

EDTR 212

Contemporary Challenges in Public Education: The American Perspective

3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County

Common Course Outline

Description

EDTR 212 – Contemporary Challenges in Public Education: The American Perspective:

Requires students to synthesize the historical context of the American education system with the ever-fluctuating trends and issues affecting today's society in order to develop a unique and independent perspective. Students are presented with the materials required to analyze the educational history that drives current issues and developments in reform measures, as well as the advantages and flaws inherent in previous attempts to improve our education system. Through an intensive investigation of past and current events using primary and secondary sources as well as reflection on personal and educational values and experiences, students will develop a critical comprehension of the American education system.

Pre-requisites: ENGL 101 and EDTR 101 or permission of the Program Coordinator

Overall Course Objectives

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

1. differentiate the educational philosophies behind American and international education systems;
2. construct an appraisal of the attitudes and perceptions of current educational policymakers and/or innovators;
3. analyze the effects of increased and decreased federal and state funding on local educational systems;
4. debate the issues involving school choice vouchers, charter schools, magnet schools, and home-schooling programs;
5. analyze the potential for effectiveness in federal reform initiatives from the challenges to current educational systems;
6. evaluate the efficacy of various school violence/gun violence prevention programs;
7. examine the benefits and repercussions of expanded use of technology in classrooms;
8. identify the issues surrounding teacher performance and accountability and analyze their effects on teacher effectiveness and quality instruction;
9. evaluate the need to train culturally responsive teachers in an increasingly multicultural society;
10. demonstrate the ability to critically analyze, discuss, and debate educational issues in formal and informal settings.

Major Topics

- I. Political Perspectives and Influences in U.S. Education
- II. Educational Philosophies

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For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

- a. The United States
 - b. International Models
- III. Federal Curriculum Initiatives
 - a. State standards, state curriculum, etc.
 - b. Funding
- IV. School Organizational Reform
 - a. School Choice Programs
- V. Curricular Reform
 - a. Technology in the Classroom
- VI. Instructional Reform
 - a. Diverse Student Populations
- VII. Disciplinary Structures

Course Requirements

Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following, at minimum:

- Discussions and debates
- Written reflections based upon in-class discussions and individual analyses of the assigned readings and/or videos
- Two analysis papers on the effects of reform initiatives on local school systems
- At least one book analysis based upon one or more issues regarding current educational reform as discussed in and related to course topics, e.g., Sahlberg's Finnish Lessons or Tough's How Children Succeed
- An exhibition of a multi-modal investigation into a self-selected educational issue as presented throughout the course. The student's ability to effectively utilize the analytical and critical thinking skills, as developed and demonstrated throughout the course, must be demonstrated clearly in the project.

Written Assignments: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources.

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