

EDUC 6013-X20 Trends and Issues in Learning and Teaching
Course Meets Online January 20, 2026- March 27, 2026
Midwestern State University
Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education

Instructor/Contact Information:

Christina Wickard, PhD
E-mail: janise.wickard@msutexas.edu
Phone: 940-397-4528
Office: 308H

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	written responses
Students will explore the philosophical and theoretical foundations of contemporary school reform efforts	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	article summaries, written responses, position paper
Students will explore the role of teachers and educators in school reform	article summaries,
Students will participate in professional dialogues focusing on "trends and issues in teaching and learning"	written responses position paper

Table 1 – Points for assignments and assessments

Assignments	Points
Article Summaries and Written Responses 20 points each	160
Position Paper	100
Total Points	260

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 calendar. 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.. 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.

Article Summaries

Articles should relate to the issues and topics from the text and of course interest you and your field of study. Use the provided questions as inspiration for choosing a topic to explore. Articles 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. The more current the better.

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.

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.

Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

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.

AI is an amazing tool and can be a powerful reference and resource; however, it should be used as a reference/resource only. Passing another person or entity's work off as your own is dishonest and can also prevent you from properly learning the material you should in this course. Therefore, using AI to compose/create your assignments for you will not be tolerated. Assignments in which the professor suspects the majority was composed by AI will receive a zero. If a student receives a zero, the student may resubmit the work, revised in their own writing for half credit. The following are acceptable ways to use AI in this course but a citation must be provided to give credit to the AI program used: providing you an example answer to a question (put answer into your own words), give you a template or provide you a format to follow, assist with wording difficult concepts (then put into your own words for your assignment), researching topics to give you additional information or other viewpoints

on a topic, or ideas for lesson activities.

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.

Ideas and opinions expressed in course materials are those of the respective authors and do not imply endorsement by the professor or university.

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

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas

excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. 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 [MSU Appeal Process](#)

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 online reporting 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 for the university policy](#).

Course Calendar and Topics

Course Dates	Activities/Assignments/Topics
Module 1 Jan 25	Read the syllabus. Get familiar with the course schedule and set up. Scan the online course text. Topic: Philosophical Underpinnings Reading- Plato and Socrates Written Response <u>OR</u> Article Summary
Module 2 Feb 8	Written Response II & Article Summary II due Topic: Reading- Enlightenment Lock & Rousseau; Meaningful Change
Module 3 Feb 22	Written Response III & Article Summary III due Topic: Current Trends; Reading Dewey
Module 4 March 8	Written Response IV & Article Summary IV due Topic: Reading- Revolutionary Era; Curriculum and the purpose of schools
Module 5	Written Response V <u>OR</u> Article

Course Dates	Activities/Assignments/Topics
March 24	Summary V Position Paper due Topic: Reading- reconstruction; role of technology and teacher preparation

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 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 Abbot'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.