Culturally Responsive Pedagogy  
EDUC 3011/1100  
School of Education, University of Pittsburgh  
Classroom Location, 4317 Posvar Hall  
Fall 2014

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Course Overview

Our course, culturally responsive pedagogy, introduces students to theory, research, and especially practice related to developing and enacting curriculum and instructional practices that respond to the social context in which they (will) work. The course covers general principles and approaches to culturally responsive teaching such as how teachers can develop meaningful relationships with students, how teachers can learn from and about the school and local community, how teachers can develop and implement culturally responsive classroom management, and how teachers can develop expectations for students that maximize their capacity. In addition, the course will assist students in learning about and developing culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy in their different content/subject matter areas (such as Mathematics, Science, Art, Language Arts, and Social Studies). A recurrent and central question of the course is: How do teachers develop culturally responsive instructional practices in their particular disciplinary domain to maximize students’ learning opportunities?

Required Books (Available at the University of Pittsburgh Bookstore)


Class Assignments

- Class Participation (20 Points)
- Cultural Identity Paper (15 Points)
- Content/Subject Matter Group Presentations (25 Points)
- Culminating Experience (40 Points)
  - Research Proposal – Doctoral Students
  - Culturally Responsive Lesson(s) – Master’s Students

Assignment #1: Class Participation
20 Points

Students are expected to read all of the assigned readings for the course and to participate in class. This participation may include participating in class discussions, facilitating/leading activities and discussions, and/or completing reflective in-class written assignments (also known as quizzes). In order to participate, students must attend class. After one unexcused absence, students’ grades will decrease by 10 points for up to 20 points deducted. Students should get an email address of a classmate for updates/notes when absences occur.

Evaluation/Assessment
Are you in class and on time?
Do you attend class regularly?
Are you prepared for class? That is, do you respond and contribute to class discussions and to activities drawing from the readings?
What is the nature of this participation? Are meaningful and relevant contributions made?
Is it evident that you have completed the readings?

Assignment #2: Cultural Identity Development
15 Points

Students will draft a 6-8-page written identity awareness/development paper, describing their memories and thoughts about how they came to see themselves as a cultural being. On a small scale, students should pose questions to their parents, teachers, and/or older siblings about events, episodes and moments that shaped how they see themselves as individuals with a culture. Mostly, students should rely on their own memories, thoughts, and reflections about how they came to understand, represent, and develop their cultural awareness. The informal oral presentation and written assignment should focus on various “stages” of personal development and should convey not only a summative report of cultural awareness but should also demonstrate critical thinking about that development and growth. If papers do not take critical as well as summative stances in the discussion, points will be deducted. In other words, a summary of students’ cultural awareness, development, and growth is not enough. Critical thinking about the nature of the development and growth is also required. A short, 15-20-minute presentation of this development is also required on the due date for the written assignment. There is no need to develop a formal presentation for this assignment. Students will be expected to ‘talk us through’ their cultural identity development paper. Students are encouraged to bring and share photos and
other memorabilia/documents to assist them in their sharing. An important feature of the paper is to consider how students’ cultural identity may influence their work as educators.

While students should feel comfortable focusing on various aspects of culture, each paper must consider gender, socio-economic status/class, and race. Some guiding questions include: (a) when did I start seeing myself as a cultural being and why?; (b) what experiences (in particular) have helped shape my cultural awareness; and (c) how might my experiences as a cultural being affect me as an educator? At least two references/citations are required from our course. If course readings are not cited, points will be deducted.

**Evaluation/Assessment**

Written
How well critiqued, analyzed, and summarized are your memories and experiences about your cultural awareness, development, and growth?
How well do you make connections between your cultural awareness and your work as an educator?
Is the correct number of references cited?
Does the paper follow APA 5th edition guidelines?
Are critical, analytical, and summative stances included in the discussion?

(Informal) Oral
How well do you convey the main features/themes of the paper?
How well do you make connections between your cultural awareness and your work as an educator?
Is the informal oral presentation organized and engaging?

**Assignment #3: Content/Subject Matter Group Presentations**

**25 Points**

**Due Date: TBA**

Each student will join a group that best fits with his or her area(s) of interests and expertise. There are four books for our course. In groups, students will carefully review and synthesize each of these readings for topics in their content/subject matter areas. In addition, each group will research and locate at least 15 refereed journal articles in the content area that addresses and are grounded in culturally responsive pedagogy and/or culturally relevant pedagogy. In some cases the terms culturally responsive or culturally relevant may not show up in the title of the article but based on the group’s understanding (from an epistemological perspective) of the major tenets of CRP, articles may still be included. In this case, groups will be expected to “make the case” for the inclusion.

Groups will have two hours to present the material to the class in a manner the group decides appropriate. Important: the bulk of the focus should be on practice in the presentation as well as the synthesis and should cover elementary, middle and secondary education.

As a group, questions to organize and guide your thinking include:
• What are the major themes of the readings? Summarize.
• What points of convergence/divergence do you see between and/or among the different readings for the session? For instance, are the points different in urban versus rural contexts? Do you see differences in elementary versus secondary emphases?
• What did you learn/think about that you had not known or thought about before?
• What lingering questions emerge after reading the pieces? In other words, what else do you want to know about practice?
• What are the implications of the reading (themes) for your (as a collective) future work in the field?

Specific Questions regarding practice:

• What did teachers do in the article? How do you know?
• What did students learn in the articles? How do you know?
• How did the administration support CRP in the school or district? How do you know?
• What assessment tools were developed to support student learning, cognition, and development?

The purpose of the synthesis is to uncover and to analyze the major features and themes of the reading. This is not the time for those in the group to actually “practice” or teach or implement the theory but to talk about what was learned about practicing and implementing the theory. It is important that groups not only summarize the major parts of the readings (use headings to help with this work), but it is also critical that groups analyze what is read as well. What questions and points resonate with the group? What lingering questions emerge after reading the pieces? What are the implications of the reading (themes) for practice? See the questions above.

Each Group will:

• ensure that each member of the group participates in the preparation work as well as the delivery/presentation (contact Prof Milner immediately if there are problems with under-participation);
• develop and deliver a presentation for two hours (PowerPoint is required);
• lead the class (in a creative way) on the theme/reading for two hours;
• email the 15 refereed journal articles to the entire class by 6:00 p.m. the evening before the group’s presentation;
• construct a Content/Reading Synthesis Handout for each student in the class. The synthesis must be sent to the class by 6:00 p.m. the day before presentation or bring hard copies to class (two-sided works) for each class member (note: a hardcopy is required for Prof Milner whether uploaded or not);
• bring one hardcopy (one-sided) of the PowerPoint slides to Prof Milner the day of the presentation;
• dress in professional attire for the session leadership.
Students will be graded on the (1) content and delivery of the oral presentation, (2) PowerPoint slides, and (3) the reading synthesis.

Evaluation/Assessment
Oral
How well does the group convey the main features/themes of the readings?
Is the oral presentation organized and engaging?
How well do you “lead” the class during your presentation?
How creative is the delivery?

Written
Does the handout address all the guiding questions above with depth and accuracy?
How well organized, developed, and analytic is content of the handout?

PowerPoint
How well developed are the PowerPoints?
How creative are the PowerPoints?
What is the nature of the content on the PowerPoints?

Culminating Experiences (Select One)
40 Points
(Oral)
Written Assignment is due to Professor Milner by 12:00 Noon on December 12. Please deliver final projects to the Center for Urban Education.

Assignment #4: Research Proposal (Required for Doctoral Students, Optional for Master’s Students)

Develop a research proposal on culturally responsive teaching between 25-30 pages (including references, tables, charts, appendixes, and so forth). The proposal should be constructed as if you were planning to conduct the study, perhaps as a pilot for your dissertation. For ideas on how to organize your proposal, read dissertation proposals in the library or ask your major professor for copies of exemplary proposals for your review. Students will present their proposal to the group, not to exceed 20 minutes.

Evaluation/Assessment

Written
How well developed is the proposal?
Are relevant references and citations used in the proposal? In other words, are the major theories and researchers’ work about your topic included in the proposal?
Does the paper follow APA, 6th edition guidelines?
How scholarly is the proposal?

Oral
Are PowerPoint slides used in the presentation?
OR

Assignment #4: Culturally Responsive Lesson (Master’s Students)

A major goal of this project is to collect as much material as possible in order to develop tools (curriculum, activities, worksheets, assessments) to assist you in your work of becoming culturally responsive in your respective careers/classrooms. This project allows you to construct a series of three lessons (see lesson template at the end of this syllabus) that are culturally responsive/relevant. Each student will develop and teach a (ONE) mini-lesson using tenets of culturally responsive and/or culturally relevant pedagogy from those three lessons. Students will select a topic or related topics within their subject matter (e.g., grammar, the French revolution, mathematical equations, literature) and develop three lessons that incorporate tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy and/or culturally relevant pedagogy. Each student will teach a “mini-lesson,” drawn from the complete lesson that will be outlined in what is turned in. The mini-lesson will last approximately 20-25-minutes total (strictly enforced). Students will then step back and talk through their curricular and instructional decisions. That is, why did you make the decisions you made in the lesson? This reflection will last approximately 5-minutes. We (the entire class) will act as your students.

Lesson Plan: Students will develop and turn in three lesson plans and related documentation that

- make explicit connections to CRP (see lesson plan format at the end of this syllabus),
- make explicit connections to state standards from a particular state (students’ selection),
- make explicit connections to Common Core Standards in your content area, and
- provide evaluation/(pre/post) assessment(s) of the lesson for students to gauge students’ learning from the lesson.

6-8-Page Reflection Paper: In addition, a short paper (not to exceed 8 pages) grounded in the literature that describes students’ curricular and instructional decision-making will also be submitted. The paper should:

- describe how the lessons are culturally responsive/culturally relevant;
- name the tenets of culturally relevant and responsiveness that connect to the lessons (grounded in the literature);
- describe your decision-making/thoughts on why you selected curriculum and instructional materials and practices;
- discuss any challenges or changes you would make in the future.

Mini-Lesson Demonstration: Students will “set the stage” during the mini-lesson demonstration providing

- the grade level for the assignment,
- the number of students,
• type of school (note: lessons can be culturally relevant or responsive in different social contexts),
• prior learning that has taken place before the lesson
• pre/post assessment
• other??

To recapitulate, students will

• Select a subject, topic, and grade level
  o The lesson should draw from and make explicit connections to CRP
  o The lesson should be grounded in and guided by state standards/common core
• Develop a plan using CRP including visual aids, and assessment; show connections to CRP
• “Teach” a mini-lesson/Share rationale for decision making from the three connected lessons developed
• Turn in a complete packet/series of documentation/information that goes far beyond the mini lessons and lesson plans
• Write and submit a paper (grounded in the literature) not to exceed 8 pages that rationalizes your curricular and instructional decision-making

*Evaluation/Assessment*

**Lesson Plan: Written**

Are explicit connections to CRP made?
Are connections to state (and common core) standards from a particular state (students’ selection)? Are they logical and well done?
Are (pre/post) assessments of the lessons to gauge students’ learning developed and well executed?
Is a meaningful lesson(s) developed using CRT?
Are students likely to learn from the lesson?
What are the strengths of the lesson?
Is this a lesson that can be logically incorporated into a “real” classroom – especially given the social context identified and the state standards?
Does the written plan address the framing outlined above?

*6-8-Page Reflection Paper*

Does the paper describe how the lessons are culturally responsive/culturally relevant?
Does the paper name the tenets of culturally relevant and responsiveness that connect to the lessons?
Are the points well substantiated with the literature?
What is the nature and quality of the discussion about your decision-making/thoughts on why you selected curriculum and instructional materials and practices?
Does the paper discuss any challenges or changes you would make in the future?
Mini-lesson Demonstration: Oral
How engaging is the lesson?
Is the lesson appropriate for your selected social context?
Are tenets of CRT included and well transferred in the lesson?
Does the lesson address the framing outlined above?

Course Schedule

Session 1
August 25

Introduction to the Course

Ice Breaker/Community Builder
Syllabus Overview/Expectations
Definitions of Central Constructs
What is Culturally Responsive and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy?
  • Central Tenets
  • Central Themes and Constructs

Question and Answer Period

Labor Day, September 1 – NO CLASS

Session 2
September 8

Theme: Cultural Identity Paper Due (Sharing)

Session 3
September 15

Theme: Context of Teaching and Learning


Session 4  
September 22  

Theme: Gap Gauging  
Gay (2010) pp. 1 – 21  
Howard (2010) pp. 9 -- 34  
Ladson-Billings (2009) pp. 1 -- 15  

Session 5  
September 29  

Theme: Culturally Responsive Classroom Management  

Session 6  
October 6  

Theme: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (in action)  
Content/Subject Matter Presentations  
Elementary  
Session 7
October 13

Theme: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (in action) (Continued)
Content/Subject Matter Presentations

General/Broad-Level/Social Studies


Session 8
October 20

Theme: A “Workshop” on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy through

• Recognizing Student Background and Identity
• Developing Family and Community Connections
• Understanding Pop Culture
• Developing and Maintaining High Expectations
• Implementing Solid Classroom Management
• Developing Rigorous Academic Curriculum

Session 9
October 27

Theme: Culturally Responsive Teaching Lesson Planning and Teaching

McCUTCHEON (TBA)


Attend Geneva Gay Lecture: October 30, 2014
Session 10
November 3

Literacy

Milner (2010) pp. 79 – 106

Session 11
November 10

Math and Science

Howard (2010) page 83

Session 12
November 17

Theme: Micro/Micro-Level Reform for CRP


Session 13
November 24


Session 14
December 1

Theme: Culturally Responsive Presentations (Due)

Session 15
December 8

Theme: Culturally Responsive Presentations (Due)
Grading Scale

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Notes to Remember:

Please check your email regularly.

Please do not check email and surf the internet during class. While students are encouraged to bring in laptop computers to type notes or to complement their learning, students are expected to be engaged in class throughout each session.

All written assignments should be written in a formal fashion. For example, do not use slang or contractions in assignments you will turn in. Develop your assignments as if you are submitting them to a journal editor.

Assignments must be typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman, 12-point font, one-inch margins, and should follow the guidelines of the APA Publication Manual, Sixth Edition.

As a common courtesy to your classmates and to the instructor, please turn off cell phones during class time.

If you are a student with special needs of some kind, please let the instructor know so that he can work with you to best meet those needs.

The instructor encourages discussion about what we are learning in this course; however, all independently submitted assignments must be each student’s own work.

If you have a religious holiday that you observe, please let me know. I will work with you to meet expectations/assignments.
**Additional References**


Lesson Plan Format

Note: You will construct three.
Culturally Responsive Teaching

Preliminary Information

Name: Date:

Grade:

Number of Students: Course/Subject

Class size

Demographics of the class

Demographics and Related Neighborhood/Community Information

Connections to State Standards

Connections to Common Core Standards

Unit/Theme:

   Period/Time:

Estimated Duration:

Where in the unit does this lesson occur? (Circle one)

   Beginning of the unit
   Middle of the unit
   End of the unit

Structure(s) or grouping for the lesson (Circle any/all that apply)

   Whole class
   Small group
   One-to-one
   Other (specify)
Big Idea or Concept Being Taught

Rationale/Context
(Why this lesson at this time; how does it connect to previous or succeeding lessons?)

Connections to Culturally Responsive/Relevant Pedagogy

Student Goals
(Identify 1 or 2 goals for students; below your goals state how you will communicate the goals to students.)

Standards (Restate)
(List the standards that are relevant to your goals)

(Pre/post) Assessment and Student Feedback
(How will you assess the extent to which students met your goals and how will you provide students with feedback?)

Prior Knowledge and Conceptions
(What knowledge, skills and/or academic language must students already know to be successful with this lesson?)

Resources and Materials
(What resources and materials will you and the students need?)

Launch
(How will you get the lesson started? What questions, texts, inquiry, modeling, or other techniques will you use?)

Make Connections to Culturally Responsive/Relevant Teaching
Explore

(How will students engage with ideas/texts to develop understandings; what questions will you ask; how will you promote question generation/discussion)

Closure

(How will you bring closure to the lesson?)

What Ifs

Be proactive: Consider what might not go as planned with the lesson; what will you do about it?

Student Learning

(To what extent did students achieve the anticipated outcomes; how do you know? Focus on the group but also on one or two individual students.

Reflection/Self-Critique

(What went well; what did not; how do you know; what will you do differently next time? What did you learn about yourself as a teacher? What did you learn about your students?)

Connections to Culturally Responsive/Relevant Teaching

(What are explicit links to Culturally Responsive/Relevant Teaching?)

Homework/Next Steps