

The Evergreen State College
Masters Program in Public Administration
Education Policy in Context: Political, Social, and Economic
(CRN 20365 – 2 credits Elective)
Winter 2010 Final Syllabus 1/21/10

CRN (GR): 20365 (special grad & undergrads with permission only)

Faculty: Brenda Hood, Adjunct Hoodb@evergreen.edu

MEETS: 1 Weekend: Feb 19 – 21 (Fri 5-9pm, Sat & Sun 9am-5pm)

LOCATION: SEM 2 B1107

This is an intensive weekend course with assignments and project activities that must be completed and turned in prior to the class meeting. Please read the entire syllabus now. Take a look at your calendar and your other responsibilities to properly plan ahead to meet the course requirements. Course credit requires you attend and participate in all class meeting times and that you complete all of the assignments timely. Due to the format of this course, no exceptions are possible. The course depends upon all of us working collaboratively, respectfully, and thoughtfully.

Learning Objectives

1. Explore and make explicit one's own thinking and learning, how to think about ourselves as life-long learners, and how to support that effortful endeavor.
2. Understand education policy, and the context of education policy. What is an education policy? Who makes it, for whom?
3. How does the political, social and economic context influence policy development? What is the role of norms, values, and power in education policy?
4. Understand how to participate in the policy development environment and how to change current policy.
5. Identify tensions around policy development and policy implementation.
6. Apply learning from study of education policy to other policy arenas.
7. Improve skills in critical thinking, writing, speaking, and working effectively in teams.
8. Develop and enhance public service organization skills and capabilities.

Evaluation

Consistent with MPA program requirements, a self-evaluation will be required for credit. This must be provided to the instructor at class on Sunday, February 21, along with the student evaluation of the faculty (contact program secretaries Ruth Joynes or Pat Kolstad for forms if needed). It will be optional for the student to submit this self-evaluation to the Registrar as part of your permanent portfolio.

Texts

Required Reading

1. *Re-Framing Educational Politics for Social Justice*, Catherine Marshall, Allyn & Bacon. ISBN 9780205371426. Available at the TESC bookstore.
2. Course Pedagogical Approach: Learning Cycle (provided on Moodle)

Assignments & Projects

There are 5 Assignments related to the course concepts and the readings, and 3 Projects that require planning and immediate attention. Read all the assignments and projects thoroughly, so you can plan ahead. Many assignments and project work can be completed sooner than the due date. I provide due dates as a “no later than” date, and encourage you to send me your assignments as soon as you have them completed. Contact me with any questions. Written work is short and informal (meaning APA style is not expected). The "no more than" page limit is just that – shorter responses are likely.

Item – Due Date – Topic/Required

Assignment 1 – January 19	Course handout, Initial thoughts written assignment
Assignment 2 – February 19	Reading, short written assignment
Assignment 3 – February 19	Reading, short written assignment
Assignment 4 – February 19	Reading, short written assignment
Assignment 5 – March 1*	Reading, final written assignment

Project 1 – February 17*	Education policy bill research & write up
Project 2 – February 17*	Attended 2 meetings & observation write up
Project 3 – February 19	Pre-class write up, drawing; Class group work

*Due by midnight

Class Time:

- In teams, project work preparation and final presentation
- Faculty and guest presenters discuss and facilitate full-class discussion and exploration of topics relevant to education policy, education finance, and an international comparison of South African education policy

Assignment #1: Due January 19 at noon to Moodle or email to Brenda (hoodb@evergreen.edu)
[No more than 3 ½ pages, single spaced]

READ: Before doing this assignment, read the document I've placed on Moodle, titled "Pedagogical Approach_Learning Cycle." This will inform you of the instructional design for this course, and how to go about approaching the assignments.

WRITE: Once you have read this document, consider these to be "challenge questions." The idea is that you write your initial thoughts to these questions, journal-style, quickly and succinctly. This should be from your own perspective – what is on your mind and in your heart? Give yourself 1-2 hours total, and write no more than the guidelines I've provided for each (no more than 3 ½ pages, single spaced, total). Proof your final document for grammar, punctuation, and ease of reading.

Assessment: This assignment is to capture your initial thoughts, without judgment, and thus not assessed in any manner other than "completed." The only feedback will be if something is incomplete. I will contact students whose assignments I have not received timely, to be sure there was not a transmittal problem.

- a) What is the goal of education? [No more than half a page].
- b) Write a response to each question: [No more than one page total for all questions].
 - a. What should be the purposes of schooling?
 - b. Who should decide issues of school direction and policy?
 - c. Who should pay for schooling? How should funds be distributed?
- c) In half a page or less, define social justice (1-2 sentences), then reflect and write a draft education policy statement strengthening social justice in some aspect of the American public educational system (early learning, K-12, or higher education).
- d) In half a page or less, define life-long learning, the role of formal and informal learning on life-long learning, and the influence education policy has on life-long learning.
- e) Review the course learning objectives. In one page or less, reflect and write on the following three items from your own perspective, thinking about what led you to enroll in this course: (1) What do you believe is most important to gain from this course, in other words, what are the enduring understandings you wish to take away? (2) What are the key knowledge and skills you wish to acquire as a result of this course? (3) What are the key concepts and processes you are curious about and desire to learn more about through this course?

Assignment #2 Due February 15 by class time to Moodle [No more than 1 ½ pages, single spaced]

- (1) Before beginning the reading, journal your thoughts to the following question [no more than half a page]: How are policy and politics intertwined in education policy?

- (2) Read the Foreward, Preface, and Chapter 1 of *Re-Framing Educational Politics for Social Justice* (to page 36)
- (3) On a new page, respond to the same question in light of what you read, and provide support from the book or from other sources for your response [no more than 1 page].
- (4) Turn both your initial thoughts and revised thinking in by the due date, clearly identifying each.

Assignment #3 Due February 15 by class time to Moodle [No more than 2 pages, single spaced]

- (1) Read Chapters 2 and 3 of the *Re-Framing* text (to page 98)
- (2) Answer the following guiding questions in no more than 2 pages, drawing upon support from the book or other sources for your response: How are problems defined for policy making in political arenas, what are the structures and cultural process affecting education policy, and what role do values and personal experience play in how policy is formulated, interpreted, and implemented?

Assignment #4 Due February 15 by class time to Moodle [No more than 1 page, single spaced]

- (1) Read Part 11 (pp. 99-232) of the *Re-Framing* text
- (2) Select any ONE guiding question (located at the beginning of each chapter) throughout Part 2, and provide your response in no more than 1 page. (Hint: Review the guiding questions for each of the 5 chapters, select one, then read Part 2 and jot down your thoughts as you are reading.)

Assignment # 5 Due March 1 at noon by Moodle or email [No more than 4 pages, single spaced]

- (1) Read Part 11I (pp. 233-292) of the *Re-Framing* text
- (2) After having attended class Feb. 19 – 21 and completing all of the readings:
 - a. Write a response (your final “revised thinking” at this point) to each item below. [No more than 2 pages, single spaced, for i-vi].
 - i. What is the goal of education?
 - ii. What should be the purposes of schooling?
 - iii. Who should decide issues of school direction and policy?
 - iv. Who should pay for schooling? How should funds be distributed?
 - v. Define social justice (1-2 sentences).
 - vi. Define life-long learning, the role of formal learning and informal learning on life-long learning, and the influence education policy has on life-long learning.
 - b. Drawing upon the South African comparison provided in class, compare and contrast a tension (political, social, or economic) you experienced at either of the meetings you attended with what is going on in South Africa (or how you perceive this tension may be playing out in South Africa). Did having an international (mini) case study enhance or change your thinking about

education policy? Did it help to achieve the objectives of the class? [No more than 2 pages].

Project #1 Policy Bill Analysis

Due February 17 to Moodle. No more than 3 pages single spaced.

Select an education policy bill from last WA state legislative session (2009) that both (1) received at least one hearing and (2) includes a fiscal note. It did not need to pass the legislature to be selected. Bill website: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>.

You can look at agency/interest group websites for bills from last session, for example OSPI (<http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/2009Session.aspx>).

Answer the following questions:

- (1) Identify the bill number and title, and include a copy of the bill with your submittal.
- (2) Where did the bill originate from (an agency request, a Governor initiative, an interest group, or a legislator)? Identify the prime sponsors, and whether there was a similar bill in the opposite chamber.
- (3) What was the (compelling) reason this bill was introduced? What is the problem(s) the bill is attempting to address? What are the issues in society or in the economy that the legislation seeks to address? Why do you think the problem was defined the way it was?
- (4) Provide a brief session history (who held hearings, amendments, how far did it go), and analysis of the final bill (identify what would change if the bill was enacted and what the intended outcomes are). If there were several versions of the bill, identify how the bill changed over the course of the session.
- (5) Before reading the fiscal note, think about the likely costs of the bill and who would bear the burden of the costs, and jot them down. Read the fiscal note, and compare it to your initial thoughts. Write up narratively what the costs are as identified in the fiscal note, and what you believe it may have not captured, if anything, or what it included that you had not thought about.
- (6) Who supported the bill, who opposed the bill? Describe the sponsors of the bill (how many, party affiliation), and identify the persons or groups that testified on the bill and their position. Who else would be affected but were not represented?
- (7) What implementation issues might stem from this bill (regardless of whether it passed or not – assume it had or will)? Who would be affected (identify) and, and how?

Project #2 Attend 2 Education Policy Meetings

Due February 17 to Moodle. No more than 6 pages, single spaced.

Attend two meetings, a state legislative committee hearing and an education board meeting:

- (1) A legislative committee hearing on education policy (early learning, K-12, higher education, including education appropriations) either in the Senate or the House.

SESSION BEGINS JANUARY 11th, so start checking the schedule soon.

You can use the following link to find when hearings will take place, and the agenda. Early in the session, agencies are often invited to give an overall presentation of issues – these are particularly insightful. DO NOT WATCH IT ON TVW as a substitute, you must attend the actual hearing.

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/pages/home.aspx>

- (2) An education board meeting.

If you are interested in K-12 education, then the assignment is to attend a school board meeting. For example, the North Thurston School Board next meets January 19th.

If you are interested in higher education, check with the individual institution of interest, or you may select the HECB (next meeting is January 29th in Olympia) or SBCTC (Feb 3-4 in Olympia).

Write up your observations, using the following as a guide: [No more than 3 pages for each meeting, single spaced]

- (a) Describe the group and its policy-making role.
- (b) What is the stated purpose of the meeting you attended? Was this accomplished, and/or were other matters addressed?
- (c) Which of the models, theories, and approaches to analysis discussed in Chapter 1 are the most useful for making sense of what you observed?
- (d) Think about “voice” at this meeting - Who appears to be wielding power during the meeting? Who do they represent? Is a decision being considered? Made? Is there public participation?
- (e) Identify the values the various speakers are expressing, the position or agenda they may have at this meeting, and what they use to support their position (opinion, facts, studies, precedence, etc.).
- (f) Look around the room. What is your impression of the environment you are in, both in terms of the physical features, the atmosphere/energy of the room, and who is there (and who is not there that might be affected by the issues being considered at this meeting).
- (g) How did this meeting influence your thinking or knowledge about education policy?

Project #3 Revised thoughts, Education Policy Model, and Class Group Work

- (1) **Complete prior to class** February 19 at 5 pm, and turn in at class time (bring 2 copies, one to turn in to me and one for your group work):

- a. After having completed the readings and attending the two meetings, write a response (your “revised thinking”) to each item below. Do not refer back to your original assignment before doing this work. [No more than 4 pages, single spaced, for all questions].
 - i. What is the goal of education?
 - ii. What should be the purposes of schooling?
 - iii. Who should decide issues of school direction and policy?
 - iv. Who should pay for schools? How should funds be distributed?
 - v. Define social justice (1-2 sentences), and compare/contrast it with Marshall and Gerstl-Pepin’s definition (page 72). Identify other sources to support your position if useful.
 - vi. Define life-long learning, the role of formal learning and informal learning on life-long learning, and the influence education policy has on life-long learning.
 - b. [You will not turn this part of the assignment in, but keep it for your group work] Draw your own original picture of an educational policy system. Borrow from any models presented in the text (identify them as a footnote in the drawing), but make sure to place yourself, your neighbors, your education colleagues, and some students in the picture. Then write a paragraph or two about how you feel as you examine what you have drawn. (Adapted from page 35, exercise #3).
- (2) **During class time**, I will put you in groups. You will share your picture with your group and discuss. I will also assign a topic for your group to discuss and develop a short 15-20 minute presentation on for the rest of the class. The presentations will take place Sunday afternoon, February 21.

Expectations

Portfolio. Maintain a portfolio of your work throughout the quarter. Expect to bring your portfolio to your evaluation conference. The portfolio should be organized and user-friendly.

Classes. Everyone will arrive on time and stay until class is over.

Students

- Comply with TESC Student Conduct Code:
<http://www.evergreen.edu/studenthandbook/oldbook/soccontr.htm>.
- Writing is expected to be of the highest quality, clear with accurate grammar and spelling. Students are encouraged, and may be required, to work with the Graduate Writing Assistant. <http://www.apastyle.org/>
- Students are required to have an Evergreen e-mail account for communication about class work and to participate in program list serves.
- Computer and Internet access are required outside class.

- No computer or other electronic devices (excepting translation devices) are allowed in class.

Faculty. Faculty members are expected to be prepared for class, responsive to student questions, and to promptly return student work.

Email and Moodle

- The primary form of communication will be through your official TESC email account. You must make sure that your mailbox for that account is functioning and not full.
- The program has a TESC Moodle site at <http://www2.evergreen.edu/moodle>.
- We will do our best to ensure that all program materials will be uploaded to the site.
- Students may also access Moodle via their account. When you log into your student account and click on the class link, all the assignments show up. All students are automatically enrolled once registered. A useful site for students new to Moodle is: http://wikis.evergreen.edu/computing/index.php/Category:Moodle_for_Students
- For Moodle questions or difficulty accessing, please contact Academic Computing.

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”-- Mohandas K. Gandhi

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