

# MSEd 451: Social Studies Content for Teachers

Spring Quarter 2021

Wednesday March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021-Wednesday June 2nd, 2021

2:00pm-4:50pm

**Instructor:** Dr. Matthew Nelsen

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**Office Hours:** By Appointment

## Course Description

Civic education, broadly defined, has long been viewed as an essential component of American democracy. In fact, many of America's founding figures emphasized in both public addresses and private letters that American citizens must receive explicit instruction in democratic processes. Similarly, scholars and social reformers dating back to Reconstruction and the Progressive Era viewed civic education as way to prepare America's youngest citizens for full participation in public life. For example, John Dewey suggested that "democracy had to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife." Similarly, W.E.B. Du Bois argued that "it is the public schools...which can be made outside the home, the greatest means of training decent self-respecting citizen."

As demonstrated by the C3 Framework and Illinois education standards, social studies teachers are frequently entrusted to achieve these goals, but to what degree does content play in shaping democratic ends? How can content be used to reflect the lived experiences of young people across various facets of identity (e.g. race, class, and gender) and geographical contexts? Is it possible to make social studies content relevant while also staying true to state standards? This course will address these questions by creating opportunities to connect social studies content to the C3 Framework and Illinois State Standards. In the process, students will explore ways to select content that is both meaningful and empowering for their students by engaging with texts that critically examine various social studies topics. Students will walk away from the course with a unit plan that can be employed within their own social studies classroom in the future.

## Course Goals

1. Understand the relationship between social studies content and democratic outcomes
2. Develop a deeper understanding of multiple social studies content areas, including civics, American history, Illinois history, and economics
3. Practice designing activities, lessons and units informed by the C3 Framework, Illinois State Standards, and the course readings
4. Create a unit plan consisting of three complete lesson plans that can be utilized in your own social studies classroom

## Northwestern University Conceptual Framework for Teacher Education

The Teacher Education Program at Northwestern University is guided by a conceptual framework for teacher education, organized around a vision of learning, learners and teaching. The conceptual framework focuses on

A vision of learning that includes:

- 1.1. how students come to understand and think about subject matter;
- 1.2. an emphasis on inquiry and reflection;
- 1.3. the importance of collaboration and social interaction; and
- 1.4. experiential activities that are relevant and engaging.

A vision of learners that includes:

- 2.1 the belief that every person is capable of learning;
- 2.2 that development is shaped by social contexts; and
- 2.3 equitable experiences for all.

A vision of teaching that includes:

- 3.1 connecting theory and practice;
- 3.2 inquiry, reflection, collaboration, and innovation;
- 3.3 creating a climate of learning for all students; and
- 3.4 acting professionally, responsibly, and ethically.

### **Dispositions**

Dispositions are habits of professional action and moral commitment to teaching. The program will help candidates acquire the following dispositions to the level of proficiency:

- reflect on one's own practice and make changes as appropriate
- support students as individuals
- collaborate with all stakeholders
- engage all students
- incorporate innovations in teaching, including the use of new technologies
- conduct oneself professionally, responsibly and ethically

### **Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (2013)**

Standard 1 - Teaching Diverse Students – The competent teacher understands the diverse characteristics and abilities of each student and how individuals develop and learn within the context of their social, economic, cultural, linguistic, and academic experiences. The teacher uses these experiences to create instructional opportunities that maximize student learning.

Standard 2 - Content Area and Pedagogical Knowledge – The competent teacher has in-depth understanding of content area knowledge that includes central concepts, methods of inquiry, structures of the disciplines, and content area literacy. The teacher creates meaningful learning experiences for each student based upon interactions among content area and pedagogical knowledge, and evidence-based practice.

Standard 3 - Planning for Differentiated Instruction – The competent teacher plans and designs instruction based on content area knowledge, diverse student characteristics, student performance data, curriculum goals, and the community context. The teacher plans for ongoing student growth and achievement.

Standard 4 - Learning Environment – The competent teacher structures a safe and healthy learning environment that facilitates cultural and linguistic responsiveness, emotional well-being, self-efficacy, positive social interaction, mutual respect, active engagement, academic risk-taking, self-motivation, and personal goal-setting.

Standard 5 - Instructional Delivery – The competent teacher differentiates instruction by using a variety of strategies that support critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and continuous growth and learning. This teacher understands that the classroom is a dynamic environment requiring ongoing modification of instruction to enhance learning for each student.

Standard 6 - Reading, Writing, and Oral Communication – The competent teacher has foundational knowledge of reading, writing, and oral communication within the content area and recognizes and addresses student reading, writing, and oral communication needs to facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge.

Standard 7 - Assessment – The competent teacher understands and uses appropriate formative and summative assessments for determining student needs, monitoring student progress, measuring student growth, and evaluating student outcomes. The teacher makes decisions driven by data about curricular and instructional effectiveness and adjusts practices to meet the needs of each student.

Standard 8 - Collaborative Relationships – The competent teacher builds and maintains collaborative relationships to foster cognitive, linguistic, physical, and social and emotional development. This teacher works as a team member with professional colleagues, students, parents or guardians, and community members.

Standard 9 - Professionalism, Leadership, and Advocacy – The competent teacher is an ethical and reflective practitioner who exhibits professionalism; provides leadership in the learning community; and advocates for students, parents or guardians, and the profession.

## **Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards**

Goal 1 - Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.

Goal 2 - Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

Goal 3 - Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students in this course are required to comply with the policies found in the booklet, "Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic guide". For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern or to download the guide, visit:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/index.html>.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Any student with a disability requesting accommodations must register with Services for Students with Disabilities ([ssd@northwestern.edu](mailto:ssd@northwestern.edu); 847-467-5530) and request an SSD accommodation notification for their professor, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

## **Student Attendance Policy**

Active attendance and participation in the class is required. If you must miss a class session for any reason, please contact the instructor in advance. Unexcused absences or tardiness will result in a lower participation grade. Absences for legitimate reasons (such as medical crises, family emergencies, and religious observances) do not count towards this policy. However, it is your responsibility to inform me of the legitimate reason for an absence in a timely manner. For absence due to religious observances, this means informing me ahead of time. For an absence due to illness or medical emergencies, this means letting me know why you missed class at the very first opportunity to do so. After missing a class, you should expect to make up the missed instructional minutes by completing any missed assignments and by writing a two-page response paper about the readings assigned for the missed class period.

## **Reading**

You are expected to read the required texts before each class meeting. This course is a seminar, not a lecture course. This seminar provides the opportunity for informed discussion of ideas pertaining to social studies content. In order to be a productive participant in an informed discussion, you need to be prepared for class. If you are not prepared for class, you not only undermine your own learning, you also lower (or at least do not help to elevate) the overall level of the discussion, and thus detract from the learning experience of others. Make sure to budget your time so that your reading for this class is done on time.

## **Participation**

Informed participation in seminar discussions is required of each student. The *quality* of participation will weigh more heavily than the *quantity* of participation. Social studies education *is* an exercise in democracy, so it is essential to find ways to engage in discourse with individuals who may not share your perspective of ideological predispositions. In the process, I commit to fostering an environment that is inclusive for all voices. However, I am also committed to facilitating conversations that do not rearticulate existing inequalities or violate the norms of pluralist democracy. We will discuss acceptable forms, styles, and levels of participation during the first week in class. Students who are concerned about this requirement of the course, due to shyness or for any other reason, are encouraged to meet with the instructor early in the semester to discuss individual strategies for meeting this course requirement. However, I will provide opportunities for individual reflection at the end of each course that will also contribute to the overall participation grade.

## **Grading**

Assignments must be posted in Canvas and turned in by their assigned deadline or receive a half letter grade penalty for each day it is late. You should expect feedback on your assignments as well as number of points earned within a week after submission. For all assignments, I will use a rubric for grading that you will receive ahead of time. Following each assignment, I will also provide an overview of grade distributions in order to maintain transparency. I will not accept any assignment for credit after the last day of the quarter.

## Required Texts

Boo, Katherine. 2014. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*. New York, NY: Random House. **(audiobook available)**

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2014. *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. **(audiobook available)**

Hertz, Daniel Kay. 2018. *The Battle of Lincoln Park: Urban Renewal and Gentrification in Chicago*. Cleveland, OH: Rust belt Publishing.

Levinson, Meira. 2014. *No Citizen Left Behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

\*Additional readings will be made available on Canvas. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you are having difficulty obtaining any of the required texts. I am open to substituting some course readings based on student interest and the trajectory of the course. In the process I will ensure that the readings are representative of a diverse set of voices, including women and people of color.

**\*\*Podcasts, documentaries, and additional (short) articles will be assigned on a weekly basis to adequately address students' questions, concerns, and interests.**

## MSEd 436: Graded Assignments

### Class Participation (25 points)

Your attendance and quality of participation in each class session will be taken into consideration as part of your final grade (See Participation Rubric).

### Unit Plan Project Proposal (20 points)

Create a proposal for your Unit Plan Project that includes 2 ideas/possibilities for your unit. Briefly describe the goals/objectives and some of the content, skills, experiences, assessments that will be included for each idea. Please be prepared to share this with the class! A more detailed description of this assignment and the corresponding rubric will be provided later on in the quarter.

### Milestone Assignments (15 points each; 30 total)

For each of the Milestone assignments, you will complete a lesson plan including all resources, materials, and formative assessments necessary to teach each lesson. I will provide feedback on each Milestone that you should incorporate into the final Unit Plan Project. The goal here is to help structure your work toward the final project throughout the quarter while also providing multiple opportunities to receive my feedback prior to submitting the final project. A more detailed description of these assignments and the corresponding rubrics will be provided later on in the quarter.

### Unit Plan Project (100 points)

Create a major teaching unit plan on a topic of your choice. Write an introduction/overview that explains the content, context, rationale, and goals of the plan. This plan should also include a brief reflection that describes how you incorporated feedback from the instructor and your peers into the final product. Outline the lessons that will be taught within the plan. Detail at least 3 lesson plans including all resources, materials, and formative assessments necessary to teach each lesson (**Please note that two of these lessons will be completed earlier in the quarter as Milestone assignments**). Detail at least 1 summative assessment that will check student understanding at the end of the unit. A more detailed description of this assignment and the corresponding rubric will be provided later on in the quarter.

## Class Session Schedule, Topics, and Assignment Deadlines

**\*\*Podcasts, documentaries, and additional (short) articles will be assigned on a weekly basis to adequately address students' questions, concerns, and interests.**

### **Civics (Two Weeks)**

#### **March 31, 2021: Social Studies Education and Democratic Outcomes**

##### *Readings*

- Levinson, Meira. 2014. *No Citizen Left Behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. **(Pg. 1-59)**

##### *Alignment to C3 Framework (Examples)*

- **D2.Civ.2.K-2:** Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community
- **D2.Civ.2.3-5:** Explain how a democracy relies on people's responsible participation, and draw implications for how individuals should participate
- **D2.Civ.2.6-8:** Explain specific roles played by citizens (such as voters, jurors, taxpayers, members of the armed forces, petitioners, protesters, and office holders)
- **D2.Civ.2.9-12:** Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans' participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present

##### *Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)*

- **SS.CV.1.1:** Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community
- **SS.CV.2.4:** Explain how a democracy relies on people's responsible participation, and draw implications for how individuals should participate
- **SS.CV.2.9-12:** Evaluate the opportunities and limitations of participation in elections, voting, and the electoral process

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#### **April 7, 2021: Heroes, Institutions, and Democratic Outcomes**

##### *Readings*

- Levinson, Meira. 2014. *No Citizen Left Behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. **(Pg. 138-166)**
- Nelsen, Matthew D. 2021. "Analysis| Serious historians are criticizing Trump's 1776 report. It's how most U.S. history is already taught." *Washington Post*. Accessed January 31, 2021. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/01/28/trumps-1776-report-is-getting-lot-criticism-its-how-most-us-history-is-already-being-taught/> **(2 pages)**
- Manuel, Steph. 2021. *Jude's War*. TrueFiktion. **(16 pages)**

##### *Guest Speaker*

- Steph Manuel (TrueFiktion)

##### *Alignment to C3 Framework*

- **D2.Civ.1.K-2:** Describe roles and responsibilities of people in authority
- **D2.Civ.6.3-5:** Describe ways in which people benefit from and are challenged by working together, including through government, workplaces, voluntary organizations, and families
- **D2.Civ.6.6-8:** Describe the role of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives
- **D2.Civ.6.9-12:** Critique relationships among governments, civil societies, and economic markets

##### *Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)*

- **SS.H.2.3:** Describe how significant people, events, and developments have shaped their own community and region
- **SS.CV.1.6-8LC:** Identify roles played by citizens (examples: voters, jurors, taxpayers, military, protesters, and officeholders)

- **S.CV.8.9-12:** Analyze how individuals use and challenge laws to address a variety of public issues
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## United States History (Two Weeks)

### April 14, 2021: Racial Scripts and Counterscripts

#### Readings

- Molina, Natalia. 2014. *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. **(Pg. 1-13;56-94)**
- Nelsen, Matthew D. 2020. "Analysis | America's Classrooms Shut down This Spring. Civics Lessons Shifted to the Streets." *Washington Post*. Accessed August 12, 2020.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/06/22/americas-classrooms-shut-down-this-spring-civics-lessons-shifted-streets/>. **(2 pages)**

#### Assignment

- Unit Plan Proposal due by 2:00pm
- Be prepared to discuss proposals during class

#### Alignment to C3 Framework

- **D2.Civ.14.K-2:** Describe how people have tried to improve their communities over time
- **D2.Civ.14.3-5:** Illustrate historical and contemporary means of changing society
- **D2.Civ.14.6-8:** Compare the historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good
- **D2.Civ.14.9-12:** Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights

#### Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)

- **SS.CV.2.3:** Explain how groups of people make rules to create responsibilities and protect freedoms
- **SS.CV.2.5:** Examine the origins and purposes of rules, laws, and key U.S. constitutional provisions
- **SS.H.2.9-12.** Analyze change and continuity within and across historical eras

### April 21, 2021: A Series of Refoundings

#### Readings

- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2015. *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press **(Pg. 1-16; 95-116)**

#### Alignment to C3 Framework

- **D2.Geo.6.K-2:** Identify some cultural and environmental characteristics of specific places
- **D2.Geo.6.3-5:** Describe how environmental and cultural characteristics influence population distribution in specific regions
- **D2.Geo.6.6-8:** Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures
- **D2.Geo.6.9-12:** Evaluate the impact of human settlement activities on the environmental and cultural characteristics of specific regions and places

#### Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)

- **SS.H.2.K:** Explain the significance of our national holidays and the heroism and achievements of the people associated with them
- **SS.H.1.4:** Explain connections among historical contexts and why individuals and groups differed in their perspectives during the same historical period
- **SS.CV.7.9-12:** Describe the concepts and principles that are inherent to American Constitutional Democracy

## Illinois History (Two Weeks)

### April 28, 2021: The Battle of Lincoln Park (Part 1)

#### Readings

- Hertz, Daniel Kay. 2018. *The Battle of Lincoln Park: Urban Renewal and Gentrification in Chicago*. Cleveland, OH: Rust belt Publishing (Pg. 1-91)

#### Alignment to C3 Framework (Examples)

- **D2.Geo.7.K-2:** Explain why and how people, goods, and ideas move from place to place
- **D2.Geo.7.3-5:** Explain *how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas*
- **D2.Geo.7.6-8:** Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices
- **D2.Geo.7.9-12:** Analyze the reciprocal nature of how historical events and the spatial diffusion of ideas, technology, and cultural practices have influenced migration patterns and the distribution of human population

#### Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)

- **SS.G.2.4.:** *Analyze how the cultural and environmental characteristics of places in Illinois change over time*
- **SS.CV.4.4:** Explain how rules and laws change society and how people change rules and laws in Illinois
- **SS.CV.2.6-8.MdC:** Explain the origins, functions, and structure of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, Illinois Constitution, and other systems of government

### May 5, 2021: The Battle of Lincoln Park (Part 2)

#### Readings

- Hertz, Daniel Kay. 2018. *The Battle of Lincoln Park: Urban Renewal and Gentrification in Chicago*. Cleveland, OH: Rust belt Publishing (Pg. 95-166)

#### Alignment to C3 Framework (Examples)

- **D2.Geo.7.K-2:** Explain why and how people, goods, and ideas move from place to place
- **D2.Geo.7.3-5:** Explain *how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas*
- **D2.Geo.7.6-8:** Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices
- **D2.Geo.7.9-12:** Analyze the reciprocal nature of how historical events and the spatial diffusion of ideas, technology, and cultural practices have influenced migration patterns and the distribution of human population

#### Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)

- **SS.G.2.4.:** *Analyze how the cultural and environmental characteristics of places in Illinois change over time*
- **SS.CV.4.4:** Explain how rules and laws change society and how people change rules and laws in Illinois
- **SS.CV.2.6-8.MdC:** Explain the origins, functions, and structure of government with reference to the U.S. Constitution, Illinois Constitution, and other systems of government

#### Assignment

- Milestone 1 due by 2:00pm
- Be prepared to discuss Milestone 1 during class

## Economics (Two Weeks)

### May 12, 2021: Behind the Beautiful Foreverers (Part 1)

#### Readings

- Boo, Katherine. 2014. *Behind the Beautiful Foreverers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*. New York, NY: Random House. (Pg. ix-116)

#### Alignment to C3 Framework (Examples)

- **D2.Eco.14.K-2:** Describe why people in one country trade goods and services with people in other countries.
- **D2.Eco.14.3-5:** Explain the effects of increasing economic interdependence on different groups within participating nations.
- **D2.Civ.2.6-8:** Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.
- **D2.Civ.2.9-12:** Explain how current globalization trends and policies affect economic growth, labor markets, rights of citizens, the environment, and resource and income distribution in different nations.

#### Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)

- **SS.CV.1.1:** Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community.
- **SS.CV.2.4:** Explain how a democracy relies on people's responsible participation, and draw implications for how individuals should participate.
- **SS.CV.2.9-12:** Evaluate the opportunities and limitations of participation in elections, voting, and the electoral process.

### May 19, 2021: Behind the Beautiful Foreverers (Part 2)

#### Readings

- Boo, Katherine. 2014. *Behind the Beautiful Foreverers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*. New York, NY: Random House. (Pg. 117-244)

#### Alignment to C3 Framework (Examples)

- **D2.Eco.14.K-2:** Describe why people in one country trade goods and services with people in other countries.
- **D2.Eco.14.3-5:** Explain the effects of increasing economic interdependence on different groups within participating nations.
- **D2.Civ.2.6-8:** Explain the benefits and the costs of trade policies to individuals, businesses, and society.
- **D2.Civ.2.9-12:** Explain how current globalization trends and policies affect economic growth, labor markets, rights of citizens, the environment, and resource and income distribution in different nations.

#### Assignment

- Milestone 2 due by 2:00pm
- Be prepared to discuss Milestone 2 during class

## Civic Possibilities and Lived Civics

### May 26, 2021: Civic Possibilities

#### Readings

- Levinson, Meira. 2014. *No Citizen Left Behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Pg. 210-249; Pg. 289-296)

### June 2, 2021: Lived Civics

#### Readings

- Cohen, Cathy, Joseph Kahne, and Jessica Marshall. 2018. "Let's Go There: Making a Case for Race, Ethnicity and a Lived Civics Approach to Civic Education." (18 pages).

## Assignment

- Unit Plan Presentations

### *Alignment to C3 Framework (Examples)*

- **D2.Civ.10.K-2:** Compare their own point of view with others' perspectives
- **D2.Civ.10.3-5:** Identify the beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and values that underlie their own and others' points of view about civic issues
- **D2.Civ.10.6-8:** Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in civil society.
- **D2.Civ.10.9-12:** Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights

### *Alignment to Illinois Standards (Examples)*

- **SS.CV.1.1:** Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community.
- **SS.CV.5.6-8.MdC:** Analyze the purposes, implementation, and consequences of public policies in historic and contemporary settings.
- **SS.H.1.2:** Summarize changes that have occurred in the local community over time.