BEF 534

Multicultural Education

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Course Meeting Dates: May 31-June 1, June 7-8, June 21-22, June 28-29

Meeting Times: Fridays 5:00-8:00, Saturdays 9:00-5:00

**I. Course Overview**

In no small part, this course addresses in a very specific way the following question: What is the purpose of schooling? Schooling has a variety of purposes including economic, political, social, and intellectual purposes. Historically, one of the political purposes of schooling has been to realize the long-since cliché notion of the “melting pot.” This has consisted of promoting patriotism by teaching myths, history, and stories (lies?, see Loewen, 1995)[[1]](#footnote-2) about the country, its leaders, and form of government. One of the goals embedded here most relevant to this course is assimilation to a specific cultural milieu that has arisen over the past two and a quarter centuries and the acceptance of class distinctions in terms of privilege and power. All too often, well-meaning and limited forms of assimilation have taken on the much more troublesome form of “Americanization.” “Multicultural education” began to appear on the educational scene during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. What multicultural education means and/or should mean has gone through a number of iterations and has been informed by various theoretical perspectives, including critical theory, feminist theory, neo-Marxism, and queer theory. From these perspectives, simple cultural sensitivity, or a “Taco Tuesdays” approach to multiculturalism, has given way to deeper understandings and a search for social justice in both education and in the larger society. Here multicultural education has been enriched by critical pedagogy. Specifically anti-racist education also adds to the depth of understanding of multiculturalism and to the purposes of critical pedagogy.

In this course, we will explore such variations of transformative pedagogy that are key to providing “multicultural education.” One important question that we must address in this class is when pedagogy becomes “transformative” and why. Here we will consider whether “pointing out” differences is equal to “recognizing” them. In considering these questions, we must first come to some sort of consensus on the role of education in the acculturation and assimilation process and on the transmission of culture in a pluralistic society. We must also consider the ways in which power operates to ensure privilege (and vice-versa) through the social construction of difference. We can then embark on fleshing out the specifics of a number of multicultural education models and transformative pedagogies.

The course is divided, roughly, into two parts. In the first part of the course, we will review the theoretical foundations of multicultural education. Historically, these foundations have been based not in multiculturalism but on coercion, cultural inferiority and deprivation theories, and a host of –isms, including sexism, racism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, ethnocentrism, anglocentrism, etc. (Cf. Spring, 2000).[[2]](#footnote-3) We will attempt to understand and expose privilege and power and the ways they affect our understanding of difference. This understanding should also lead us to interrogate more critically what the purpose of schooling in a “free,” “democratic” society should be. In the second part of the course, we will analyze the present-day circumstances of students affected by certain “isms” and differences in power and privilege. We will consider the ways in which schools (and practices therein) serve to perpetuate them and how critical multicultural education can help to transform “ism-ic” schools.

Generally speaking, the first part of the course is meant to be almost purely theoretical, and the second part of the course is meant to focus more specifically on school policies, practices, and pedagogy. However, since it is impossible and short-sighted to try to disentangle theory from practice, we will continue reading theoretical work as well throughout the second part of the course. The goal is to connect theory to practice and back again.

**II. Required Texts**

Michie, G. (2005). *See you when we get there: Teaching for change in urban schools.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Sensoy, O. and DiAngelo, R. (2012). Is Everyone Really Equal? An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education. NY: Teachers College Press.

**III. General Policies**

*• Special Needs*—If any member of the class feels s/he has a disability and needs special accommodations as addressed by the ADA, please let me know so that I can work with you to provide reasonable accommodation. You should provide this information/request immediately before or after class on the first or second meeting to ensure your fair opportunity to participate in this class.

*• Attendance*—This course will be run in seminar fashion. In other words, informed discussion, exchange of ideas, and debate is the heart of the class. That cannot happen if you do not attend class. Attendance at every class meeting is expected and your grade will reflect your attendance in combination with your participation (see “grading” below). I appreciate that you will all have family or professional responsibilities to deal with, not to mention illnesses. Your first 3 hours of absence will not be counted against you. All other absence will—barring any unusual extenuating circumstances. (For example, a death in the family would count as one such circumstance, a long-held reservation for a few days away at a swank resort would not.) *Regardless of the cause*, a 2-3 page reading reflection will be required to make up for any absences beyond the first. Each absence beyond the 2rd will cause your grade to be lowered by a full letter, and the make-up paper will still be required.

**IV. Assignments and Grading**

*• Participation and Attendance, 20 points.* Informed discussion is the heart of this course. Therefore, all students will be expected to contribute to discussions, applying the readings. Students are encouraged to bring their own experiences, personal reflections, and ideas to discussions with the idea that they will shed light on concepts and ideals being discussed in class. But we must also recognize that our own ideas cannot be stagnant; I, the readings, and your classmates will serve as sounding boards. You might not always like or understand what comes back, but you must always struggle with it. PLEASE DO NOT COME TO CLASS IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE ASSIGNED READING.

Rules of engagement:

1. Never take what you or someone says as your/their final word on the subject. After all, change and progress is what education is about.

2. Attack ideas, not people.

3. Don't get defensive when #2 happens to you.

4. Don't feel obligated to say things like, "Maybe I'm wrong but..." or "Playing devil's advocate..." Usually people hide behind such phrases so that others won't think that they are thinking what they are thinking. You're saying it, so you must be thinking it. If you are thinking it, it is likely you believe there is some truth to it. This makes it worthy sharing, without qualification, for discussion. Remember, we are still playing by rule number 1.

*• Presentation (20 points).* Each of you will be required to present a chapter of the Michie text. (Probably in pairs, TBD). Your presentation should include an analysis of the ways in which the teacher engaged (or not) in critical multiculturalism. This analysis should integrate in a substantial way the readings from the first two days of class as well as the readings assigned for the day you are presenting.

*• Paper (60 points).* You will complete one class paper that will be divided into three main sections as described below. Your paper should be 15-20 pages in length, have 1.5 spacing, and be in 12 point font. You have two paper options to choose from:

**OPTION 1**

Introduction (approx. 150 words)

Section 1, Theory. In this section of your paper, you should consider the theoretical underpinnings of multicultural education. What are they? What do they mean to definition and purposes of critical multiculturalism as opposed to vulgar multiculturalism? Given these theoretical underpinnings, discuss the connections among multicultural education, anti-racist education, and critical pedagogy. What are these things? Why/how are they required to be symbiotic? In other words, can you have one without the other? How does answering this question involve consideration of privilege and power? What would multicultural education mean/look like without its critical and anti-racist partners?

Section 2, Content or Issue. In this section of your paper you may choose either to examine your ability to make your own practices within your given area of expertise multicultural (“multicultural” as defined in paper #1) or to examine the ways you handle or not and [should] have handled a specific “ism” in your classroom. You should spend the first pages of this paper describing your pedagogical style and strategies in the content area you have chosen or strategies and “hang ups” around the ism you have chosen. What aspects of your own [socio-cultural and political autobiography](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534.1/Fall2008.htm#autobiography) have contributed to your pedagogical style and beliefs around multiculturalism and/or the particular ism you have chosen? Are your pedagogical styles and strategies “multicultural?” (refer to your first paper) To what extent? How might you change your practices (and why should you) or what ideas could you effectively add to your teaching arsenal based on the reading. You need to choose at least one additional reading (suggestions will be offered) to complete this assignment.

Section 3, Reflection. In his introduction, Michie writes that the teachers in his book “don’t always see what they are doing as ‘radical,’ and they wouldn’t necessarily cite ‘critical pedagogy’ as the bedrock of their work in schools.” What are some of the “small victories” these teachers achieve and given your reflections in section 1 and your further reading around the concept of critical pedagogy and reflections on your own practices, in what ways are these teachers engaging in critical multicultural education? In what ways are they not? How would more thorough-going critical pedagogues critique their work and “improve” it? Reflecting on your own practices as a teacher or your own educational experiences as a student, what have you learned from these teachers?

 Summary and Conclusions (approx. 200 words).

**OPTION 2**

Introduction (approx. 150 words)

Section 1, Theory. Follow the description of section one above.

Section 2, School Climate and Curriculum Analysis. Using the conceptual framework you developed in section 1 of your paper and the charts developed by Nieto and/or Banks to help you, analyze and identify the level of multiculturalism present in your school and curriculum. How multicultural is your school? To what extent and in what ways is multiculturalism reflected in your curriculum guide, across the curriculum? What evidence do you have (or lack) to place your school/program/teaching where you do on the various continua represented in the rubric? Examine the textbooks your school uses and your library holdings. Survey colleagues as to their (self-reported) “multicultural” practices. Given the class readings, what recommendations might you make to make your school and teaching (even) more multicultural?

What issue(s) in particular is your school not dealing with effectively? Why? This could be a structural problem. For example, rowed classrooms cater to one learning style or you might simply lack materials or you may have various forms of tracking. It could be a policy problem to the extent that certain groups of students are more impacted by school policies (zero-tolerance policies or colorblind punishment policies, e.g.). It could be a conceptual challenge. For example, you don’t see how multiculturalism generally or a particular issue of multiculturalism is relevant to your school. It could be a personal philosophical inconsistency with some of the ideals of multiculturalism. This might be, as you might discover in doing a [cultural autobiography](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534.1/Fall2008.htm#autobiography), due to a clash of one your identities with that of another person. In this case, what are your responsibilities as a “multicultural” instructional leader and can you make them consistent with your own identity(ies)?

Section 3, Reflection. Drawing on the lessons you learned from the teachers in Michie’s book, describe how they engaged in critical multiculturalism (or not) and how the structure/philosophy/policies at the school level (as you describe and analyze them in section 2) can positively and negatively impact the practices of teachers in the classroom.

Summary and Conclusions (approx. 200 words).

**OPTION 3**

If neither of the first two options melts your butter or meets your professional needs/interests (e.g. Higher Ed students may find the options too geared to K-12 issues), you are free to consult with me to come up with your own paper topic.

**Notes on grading of papers:**

While it is not required, I would encourage you to be working on the various sections of your paper throughout the course. I also encourage you to submit drafts of any section of your paper as you develop them. Until you hand in the final version of your paper, you should always consider it a draft to be revisited, edited, addended, etc., as you engage in more reading. Grading option: You may hand in each section of the paper separately and have each section graded separately as we progress through the units or you may hand in the full paper once at the end. Your complete paper is due on Monday, July 1, by 5:00 pm.

*The following criteria will be taken into account in the grading of your paper(s):*

1. Does the paper adequately, coherently, and accurately address the theoretical underpinnings discussed in the course?

2. Does the paper integrate the readings in academically reasonable ways that serve to build an argument and/or effectively elucidate major concepts?

3. Is the information in the first section of the paper brought to bear in the other sections of the paper in a way that evidences a theoretically grounded analysis?

4. Does the paper evidence thorough reading on the part of the writer?

5. Does the paper provide evidence of the ability of the author to engage in praxis?

**•** Final grading: 100-90 A, 90-80 B, 80-70 C, 70-60 D, 60-0 F

**V.  Schedule of Readings**

\*all underscored readings are available on line.

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| ***Privilege, Power, and Ideology: The Theoretical Underpinnings of Critical Multiculturalism*** | |
| May 31  Concepts to guide our thinking about multiculturalism: Privilege | *Reading:* [Ignatiev](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Ignatiev.pdf); [Garvey](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Garvey.pdf); [McClaren & Munoz](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/McLarenMunoz.pdf); [Freire](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Freire.pdf)*\** |
| June 1  Conceptualizations, ideals, and purposes of multicultural education | *Reading:* [Banks](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Banks.pdf); [Kailin](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Kailin.pdf); [Blum](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Blum.pdf); [Nieto](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Nieto.pdf); [McLaren](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/McLaren.pdf) (pp. 183-192)  *Video:* Ethnic Notions |
| ***Critical Pedagogy and the Issues: Social Stratification and Racism*** | |
| June 7  Race, class, and schooling: Can you say “social stratification”? | *Reading*: Johnson, pp. 41-89 & 108-124; [Chomsky](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Chomsky.pdf); [Mantsios](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Mantsios.pdf); [Bigelow](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Bigelow.pdf); [Kozol](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Third_World_US/JonathanKozol_page.html) *(To be assigned),* [Condron](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Condron.pdf)  *Video:* A Question of Fairness |
| June 8  Race, ethnicity, and privilege: What does it mean to be purple in school? | *Reading*:  Michie, xi-xiv, 1-14 and 15-49 (group 1); [McIntosh](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/McIntosh.pdf); [Tenorio](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Tenorio.pdf); [Peterson](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Peterson.pdf); [Miller](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Miller.pdf); McLaren, 193-218  *Video:* The Color of Fear |
| ***From Theory to Practice: Critical Pedagogy and the Issues: Sexism, Heterosexism, and linguicism*** | |
| June 21  Gender: Improper masculinities | *Reading*: Johnson, pp. 90-107; Michie, 51-83 (group 2); [Frye](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Frye.pdf); [Martino](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Martino.pdf); [Mills;](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Mills.pdf) [Taylor](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Taylor.pdf)  *Video:* Tough Guise |
| June 22  Sexual orientation: The walls are str8; you be too. | *Reading*: [Pharr;](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Pharr.pdf) [O’Conor](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/OConor.pdf); [Gordon](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Gordon.pdf); [Ellis;](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Ellis.pdf) [Temple](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Temple.pdf)  *Video*: It’s Elementary |
| June 28  Language diversity: Please, speak English (and if you’re from here, speak standard English) | *Reading*: Michie, 85-117 (group 3); [Krashen](http://www.ericdigests.org/1997-3/bilingual.html); [Perry](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/Perry.pdf); [Delpit](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/DelpitEbonics.pdf) |
| ***From Theory to Practice: Critical Pedagogy and the Issues: Cultural Capital and the Necessity of Double Consciousness*** | |
| June 29  Changing what counts as cultural capital | *Reading*: Johnson, pp. 125-153; Michie, 119-151 (group 4); Michie, 153-182 (group 5); Michie, 183-195; [Delpit](http://www.bama.ua.edu/%7Ejpetrovi/BEF534/readings/DelpitOther.pdf); McLaren, 218-219  *Video*: Untracking Schools |

Complete Citations for assigned readings and additional resources:

Banks, J. A. (2002). Chapter 1, Goals and Misconceptions. *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bigelow, B. (1994). Getting Off the Track: Stories from an Untracked Classroom. In *Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Social Justice*. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools.

Blum, L. (2004). Antiracism, Multiculturalism, and Interracial Community: Three

Educational Values for a Multicultural Society. In Heldke, L. and O’Connor, P. (Eds.),

*Oppression, Privilege, & Resistance: Theoretical Perspectives on Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Chomsky, N. (2000). Chomsky on MisEducation. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Publishers.

Condron, D. and Roscigno, V. (2003). Disparities within: Unequal spending and achievement in an urban school district. *Sociology of Education*, *76*(1), 18-36.

Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in teaching other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review, 58*, 280-287.

Delpit, L. (1997). Ebonics and Culturally Responsive Instruction: What Should Teachers Do? *Rethinking Schools*, 12(1).

Ellis, V. and High, S. (2004). Something more to tell you: Gay, lesbian or bisexual young people’s experiences of secondary schooling. *British Educational Research Journal*, *30*(2), 213-225.

Freire, P. (1973). Education for Critical Consciousness. New York: Continuum.

Frye, M. (2004). Oppression. In Heldke, L. and O’Connor, P. (Eds.). *Oppression, Privilege, & Resistance: Theoretical Perspectives on Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Garvey, J. (1996). My Problem with Multicultural Education. In N. Ignatiev & J. Garvey (Eds.), *Race Traitors*. New York: Routledge.

Gordon, L. (1994). What do we say when we hear “faggot?” In B. Bigelow, L. Christensen, S. Karp, B. Miner, and B. Peterson (Eds.),*Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Social Justice*. Milwaukee. Rethinking Schools.

Ignatiev, N. (1996). Immigrants and Whites. In Ignatiev, N. & Garvey, J. (Eds.), *Race Traitors*. New York: Routledge.

Kailin, J. (2002). *Antiracist education: From theory to practice*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Kozol, J. (1991). Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools. New York: HarperPerennial.

Krashen, S. (1997). Why bilingual education? *ERIC Digest*. Available at http://www.ericdigests.org/1997-3/bilingual.html

Mantsios, G. "Class in America: Myths and Realities." *Rereading America: Cultural Contexts for Critical Thinking and Writing*, 2nd ed. G. Colombo, R. Cullen, and B. Lisle (Eds.). New York: Bedford Books, 1992. 72-85.

Martino, W. Gendered Learning Practices: Exploring the Cost of Hegemonic Masculinity for Girls and Boys in Schools. Retrieved from [www.doe.tased.edu.au/equitystandards/gender/framewrk/learning.htm](http://www.doe.tased.edu.au/equitystandards/gender/framewrk/learning.htm) on 9/7/2005.

McIntosh, P. (2004). White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women’s Studies. In Heldke, L. and O’Connor, P. (Eds.), *Oppression, Privilege, & Resistance: Theoretical Perspectives on Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

McLaren, P. (2003). Life in Schools. An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education. (4th Ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

McLaren, P. & Munoz, J. (2000). Contesting Whiteness: Critical Perspective on the Struggle for Social Justice. In Ovando, C. and McLaren, P. (Eds.) *The Politics of Multiculturalism and Bilingual Education: Students and Teachers Caught in the Cross-Fire*, pp. 22-49. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Miller, K. (1994). Tapping into Feelings of Fairness. In B. Bigelow, L. Christensen, S. Karp, B. Miner, and B. Peterson (Eds.), *Rethinking Classrooms: Teaching* *for Equity and Social Justice*. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools.

Mills, M., Martino, W., and Lingard, B. (2004). Recruiting and retaining male teachers: Policy issues in the male teacher debate. British *Journal of Sociology of Education*, *25*(3), 355-369.

Nieto, S. (2004). Chapter 9, Multicultural Education and School Reform. *Affirming Diversity* [4th Ed.]. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

O’Connor, A. (1994). Who Gets Called Queer in School? Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Teenagers, Homophobia and High School. *The High School Journal*, 77(1&2), 7-12.

Perry, Theresa (1997). I’on Know Why They Be Trippin’. *Rethinking Schools*, 12(1).

Peterson, Bob. (1994). Teaching for Social Justice: One Teacher’s Journey. In B. Bigelow,

L. Christensen, S. Karp, B. Miner, and B. Peterson (Eds.), *Rethinking Our* *Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Social Justice*. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools.

Pharr, Suzanne. (2004). Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism. In Heldke, L. and O’Connor, P. (Eds.). *Oppression, Privilege, & Resistance: Theoretical Perspectives on Racism, Sexism,and Heterosexism*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Taylor, Frank. (2003). Content analysis and gender stereotypes in children’s books. *Teaching Sociology*, *31*(3), 300-311.

Temple, Julia R. (2005). People who are different from you: Heterosexism in Quebec High School textbooks. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *28*(3), 271-294.

Tenorio, Rita. (1994). Race and Respect Among Young Children. In B. Bigelow, L. Christensen, S. Karp, B. Miner, and B. Peterson (Eds.), *Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Social Justice*. Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools.

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| Doing a cultural autobiography      Respond to the following prompts. Then use the information to write a one-page reflective narrative about what you learned, specifically sharing what discoveries about your family, ethnicity, culture stand out most and why.    1. Name the country/ies other than the U.S. that you identify as a place of origin for yourself and your family.    2. Identify your ethnic/cultural group membership and write out at least three examples of advice that has been handed down through your family by your ancestors, such as a family motto.    3. List at least five values that are most important to your cultural/racial identity and then rank order them from most important to least important. (Identify the source of these values and try to categorize them, e.g., religious belief, political ideal, family tradition…)    4. Write down what particular family members’ attitudes are towards people who are culturally and ethnically different (White Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Gays/Lesbians, Physically Challenged People, Religious People, Rich/Poor People, etc.)    5. Write down at least two things that you were encouraged (explicitly or implicitly) to believe about people of other groups.    6. Compose a list of what was discussed and what was not discussed and why you think that was so.    7. Complete the following sentence starters:           As a woman/man, I must .........................         As a member of my ethnic or cultural group, I must........................         As a member of my social group, I must..........................................         As a member of my profession, I must.............................................         As a member of my age group, I must...........................................  8. Write out a timeline in 5 year blocks. For each block, recall and write down specific incidents in your live that affected your thinking and/or feelings about people who are culturally or ethnically different from yourself.    9. Use what you have thought about and learned from doing #1-8 to write to write a one-page reflective narrative about what you learned, specifically sharing what discoveries about your family, ethnicity, culture |

1. Loewen, James. (1995). Lies my teacher told me: Everything your American history textbook got wrong. New York: Touchstone. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Spring, Joel (2001). Deculturalization and the struggle for equality. Boston: McGrawHill. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)