SSE 5347r Seminar: Public Affairs and Trends for Teachers/Focus on Human Rights

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Course Description: This is a graduate course designed to examine, analyze, compare, contrast, and apply three different perspectives on human rights and how such issues impact on social studies curriculum. Included perspectives or paradigms will be the natural rights perspective, the critical/neomarxist perspective, and the federalist (commonwealth) perspective. Each of these perspectives is currently vying, in the literature of education, for adherents. The course will call on students, in regards to these perspectives, to read appropriate level literature, engage in discussions over the readings, listen to guest advocates, devise lessons, and arrive at a tentative, justifiable position at to which the student feels most supportive. The course will encourage the exchange of ideas. Accordingly, varied teaching strategies will be used including discussion, panels, debates and trials (or adversary hearings). The course will extensively use real life cases, involving human rights issues, for illustration and as foundations for role-playing exercises. In addition the course will discuss and demonstrate appropriate classroom methods by which teachers can incorporate the highlighted perspectives into teaching strategies.

Objectives:

- 1 The student will identify elements of the following human rights perspectives: natural rights, the critical/neomarxist, and the federalist (commonwealth) perspectives.
- 2 The student will critically analyze the three highlighted perspectives as they relate to social and natural issues.
- 3 The student will evaluate each of the highlighted perspectives as they pertain to social studies curricula.
- 4 The student will apply the highlighted perspectives in the development of lesson plans appropriate to specified grade levels.
- 5 The student will conduct informal interviewers to gauge and evaluate the opinions of educators and students in the schools and at the universities regarding the highlighted perspectives.
- 6 The student will apply the prescriptive ideals suggested by the highlighted perspectives to practical classroom concern in contemporary American schools.

Specifically, the applications will be in the areas of classroom management, school law, and professional ethics.

7 - The student will develop a defensible position as to the perspective he or she supports at the conclusion of the course.

Required Texts:

- Alderman, E. & Kennedy, C. (1991). <u>In Our Defense: The Bill of Rights In Action</u>. New York: Avon Books.
- Freire, P. (1999). <u>Pedagogy of the oppressed</u>. New York: Continuum. [Originally published in 1970.]
- Etzioni, A. (1993). <u>The spirit of community: Rights, responsibilities, and the communitarian agenda</u>. New York: Crown Publishers.

Requirements:

Attendance - The instructor will follow the University's guidelines for attendance. The student should not miss more than ONE class meeting during the semester. If an emergency arises, the student is expected to contact the instructor at the soonest available time. (The instructor has Voice-Mail!) Since the class meets once a week, missing one full day is equivalent to missing one week.

Other than the first class meeting, class time will roughly be divided according to the following activities: reviewing the assigned readings, engaging in an inquiry exercise in which a question relating to human rights will be studied and a personal solution will be developed. These activities will vary (see description above), and either preparing or presenting a demonstrative lesson which will explain and illustrate an inquired content (this activity will be in a group format).

In relation to these activities students will be assigned the following:

- development of one unit of study of five lessons which incorporates a human rights issue and is based on one of the highlighted perspectives
- development, within a group arrangement, and presentation of a reaction to one of the highlighted perspectives
- weekly readings from required texts and supplemental articles
- field notes (three sets) in which students will conduct informal interviews with educators and students regarding the highlighted perspectives

Honor Code and Academic Honesty – Florida State University has an Honor Code as explained in the University Bulletin and Student Handbook. The code addresses a number of concerns such as preparation of papers, giving credit to sources used, taking test, etc. Students are advised to read the Code carefully; the instructor of this course will adhere to the Code. The instructor will also expect a fully professional and mature

demeanor on the part of students in all activities associated with this course. This applies to such concerns as punctuality, dress, and civility.

Disability Statement – Students with a verifiable disability, which may interfere with learning in this class, may negotiate a reasonable accommodation with the instructor early in the semester.

Evaluation

The instructor will apply the following grade distribution

Attendance and classroom participation	25%
Individual unit of study	. 25%
Three sets of field notes	20%
Group presentation on human rights perspective	10%
Take-Home Final Exam	20%

Grading:

95 - 100 points ... A

90 – 94 points A-

87 - 89 points B+

83 – 86 points B

80 - 82 points B-

77 - 79 points C+

73 - 76 points C

70 - 72 points C-

69 and below 69..F

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WORKING COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1 Introduction, Review of Syllabus

<u>Topic</u>: Definition of Rights: Distinguishing rights as claims, as legal requirements, and as fundamental moral principles and their function in curricular content.

WEEK 2 <u>Topic</u>: Debate between "Benefit" Theory, "Choice"

Theory, and "Interest" Theory of Rights and How They

Relate to Concerns of Justification

Readings:

"Theoretical foundations of liberalism," in <u>Liberal Rights:</u> <u>Collected Papers, 1981-1991</u> by Jeremy Waldron, pp. 35-62 and "Human Rights Education in the Post-Cold War Context," in <u>Human Rights Education for the Twenty-First Century</u>, George J. Andreopoulos & Richard Pierre Claud (Eds.). pp. 9-20.

WEEK 3

<u>Topic</u>: Distinction between Rights and Human or Natural Rights / Contributions of John Locke. Readings:

"Locke, toleration, and the rationality of persecution," in <u>Liberal Rights: Collected Papers, 1981-1991</u> by J. Waldron, pp. 88-114.

"Human Rights Education as Empowerment: Reflections on Pedagogy," in <u>Human Rights Education for the Twenty-First Century</u>, George J. Andreopoulos & Richard Pierre Claud (Eds.). pp. 64-79.

WEEK 4

Topic: Efforts to Codify Human Rights

Readings:

"Declaration of Independence"
"United States Constitution"

"The United States Bill of Rights"

The French "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens"

The "United Nations Declaration of Human Rights"

WEEK 5 & 6

<u>Topic</u>: Case Studies in which Human Rights Claims Are

Adjudicated Readings:

Assorted descriptions of cases involving real life Bill of Rights litigation from <u>In Our Defense</u>: <u>The Bill of Rights</u> in Action by Ellen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy.

WEEK 7

<u>Topic</u>: Teaching from a Natural Rights Perspective

Readings:

"Liberalism and Its Critics," by Jeffery Reiman in <u>The Liberalism-Communitarian Debate</u>, edited by C. F. Deaney, pp. 19-38.

"Human Rights Education: The Promise of the Third Millennium?" in <u>Human Rights for the Twenty-First Century</u>, George J. Andreopoulos & Richard Pierre Claud (Eds.). pp. 142-160.

WEEK 8

Topic: A Utilitarian View of Rights

Readings:

Chapter 1 in <u>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u> by Paulo Freire and "Utilitarianism," by John Stuart Mill in <u>Morality and Moral Controversies</u>, John Arthur (Ed.), pp. 34-41.

WEEK 9

<u>Topic</u>: Neomarxist Approach: A Critical Perspective Readings:

Chapter 2 in <u>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u> by Paulo Freire and "Critical Pedagogy and Social Education" by Cleo Cherryholmes in <u>Handbook on Teaching Social Issues:</u> <u>NCSS bulletin 93</u>, Ronald W. Evans & David W. Saxe (Eds.), pp. 75-80.

WEEK 10

<u>Topic</u>: Teaching from a Critical Perspective Readings:

Chapter 3 in <u>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u> by Paulo Freire and "Culture, Power, and Transformation in the Work of Paulo Freire: Toward a Politics of Education" by Henry A. Giroux in <u>Teachers as Intellectuals: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning</u>, Henry A. Giroux (Ed.), pp. 108-120.

WEEK 11

Topic: The Communitarian Concern: Enriching the

Commonwealth

Readings:

Chapters 1 & 2 of <u>The Spirit of Community: Rights</u>, <u>Responsibilities</u>, and the Communitarian Agenda by Amitai Etzioni, pp. 23-88.

WEEK 12

<u>Topic</u>: A Communitarian Public Philosophy and Federalist Liberty

Readings:

Chapter 1 & 2 of <u>Democracy's Discontent</u>: <u>America in Search of a Public Philosophy</u> by Michael J. Sandel, pp. 3-54 and "How federal is the Constitution? Thoroughly" by Daniel J. Elazar (Handout).

WEEK 13

<u>Topic</u>: Teaching from a Federalist Liberty Perspective

Readings:

Chapter 3 & 9 of The Spirit of Community: Rights,

Responsibilities, and the Communitarian Agenda by Amitai Etzioni, (pp. 89-115 and pp. 226-246, respectively).

WEEK 14

<u>Topic</u>: An American Perspective?: The Complication Due

to Federalism Readings:

"Felix Frankfurter and American Federalism" by Michael E. Parrish (pp. 27-36) and "Justice Brennan and Federalism" by Robert C. Post (pp. 37-44) both in Federalism: Studies in History, Law, and Policy, Harry N. Scheiber (Ed.).

WEEK 15

<u>Topic</u>: Choosing Among the Options: Review and Closure Assignment: Take-home examination, due when final exam time has been allocated.