

Curriculum, Policy, and Ideology



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ELMP 8159
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Course Description and Objectives

This course will address urgent curricular issues facing educational leaders: the coronavirus pandemic and structural racism. The COVID-19 outbreak has prompted enormous shifts in how educators, families, and students engage in teaching and learning. At the same time, recent killings of Black people have sparked a national conversation about the systemic racism that marks U.S. schools and society. We will spend this semester considering what these developments mean for your work.

Overall, this course has two primary goals:

- to introduce you to multiple perspectives on the ways that curriculum contributes to educational equity and inequity
- to provide you with tools as school leaders to respond to our dual pandemics

Pandemic objectives:

- To be patient and kind with ourselves and each other
- To do our best, knowing this will probably look different than other semesters
- To communicate openly about our expectations, goals, and concerns
- To be flexible and embrace the opportunity to learn in new ways

Course Requirements

Class Attendance and Participation

This is a discussion and workshop-based course. Our success and shared learning – both your own and your peers’ – depend on you. Please arrive on time and ready to think through course assignments, with notes and questions that you want to discuss in class.



Listening actively, sharing resources or skills, asking questions, responding to others’ comments, and sharing tentative, speculative ideas are just as important to our communal learning as presenting fully-formed thoughts. We may discuss issues that are sensitive or that affect you personally; we will work together to challenge ideas in constructive and compassionate ways as a community.

As part of our preparation for class meetings, we will use perusall.com, an online reading and annotation tool. *You will need to set up a free account and log in with the course code: FREIDUS-GU2XN.* The goal of this social reading platform is to share how you are grappling with new ideas, both in the texts and from your peers – not to show how you have “mastered” the main ideas. The interface is user-friendly and many students find it easy to use; if you have questions, please reach out for help or check the [student support page](#). **Please be sure to post your notes, questions, and responses before the deadline for each assignment.**

An A in participation looks like:

- Attending each class meeting for the entire scheduled time in person or via Microsoft Teams.
- Engaging in class discussion by listening carefully, asking thoughtful questions, building on others’ ideas, respectfully disagreeing, offering your own ideas-in-progress, and sharing your skills and resources.
- Commenting at least twice on each assigned reading on Perusall in a collaborative and timely manner. (We will not be using the “score” functions of Perusall.)
- Providing kind, specific, and actionable feedback to your colleagues via written comments and/or in small-group conversations.

Curricular Leadership Case Study

As an educational leader, you will be required to make decisions constantly. In this project, you will work as part of a group of 3-4 students to create and teach a “case study” of a leadership decision related to curriculum. You will use this case study to identify a framework, processes, and trade-offs you might make as you exercise curricular leadership. We will share more details about this assignment in class.



An A on your case study looks like:

- You work with your group to develop a case study that includes a brief theoretical framework, a narrative, and teaching notes.
- You collaborate with your group to effectively present the case study and lead class discussion to the class.
- Your project incorporates frameworks, tools, and feedback that we have shared throughout the semester.
- Your project is polished, professional, and submitted in a timely manner.

Final Project: Curriculum Review

The final project for this course is a curriculum review, revision, and implementation plan – something many school and district leaders are expected to do on a regular basis. You will evaluate a curricular plan using one theoretical framework we have explored in class,



make suggestions for ways it could be improved or updated, and develop a strategic plan that outlines how these changes will be shared with teachers, how you will track implementation, and how you will amend the plan in response to feedback and other data. We will share more details about this assignment in class.

An A on your curriculum review looks like:

- Your project meets all the assignment specifications (stay tuned).
- Your project incorporates frameworks, tools, and feedback that we have shared throughout the semester.
- Your project is polished, professional, and submitted in a timely manner.

Grading Philosophy:

Our goal is to create space for you to take risks and set ambitious goals for yourself throughout the semester. You will have multiple opportunities to reflect on your work in this course, both formally and informally. You will also complete a final self-evaluation in which you will assign yourself a grade for the semester, based on these specifications and your assessment of your learning. If a student takes undue advantage of this system then, we reserve the right to adjust grades as appropriate. However, we do not anticipate needing to make these adjustments.

Our commitment to your learning:

We will respect the identities, perspectives, and personal, practical, and intellectual commitments you bring to class discussions and assignments. We will not grade each individual piece of your work, except in the unlikely case that we need to mark something “no credit.” We believe those kinds of small grades make it harder to take risks and distract students from focusing on their growth. We will work with you to understand your goals, even – or especially – if the risks you take do not work out as expected. We will provide individualized feedback on much (but not all) of your writing. We will also make ourselves available to consult with you and offer practical support as needed.

Course Expectations

- **This semester in particular, expect the unexpected. We will adjust the course schedule based on how things go. Please check your Seton Hall email regularly for updates.** This is a new and challenging experience for all of us. Please be generous with yourselves, your colleagues, and your teachers. Class plans may need to be adapted. Children and family members may pop up into video screens. You may face unexpected or particularly challenging circumstances. It may be difficult for us to identify students who need extra help. If you need additional support (access to course materials, flexibility with deadlines, or anything else), please reach out as soon as you can. We will work with you in every way we can, but advance notice helps. You don't need to tell us what's going on unless you want to, just that you need help.
- **Our success will depend on every member of the class being actively engaged as both learners and teachers.** Each of us has valuable experiences and perspectives that will inform our collective knowledge. Please be prepared to share your own writing and to respond to your peers' work with generous, productive feedback.
- **All assignments are required to pass this course.** The assignments in this class are designed to help you move step-by-step through the process of developing your final project, so it is important that you complete each assignment in the order assigned.
- **We have set deadlines in order to make sure you work through the assignments in a logical sequence.** We know that we may need to be flexible about those deadlines this semester. We ask that you communicate proactively if that's the case. **Unless noted otherwise, all**

perusall.com annotations are due by 9am the day before class and all fieldwork/memo assignments are due at the beginning of class. Be sure to back up all of your work; problems with technology will not excuse late assignments.

- **Your success in this class is important to us. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let us know as soon as possible.** We will work together develop strategies that meet both your needs and the course requirements. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. Please make sure you have registered in advance with the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67, (973) 313-6003.
- **Some of you may experience challenges because you cannot afford sufficient food, you lack a safe place to live, or you struggle to balance school with paid work or family responsibilities.** If you are experiencing these or other challenges, we encourage you to reach out to the [Dean of Students](#) for support and referral to services that can help. If you feel overwhelmed or are experiencing anxiety or depression, please reach out to [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) for free, confidential support with mental health challenges. If you feel comfortable doing so, please also let us know so that we can assist you in accessing support.
- **Academic Integrity:** All work that you submit for this class must be your own. Building on the ideas of others is a critical part of academic work, but **you must clearly credit the people whose ideas and/or words you are using every time you use them.** Do not present the work of another as your own by copying or paraphrasing their words or ideas without properly citing them. Include the author and date of publication you are referencing in your text and have complete bibliographic information at the end of the paper. Use quotation marks every time you borrow another author’s language, even if you also cite them. If you do not follow these conventions, you are plagiarizing. **If you plagiarize, you will receive no credit for the assignment and the incident will be recoded in your academic record.** Depending on the severity of the incident, there may also be additional consequences, per ELMP policy, which you have received via email.

Course Schedule

Guiding Question(s)	Dates	How to prepare for class (Texts appear in recommended reading order)
What is curriculum and why does it matter?	10/17	<p>Read and annotate in Perusall:</p> <p>Shalaby, C. (2017). <i>Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children in School</i>. The New Press.</p> <p>Baldwin, J. (1996). A Talk to Teachers. In W. Ayers & P. Ford (Eds.), <i>City Kids, City Teachers: Reports from the Front Row</i>. The New Press.</p> <p>Guhin, J. (2020). <i>How COVID Can Change What Schools Are For</i>. The Hedgehog Review. https://hedgehogreview.com/blog/thr/posts/how-covid-can-change-what-schools-are-for</p> <p>Rafalow, M. (2020). <i>How Digital Divisions at School Impose Barriers to Connected Learning – and What We Can Do About It</i>. Connected Learning Alliance. https://clalliance.org/blog/how-digital-divisions-at-school-impose-barriers-to-connected-learning-and-what-we-can-do-about-it/?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=CLA&utm_medium=social</p>

		<p><i>5 Questions with Matthew H. Rafalow, author of “Digital Divisions.”</i> (2020). The Chicago Blog. https://pressblog.uchicago.edu/2020/08/18/5-questions-with-matthew-h-rafalow-author-of-digital-divisions.html</p>
	10/18	<p>Read and annotate in Perusall:</p> <p>Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). But That’s Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. <i>Theory into Practice</i>, 34(3), 159–165.</p> <p>Hammond, Z. L. (2015). <i>Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students.</i></p>
<p>How can school leaders support curricula that advances educational equity?</p>	11/7	<p>Bring your group’s case study narrative and teaching notes to class – and be ready to teach the case!</p> <p>Read and annotate in Perusall:</p> <p>Freidus, A. (2020). “I Didn’t Have a Lesson”: Politics and Pedagogy in a Diversifying Middle School. <i>Teachers College Record</i>, 122(7).</p> <p>Maloney, T., & Powell, T. (2018). The math wars continue: How glocal events inform mathematics curriculum, teaching, and learning. In D. Schwarzer & J. Grinberg (Eds.), <i>Understanding Glocal Contexts in Education: What Every Novice Teacher Needs to Know.</i></p>
	11/8	<p>Select the curriculum you will review for the final project.</p>

All required readings will be posted on perusall.com. In addition to the readings due before each class, we will explore other texts during class, which we will share through Perusall or Microsoft Teams.

Project Deadlines:

- Case study project drafts due Monday, 10/26 at 9am
- Case study teaching presentations due Saturday, 11/7 at 9am
- Curriculum review projects due Monday, 12/7 at 9am