EDF 5510, Theory Into Practice: Social Foundations for Educational Practice

1. Catalogue Description
   a. EDF 5510
   b. Theory Into Practice: Social Foundations for Educational Practice
   c. 3-0-3
   d. F. S. Su
   e. Soc Found Ed
   f. The school in society; effects of cultural patterns, social classes, diverse community organizations and current social problems on creating effective educational environments.
   g. Graduate standing
   h. Online delivery

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Course:
   By the end of the semester students will be able to:

   1. Describe and analyze the nature of American society and the institution of schooling;
   2. Describe and analyze societal influences on youth and their diverse needs;
   3. Understand how student learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, prior cognitive structures and community aspirations and values;
   4. Apply knowledge of diversity of students, communities and strategies of instruction to create effective learning environments;
   5. Describe and analyze the status of teachers and the teaching profession;
   6. Engage in instructional and problem solving activities that demonstrate sensitivity to and respect for individuals, individual experiences, values, ideals as well as cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity;
   7. Articulate and defend practical approaches to contemporary education based on an understanding of existing social realities;
   8. Initiate and design instructional environments that enhance cooperation and respect for individual differences and multiple learning styles;
   9. Collaborate with peers and participate in professional dialogue to generate ideas and solve curricular and instructional problems;
   10. Participate in qualitative improvement of instruction based on recent research using the state and National Content Standards.

3. Outline:
   The following course topics relate to current practice. Each student chooses one subtopic for research on a local social problem and reports to the class. All major topics are covered every semester, but subtopics may vary.

   The Social Organization of Schooling (300 minutes)
   - Inequities in school funding and possible remedies
   - Hierarchical organization of the schools and possible alternatives
   - Comparison of public schools, private schools, and home schooling

   Youth Culture and the Student Peer Group (300 minutes)
Liminality: A time for flexibility vs. assumption of responsibility
Peer pressure and substance abuse
Acceptance of special education students in the mainstream

The Labor Force in Education (300 minutes)
Merit pay and job specialization as rewards
Teacher autonomy vs. accountability
Respect for teachers: national and social class variations

Social Class and Its Relation to Schooling (300 minutes)
Parent power in determining eligibility for services or punishment
The teacher’s role in promoting middle-class values and lifestyles vs. adapting to students social class as a determiner of success in school

Curriculum and the Stratification of Knowledge (300 minutes)
Tracking and ability grouping: some alternatives
Vocational education: adaptation to student interests or a form of tracking
Four types of curricula: appropriateness to age level and subject matter
Differentiated instruction for exceptional students: gifted and special needs

Racial and Ethnic Minorities: Equality of Educational Opportunity (300 minutes)
Cultural assimilation vs. cultural pluralism: when is each appropriate?
Inequality of funding and other opportunity
De facto segregation by residence patterns and possible solutions

Gender Equity in Schooling (300 minutes)
Gender segregated classes and schools as a means of promoting confidence
Teachers as perpetuators of traditional gender roles
Teachers as change agents: role models, mentors and encouragers
Cultural influences on gender roles
Title IX and its influence on school practices

Action Research Projects (150 minutes)

**Evaluation:** Evaluation will be based on:

a. Informed and reasoned participation in classroom discussion through small group and individual reports on topics/subtopics chosen by students (20%)

b. Demonstrated ability to interpret and appropriately contextualize and critique issues raised in the course (30%)

c. Completion of an action research project (50%) The action research project will focus on a specific educational/social issue that is both personally and professionally significant to the student and will lead to reflective application of best practice.

4. Implementation:

a. Graduate faculty in the department available to teach the course includes Drs. Cummings, Edwards, Smith and Zhang. In addition, other faculty in the department maybe assigned to teach the course.

b. No additional costs to the student

c. Text and supplementary materials assigned by instructors.
d. Fall 2001

5. Rationale:
   a. Consistent with the master educator expectations envisaged in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and Illinois Core Professional Teaching Standards, this graduate seminar examines the school as a social institution and explores the effects of cultural patterns, social class, family, race and ethnicity, gender and professionalization on educating the youth. The seminar will examine the current policies, practices and procedures prevalent in schools and reflect about their qualitative improvement to meet the needs of all students.
   b. Graduate standing and classroom teaching experience. Target audience includes inservice educators pursuing Master’s/specialist degrees.
   c. Replaces existing EDF5510 Social Foundations of Education. The proposed course covers theoretical knowledge base and core concepts, which can be applied to meet the educational needs of all students. The course is designed to assist the participants in reflective reformulation of instructional policies and practices.
   d. The revised course will be available to meet the education foundational core coursework requirements of M.S. and specialists degrees.

6. Community College Transfer:
   Does not apply

7. Date approved by the department  
   August 31, 2000

8. Date approved by the CEPS Curriculum Committee  
   September 25, 2000

9. Date approved by CGS  
   October 17, 2000