Westminster College

History 450
Teaching Social Studies in Secondary Schools

Instructor: David Gibb
Email: david_gibb@hermitage.k12.pa.us

Class Time: Thursday, 3:40-5:15

Office Hours: Thursdays 3:10-3:40, 5:15-5:45 and by Appointment

Room: Patterson Hall room 207

Course Objective: Students will develop an understanding of the practicalities of the classroom. This course does not focus on theory, but in the realistic experiences you will one day encounter as social studies teachers in your middle and high school classrooms. Public educators are salaried workers and, in Pennsylvania, are contracted to teach 180 days per year. However, as you will learn, a good teacher does far more than work 180 days and their day does not end when the dismissal bell rings.

Grading:
- Attendance & Participation: 20%
- Teaching Presentations: 20%
- Field Observation & Accompanying Assignments: 20%
- Book Reflections: 15%
- Weekly reflection questions: 15%
- Philosophy of Education: 10%

Attendance/Participation/In-Class Assignments:
Attendance and participation will be assessed together and that grade is worth 20 percent of your total grade. Students are encouraged to participate with questions and comments that demonstrate serious reflection about the weekly reflection questions, reading assignments and course topics.

Teaching Presentations
Students will teach two 15-20 minute lessons to the class. Complete lesson plans must be provided for all students. Each lesson will be videotaped (you need to provide a memory card for me to record your presentation for your personal reflection). You will do a self-critique of your lesson and each student in the class will write a critique of each lesson to be provided to me.

Field Observations & Accompanying Assignments
Each student will spend 15 or more hours in my classroom and 5 or more hours in a social studies classroom from your hometown school district. You will write an essay highlighting your observations and experiences in the classroom. You must interview a teacher from your hometown district and submit a student and teacher observation form from your classroom visits.
Book Reflections
When a reading assignment is given, students must submit a 1.5-2 page reflection paper summarizing the main points and commenting on major points of interest. Find connections across the chapters and do your best to relate it to the modern problems of education.

Weekly Reflection Questions
Each week, two education/personal reflection questions will be assigned to be turned in the subsequent week. Answers will be a minimum of a half page each.

Philosophy of Education
Your final project for this class will be a two page personal philosophy of education, summarizing your beliefs about education, your hopes and dreams about what you can accomplish, your rationale for becoming a teacher, your ideal classroom, etc. What are your beliefs about the profession and social studies education in general?

***Note: Assignments will always be due the next week unless otherwise noted***

Course Outline/Calendar

January 18 (Week 1): Introduction to the Course
- Assignment:
  - Weekly Reflection Questions:
    - 1. Why do you want to be a teacher?
    - 2. In your life, who inspires you? Why do these people inspire you? How will their inspiration influence you as an educator?
  - READ: The Teacher Wars chapters 1-4
  - Book reflection

January 25 (Week 2): Content Knowledge
- Assignment:
  - Weekly Reflection Questions
    - 1. What kind of a student were you in high school?
    - 2. What were some turning points in your life? (made you what you are today)
  - READ: The Teacher Wars chapters 5-7
  - Book reflection

February 1 (Week 3): Students
- Assignment:
  - Weekly Reflection Questions
    - 1. What teachers were your favorites? Why? What teachers were your least favorites? Why? How will you use these positive/negative qualities/experiences to guide you in your teaching?
    - 2. What should a teacher be for their students?
  - READ: The Teacher Wars chapters 8-9
  - Book reflection
February 8 (Week 4): Procedures
  • Assignment:
    • Lesson Plan for those teaching on February 15
    • READ: The Teacher Wars chapters 10-Epilogue
    • Book reflection (due March 1)

February 15 (Week 5): Model Lesson (3)
  • (4) model 15 minutes lessons
  • Assignment:
    • Lesson Plan for those teaching on February 22
    • Reflections from your teaching experience (due March 1)

February 22 (Week 6): Model Lesson (3)
  • (3) model 15 minutes lessons
  • Assignment:
    • Reflections from your teaching experience (due March 1)
    • Weekly reflection questions
      • What were your fondest memories of high school? What were your worst memories of high school?
      • How did these moments affect you as a student?

March 1 (Week 7): Teachers
  • DUE: Reflections for your teaching experience
  • Discussion of the teaching experience
  • Assignment:
    • Weekly Reflection Questions
      • 1. How will you adapt your teaching for IEP students in a diverse class?
      • 2. How do you learn best? What types of learning don’t work for you?
    • Read The First Days of School section C - Classroom Management
    • Book Reflection (due March 15)

March 8 (Week 8)
SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS
  • USE THIS WEEK TO STOP IN TO YOUR OLD HIGH SCHOOL TO OBSERVE A FAVORITE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER
    • Complete your five hours of observation
    • Interview this teacher from the scripted questions (add more if you wish)
    • Compete the Student Observation form
    • Complete the School Environment form

March 15 (Week 9): The Classroom Experience
Assignment:
  • Weekly reflection questions
    • 1. How will you respond to a student who asks, “Why are we learning this? I’m never going to use this.”
2. How will you handle discipline issues in class? A student who swears, who comes in late frequently, never does homework, openly disrespects you, etc.

- Read *The First Days of School* section B - Positive Expectations
- Book Reflection

March 22 (Week 10): Discipline
Assignment:
- Weekly reflection questions:
  1. What will your classroom look like?
  2. What do you believe you will do to involve yourself in the school?
- Read *The First Days of School* section D - Lesson Mastery
- Book Reflection (due April 5)

March 29 (Week 11)
EASTER BREAK: NO CLASS

April 5 (Week 12): Your Classroom
Assignment:
- Weekly Reflection Questions:
  1. What are your strengths as an educator? What are your weaknesses as an educator?
  2. How will you address these weaknesses moving forward? How will you use your strengths to drive your teaching?
- Read *The First Days of School* section A - The Teacher
- Book Reflection
- Read *The First Days of School* section E - The Professional
  - No book reflection necessary on this one; this will help you with your philosophy of education

April 12 (Week 13): Your Classroom
- Assignment:
  - Lesson Plan for those teaching on April 19
  - Philosophy of Education (due May 3)

April 19 (Week 14): Model Lesson #2 (3)
- (4) model 15 minutes lessons
- Assignment:
  - Lesson Plan for those teaching on April 26
  - Philosophy of Education (due May 3)

April 26 (Week 15): Model Lesson #2 (3)
- (3) model 15 minutes lessons
- Assignment:
  - Reflections from your teaching experience
  - Philosophy of Education
  - Reflection questions:
    - 1. What do you want your students to say about you?
2. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 15 years? 25 years?

May 3 (Week 16): Conclusion: Where do we go from here?
- DUE: Philosophy of Education
- DUE: Reflections from your second lesson
- DUE: Final Reflection questions