

# EDGEWOOD COLLEGE – MADISON, WISCONSIN

**Course:** ED 618 Language, Literacy, and Diversity  
**Semester:** Summer 2010  
**Instructor:** Kenneth J. Fasching-Varner, PhD  
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**Office Hours:** Saturday 8:00 – 9:00  
By Appointment  
**Class Meetings:** Saturdays – 9:00am – 1:00pm



## Philosophy and Guiding Principles Informing Course

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This course is guided by the mission of Edgewood College and the School of Education. This course embraces the belief that all children learn and that learning occurs best when students are actively engaged in constructing meaning within a collaborative and supportive community of learners. The course is further informed by the ideas of self-reflection and commitment to professional development.

## Edgewood College Mission

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Edgewood College, rooted in the Dominican tradition, engages students within a community of learners committed to building a just and compassionate world. The College educates students for meaningful personal and professional lives of ethical leadership, service, and a lifelong search for truth.

## Diversity Statement

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This course views equity, diversity, as well as social and racial justice as fundamental aspects of social justice, and of the larger enterprise of education. Quality educators understand that they teach students, not subjects, and work for and with students, families, and community. Quality educators make explicit in their craft the ability to understand that all peoples differ in their approaches to language, literacy, behavior, rituals, and routines, thus creating instructional approaches to learning that meet students' needs socially, developmentally, and with the utmost of respect. Throughout your program you will begin to see and understand the interrelationships that occur when race, class, gender, sexuality, thought, language, environment, disposition, and emotion intersect in and beyond the classroom. This course seeks to push your developing understanding of these intersections. Many say that in today's society we are becoming more diverse; this is a misstatement. Society has always been diverse! The difference perhaps is that we are now better coming to understand the different manifestations of diversity that for too long had been ignored, subverted, and/or otherwise disregarded. Our beliefs and practice must trouble our own pedagogy so that as we look at students, parents, administrators, and the community, we can confidently claim that our practice has been informed by the multiple ways of knowing and being in the world.

## Grading Policy

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At this point in your graduate career it is my expectation that you do assignments in the course less for the grade you receive, and more for both your own learning, and in order to become a better educator. I expect engagement and quality work. **Exemplary work** [that which goes **above and beyond the expectations of the particular assignment**] will receive an exemplary grade (A), **proficient work** [that which **meets the expectations** of the rubric] will receive a proficient grade (A/B or B), **developing work** [work that **does not fully meet the expectations** of the assignment, but that is clearly on track toward the expectations] will receive a developing grade (B/C, C, or C/D). Anything **less than satisfactory** [**does not address the assignments in a manner consistent with graduate level work and/or course work is incomplete by not meeting basic parameters of the assignments**] will receive a grade of D or F reflecting **unacceptable work**.

Each assignment will be handed back with the a grade commiserate with the work along with my feedback about your work. If you work is less than satisfactory or unacceptable your paper will receive a red flag with an explanation as to why the assignment does not meet standards for an educator. You may redo any assignment in the course. You will have to set up a meeting to reflect on the feedback I have provided as well as set up a plan for completion of the assignment if any assignment is unacceptable. While we can always discuss your particular circumstances, your success in this course is ultimately your responsibility.

If you are unhappy with your grade, rubric levels, or feedback you must schedule, via e-mail, an appointment to see me no sooner than 24 hours after I have handed back the assignment. This 24 hours is a chance to take a step back, reflect on your performance with the assignment, and prepare in an articulate manner the exact concern you wish to discuss. You must come to the meeting with a copy of the assignment, my feedback, the rubric, and the discussion points you wish to address written down. I will not discuss grades immediately after handing back assignment under any circumstances nor will I discuss your assignments over e-mail.

Assignment	Timeliness	Objectives/ Content	Writing	Quality Points A&B	Total
Chapbook		/10	/2		/12
Professionalism		/10			/10
Hector Pieterse	/2	/10	/2	/2	/16
Experiential Assignment 1	/2	/5	/2	/1	/10
Experiential Assignment 2	/2	/5	/2	/1	/10
Group Media Analysis	/2	/10	/2	/2	/16
Autobiography	/2	/20	/4		/26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>/10</b>	<b>/70</b>	<b>/12</b>	<b>/8</b>	<b>/100</b>

### FINAL GRADES

100 – 93 points – A	77 – 73 points – C
92 – 88 points – A/B	72 – 68 points – C/D
87 – 83 points – B	67 – 63 points – D
82 – 78 points – B/C	62 – 00 points – F

**Attendance Policy** - Because the course physically meets for a short time you are required to be at all class sessions unless you have an excused absence that has been discussed with me. If you miss a class session or part of a class session successful completion of the course may be jeopardized. Attendance will be generally factored into the grade as follows:

- Misses 1-2 hours of class =  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  letter grade deduction
- Misses 2-3 hours of class =  $\frac{3}{4}$  - 1 letter grade deduction
- Misses 3-4 hours of class = 1 -  $1\frac{1}{2}$  letter grade deduction
- Misses more than 4 hours =  $1\frac{1}{2}$  - Failure of class due to attendance

### Other Important Information

- All candidates are expected to check their email account frequently. All correspondence will be sent via Edgewood e-mail. I am not in the habit of using other e-mails unless there is a compelling reason.
- Some assignments [the experiential assignments, the chapbook, and the autobiography] you will have until August 5<sup>th</sup> to complete, whereas other assignments [Hector Pieteron, Group Media Project, and course readings] will need to be completed by the dates specified in the syllabus.

### Tentative Reading Schedule and Assignment Due Dates

Course topics are discussed from an intersectional approach. Thus throughout the course we will discuss a variety of topics as they intersect with our texts and our learning **precludes the inclusion of a weekly schedule of pre-set topics**. Topics that will be discussed through intersection include but are not limited to: race, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, class, the 'isms,' reform, and activism. As a general rule of thumb, each week we will engage in discussions of texts as well as processing activities to engage us with the various topics we are learning about.

Date	Readings Due – Check class Wiki for additional resources and To Do List	Assignment Due
06/11/10	<input type="checkbox"/> Nieto - Social Justice in Hard Times <input type="checkbox"/> Simbao – 30th Anniversary of Soweto Uprising <input type="checkbox"/> Ladson-Billings Webcast – Watch and take notes as explained on Wiki <input type="checkbox"/> Case Study – Choose 1 Case Study from TDSI to complete	
06/18/10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1a. Loutzenheizer - How Schools Play Smear The Queer <b>or</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 1b. Loutzenheiser – Citizenships and Sexualities <input type="checkbox"/> McDermott - Culture as Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Bloome - Learning To Read Is Who You Are	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Assignment 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Hector Pieteron <input type="checkbox"/> Chapbook-update
06/25/10	<input type="checkbox"/> Haberman – Pedagogy of Poverty <input type="checkbox"/> 2a. Lee – Big Picture Talkers <b>or</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 2b. Lee – Literacy and Cultural Diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Assignment 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Group Media Project <input type="checkbox"/> Chapbook-update
Rest Of Summer		<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Autobiography and Chapbook

# ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

## Professionalism

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End of the course – You will self-rate and turn in a copy. I will rate you as well and give you feedback. If there are significant areas of concern I will discuss them with you. Your final grade will look holistically at the entire rubric in order to place the letter grade and grade equivalent based on the rubric and your performance throughout the course. **Please refer to the rubric in the assessment document.**

## Chapbook Assignment

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**General Description:** Over the course of the semester (from June to August) you will compile a chapbook of questions, reactions, responses, daily influences, observations, reflections, fiction and non-fiction snippets, 'realia' (newspaper clips, magazine articles, photos, admission tickets, etc). Chapbooks, a type of self-publication, date back to 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Scotland. At that time books were expensive to make, so many people resorted to self-published collections on folded sheets of inexpensive paper. You will create a diversity chapbook of your own using a spiral notebook or other outlet. The chapbook should include your own writings and collections including observations from your lives, ideas from readings and class discussions, general feelings, and hopefully reflexive] thoughts and ideas. Each entry that is not your own writing (newspaper clips or photos for example) should be accompanied by a **brief** rationale of why you selected the piece, to remind you of its inclusion in the book.

**Minimum Requirements:** Your chapbook should have a minimum of three sections or components. You may choose to clearly distinguish these three sections, or you may choose to integrate the sections each week, highlighting each time you switch between components. The three sections are:

1) **critical questions** – each week you need to craft a list of critical questions. Critical questions often incorporate narrative contextual information prior to posing the question. These questions should be 'deep' to the extent that they go beyond simple yes/no responses; the questions you pose should have no apparent answers.

The questions you pose need to come from at least three sources:

i. **the self you are** (these are self-posed questions that challenge your own thoughts, opinions, and beliefs – particularly trying to get at where those beliefs and opinions are rooted [\*\*note\*\* minimum of one question per week; no maximum])

ii. **the texts you read** (these questions come from the texts you are reading for the class – again, questions that spark conversation and thought, not questions like "who wrote The Bluest Eye?") [\*\*note\*\* each text you read should ideally spark multiple questions as you read – there is no limit to the questions you pose in your chapbook, however the minimum for each text is one per week the book is read – so if we read a book over two weeks, that text should have two critical questions posed]

iii. **the world you live in** (these questions should help you make sense of the world you live in – how are you positioned in this world, how are others positioned, what are your sources of privilege, how is privilege interrogated, even existential questions about the workings of the world are appropriate here) [\*\*note\*\* minimum of one question per week; no maximum]

2) **reactions/responses** – each week you should write narrative reactions and responses to what we learn in class, reactions/responses to guest speakers, your own feelings about your learning in the class, your level of (un)comfort with the course material, reactions about what happens throughout the week out of class that can help you make sense of what we learn in class. These can be raw, edgy, and honest – but remember honest does not mean attacking or bashing – ideally your honest and candid responses focus **all on you** and how you are positioning yourself against the course material. For example if something upsets you, try in your response to get at the center of this feeling, likewise if something really resonates with you, try in your honest response to locate why that idea of concept would resonate with you.

3) **daily influences** – daily influences can be anything that happens out of class. It can include taking photos, articles, creating artwork, drawings, songs, newspaper pieces, flyers, really anything that exists in the world of ideas that you live in that help you either make sense of or apply course material to the world.

## Experiential Assignments

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During the course you will engage with two experiential assignments. Upon completing **each** “experiential assignment” you will write a short paper addressing items a-d below. Be certain to respond to the following questions and be sure to adhere to the length requirement so that these papers remain brief.

- a. Describe the impact of the assignment – your experience navigating through the experiences? – Limited to 1 paragraph
- b. Have you addressed the systemic nature of at least one –ism that became apparent during the experience? (minimum 1 paragraph / maximum 2 paragraphs)
- c. Have you addressed implications for literacy? (minimum 1 paragraph / maximum 2 paragraphs)

Additionally, you should be prepared to give a three to five minute presentation in which you discuss the assignment with your peers. Have a half a sheet of paper outline of what you will present with notes for yourself (all the outlines will be collected and looked at by the professor).

### Experiential Assignment 1

You are to go as a little person, who is 3ft. 5 inches, to do grocery shopping at your local grocery store without seeking any assistance from any one at the store. Determine a system for measuring the 3.5 ft. accurately so that you get a clear indication of how you will be shopping.

### Experiential Assignment 2

Use the bus as a means of transportation for an entire day in which you go to at least four different places using the bus, **and at least two places that include transfers of buses**. Keep track of the buses you take, the locations of transfers, the wait time between buses, etc. and attach that documentation to your paper. (Your start/end point counts as one location).

**\*\*** You may substitute one of these assignments with one of your own creation based on conversation with me. If you are interested in pursuing a different experiential assignment plan to talk with me ASAP.

## Hector Pieterse Literacy Repositioning Assignment

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You will read an article about the role of the shadow in the famous picture of Hector Pieterse from the Soweto Uprisings in South Africa. Prior to the second class you should investigate about the history of Hector Pieterse's death as well as the Student Uprisings in Soweto. After reading the article and doing some investigation prior to class we will discuss the power of images and how images can serve as literacy events and the role of what is seen and what is left unseen. You will reposition the Hector Pieterse photo by creating your own reproduction of the event basing your work off of the original image. Inherently you will make choices about what is seen, what is not seen, the appearance and focus of your work. You will be given a large paper that will serve as your canvas for the reproduction you create (although you are free to use your own paper **or** you may have your own creative way of creating this assignment so feel free to live outside of the box). You will also create a literacy narrative that simultaneously tells the Hector Pieterse/Soweto Uprising story **as you come to learn it** from the point of view of your repositioned image/images. The objectives of this assignment are to use an image and known story to reposition focus and thus create a unique literacy event, and unique narrative based off of a common historical event taking into account the diversity of views that can be applied to the assignment.

## Group Media Analysis Project

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On the first class we will view a portion of a video by Kilbourne; the Kilbourne video is an analysis of gender portrayal in media and advertising. Using the Kilbourne video as a departure point, groups of 3-5 candidates will select an –ISM, and research the –ISM in popular media and advertising (print and multi-media). Groups will

select and analyze the relationship between the -ISM and its portrayal in the media. Groups will prepare a 15 minute presentation that models the approach used in the Kilbourne video. Presentations will be strictly limited to 15 minutes, and if a group exceeds 15 minutes, the presentation will be ended – thusly, ensure that presentations adhere to the time guideline. All group members must participate in the presentation in an equitable manner in addition to equitably contributing the construction of the presentation.

My group members are: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### **Cultural Autobiography Assignment**

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You will be writing your own cultural autobiography. In this cultural autobiography you will do more than chronologically narrate your life. Instead you will think about key moments that can move forward a holistic narrative that begins to document the complexity of you as a cultural being. Given that this is a literacy class the role of literacy should certainly factor in. The autobiography must examine minimally the intersection of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Again each of those should not be examined and written about in isolation, but rather thinking of the key moments and stories of your life where intersections of these cultural markers come together in various combinations.

Your chapbook can be a rough drafting space for some of this work.

As your life is complex you are not expected to create a narrative that accounts for your whole life or is “complete” – this assignment could be ongoing over the course of your life. As such the emphasis for this assignment is not a perfectly drafted assignment, but rather a well written document that helps you better understand yourself.