.

Module 6

1. Read Chapter 14 Post World War II & Chapter 15 The 80's and Beyond
2. Written Response- Double Note Journal
3. Article Summary: Any article related study questions. See instructions.
4. Position Paper: Write a 3 to 5 page position paper developing a position on a critical issue studied in this course. Include citations and references to at least 5 scholarly sources (articles, books, etc.). Use APA style and conventions.
 - a. Make a case for or against single sex schools and/or classrooms.
 - b. Argue for or against zero tolerance policies in school.
 - c. Describe the current and ultimate roles of computers and computer technologies in schools.
 - d. Describe a reliable method of identifying exceptional teachers.
 - e. How would merit pay influence teaching and learning in your school?

- f. Describe what you believe to be the best model for teacher preparation.

Instructor Class Policies

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. Inappropriate behavior in the D2L online classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to drop the class and/or a Professional Fitness Form will be filed for review with the college. If the instructor must file a Fitness Alert Form for any reason, including failure to demonstrate appropriate classroom behaviors, the student may receive an instructor drop with an "F" for the course.

An instructor may drop a student any time during the semester for failure to participate, for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude, or for disruptive conduct. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to dropping the student from the class. An instructor's drop of a student takes precedence over the student-initiated course drop of a later date. The instructor will assign a grade of either WF or F through the first 8 weeks of a long semester, the first 6 weeks of a 10 week summer term, or the 11th class day of a 4 or 5 week summer term consisting of 20 days. After these periods the grade will be an F. The date the instructor drop form is received in the Office of the Registrar is the official drop date.

Late Work

Assignments are expected to be turned in by the due date. Late work will receive 50% maximum credit.

Written Work

All written work should be completed in a professional style. Using correct spelling and grammar are important communication skills. Therefore, all written assignments will have 10% -20% of the grade based on spelling and grammar. Expectations are for quality work.

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)/Brightspace

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor. All assignments must be submitted to D2L/BRIGHTSPACE for this course and should be in a PDF unless otherwise specified in the assignment guidelines. I will not accept assignments via email. Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. *Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments,*

tests, or discussion postings. Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. Computer issues are not an excuse for missing a deadline. There are many places to access your class! Our online classes may be accessed from any computer, which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however, they are able to help you be connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Academic Dishonesty:

Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Plagiarism

"By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a 'limited right' in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The 'limited right' shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality, authenticity, and educational purposes." from [Student Handbook](#) . All assignments submitted in BRIGHTSPACE will also be checked through Turn It In for originality. Assignments with more than 50% match will be given a 0.

AI / Chat GPT

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

You may type a question into ChatGPT, you may not copy and paste its response, and turn it in as your own. If you use ChatGPT, you must disclose this at the beginning or end of your assignment. If you use ChatGPT or any AI, please use it in ways that are ethical, accurate, and useful.

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor. Teaching is about being responsive to student needs, as such, the topic dates may change as there may be more or less time needed for particular concepts. However, assignment due dates will not be moved up.

MSU-TEXAS Policies and Procedures and Dates:

Refer to: [Academic Calendar](#) for all deadlines.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request). For specific information and information regarding financial aid policies, contact the MSU business office.

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on university property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University

Appendix A

Inclement Weather

In the event that the university is closed for a short time due to inclement weather, course work that is posted in the course calendar is still due unless a notification is posted in D2L on the News page stating otherwise. In most cases courses will not be offered digitally synchronously unless the closing extends beyond a brief period and is otherwise noted on the D2L News page. Students enrolled in courses with observations, internships, and field work, will be handled on a case by case basis.

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "*Run. Hide. Fight.*" which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: "[Run. Hide. Fight.](#)"

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick
Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [this link](#).

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [this link](#).

Course Calendar

Date	Activities/Assignments/Exams
Jan 20-24	Read the syllabus. Get familiar with the course schedule and set up. Scan the online course text.
Feb 2	Written Response I due
Feb 9	Article Summary I due
Feb 16	Written Response I due
Feb 23	Article Summary II due
March 2	Written Response III due
March 23	Article Summary III due
March 30	Written Response IV due
April 6	Article Summary IV due
April 13	Written Response V due
April 27	Article Summary V due
May 4	Written Response VI due
May 11	Article Summary VI due
May 12	Position Paper due

This calendar and syllabus are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. In the event that an update must occur, the newest version will be posted on D2L in the Read Me First tab and a News item will notify students.

References and Additional Reading

Marzano, Robert J. (2017) *The New Art and Science of Teaching*. Bloomington, IN: ASCD.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition. 2020. APA

Appendix B

Standards/Competencies List

WCOE Standards (InTASC):

The outcomes for graduates of professional programs are based upon knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the following elements:

Learner Development - understand how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and design and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Learning Differences - understand individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Learning Environment - work with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Content Knowledge - understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Application of Content - understand how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

Assessment - understand and use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

Planning for Instruction - plan instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Instructional Strategies - understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

Professional Learning and Ethical Practice - engage in ongoing professional learning and use evidence to continually evaluate his or her practice, particularly the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

Leadership and Collaboration - seek appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Appendix C

Scientific data shows that being fully vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 and has the greatest probability of avoiding serious illness if infected in all age groups. Although MSU Texas is not mandating vaccinations in compliance with Governor Abbott's executive orders, we highly encourage eligible members of our community to get a vaccination. If you have questions or concerns about the vaccine, please contact your primary care physician or health care professional. Given the recent rise in cases, individuals are also strongly encouraged to wear facial coverings when indoors among groups of people, regardless of vaccination status. Although MSU Texas is not currently requiring facial coverings, they have been an effective strategy in slowing the spread.