

# MAKING KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS INTO RADICALS

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

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with Steven DeRose*



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Executive Summary .....	1
Section I: The Problem of Teacher Preparation .....	3
Section II: The Curricular Revolution of 2020: UF Overhauls the Elementary Education Major .....	7
Table A .....	8
Section III: General Findings .....	11
Table B .....	13
Section IV: Prospects For Reform .....	17
Conclusion .....	20
Appendix A .....	21
Red Courses .....	22
Yellow Courses .....	32
End Notes .....	35





**“IT’S AN UNIVERSAL  
LAW—INTOLERANCE IS  
THE FIRST SIGN OF AN  
INADEQUATE EDUCATION.  
AN ILL-EDUCATED PERSON  
BEHAVES WITH ARROGANT  
IMPATIENCE, WHEREAS TRULY  
PROFOUND EDUCATION  
BREEDS HUMILITY.”**

*– Alexander Solzhenitsyn*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Florida has led the nation in eliminating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) offices and policies in higher education. The next stage of DEI regulation should involve K-12 teacher preparation programs, which are among the most politicized, ideologically captured departments in modern universities. States have the authority to regulate teacher certification requirements, and in turn shape the curriculum taught in higher ed K-12 training programs. The need is great.

This first-of-its-kind report provides a comprehensive analysis of the elementary education major at the University of Florida (UF), the largest education major within UF's College of Education (COE) over the past decade. UF's COE revolutionized and racialized its elementary education major after the 2020 Floyd riots, with most required classes now based on the idea that America is fundamentally and irredeemably racist, among other sins. As UF's COE states in its curriculum change approval memorandum, "The state of our nation and global society leads us to conclude that emphasizing a social justice focus in our new program is important and much needed."

During the COE's revolution of 2020, professional classes emphasizing math content, teaching methods for music and art, core teaching strategies and basic classroom management were eliminated. UF's new program was "centered on equity pedagogy." Equity pedagogy makes raising racial consciousness and eliminating racial gaps—and not subject matter mastery or learning-effective teaching strategies—the moral imperative of the teaching profession.

In UF's elementary major, the assumptions of equity pedagogy are treated as matters of fact. Students are required to integrate equity pedagogic assumptions into their practice. The assignments lack rigor (nearly all focus on self-reflection about the teacher's own biases) and emphasize how teachers, above all, must overcome their own racial and sexual biases.

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### **MORE THAN HALF OF THE COURSES IN THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR ARE INFUSED WITH CRITICAL PEDAGOGY.**

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For example, through EDG 3623: Equity Pedagogy Foundations, the first required equity pedagogy course, students are "prepared to leverage the assets of students and families from diverse backgrounds to engage in meaningful change in the classroom, community, and beyond." The course's objectives are inseparable from believing in and promoting critical pedagogy. Its two required readings are critical race staples in children's literature. Further readings include books of critical race theory such as Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*, Peggy McIntosh's "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," and a seminal article devoted to these themes titled "Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline through Racial Literacy Development in Teacher Education" by Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz. Such is the introductory course for elementary education majors!

More than half of the required courses in UF's



elementary education major are infused with critical race theory, radical gender theory, and other aspects of critical pedagogy, as detailed in this report through an analysis of course descriptions, course learning outcomes, required and suggested readings, and assignments. The emphasis on critical pedagogy even extends to math courses, as well as courses in school discipline and classroom management. At least ten elementary education courses for majors—including all in the four-course sequence on equity pedagogy and two of the four prerequisites (which all undergraduates in the COE must take)—have critical pedagogy sown into every aspect of course design. An additional four courses have critical pedagogy sown into large parts of their course design, while fewer than half appear to be mostly devoid of critical pedagogy in their syllabi.

UF's COE violates Florida House Bill 1291, passed in 2024, which regulates the teacher certification programs. Yet it does not have to remain like this. The COE could turn away from ideological approaches that contradict Florida's laws. If COE does not change, we recommend ways to regulate teacher certification that will point teacher programs away from corrupt critical pedagogy models of education and create a more classical emphasis within Florida's teacher body. Florida is once again leading the way in creating competent, patriotic education for K-12 students. Other states cannot afford to neglect this important area of policy and should take the evidence of this report as a warning that their K-12 educator training programs must also be audited.



# SECTION I:

## THE PROBLEM OF TEACHER PREPARATION



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## THE PROBLEM OF TEACHER PREPARATION

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Quality teaching matters. Effective teachers improve student learning; enhanced learning improves the quality of life for their students after they graduate. Yet teacher preparation programs are both ineffective and heavily politicized. The National Council on Teacher Quality labels schools of education “an industry of mediocrity.”<sup>1</sup> Arthur Levine, the former president of Columbia Teachers College, thinks “the education our teachers receive today is determined more by ideology and personal predilection than the needs of our children.”<sup>2</sup> The politicization of teacher preparation programs has intensified in the past forty years, such that there are few traditionalists left anywhere in schools of education.

Yet schools of education have been out of sight and out of mind for most education reformers. Most people assume that they impart to prospective teachers the content and pedagogical knowledge necessary to run a classroom effectively.

Not so. Those that have studied schools of education have concluded that teacher education programs are among the most highly politicized on the modern university campus. One study, from Jay Schalin of the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, solicited education school syllabi from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and University of Michigan (among the three most prestigious) to discover which authors were most assigned for students to read. Topping the list were Gloria Ladson-Billings, Paulo Freire, and Linda Darling-

Hammond—all of whom are advocates of radical, critical pedagogy rather than teachers of traditional professional techniques and strategies.<sup>3</sup> Another study from David Steiner and Susan Rozen analyzed over 160 education school syllabi from sixteen major universities. They found a heavy emphasis on “constructivist and/or progressive” methods, readings from few traditionalists, almost all articles published in the past thirty years, and few programs emphasizing basic teaching skills at the expense of contemporary politics.<sup>4</sup> A Wisconsin Institute of Law and Liberty published selections from syllabi at Wisconsin’s public university schools of education in 2022, showing that leftist political activism, critical race theory, and radical gender theory were the dominant motifs throughout the system.<sup>5</sup>

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### THE POLITICIZATION OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS HAS INTENSIFIED SINCE THE 1970S, SUCH THAT THERE ARE FEW TRADITIONALISTS LEFT ANYWHERE IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION.

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A common thread among these studies is an intellectual history of what is called critical pedagogy, a phrase derived from Paulo Freire, the influential Brazilian educational theorist.<sup>6</sup> Schools of education have moved from being guided by progressivism in the 1920s, to multiculturalism in the 1970s and 1980s, to critical pedagogy today. On the surface, Freire’s



book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, criticizes the ordinary lecture-and-response-classroom, where a “paternalistic” and authoritarian teacher “deposits” conventional knowledge into passive students.<sup>7</sup> Freire had much more in mind than criticizing lectures as an educational technique, however. He regarded *any method* that tries to fit students into and get them to prosper within the existing social order as a prop of capitalism and white supremacy.<sup>8</sup> He thought the purpose of education was raising the revolutionary consciousness of students, especially in elementary education. As Peter McLaren writes, “The purpose of dialectical educational theory [i.e., critical pedagogy], then, is to provide students with a model that permits them to examine the underlying political, social, and economic foundations of the larger white supremacist capitalist society.”<sup>9</sup>



Canvas of Paulo Freire

Critical pedagogues perceive modern America to be a dark place where the economy favors the few and where the society as a whole is inherently racist, sexist, and homophobic. Traditional schools are, in the words of the critical pedagogue and Freire student, Henry Giroux, “breeding grounds for commercialism, racism, social intolerance, sexism and homophobia.”<sup>10</sup> Without critical pedagogy, this breeding ground forms the “hidden curriculum” in schools. With critical pedagogy, schools can become fonts of liberation, resistance,

and disruption. Yet Freire’s critical pedagogy was not a practical program to achieve specific educational goals. He set the goals. Other scholars, underlaborers in the critical pedagogy project, invented the more technical academic theories to reduce his goals to practice. Gloria Ladson-Billings and Peggy McIntosh are, like Giroux, prominent disciples of Freire.<sup>11</sup> Underlaborers authored key concepts like cultural competence, culturally responsive or relevant teaching, white privilege, queer theory, comprehensive sexuality education, decolonizing the curriculum, and restorative justice that reduce critical pedagogy to practice. Ladson-Billings, one of the most assigned authors in UF’s elementary education program, introduced “culturally responsive” teaching, which uses the students’ own standards and norms as the basis for classroom rules.<sup>12</sup> McIntosh, also prominently featured in UF’s elementary education major, coined the term “white privilege.” UF has renamed this critical pedagogy as “equity pedagogy”, a distinction without a difference.

The following study goes deep instead of wide. It searches the courses students must take to graduate from UF’s COE with the elementary education major and identifies those with critical pedagogy and its derivative concepts. We have collected the most recent, publicly available syllabi from required courses in the elementary major. This study draws conclusions about courses from course descriptions, course learning outcomes, required readings and assignments, and course materials assigned to students in their Canvas accounts outside of public view. Using the data, we rank courses as red when critical pedagogy is sown into the entire framework of the course, yellow when courses mix professional standards with critical pedagogy, and green for those that portray adherence to strict



professional standards. This methodology is conservative, since professors who embrace critical pedagogy (and there are many in UF's COE) could bend a relatively professional-looking syllabus toward critical pedagogy without the public becoming aware. We omit consideration of courses outside the school of education, like general education.

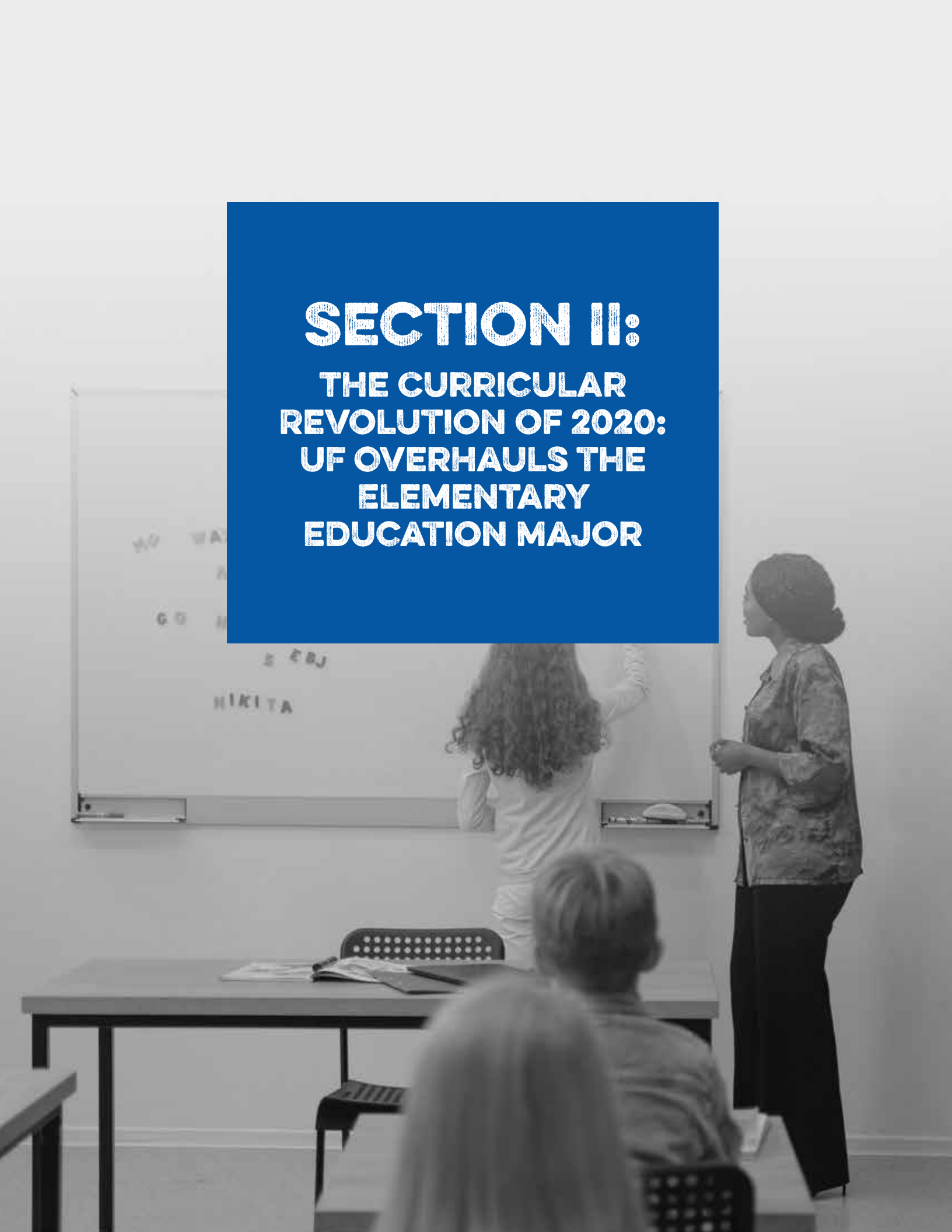
This is an opportune time to conduct such a study in Florida. While Florida provides many routes to certify teachers, the most usual route to certification is still through degree programs from approved schools of education. What happens in those required and recommended courses helps make teachers what they are. This is especially true for elementary education majors. Recognizing this, Florida's process for certifying teachers is enshrined in laws and regulations and then executed in schools of education at universities and colleges. These laws mostly lay dormant since politicians and regulators are understandably reluctant to oversee the syllabi of university curriculum and to comb through contested policies, practices and curricula that run afoul of the state's values. Still, Florida policymakers have recently adjusted criteria for certifying teachers through laws and regulations. By 2021, schools of education had adopted an untested and ineffective whole language, "three-cueing" model for teaching reading. Florida lawmakers and regulators required schools of education to abandon whole-language approaches and offer the science of reading, phonics-based reading programs (Reg 6A-5.066). This is a model for regulation.

In 2024, Florida's legislature, understanding how critical pedagogy had come to grip schools of education, passed House Bill 1291 to regulate teacher preparation programs. The state will not certify programs that, according to HB 1291, "distort significant historical events or include curriculum or instruction that teaches identity politics" or are "based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political, or economic inequities." Certified programs "must afford candidates the opportunity to think critically, achieve mastery of academic program content, learn instructional strategies, and demonstrate competence."<sup>13</sup> This "don't-do-that-but-instead-do-this" approach is now going to guide regulations for teacher certification again. UF's COE and all other colleges of education around the state should look inward to their own practices as regulators imagine a new and better future for Florida's schools of education.

As this report shows, the beating heart of the elementary education major at UF violates HB 1291. After relaying our general findings and providing the receipts, we make recommendations for how Florida might continue efforts to reform K-12 education through emphasizing classical education and professional methods as well as regulating its state-funded schools of education.

# SECTION II:

## THE CURRICULAR REVOLUTION OF 2020: UF OVERHAULS THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR





# THE CURRICULAR REVOLUTION OF 2020: UF OVERHAULS THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR

UF’s College of Education revolutionized its elementary education curriculum after the Summer of Floyd in 2020. This revolution consisted of removing courses that emphasized professional standards and practical advice for prospective teachers, while adding courses infused with critical pedagogy.

UF’s faculty used declining enrollments as a pretext to create an elementary education major focused on critical pedagogy. It trimmed the number of courses so as to attract new students. What emerged was not a leaner major, however. Four “equity pedagogy” classes were added in the curricular revolution of 2020. Existing courses changed markedly. The COE’s proposal to the University’s Curriculum Committee (UCC) shows that political diagnoses, not professional considerations,

motivated the change. “The state of our nation and global society,” according to the proposal, “leads us to conclude that emphasizing a social justice focus in our new program is important and much needed.”<sup>14</sup> The COE’s advocate told the UCC that “the proposed changes . . . focus on diversity and equity.”<sup>15</sup>

Courses infused with social justice ideology replace practical courses like Mathematics Content for Elementary Teachers, Art Education for Elementary Schools, and Music for the Elementary Child would no longer be required. Math and science would be reconfigured to emphasize social justice and equity issues as well. (See Table A for the courses dropped and added in UF’s curricular revolution.)

**Table A: The Curricular Revolution of 2020: Removed and Added Courses**

COURSES REMOVED	COURSES ADDED
Mathematics Content for Elementary Teachers	Teaching Mathematics in the Inclusive Elementary School
Core Teaching Strategies	Equity Pedagogy Foundations
Art Education for Elementary Schools	Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies
Music for the Elementary Child	Equity Pedagogy Applications
History of Education in the United States	Studying Equity Pedagogy
Core Classroom Management Strategies	Rethinking Discipline & Classroom Management
Elementary Science Content	Elementary Science Methods for the Inclusive Classroom



## **CURRICULAR CHANGES ALLOWED THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION TO “CONTINUE ADVANCING ISSUES OF ANTI-RACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION.”**

The course Core Teaching Strategies was eliminated. It was effectively replaced with a four-course sequence in equity or critical pedagogy. Knowledge and character are not foundational in UF’s COE. Rather, the first of the required courses focuses on “the foundational concepts of race, class, ability and sexuality as they impact schools.” Students will “define educational equity and state historical reasons for the inequalities that exist in public schools today” and learn to “articulate beliefs they hold about instruction that can prove problematic to the educational achievement of children from minoritized groups.”<sup>16</sup> (This report catalogs many such assertions in these four equity pedagogy courses in Section 3 and in Appendix A).

A mandatory course titled Core Classroom Management was replaced by a mandatory class called Rethinking Discipline and Classroom Management. The new course is part of an effort to build culturally-responsive classrooms and also to raise the consciousness of teachers. Unlike the old course, which emphasized the nuts and bolts of organizing classrooms, the new course is about *rethinking* discipline and management. It deconstructs “classroom management as it currently exists in schools, developing the skills to work within this system while simultaneously challenging and disrupting common practices that have adversely affected many school children including Black and Brown students . . . LGBTQ students.” Its readings focus on restorative justice programs—a lenient

approach to discipline, which research has found decreases achievement and increases rates of misbehavior and violence<sup>17</sup>—and equity-based Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for minoritized bodies.<sup>18</sup> New classroom management is more about allowing students to follow their own standards of good behavior and preventing teachers from imposing their ways onto the unique minority cultures that abound in our multicultural present.

The old math class, where teachers learned elementary math content, was replaced with Elementary Mathematics Lab. This new class is “inquiry-based”—another classroom approach that mountains of research has deemed ineffective<sup>19</sup>—and involves hands-on activities related to foundational concepts in elementary mathematics, with an emphasis on family/community experiences [and] equity and social justice issues.”<sup>20</sup> The move away from the “sage on the stage” style and the embrace of the “guide on the side” style—so common to critical pedagogy—is evident in most of these courses.

These curricular changes allowed the COE, in the words of Dean Glenn Good, to “continue advancing issues of anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion.” Nor did the revolution stop at course catalogs. The College enacted additional policies and programs such as conducting a search for an Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement and establishing a “Collective for Black Student Advancement to identify action items to enact positive change.”<sup>21</sup> College-level hiring has reflected the new need to provide equity pedagogy for relevant majors. Most EdDs in the COE have been written to reflect the research interests of faculty promoting equity pedagogy—and UF is thus preparing the next generation of activist college educators that will prepare future K–12 teachers (though this is a story for another report).



## Highlights from UF's COE curricular proposal

### **PROPOSED ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM: COURSE DESCRIPTIONS** **(New courses in red font)**

#### **EDG 3XXX Equity Pedagogy Foundations**

Explores the foundational concepts of race, class, ability, and sexuality as they impact schools and the children served in them. Students will examine the ways their own history and experiences have shaped their view of schools, schooling, and the children they will teach throughout their careers as educators.

#### **EDG 3XXX Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies**

An overview of how to plan instruction using Universal Design for Learning and Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Pedagogy. These foundational approaches to instruction will help future teachers focus on the strengths of learners who come from diverse backgrounds, particularly those with a range of abilities, as they design learning environments to meet students' needs.

#### **EDG 4XXX Equity Pedagogy Applications**

The application of pedagogical frameworks (Universal Design for Learning and Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Pedagogy) in the implementation and assessment of instruction in the elementary classroom. Teacher candidates will examine minoritized identities (i.e., race, ability, gender and sexuality, etc.) and the ways these identities intersect with one another to impact how children experience schools and schooling.

#### **EDG 4XXX Studying Equity Pedagogy**

Teacher candidates will engage in the process of teacher inquiry as they focus on becoming an antiracist teacher and cultivating skills to advocate for themselves, their students, and the profession of teaching.



# **SECTION III: GENERAL FINDINGS**



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## GENERAL FINDINGS

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### THE BEATING HEART OF UF'S ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR VIOLATES FLORIDA LAW.

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The beating heart of UF's elementary education major violates Florida law. Let the plain facts about the program be submitted to a candid world.

UF's elementary education major is centered on **equity pedagogy**. Equity pedagogy is a form of critical pedagogy—a patently radical philosophy of education that prioritizes “raising the consciousness” of students so they can transform society instead of emphasizing formal academic training. Critical pedagogy and its derivative concepts aim to identify and eradicate disparate outcomes among groups through manipulating standards and practices and to kindle the revolutionary consciousness among teachers and students. Teachers are presumed to be agents of a systemically racist (or homophobic, etc.) system. Critical, equity pedagogy seeks to deconstruct the teacher's cultural identity so that he or she can teach in an environment where students from different cultural backgrounds are treated according to the standards of their unique background. In reality, it replaces traditional cultural, academic and behavioral norms with a more radical ethic of resistance, disruption, agitation, and opposition. In fact, this report finds that:

- Two of the four “critical tracking” (prerequisite courses) for education majors use equity pedagogy as the framework for the course (EDF 1005: Introduction to Education and EDF

2085: Teaching Diverse Populations).

- All four “equity pedagogy” courses are required of elementary education majors—one required each semester of junior and senior year—are infused with critical pedagogy.
- The approach to classroom management as seen in EDG 4442: Rethinking Discipline and Classroom Management is derived from the restorative justice movement, recommending that whites and blacks, as well as other minorities be held to different standards for discipline in the classroom and that single standards are marks of white privilege.
- Several of the subject matter specific courses like MAE 4310: Teaching Mathematics in the Inclusive Elementary School and SSE 4312: Social Studies for Diverse Learners are either infused with critical pedagogy or mix critical pedagogy with some professional standards in their syllabi.
- More technical courses involving the teaching of reading, teaching labs, student teaching, or the integration of technology into the classroom manifest less critical pedagogy in their syllabus. (Movements to replace the Western approach to the scientific method with indigenous approaches are afoot, for instance, and equity pedagogues are on the front lines in putting them forward.)

While not every course in UF's elementary education major is steeped in critical theories, the radical, one-sided nature of these courses must be seen to be believed. All material in Appendix A comes from course syllabi and assignments verbatim.

**Table B: Equity Pedagogy in UF's Elementary Education Major**

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE NAME
<b>Critical Tracking Courses</b>	
EDF 1005	Introduction to Education
EDF 3110	Human Growth & Development
EDF 2085	Teaching Diverse Populations
EME 2040	Introduction to Educational Technology
<b>Core Courses</b>	
<i>Semester Five</i>	
EDE 3941	Clinical Rotations Across Diverse Elementary School Contexts
EDG 3623	Equity Pedagogy Foundations
MAE 4310	Teaching Mathematics in the Inclusive Elementary School
RED 3211	Teaching Language & Meaning Construction in Elementary Reading
SCE 4310	Elementary Science Methods for the Inclusive Classroom
TSL 3520	ESOL Foundations: Language & Culture in Classrooms
<i>Semester Six</i>	
EDE 3941	Clinical Rotations Across Diverse Elementary School Contexts
EDG 3343	Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies
EDG 4442	Rethinking Discipline & Classroom Management
SDS 3430	Family & Community Involvement in Education
SSE 4312	Social Studies for Diverse Learners
<i>Semester Seven</i>	
EDE 4940	Internship in Elementary Education
EDG 4703	Equity Pedagogy Applications
EME 4401	Integrating Technology in the Elementary Curriculum
LAE 4314	Language Arts for Diverse Learners
RED 3210	Teaching Word Identification & Fluency in Elementary Reading
<i>Semester Eight</i>	
EDE 4940	Internship in Elementary Education
EDG 4048	Studying Equity Pedagogy
RED 4844	Practicum in Reading
TSL 4100	ESOL Curriculum, Methods & Assessment

**Note:** Courses coded in red are infused with equity and critical pedagogy in all aspects of the courses; those colored in yellow mix equity and critical pedagogy with professional standards; courses in green reflect mostly professional standards.



The teaching practices and educational philosophy surrounding “equity pedagogy” violate Florida’s HB 1291 (2024). Teacher preparation programs, according to the law, “may not distort significant historical events or include curriculum or instruction that teaches identity politics . . . or is based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political, or economic inequities.” Equity pedagogy, as it is defined in theory and in practice within UF’s elementary education major, is based on the theory that America and Western civilization are built upon a systemically racist foundation that can be overcome through transformative teaching. It therefore violates the spirit and the letter of HB 1291.

This bold statement requires systemic proof. Systemic proof arrives as a series of propositions:

1. UF’s elementary education major embodies an overriding commitment to equity pedagogy, not just a good-faith investigation of it as one valid option among many (as revealed in the required books, the course descriptions, and course learning outcomes).
2. Equity pedagogy embodies theories traceable to critical pedagogy and to practices like culturally responsive teaching, restorative justice, radical gender ideology, action civics, multiculturalism, transformative social and emotional learning, and others.<sup>22</sup>
3. Such theories reflect the idea that America is systemically racist, sexist, or just plain oppressive—one central to all critical pedagogy.
4. UF’s elementary education program is populated with people who are products of

institutions dedicated to an understanding of education inseparable from these multiplying number of educational theories.

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**UF’S ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR VIOLATES HB 1291. THEREFORE, THE COLLEGE MUST EITHER CHANGE OR BE PREVENTED FROM CERTIFYING TEACHERS.**

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Let us prove proposition 1. Course descriptions demonstrate the moral center of UF’s elementary education major. As the syllabus to **EDG 3623 Equity Pedagogy Foundations** begins, “the program is centered on equity pedagogy.” The course catalog quotes EDG 3623 almost verbatim. “The program is intentionally designed to develop teacher candidates’ competence in working with current school systems while simultaneously *cultivating the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to challenge existing systems* that fail to support the learning needs of all children.”<sup>23</sup>

The four-course sequence in equity pedagogy presents itself as a remedy to America’s systemic racism. The first course, **EDG 3623 Equity Pedagogy Foundations**, is about “Situating Self and Others in Schools, Community, and Society: Teacher as Cultural Beings.” According to the course description, the school system is now denying racial and sexual minorities an equal chance for a sound education, but the elementary education program will prepare to help students “to change the system” so that it does. The course description reads, in the relevant part:

University of Florida’s Elementary Education program prepares the next generation of

teachers to address this cultural gap and ***become leaders in the creation of more equitable and socially-just classroom experiences for all children***. This program is intentionally designed to develop your competence in working within the current school system ***while simultaneously cultivating the attitudes, skills, and dispositions necessary to change the system to address the learning needs of all children regardless of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, language, and other differences***.

The course readings—surveyed in Appendix A—support just such a view of the world, as they include only books told from the perspective of critical race theory or radical gender theory. Nearly every reading in the course—both the required readings and suggested ones—arise from within the worldview of critical theory. Students even take an implicit bias test as part of being evaluated. Other assignments in the program are infused with racist assumptions of critical pedagogy.

The other three equity pedagogy courses build on **EDG 3623**. As fruits of this tree, they cannot but partake in its character. The second course, **EDG 3343: Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies**, has as its theme “Situating Self and Centering Others in Instructional Design: Teacher as Instructional Designer.” The third course is **EDG 4703: Equity Pedagogy Applications**. It addresses the question, “How do I enact pedagogy that is accessible to all learners?” while the fourth course, **EDG 4048: Studying Equity Pedagogy**, brings the why, what, and how together in a continuous process of evolution toward unique professional practice as a teacher. As readings, assignments, and course objectives make clear, each course emphasizes political activism and creating agents of social change. Teachers are to “become leaders in the

creation of a more equitable and socially-just classroom”; to see “equity as essential to the process of teaching and learning”; and “construct lesson plans that are culturally and linguistically sustaining.”

Other courses revolve around this moral center as well. Restorative justice ideology shapes the approach to student discipline and classroom management. **EDG 4442: Rethinking School Discipline and Classroom Management** suggests that “the growing cultural gap between communities and schools” should inform how teachers discipline—different standards for different subcultures. Only if teachers are “cultivating the attitudes, skills, and dispositions necessary to change the system” can students truly learn to be “disrupting common practices that have adversely affected many school children, including Black and Brown students.” **MAE 4310: Mathematics Content & Methods for Teaching Mathematics in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms** emphasizes “culturally and linguistically responsive” teaching, where students “adjust story problems to be more culturally relevant,” though there are attempts to teach mathematics in the course as well. **SDS 3430: Family and Community Involvement in Education** contains only one required book out in the open, a book about “building ***culturally responsive*** family-school relationships” and assignments asking how to “create a culturally responsive teaching plan for students” from a particular family. **RED 3211 Teaching Language and Meaning Construction in Elementary Reading** embodies the “***critical reader response approach***” to teaching language. There are three general approaches to literary theory: a formalist or traditionalist approach (What does this book say?); a reader response approach (What do you think about this book? How does it make you feel?); a “critical” approach



(What does this book, as an artifact, tell us about the oppressive structures of Victorian England? Let's read *Romeo and Juliet* through an antiracist or feminist lens). This course is based on the critical approach. **SSE 4312: Social Studies for Diverse Learners** is also infused with the culturally relevant teaching model.

On proposition 2, a close reading of the assigned writings and assignments (as cataloged in Appendix A) also shows that most readings employ methods derived from critical pedagogy, including culturally responsive teaching, restorative justice, radical gender ideology, action civics, and transformative social and emotional learning. Many other scholars of educational theory have shown

these practical applications of Freire's critical pedagogy are "based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in institutions of the United States." This is a plain violation of HB 1291.

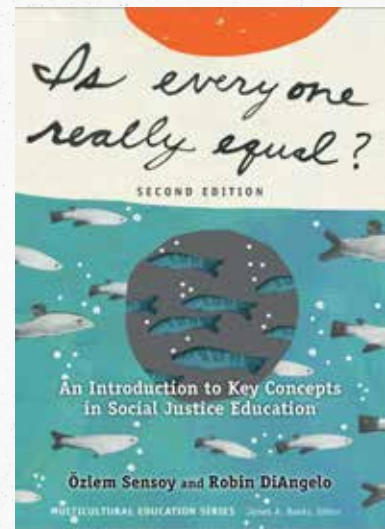
Also, with respect to proposition 4, the professors in UF's COE are also professionally committed to these ideological modes of teaching, as a review of their social media posts and curriculum vita would surely demonstrate. Many aspects of UF's elementary education major violate HB 1291 as it is written. Other degree programs probably have the same problems. Therefore, the College must either change or be prevented from certifying teachers.

### Screenshot from EDF 2085 Teaching Diverse Populations

Unit 1 - Education in a Changing Society and Multicultural Education (2 weeks - Weeks 1 & 2)



Shelley Moore is an educator, researcher, and inclusive education advocate, who proposes changes in curriculum and educational structures to promote effective inclusive education.



A black and white photograph of a crowd of people at an outdoor event, possibly a festival or concert. The people are seen from behind, with their arms raised in the air. In the foreground, a man on the left wears a dark tank top with a large white number '8' on his back. A woman in the center has her arms raised, wearing a patterned dress. To her right, another woman has long, dark, curly hair. In the background, a man on the right wears a white t-shirt and shorts. The background is slightly out of focus, showing a large building with an arched window. A solid blue rectangular overlay is positioned in the upper middle of the image, containing white text.

**SECTION IV:**  
**PROSPECTS FOR  
REFORM**



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## PROSPECTS FOR REFORM

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Schools of education have given prominence to multicultural education approaches for more than forty years. Before that, progressive educators did a lot to wipe out classical approaches to educating the educators. It is difficult to recover the older, classical way of teaching in generations where the modern progressive and multicultural modes have been embraced. Florida, however, has stated the intent and taken no few actions to recover classical education. This act of recovery, after decades of neglect, requires ending the Left's project in schools and replacing it with classical education. Florida has sought to do this first through eliminating DEI programs and also through the adoption of new higher standards called the Florida Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) standards in English Language Arts, Civic Literacy, Mathematics, Social Studies, and more.<sup>24</sup>

What would a recovery of classical education in public schools look like? First, as Florida's new standards emphasize, the great purpose of education is *transmission*, not social transformation. Awareness of and appreciation for our civilizational heritage drives classical education. It is not "child-centered" nor does it aim to fit students into contemporary society; rather, classical education is civilization-centered. For instance, before progressive reforms, classical educators put the history and myths of Western civilization at the heart of childhood education, emphasizing the heroes of our cultures (like Alfred the Great or Alexander the Great) and Greek, Roman, and even Norse myths as a way of firing up the imagination of young people. Even early progressive schools did not neglect such

heroes. Under multicultural education, there are no civilizational heroes; there are instead supposedly unsung heroes who have overcome the oppression of our civilization. Today, few students even know George Washington had wooden teeth! Similarly, under classical education, great inventors and scientists could be celebrated. Today, our historic inventors are often as unknown as their methods, as many critical educators teach and even celebrate supposedly indigenous methods. Cultural literacy has been replaced with racial literacy and equity pedagogy.

Imagine if instead of four courses on equity pedagogy, teachers were required to take four courses on the content informing Florida's B. E.S.T. standards and the great political, artistic, and religious events of our civilization; if they knew the names of the great symphonies and works of art; if they could put together a timeline of one hundred pivotal events in the history of Western civilization; if they could recite portions of great epic poems. Contemporary education has none of this. Florida's COE has too little of this. But it could happen either through the COE's voluntary compliance with HB 1291 or through the more difficult task of regulation.

For example, history pedagogy has already moved from the cultural literacy that emphasizes building a foundation of knowledge of important dates, persons, events, and ideas to one that scorns what it deems to be mere memorization and that focuses instead on identifying hidden biases and other supposed processes of reasoning. And that emphasis is seen in UF's social studies courses for

the elementary education major. The course titled Social Studies for Diverse Learners seeks to “create supportive, accepting, **student-centered classroom environments,**” recommends that students subscribe to a journal called *Rethinking Schools*, and assigns *A Different Mirror for Young People: A History of Multicultural America*, both of which are anticlassical and move toward adopting a critical historical approach to American history. The course is infused with culturally responsive pedagogy. It does not have to be that way. UF’s COE could willingly put Florida’s B.E.S.T. State Academic Standards at the heart of its social studies courses.

As Florida implements HB 1291, it should broadly displace education theories traceable to the ideas of critical pedagogues with elements traceable to classical education and professional teaching methods as found in the new Florida standards. Policymakers should use the “don’t-do-that-but-instead-do-this” formulations that guided schools of education to displace whole language learning with a phonics-based “science of reading.” The ideas animating such critical pedagogy can be more slippery, and COE professors are bound hide their radical commitment to critical pedagogy. Achieving the goals of HB 1291 demands careful crafting and determined regulation with real penalties for violations. At stake, ultimately, is whether particular schools of education will remain able to certify teachers.

Any rule change should imagine how to displace the equity pedagogy model in UF’s education majors with a more salutary, classical approach. Among our suggestions for rule changes are the following:

1. Strategies should not emphasize eliminating gaps in student achievement as the result of race, sex, ethnic identity, or disability, but

rather should aim to increase the knowledge and subject matter mastery of every individual student in the classroom.

2. Evidence-based strategies derived from the federally developed practice guides housed within the “What Works Clearinghouse” and in the Florida Department of Education rather than abstract theories traceable to critical pedagogy should guide schools of education in their constructions of syllabi and class material.

3. Strategies appropriate for the teaching of history and social studies should not elevate historical reasoning above cultural literacy of facts, events, ideas, and persons that helped build America as a self-governing country or that made Western civilization powerful.

4. Strategies aimed at teaching the fundamentals of Western science and its methods and at instilling a sense wonder in students at the glories of nature must be privileged over indigenous methods of scientific inquiry.

5. Strategies derived from critical race theory, culturally responsive pedagogy, restorative justice, transformative social and emotional learning, and other derivatives of critical pedagogy must not form the basis for organizing required classes; instead, required classes must emphasize cultural literacy, comprehensive history of education and its related philosophies, content instruction, cognitive theories of learning, classroom management, and the delivery of content derived from Florida’s state standards.

6. The department of education should use periodic discretionary review authority to ensure that assignments do not involve overmuch personal reflection as opposed to content-based reflection or that curriculum



does not emphasize consciousness raising and having proper beliefs rather than core teaching methods.

Schools of education that cannot rewrite their

curriculum to remove all traces of critical pedagogy and deliver on grounding education practices in traditional learning must lose their ability to certify teachers.

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## CONCLUSION

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UF's COE has lost its way. Its new elementary education curriculum is infused with divisive, ideological concepts derived from the revolutionary ideas of critical pedagogy. If UF's COE does not change, it will run up against the standards embodied in HB 1291 and the coming regulations. Other elements of the COE are also, it is safe to infer, as infused with critical pedagogy as the elementary education major. New teachers are not prepared for classroom management; rather, their consciousness of their own privilege is raised and they are encouraged to be skeptical about the behavioral standards of traditional American society. They are not steeped in core teaching strategies; instead, their consciousness regarding their own biases is supposedly raised. The COE elementary education does not emphasize core content knowledge, but revolutionary ideology.

Yet it is not beyond hope that UF could once again find its way. UF should voluntarily eschew the divisive, ineffective, highly partisan approach to teacher preparation that now guides its elementary education major.

Reversions to the pre-2020 curriculum, while not sufficient, would be a good place to start. So, too, would a formal effort to integrate Florida's new B.E.S.T standards into teacher preparation as much as possible. Thus, UF's COE could provide a model for reforming its teacher preparation programs from which other states can follow. At the same time, Florida can maintain alternative modes of teacher certification. As school choice becomes more deeply embedded in Florida's education practice, schools themselves could continue to certify or decide on teacher qualifications.

Either way, the survival of schools of education as vehicles of teacher preparation cannot be taken for granted. Enrollments are dipping. Alternative modes of certification are there. The best survival strategy is to offer genuine value to students and school districts and the state as a whole. Genuine value will come from complying with HB 1291, not from following the lemmings in other schools of education over the cliffs.

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## APPENDIX A: SELECTIONS FROM ELEMENTARY EDUCATION SYLLABI

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Several reports have provided a detailed analysis of the various writings informing modern critical education. I encourage everyone to read them.<sup>25</sup> What follows is a set of highlights from the required courses in UF's elementary education major. Elements that point unmistakably to critical pedagogy are highlighted in bold and italics. Heretofore, this report has relied on providing the big picture of what is taking place in UF's elementary education major. This is where we provide many of the most important receipts.

One important element of critical pedagogy, however, should be noted beforehand, since it reveals much about the overall structure

of UF's elementary education major. Critical pedagogy emphasizes personal stories, self-reflection, and other subjective techniques of evaluation over knowledge of facts or theories. Critical pedagogues tend to be generalists armed with abstract theories about how society works. They are concerned first and most centrally with race, as Gloria Ladson-Billings and her coauthor wrote in a 1995 article titled "Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education," "Race first!"<sup>26</sup> In this way, the emphasis on self-reflection in assignments, the lack of emphasis on strategies and techniques for teaching, and the obsession with race are part of this entire approach to education.





## RED COURSES: REQUIRED OR RECOMMENDED COURSES INFUSED WITH EQUITY PEDAGOGY

### EDG 3623 EQUITY PEDAGOGY FOUNDATIONS

#### From **Course Overview**:

Today's schools are often characterized by incredible racial, ethnic, social class, linguistic and cultural diversity. However, school curricula, instructional strategies, and teacher demographics rarely reflect this diversity and represent a growing cultural gap between communities and schools. University of Florida's Elementary Education program prepares the next generation of teachers to address this cultural gap and **become leaders in the creation of more equitable and socially-just classroom experiences for all children**. This program is intentionally designed to develop your competence in working within the current school system **while simultaneously cultivating the attitudes, skills, and dispositions necessary to change the system to address the learning needs of all children regardless of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, language, and other differences**. To prepare you to become a teacher who can help all learners thrive in and outside of school, the program is centered on equity pedagogy. Teacher candidates who complete coursework in equity pedagogy will be prepared to leverage the assets of students and families from diverse backgrounds to engage in meaningful change in the classroom, community, and beyond. . . .

This course, the first in the four-part course series, is taken during your first semester in the program. The theme of this semester is "Situating Self and Others in Schools, Community, and Society: Teacher as Cultural Being." As the first course in the equity

pedagogy series, this class will address this theme by introducing you to concepts (such as race, class, ability, sexuality) that are necessary to explore in order to understand the ways your own prior history and experiences have shaped **the ways you see yourself, schools and schooling, and the children you will teach throughout your career**. In particular, in this first class we will focus primarily on race. This class addresses the question, "WHY" equity pedagogy?

#### From **Course Objectives**:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define educational equity and state historical reasons for the inequalities that exist in public schools today.
2. Articulate beliefs they hold about instruction that can prove problematic to the educational achievement of children from minoritized groups.
3. Assess and examine their own biases and the role they play in understanding issues of equity within schools and the larger society.
4. Identify larger societal issues related to inequity and its impact on individuals as reflected by narratives in young adult literature.
5. Identify characteristics of racism and the impacts it has on teaching and learning in the classroom.

#### Selections from **Required Readings**:

Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press.

Bolgatz, J. (2005). *Talking Race in the Classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press (Chapter 2).

Dixson, A. D., & , C. Rousseau Anderson (2017). "The First Day of School: A CRT Story." In *Critical Race Theory in Education: All God's Children Got a Song*, edited by A. D. Dixson,

C. Rousseau Anderson, and J. K. Donner, 57–64. New York: Routledge.

Evans, E. (2017). "White Girl Teaching." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 31 (2): 158–61.

Howard, T. C. (2003). "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Ingredients for Critical Teacher Reflection." *Theory into Practice* 42 (3): 195–202.

Kailin, J. (2002). *Antiracist Education from Theory to Practice*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. (Chapter 5).

McIntosh, P. (1989). "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." *Peace and Freedom Magazine*, 10–12.

Michael, A. (2015). *Raising Race Questions: Whiteness and Inquiry in Education*. New York: Teachers College Press. (Chapter 2)

Mott-Smith, J. A. (2008). "Exploring Racial Identity through Writing. In *Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real about Race in School*, edited by M. Pollock, 146–53. New York: New Press. (Chapter 27)

Moradi, B. (2017). "(Re)focusing Intersectionality: From Social Identities back to Systems of Oppression and Privilege." In *Handbook of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity in Counseling and Psychotherapy*, edited by K. A. DeBord, A. R. Fischer, K. J. Bieschke, and R. M. Perez, 105–27. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Sealey Ruiz, Y. (2011). "Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline through Racial Literacy Development in Teacher Education." *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy* 8 (2): 116–20. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2011.624892>.

Silva Parker, C., & Willsea, J. (2011). "Summary of Stages of Racial Identity Development." *Interaction Institute for Social Change*, 1–5.

Smith, I. E. (2016). "Minority vs. Minoritized." *The Odyssey Online*. September 2, 2016. <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/minority-vs-minoritize>.

Stevenson, H. (2015). "Hearing the Lion's Story: Racial Stress Can Silence Children; Storytelling Can Awaken Their Voices. *Learning for Justice*. Spring 2015. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2015/hearing-the-lions-story>.



[EDG 3343: EQUITY PEDAGOGY  
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES](#)

From **Course Description**:

Today's schools are often characterized by incredible racial, ethnic, social class, linguistic and cultural diversity. However, **school curricula, instructional strategies, and teacher demographics rarely reflect this diversity and represent a growing cultural gap between communities and schools.** University of Florida's Elementary Education prepares the next generation of teachers to address this cultural gap and become leaders in the creation of more equitable and socially-just classroom experiences for all children. This program is intentionally designed to develop your competence in working within the current school system while simultaneously **cultivating the attitudes, skills, and dispositions necessary to change the system** to address the learning needs of all children regardless of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, language, and other

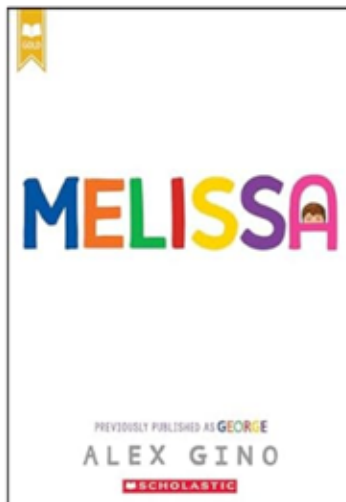
differences. To prepare you to become a teacher who can help all learners thrive in and outside of school, the program is centered on equity pedagogy. Teacher candidates who complete coursework in equity pedagogy will be prepared to leverage the assets of students and families from diverse backgrounds to engage in meaningful change in the classroom, community, and beyond.

From **Required Textbooks**:

Heumann, J. & K. Joiner. (2021). *Rolling Warrior: The Incredible, Sometimes Awkward, True Story of a Rebel Girl on Wheels Who Helped Spark a Revolution.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American children.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Meyer, A., D. H. Rose, & D. T. Gordon (2014). *Universal Design for Learning: Theory and Practice.* Wakefield, MA: CAST Professional.



## Melissa (previously published as GEORGE)

Paperback – April 19, 2022

by Alex Gino (Author)

4.6 ★★★★★ 1,515 ratings

4.1 on Goodreads 45,795 ratings | 38,512 Want to Read

Teachers' pick

[See all formats and editions](#)

### BE WHO YOU ARE.

When people look at Melissa, they think they see a boy named George. But she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl.

Melissa thinks she'll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her teacher announces that their class play is going to be Charlotte's Web. Melissa really, really, REALLY wants to play Charlotte. But the teacher says she can't even try out for the part... because she's a boy.

With the help of her best friend, Kelly, Melissa comes up with a plan. Not just so she can be Charlotte -- but so everyone can know who she is, once and for all.

### EDG 4703: EQUITY PEDAGOGY APPLICATIONS

#### From **Course Description:**

This course, Equity Pedagogy Applications, builds upon the why of equity pedagogy from your Equity Pedagogy Foundations course, the what of equity pedagogy from your Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies course by addressing the question, “How do I enact pedagogy that is accessible to all learners?” Students will learn how to design and implement effective instruction to meet the needs of all learners and begin a cycle of inquiry to improve their pedagogical practice(s).

#### From **Course Goals:**

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

1. Describe how Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning pedagogical frameworks converge to enable teachers to address the learning needs of all children;
2. Address barriers in schooling to support all students;

#### From **Required Texts:**

Gino, A. (2022). *Melissa (Previously Published as George)*. Scholastic.

Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Muhammad, G. (2020). *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy*. Scholastic.

- Nelson, L. L. (2021). *Design and Deliver: Planning and Teaching Using Universal Design for Learning* (2nd ed.). Baltimore: Brookes.

### EDG 4048: STUDYING EQUITY PEDAGOGY

#### From **Course Overview:**

In addition, during this “putting it all together” class, ***we will focus explicitly on equity pedagogy grounded in an inquiry stance***, as well as cultivating skills to advocate for your students, yourself, and the profession of teaching. In this course we will answer the questions: ***What does it mean to study your own practice as a teacher committed to the creation of more equitable schools and classrooms? How do I study my own professional practice to achieve a more equitable and socially-just classroom? What role do leadership and advocacy play in the profession of teaching?***

#### From **Course Objectives:**

- ***Select, summarize, and synthesize literature to inform a question of practice formulated about implementing equity pedagogy*** in their internship classroom
- Complete one full cycle of inquiry ***related to a question of practice formulated about implementing equity pedagogy*** in their internship classroom
- Share their inquiry learnings with others at the Inquiry Showcase to engage in ***collegial conversations focused on equity pedagogy and inquiry***
- Articulate and represent their vision for their ***enactment of equity pedagogy in their future work as teachers***



**EDF 1005: INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION**

From **Course Description:**

You will (1) examine educational foundations through contemporary events, phenomena, and trends; (2) explore the realities of educational spaces and those who occupy them; and (3) reflect on your evolving perspectives about the education profession.

Selections from **Required Readings:**

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "The Urgency of Intersectionality" (video).

Jackson, Jenna. "'Dangerous Presumptions': How Single-Sex Schooling Reifies False Notions of Sex, Gender, and Sexuality" in *Gender and Education* (2009).


Sensoy, Ozlem, and Robin DiAngelo. "Prejudice and Discrimination." In *Is Everyone Really Equal?: An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education*, chapter 3.

From **Course Assignments:**

None of the assignments concern rigorous work. All of them are "reflection" papers on course modules, the entire course, or field experience.

**EDF 1005 Introduction to Education**

Below is a sample of coursework assigned to students in Canvas.

<p>1. <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Sensoy &amp; DiAngelo (2017) - Ch. 3: Culture and Socialization</a> ↓</p> <p>2. <b>Watch:</b> <a href="#">The Urgency of Intersectionality   Kimberlé Crenshaw</a> ↗</p>  <p>3. Choose <u>one</u> of the following to <b>read</b> (<i>identity focus of article</i>):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <a href="#">Pushing Past the Achievement Gap: An Essay on the Language of Deficit</a> ↓ (<i>race/ethnicity</i>)</li><li>2. <a href="#">Help-Seekers and Silent Strugglers: Student Problem-Solving in Elementary Classrooms</a> ↓ (<i>socioeconomic status</i>)</li><li>3. <a href="#">'Dangerous Presumptions': how single-sex schooling reifies false notions of sex, gender, and sexuality</a> ↓ (<i>gender/gender identity/sexual orientation</i>)</li><li>4. <a href="#">Give Voice to Valeria's Story</a> ↓ (<i>nationality/language</i>)</li><li>5. <a href="#">Inclusion, School Restructuring, and the Remaking of American Society</a> ↓ (<i>ability/disability</i>)</li></ol> <p>4. <b>Participate:</b> <a href="#">Participation Community Activity</a></p> <p><small>T4. Community Activity: Should Teachers Be Armed?</small></p>
<b>WEEK 9</b>
<p>1. <b>Listen:</b> <a href="#">Harvard EdCast: Unconscious Bias in Schools</a> ↗</p> <p>2. <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Who Should Be Armed in Florida Schools? Not Teachers, Lawmakers Say. But Maybe Librarians.</a> ↓</p> <p>3. <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">These schools say arming teachers 'can be done right'</a> ↗</p> <p>4. <b>Listen:</b> <a href="#">Study: How Arming Teachers Can Put Students Of Color At Greater Risk</a> ↗</p> <p>5. <b>Submit:</b> <a href="#">Module 4 Response</a></p>

EDF 2085: TEACHING DIVERSE POPULATIONS

From **Course Description**:

A survey of **educational demographics, foundations of prejudice, elements of culture, political and philosophical roots of diversity and commonality, and barriers to cultural understanding and diversity in the classroom.**

Designed for the prospective educator, this course provides the opportunity **to explore issues of diversity**, including an understanding of the influence of disabilities, culture, family, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, language of origin, ethnicity, and age upon the educational experience. **Students will explore personal attitudes toward diversity.**

From **Student Learning Outcomes**:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Describe factors contributing to student diversity and inequalities in education associated with ability, gender, language, race, and social class.
- Identify the elements of inclusive classrooms and schools that accommodate and respond to the diverse learning needs of all students.
- Increase awareness of cultural identity and factors that contribute to intercultural understanding.

Selections from **Required Texts** and **Additional Readings**:

Cushner, K., McClelland, A., & Safford, P. (2022). *Human Diversity in Education: An Intercultural Approach* (10th ed.).

Dweck, Carol S. "Mindsets and Human Nature: Promoting Change in the Middle East, the Schoolyard, the Racial Divide, and Willpower." *American Psychologist* (2012).

GLSEN. *The 2017 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth in our Nation's Schools.*

McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."

Sensoy, Ozlem, and Robin DiAngelo. *Is Everyone Really Equal?: An Introduction to Key Concepts in Social Justice Education* (2nd ed.).

From **Assignments**:

None of the assignments require rigorous work.

**Cultural Autobiography:** The cultural autobiography is designed to encourage students to critically think about their cultural identity within a continuum of roles and categories within society.

**Ethnography Project:** Students will work in groups to complete a semester-long project focused on engaging in an in-depth learning experience about a cultural group to which you do not belong.



## EDF 2085 Teaching Diverse Populations

Below is a sample of coursework assigned to students in Canvas.

### Intercultural Development

This week we will look at what it means to develop greater awareness and sensitivity to your own culture as well as the cultures of other people. We will discuss some general models of ethnic and racial identity. We will also look closely at the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity as a means to become interculturally competent.

#### Objectives

After completing this module, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the relationship between being aware one's own culture and being aware of the culture of others. (SLO 3)
2. Identify and understand the models of intercultural development. (SLO 3)
3. Describe the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). (SLO 3)
4. Present professional conduct (SLO 4)

#### Readings

1. Cushner et al., Chapter 5

#### Lectures

PowerPoint presentation:  
[EDE2085 Module 5: Intercultural Development.pptx](#) ↓  
 Supplemental video:

### Race and Ethnicity/Racism and Privilege

In Module 7 we will continue to address ideas from several chapters from Sensoy & DiAngelo's book, *Is Everyone Really Equal?* as well as the Cushner et al. textbook. These ideas center around the societal systems that create and reinforce division between groups. This module will specifically address privilege (S & D, Chapter 6 and McIntosh, 1989), and race and racism (Cushner et al., Chapter 6).

#### Objectives

After completing these modules, students will be able to:

1. Identify racial disparities in US Public schools. (SLO 1)
2. Discuss strategies for prejudice reduction. (SLO 2)
3. Define privilege and identify its dimensions. (SLO 1)

#### Readings

1. Race and Racism: Cushner et al., Chapter 6
2. Privilege: McIntosh Article [mcintosh11.pdf](#) ↓
3. Sensoy & DiAngelo, Chapter 6

Optional Reading (Highly recommended):

4. Bussey, C. L., & Cruz, B. C. (2017). A shared heritage: Afro-Latin@s and Black history. In L. J. Scott & K. J.

### Oppression and Power

In the following two modules of this course (Modules 6 and 7), we will address ideas from several chapters from Sensoy & DiAngelo's book, *Is Everyone Really Equal?* as well as the Cushner et al. textbook. These ideas center around the societal systems that create and reinforce division between groups. This includes power and oppression (S & D, Chapters 5 and 8), privilege (S & D, Chapter 6), and race and racism (Cushner et al., Chapter 6). In addition, we will read two articles that discuss the manifestation of privilege and racism in our personal lives as well as in schools.

#### Objectives

After completing this module, students will be able to:

1. Define oppression and power and identify elements of oppression. (SLO 1)
2. Differentiate internalized dominance and internalized oppression and identify messages of White superiority on multiple levels. (SLO 1)
3. Define racism and identify its challenges. (SLO 1)
4. Discuss the concept of intersectionality.(SLO 3)

#### Readings

1. Sensoy & DiAngelo, Chapters 5 & 8

### Gender and Sexual Diversity

Chapter 10 discusses the socialization process that leads to gender differences, the role that schools play in the process, and the rationale for collaborative teaching and learning to benefit all students. Also, attention is paid to sexuality in its different forms and ways that teachers can assist students to understand those different forms (i.e., reduction of homophobia in the environment). We will supplement this discussion with data from the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)'s [biennial climate survey of American schools](#) ↓.

#### Objectives

After completing these modules, students will be able to:

1. Identify positive aspects of inclusion for teaching and learning, and discuss characteristics of gender-inclusive schools and classrooms.
2. Differentiate the concepts of sex, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity.
3. Understand gender roles as socially constructed and identify main socialization agents.
4. Discuss the impact an unsafe school setting has on LGBTQ students' academic performance.
5. Identify effective strategies teachers can use to promote gender-inclusive classrooms.

#### Readings

[EDE 3941 CRITICAL ROTATIONS ACROSS DIVERSE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONTEXTS](#)

From **Course Description:**

***A Teacher's pursuit of DEI activism is a lifelong endeavor.*** These clinical rotations are an essential step in the lifelong journey towards ***becoming an effective and inclusive educator*** and offer the opportunity to examine various questions within dynamic classroom environments.

Students are required to compare all experiential learning in elementary classrooms in relation to what they learn in their classes about equity pedagogy. By the end of your junior year, you will have explored three different elementary education school contexts and compared, contrasted, and analyzed each experience in relation to what you are learning in EDG 3623: Equity Pedagogy Foundations (fall semester), EDG 3343: Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies (spring semester), as well as additional courses are taken concurrently with this field-based experience course.

From **Course Objectives:**

Questions addressed ***in the course focus heavily on personal experience, "positionality" aka levels of privilege, and reflections on one's personal history.***

1. How does my evolving understanding of my prior history, experiences, and current

positionality continue to shape how I see myself, schools and schooling, and the children I will teach throughout my career? . . .

4. What does it mean to be a professional and establish professional relationships with fellow educators, administrators, students, and families in diverse community settings?

From **Instructional Materials/Assignments:**

In this class, you are expected to connect to readings and text assignments associated with EDG 3623: Equity Pedagogy Foundations (fall semester) and EDG 3343: Equity Pedagogy Instructional Strategies (spring semester) within your core assignments.

- Students are required to keep a reflection journal. "Becoming a Reflective Practitioner" ***These Journaling exercises focuses on self-consciously examining one's beliefs and practices as opposed to "mindlessly implementing systems designed by others."*** "We believe that reflective professionals (those who self-consciously examine their beliefs and practices) are much more effective than technicians (those who mindlessly implement systems designed by others). . . .

- Everything must be connected to instruction in the Equity Pedagogy course

These prompts serve to connect what you have learned and will be learning in your equity pedagogy courses and other coursework to your experiences in the field.



[EDG 4442: RETHINKING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT](#)

From **Course Description**:

As you have learned during your first year in this program, **today's schools are often characterized by incredible racial, ethnic, social class, linguistic, and cultural diversity. However, school curricula, instructional strategies, and teacher demographics rarely reflect this diversity and represent a growing cultural gap between communities and schools.**

Your program **prepares you to address this cultural gap and become a leader in creating more equitable and socially-just classroom experiences** for all children. As such, your program is intentionally designed to develop your competence in working within the current school system while simultaneously cultivating the attitudes, skills, and dispositions **necessary to change the system** to address the learning needs of all children regardless of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, language, and other differences.

New teachers report that one of the most challenging aspects of learning to teach and their first years of teaching in the current school system is understanding and working with the behavior of the students they teach. Hence, in this course, you will explore classroom management as it currently exists in schools, developing the skills to work within this system **while simultaneously challenging and disrupting common practices that have adversely affected many school children, including Black and Brown students, students whose first language is not English, immigrant students, students with ability differences, LGBTQ students,** and students who live in poverty.

We will accomplish this goal through the consideration of several questions, including

- What do teachers need to know about student behavior?
- What are some ways that behavior is currently understood in schools?
- **What happens when teachers' understanding of classroom management is clearly linked to issues of justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity?**
- **How do teachers create classroom learning environments that are culturally responsive and conducive to the learning of all students?**

From **Course Objectives**:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe and problematize the relationship between schools and behavior.
- Compare **Restorative Practices** to other forms of classroom management.

From **Required Textbooks**:

- Shalaby, C. (2017). *Troublemakers: Lessons in Freedom from Young Children at School*. New York: New Press.
- Smith, D., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2015). *Better Than Carrots or Sticks: Restorative Practices for Positive Classroom Management*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- McCart, A., & Miller, D. (2020). *Leading Equity-Based MTSS for All Students*.

MAE 4310 TEACHING MATHEMATICS IN THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

From **Student Learning Outcomes:**

5. Students will be able to plan lessons that integrate . . . technology to support the learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students.
6. Students will be able to plan for language sensitive mathematics content instruction for emergent bilinguals . . .
7. Students will be able to plan differentiated learning experiences for emergent bilinguals and integrate their cultural background knowledge, learning styles, and prior formal educational experiences.

From **Assignments:** (All points in course are related to equity pedagogy)

CASE STUDY (35 POINTS TOTAL)

This assignment focuses on student learning, identity, and dispositions of a . . . bilingual student. . . You will consider how to use their knowledge, linguistic abilities, and cultural background in mathematics instruction. You will first conduct a “Getting to Know You” interview, where you learn about your case study student’ interests, math background, and cultural background. You will then adjust story problems and your anticipated questioning from the “Problem Solving Interview” protocol to be more culturally responsive to your child. You will then conduct a “Problem Solving Interview” with that same student. After conducting the “Problem Solving Interview,” we will participate in a mock caregiver/teacher conference to practice communicating achievement expectations and student progress to parents.

Part 1: Mathematics “Getting to Know You” & Developing Culturally Relevant Tasks Written Report (10 points). You will ask questions

to become more familiar with the student’s activities and interests, the student’s home, community knowledge base, and resources. You will also adjust story problems to be more culturally relevant to your student.

Part 2: Problem Solving Interview & Written Report . . . (20 points), . . . You will conduct a problem-solving assessment with your case study student. This interview provides an opportunity to practice eliciting, interpreting, and assessing students’ thinking about mathematics, with a particular focus on children’s understanding of whole number and fraction concepts.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE FUTURE TEACHING PROJECT (20 POINTS)

The Culturally Responsive Future Teaching Project is your opportunity to curate resources and ideas that resonate with you pertaining to issues of Access and **what culturally responsive mathematics will look, sound, and feel in your future classroom**. Throughout the course of the semester, you might encounter these through our discussions, readings, videos, or even in your work at your school site. **This guide will remind you how to establish instruction that is culturally relevant and meaningful in your future classroom and adjust instruction to meet the needs of your ELLs.**

You can write a 3–5 page . . . describing your current thinking about how the teaching and learning of culturally responsive mathematics will be implemented in your future classroom. **This will also include rich descriptions of the types of activities with technology integration that will take place, the interactions that will occur, and your overall philosophy/beliefs about the teaching and learning of culturally responsive mathematics.** Provide support from readings and class activities to support your most current thinking about the teaching and learning of culturally responsive mathematics.



## **YELLOW COURSES: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY MIXED WITH PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

### SDS 3430: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

#### From **Required Readings**:

Amatea, E. (Ed.) (2012) Building culturally responsive family-school relationships.

#### From **Assignments**:

#### **FAMILY DIVERSITY SMALL GROUP PROJECT**

During the semester you will be organized into small groups and asked to form a family of your own based on a case study assigned to your group. Please plan to get organized and get underway with this project as soon as teams are announced! (I suggest you exchange contact information with your group members) The purpose of this assignment is threefold:

- ***To explore the influences of family diversity on professional teaching practices and interactions with families.***

- To increase your understanding of the particular strengths and obstacles faced by families in differing life circumstances.

- To develop instructional strategies that connect all types of one family's funds of knowledge, including ELL's, gifted and ESE, to your classroom instructional goals and practices

The steps in the assignment are to:

1. Read your case study and create a genogram/relationship map outlining the relationships in the family and involved school professionals.
2. Respond to the discussion questions proposed in your case as a group \*group questions assignment
3. ***Develop a presentation, together as a group, in which you outline the composition of your family, identify their funds of knowledge, explain any special challenges, present your family's situation, and provide suggestions for how one might create a culturally responsive teaching plan for students from this family.***

SSE 4312: SOCIAL STUDIES FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

From **Course Description:**

As part of this course, students will engage with multicultural social studies content and with a variety of approaches to social studies planning, instruction, and assessment. Pre-service teacher candidates will also grapple with teaching complex and controversial social issues to young learners. . . .

From **Course Goals:**

5. Examine social studies content standards for limitations and opportunities to explore **multicultural approaches** to social studies education at the elementary level. . . .

8. Utilize a **variety of frameworks to conceptualize a democratic approach** to elementary social studies content. . . .

11. Create authentic assessments for social studies that have value beyond school, involve disciplined inquiry, and facilitate the construction of knowledge.

12. Discuss approaches and beliefs towards addressing current events and controversial issues in the elementary social studies classroom.

From **Course Texts:**

Takaki, R. (2012). *A Different Mirror for Young people: A History of Multicultural America*. Boston: Back Bay Books.

From **Assignment Descriptions:**

COOPERATIVE CHILDREN'S BOOK

The purpose of this assignment is to develop an integrated social studies/language arts project through the creation of a children's biography. In small groups, you will write original children's biographies. **You will take a person, event, or concept from Ronald Takaki's book (grades 4-5) and turn it into an age-appropriate children's book to be read or used in a social studies class for elementary school.** You will also incorporate one of the five themes of geography and learn to consider geography beyond mapping activities. The project will generally follow the procedures outlined in Parker.

TSL 3520: ESOL FOUNDATIONS: LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

From **Course Description:**

This course will examine issues of language and culture that are relevant for elementary school learners of English as a second language (ESL). The course has three main sections: (1) the role and nature of culture and its influence on learning for diverse English learners (ELs); (2) an introduction to the structure of language and to principles of first and second language development in young learners; and (3) ESOL Policies & Practices in Schools & Communities. Readings, vignettes, film documentaries, case studies, audio, video, and language samples are used for reflection, analysis, and in-class discussion activities.





## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> National Council on Teacher Quality, “Teacher Prep Review,” revised December 2013, [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher\\_Prep\\_Review\\_2013\\_Report](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher_Prep_Review_2013_Report).
- <sup>2</sup> Arthur Levine, “Educating School Teachers,” *Education Schools Project*, 2006.
- <sup>3</sup> Jay Schalin, *The Politicization of University Schools of Education: The Long March through Education Schools*, at James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, February 2019, <https://www.jamesgmartin.center/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/The-Politicization-of-University-Schools-of-Education.pdf>.
- <sup>4</sup> David Steiner, “Skewed Perspective: What We Know about Teacher Preparation at Elite Education Schools,” <https://www.educationnext.org/skewedperspective/>.
- <sup>5</sup> Will Flanders and Dylan M. Palmer, “From the Top: The Impact of College-Level Indoctrination on K--12 Education,” <https://will-law.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/FromTheTop2.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> There is no better starting place for an understanding of critical pedagogy than James Lindsay, *The Marxification of Education: Paulo Freire’s Critical Marxism and the Theft of Education* (Self-published: 2022), though reading Freire’s own *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is the best source document for critical pedagogy.
- <sup>7</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970), 72.
- <sup>8</sup> Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 6.
- <sup>9</sup> Peter McLaren, *Life in Schools* (Boston: Pearson Education, 1998), 161.
- <sup>10</sup> Henry A. Giroux, *On Critical Pedagogy* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011), 71.
- <sup>11</sup> Ladson-Billings appears to be the most cited author in the four-course sequence forming the spine of the elementary education major. She is “known for her groundbreaking work in the fields of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Critical Race Theory.” From Gloria Ladson-Billings, National Academy of Education Profile, <https://naeducation.org/our-members/gloria-ladson-billings/>.
- <sup>12</sup> See Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teaching for African-American Students* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994) and Ladson-Billings, “Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy,” *American Education Research Journal* (1995): 465–91.



See James Lindsay, “What is Culturally Relevant Pedagogy?” *New Discourses Podcast*, <https://newdiscourses.com/2022/02/critical-education-what-is-culturally-relevant-pedagogy/>.

<sup>13</sup> Florida House of Representatives, CS/HB 1291, 2024 Legislature, <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2024/1291/BillText/er/PDF>.

<sup>14</sup> Elementary Education Major-Curriculum Change (proposal), Fall 2020, <https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/47/17NOVEMBER2020/Elementary%20Education%20Major%20-%20Curriculum%20change%20Combined.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> University Curriculum Committee Minutes, November 17, 2020, <https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/47/15DECEMBER2020/UCC%20Minutes%20November%202020.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Quotations are drawn from the School of Education’s curriculum request for EDG 3xxx: Equity Pedagogy Foundations, approved by UF’s University Curriculum Committee in November 2020, <https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/47/17NOVEMBER2020/EDG%203xxx%20Equity%20Pedagogy%20Foundations%20Combined.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> See Jill Barshay, “The Promise of ‘Restorative Justice’ Starts to Falter under Rigorous Research,” *The Hechinger Report*, March 6, 2019, <https://hechingerreport.org/the-promise-of-restorative-justice-starts-to-falter-under-rigorous-research/>.

<sup>18</sup> Quotations are drawn from the School of Education’s curriculum request for EDG 4xxx: Rethinking Discipline and Classroom Management, approved by UF’s University Curriculum Committee in November 2020, <https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/47/17NOVEMBER2020/EDG%204xxx%20Rethinking%20Discipline%20and%20Classroom%20Management%20Combined.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> Paul A. Kirshner, John Sweller, and Richard E. Clark, “Why Minimal Guidance During Instruction Does Not Work: An Analysis of the Failure of Constructivist, Discovery, Problem-Based, Experiential, and Inquiry-Based Teaching,” *Educational Psychologist* 41 (2006): 75–86.

<sup>20</sup> Quotations are drawn from the School of Education’s curriculum request for MAE4310L Elementary Mathematics Lab, approved by UF’s University Curriculum Committee in November 2020, <https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/47/17NOVEMBER2020/MAE4310L%20Elementary%20Mathematics%20Lab%20Combined.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> See Glenn E. Good, “A Statement,” University of Florida, College of Education, accessed May 14, 2024, <https://education.ufl.edu/news/2021/11/05/a-statement-from-dean-glenn-good/>.

<sup>22</sup> I have discussed eight such primary theories in Anna K. Miller and Scott Yenor, California’s Blueprint for K–12 Education, Claremont Institute, <https://dc.claremont.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/23-261-IFF-California-Report-v2.pdf>, 4–7.

<sup>23</sup> “Elementary Education Grades K–6,” University of Florida, College of Education, accessed May 14, 2024, [https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/colleges-schools/UGEDU/EED\\_BAE/](https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/colleges-schools/UGEDU/EED_BAE/) (emphasis added).

<sup>24</sup> See Scott Yenor and Anna Miller, *Florida’s Blueprint for K–12 Education*, Claremont Center for the American Way of Life, accessed May 14, 2024, [https://dc.claremont.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Florida-K-12-Report\\_V3.pdf](https://dc.claremont.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Florida-K-12-Report_V3.pdf), 12–13.

<sup>25</sup> See esp., Jay Schalin, *The Politicization of University Schools of Education*, 20ff., for a historical account and for an analysis of the particular people involved in bringing the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire to schools of education around the country. The syllabi at UF’s school of education reads like the table of contents from Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

<sup>26</sup> Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tage IV, “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education,” *Teachers College Record* 97 (1995): 57.



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Scott Yenor is the Senior Director of State Coalitions at the Claremont Institute, Washington Fellow at the Claremont Institute's Center for the American Way of Life, and a professor of Political Science at Boise State University. He writes extensively on marriage and family life in the contemporary world, including his most recent book *The Recovery of Family Life: Exposing the Limits of Modern Ideologies* (Baylor University Press, 2020). He also writes on higher education, including extensive reports on Texas A&M University, Boise State University, the University of North Carolina System, and others. He also writes on American Reconstruction, David Hume, and other topics for numerous websites including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Law Liberty*, *City Journal*, *Newsweek*, *First Things*, *American Reformer*, *The Federalist*, and *The American Mind*.



**Steven B. DeRose**

Steven DeRose is an executive in the investment banking industry and has served as a guest lecturer at business schools across the country. He has done extensive reporting on DEI and critical race theory programs within Florida's higher education system.

Mr. DeRose holds Bachelor Degrees in both Economics and Business Management, as well as a Master of Science in Finance from the University of Florida. He has been the recipient of numerous awards at UF, including the 2014 UF Alumni Award for 40 Gators Under 40.



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