SEATTLE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
TEACHER EDUCATION

ORGANIZING THEME: The School of Education prepares ethical and reflective professionals for service in diverse communities.

EPDSS 904 Civics for Elementary Teaching

One Continuing Education Credit

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A word about the WEST E Elementary Education: Content Knowledge…This course will serve as good background for the content test. The WEST E is focused on the recall of facts; however, this course also is designed to develop conceptual understanding.

TEXTS

Washington State Social Studies Learning Standards:
http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/EALRs-GLEs.aspx

These texts are a starting point for exploring civic understandings. It is expected that you will read/review a number of sources for this course. Resources are available from the public library or Amazon.com.

Select one of the following:

Barber, B.R. (1998). *A place for us: How to make society civil and democracy strong*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Barber, B.R. & Battistoni, R.M. (2007). *Education for democracy: A sourcebook for Students and teachers*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing.

Laxer, J. (2009). *Democracy*. Berkeley, CA: Groundwork Books.

League of Women Voters of Washington Education Fund. (2004). *The state we're in: Washington your guide to state, tribal & local government*. Seattle: Author. Call 206-622-8961 or 1-800-419-2596 to order textbook.

Kluger, R. (1976) *Simple justice: The history of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's struggle for equality*. New York: Knopf.

Palmer, P. (2011). *Healing the heart of democracy: The courage to create a politics worthy of the human spirit*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (Highly recommended)

Recommended:

Center for Civic Education. (1994). *National standards for civics and government*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education.

Quigley, C.N. (1991) *Civitas: A framework for civic education*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Center for Civic Education.

National Council for the Social Studies. (2010). *National curriculum standards for social studies: A framework for teaching, learning, and assessment*. Washington, DC: Author.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: The teacher is an ethical knowledgeable and reflective decision-maker who teaches all learners to function effectively in a global and pluralistic society.

COURSE DESCRIPTION and INTRODUCTION

This course is designed for applicants to the MIT **elementary certification** program at Seattle University who need to deepen their knowledge of civics. The course is intended to provide background knowledge of civics for teaching at the elementary and middle school levels. It is expected that this course will serve as an introduction to civics, and that you will continue to deepen your knowledge once you are in the classroom and responsible for teaching specific topics related to civics.

This course will ask you to create a number of artifacts to demonstrate your understanding of civics—you will not be asked to read books to answer questions; however, you will need to investigate a range of resources including textbooks, the Internet, newspapers, magazines and other resources. These activities are intended to introduce you to a range of resources related to understanding civics.

The National Council for the Social Studies has defined social studies as: …the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to *promote civic competence*. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, civics, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. *The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in the interdependent world.*
(Italics added.)

At the very heart of social studies is teaching for civic competence. This is particularly important in a democratic society where schools traditionally have had a role in teaching citizenship. Yet, citizens have often not exercised their voice or been invested in participating in the democratic process even at the local level where their voices can make significant differences. Therefore, this course is designed to provide the background and knowledge that can serve you well as a elementary/middle schoolteacher. Additionally, this course will endeavor to have you construct understandings that are personally meaningful to you.

The course requirements are interrelated. In other words, researching and writing for one assignment will inform other assignments and vice versa. Choice making is an important component for learning; thus, this course offers a wide range of learning opportunities as you complete assignments. All assignments are submitted at the same time in one packet. At that time you also register and pay for the course. See http://www.seattleu.edu/coe/mit/Module_List.asp for how to enroll in this course. **Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope large enough for returning the assignments.**

It is estimated that to complete these assignments, you will invest about 60 hours. The course is one credit to make it affordable even though you will complete more work than would normally be expected of a one-credit course. It is hoped that you will use this course to your advantage and not simply "go through the hoops" to achieve credit and a grade. You are investing in your preparation for becoming a teacher, I hope these set of experience provide new insights, increased knowledge, and kindles enthusiasm for teaching civics to young people—if that enthusiasm was not already present!

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics taught at the elementary and middle school levels.

2. Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics (http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf).

4. Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of civics.

5. Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.

6. Understand issues of diversity and multiculturalism as they apply to civics.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING (Specific details on assignment sheets attached.)

This syllabus is a contract between you and your instructor of the course. It is hoped that you become actively engaged in making decisions about your learning. Read the syllabus carefully and consider all the assignments then create a plan for your learning **with a timeline.** All assignments must be word-processed (double-spaced) with at least a one-inch margin to allow for comments. All assignments must follow APA guidelines **as appropriate** and reflect correct grammar, spelling and usage. Read each assignment sheet carefully to ensure that you meet all of the requirements for the assignment.

Requirements

1. Read the books/articles that will contribute to your knowledge base for creating the assignments that follow. A bibliography is included to assist you in beginning the learning process.

2. Graphic organizer for a book reading

3. Interview a person who has run for public office.

4. Classroom-Based Assessment of a Community Issue.

5. Observe a court proceeding.

6. Review iCivics.org Website (ideally with the help of a child).

7. Reflection Paper. After you have completed all the assignments, do a self-assessment of the value of the independent study and what additional work you will need to do to be prepared to teach civics.

8. Time Log. Keep a log of the time you spent reading, researching, viewing videotapes/internet sites, or other forms of technology and in the creation of assignments.

Grading: This syllabus serves as a contract between you and your instructor. It is my hope that you will do your very best work and meet my obligation to provide you with feedback in the form of a course grade that reflects the quality of your work. There are aspects of the course that are foundational and where your understanding must be clearly demonstrated. Therefore, I will be looking at the assignments holistically.

Some assignments require a good deal more work than others do so I am using a "weighting" system. The Credit / Redo assignments are important; you cannot pass the course without being given "credit" for them. However, they do not figure into your grade point total.

Grades on assignments will be as follows: A, A-, B+, B, B, no credit. Any grade for an assignment below a B will be considered unsatisfactory and may result in not receiving a passing grade for the course. Thus, you are expected to do your best work on every assignment. The final grade for the module must be B or better.

Weight of 4	Weight of 2	Credit / Redo
Graphic organizer	Observe court proceeding	Reflection paper
Classroom-Based Assessment	iCivics.org Review	Log of learning time
	Interview	

Latest Date for turning in Assignment: August 10. However, I encourage you to turn in the assignments earlier rather than later. Don't underestimate the time to complete the course!

Name of Assignment: **Reflection**

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics.
- Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of civics.
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.
- Understand issues of diversity and multiculturalism as they apply to civics.

Rationale for the assignment: Active reflection on one's learning helps you refine your teaching and grow professionally. Inherent in reflection is a commitment to the ethical dimensions of what we do when we teach. This assignment is intended to help you reflect on what you are learning, and motivate you to grow professionally, and provide feedback to your instructor on your learning experience.

Description of the assignment: After you have completed all the assignments, do a self-assessment of the value of the independent study and what additional work you will need to do to be prepared to teach civics. Please provide feedback on the assignments answering the following questions:

1. Which assignments were particularly helpful to your learning? Explain.
2. What changes would you suggest to make this course better?
3. What additional work will you need to do to be prepared to teach civics?

Write a one- to two-page reflection.

Log: Be sure to attach your time log when you turn in your independent study.

Name of Assignment: **Interview a person who has run for office**

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics.
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.

Rationale for the assignment: To understand how individual people are connected to significant political/public events. To personalize the study of civics and to explore the role of citizens in the political process.

Description of the assignment: Identify a person that has run for a public office in the past four years in local, state or national government. This can be someone that has run for the local school board, city council or a public office in which you are particularly interested.

1. Create a set of questions for the interview addressing the following key concepts:
   The importance of political leadership and public service
   The person's values and his/her connection to the office and campaign platform
   Enduring issues and their relationship to the person's campaign[* *]
   The role of the media in the campaign
   Ethical dilemmas
   Campaign finance
2. Conduct the interview.
3. Write a three-page summary of the interview; be sure you have addressed each of the topics. Identify whom you interviewed, date of interview, and why you decided to interview this person. Include your own personal reflections on the interview.

Suggested background reading for this assignment:
Center for Civic Education. (1994). *National standards for civics and government*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education.
Quigley, C.N. (1991) *Civitas: A framework for civic education*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education.

Criteria for evaluation: The summary is professionally presented and includes all the information requested. The summary projects the writer's voice through engaging language, vivid details, and effective word choices that draw the reader into the interview. The interview demonstrates additional research beyond the personal experience of the interviewee. The summary is well organized.

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[*] There is no finite list of persistent issues and dilemmas in American democracy; however, the following outlines those most frequently considered:

- Individual beliefs/majority rule
- Obeying the law/the right to dissent
- Cultural variety/cultural assimilation/uniformity
- Community progress/individual liberties
- Individual rights/public safety
- National security/individual freedom
- National/state/local community control
- Worker security/employer rights
- Free enterprise/public planning
- Global business competition/the national interest

National Council for the Social Studies. (1994). *Curriculum standards for social studies*. Washington, DC: Author, pp. 9-10.

Name of Assignment: **Graphic Organizer for Book**

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics (http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf).
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.
- Understand issues of diversity and multiculturalism as they apply to civics.

Rationale for the assignment: To deepen your understanding of democracy.

Description of the assignment: Select **one** of the books listed below and create a graphic organizer to demonstrate your learning. Include the following information:

- Identify the book you read and why you chose the book that you did.
- Create a graphic organizer that shows the relationships of the major themes of the book. The graphic organizer should include enough **detail** to demonstrate that you have thoughtfully considered the ideas presented and how the **concepts relate** to one another. Examples of graphic organizers can be "googled," and you will find a myriad of examples. Select the graphic organizer that makes the most sense for organizing your material. You can create the graphic organizer "by hand" or by computer.

Kluger, R. (1976) *Simple justice: The history of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's struggle for equality*. New York: Knopf.

Barber, B.R. (1998). *A passion for democracy*: *American essays*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Barber, B.R. (1998). *A place for us: How to make society civil and democracy strong*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Barber, B.R. & Battistoni, R.M. (2007). *Education for democracy: A sourcebook for Students and teachers*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing.

Laxer, J. (2009). *Democracy*. Berkeley, CA: Groundwork Books.

League of Women Voters of Washington Education Fund. (2004). *The state we're in: Washington your guide to state, tribal & local government*. Seattle: Author. Call 206-622-8961 or 1-800-419-2596 to order textbook.

Criteria for evaluation: The response is professionally presented and includes all the information requested. The graphic organizer demonstrates a careful reading of the book and the relationship of civic concepts presented in the materials. The graphic organizer shows relationships between and among concepts.

Name of Assignment: **Classroom-Based Assessment (CBA) on Civics for Elementary or Middle School**

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics (http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf).
- Demonstrate understanding of civics through Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs).
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.
- Understand issues of diversity and multiculturalism as they apply to civics.

Rationale for the assignment: CBAs are used by the state to assess student learning. As a teacher, you will need to become familiar with the CBAs—teach to them and gather student evidence of learning. This assignment is designed to provide you with a firsthand experience of completing a CBA of your choice and also to create a model for your future students.

Description of the assignment:
Step 1: Review the CBAs on the following website:
http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/Assessments/default.aspx

Step 2: Select one the civics CBAs (upper elementary or middle school) and complete each step in a PowerPoint format to serve as a model for your future students. If the CBA suggests that you select a community issue, for example, select an issue that is meaningful to students at the level you will be teaching. Identify the grade level. Additionally, you may want to check out other documents associated with the CBA found on the webpage to gain a broader understanding of this process and state expectations.

Step 3: Complete the rubric as a self-assessment. Fill out the rubric and then write a one-paragraph summary as to why you evaluated yourself as you did—in the self-evaluation paragraph be specific again writing this as though you were explaining it to your students. Include the rubric with your explanation.

Step 4: Write a paragraph reflecting on what you have learned from the experience as a future teacher.

Step 5: Submit the first page of the CBA you have selected; the hard copy of the PowerPoint you have created; the rubric with your self-assessment and accompanying paragraph; and insights gleaned from this assignment.

Criteria for evaluation: The assignment is complete and includes all requested material. The CBA response is well written and organized so that it can be displayed for classroom use. It is an effective model for your future students.

Name of Assignment: **Observe a Court Proceeding**
(Jury duty can be used in lieu of this assignment.)

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics (http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf).
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.
- Understand issues of diversity and multiculturalism as they apply to civics.

Rationale for the assignment: The judicial branch of government serves an important role in our society. Television and movies dramatize this branch of government often providing an unrealistic view of the work of courts. This assignment is designed to provide you with a firsthand experience that will serve as a reference point for discussions related to the role of courts in your future classroom.

Description of the assignment: Spend a half-day in a Superior Courtroom, State Court of Appeals, State Supreme Court, or federal court. Traffic court or television broadcasts of court proceedings are not options for this assignment. However, if you have served on a jury, you may use that experience to satisfy this assignment. If you have participated on a jury, please identify the dates, place, and the case/s in which you served on the jury. Review the document: *A Citizen's Guide to Washington Courts*. This document can be located at: http://www.courts.wa.gov/newsinfo/resources/?fa=newsinfo_jury.brochure_guide&altMenu=Citi Use this guide as a reference in responding to the questions that follow.

Reflecting on your court observation or jury duty experience, provide a written response to the following:

1. What court did you observe? Please include date, place, and cases you observed. Use *A Citizen's Guide to Washington Courts* to describe the type of case and court you observed.
2. Using the "Guide" describe what aspects of the trial process did you observe?
3. "Government is responsible for making laws that serve the purposes for which it was established—the protection of individual rights and promotion of the common good."[*]
4. Respond to this quote in relation to the court proceedings you observed. Limit your response to two paragraphs.
5. As noted in the interview assignment, our democracy grapples with persistent issues and dilemmas. Review the list below; select one or more of the dilemmas that you believe were at issue in the case/s you observed. Explain your answer. Your answer should reflect a thorough understanding of the persistent dilemma. This may require additional research. *Civitas: A framework for civic education* is a good beginning point for your research. Limit your response to no more than two pages.

   - Individual beliefs/majority rule
   - Obeying the law/the right to dissent
   - Cultural variety/cultural assimilation/uniformity
   - Community progress/individual liberties
   - Individual rights/public safety
   - National security/individual freedom
   - National/state/local community control
   - Worker security/employer rights
   - Free enterprise/public planning
   - Global business competition/the national interest[**]

Criteria for evaluation: The response is thoughtful and demonstrates understanding of the dilemma addressed and the role of courts in a democratic society. The response is professionally presented and includes all the information requested.

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[*] Center for Civic Education. (1994). *National standards for civics and government*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, p. 29.

[**] National Council for the Social Studies. (1994). *Curriculum standards for social studies*. Washington, DC: Author, pp. 9-10.

Name of Assignment: **iCivics.org Review**

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of civics taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to civics.
- Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of civics.
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching civics.

Rationale for the assignment: Internet technology is gaining momentum in teaching and learning at all levels. At its most positive, the Internet opens the door to a world of information-rich, easily accessible resources for both teachers and students. Well-researched, accurate resources to supplement curriculum in civics can be found in a wealth of Web sites. A new Website: iCivics.org has recently been launched in a gaming format. How effective is it? You be the judge.

Description of the assignment:

1. Review iCivics.org.
2. Select **3 of the 5 games** that you find interesting and could help you be better educated about the games' topics. Play the games and then record your final score.
3. Review the "Teachers this way ⇒" for each of the games you selected.
4. Respond to each of the questions below (1-2 pages total):

   Content:
   1. Is the content understandable? Explain
   2. Do you think upper elementary or middle schoolers will understand the content? Explain.
   3. Do you think this is an effective way to deliver this kind of content? Why or why not?
   4. Do you think students will remember what the games are trying to teach and apply that understanding in other settings?

   Usability:
   1. Is the site easy to navigate? Explain.
   2. Are the design elements easy to use? (graphics, art, buttons, etc.) Explain.
   3. Are their features that are distracting or confusing? Explain.
   4. Do you think upper elementary or middle school students would like to play these games? Why or why not?

OR

1. Review iCivics.org.
2. Find a child (old enough to play the game) who will play **2 of the games** or more if interested. You should watch him/her play the games some of the time to get a sense of how the child responds to the games.
3. Adapt the questions for item 4 above and ask the child to respond or make your own assessment of how the child responded to the games.

Criteria for evaluation:
There is clear evidence that each step has been followed in the assignment. Each question has been answered demonstrating knowledge of the games and understanding of the content of the games. The responses are thoughtful and insightful and professionally presented.

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Before turning in your assignments, please review this checklist of activities and place it as the cover page of your assignments:

Name:
Address:

Email address:

Periodically this syllabus is updated. Please note the date **at the bottom of page** of the syllabus so that both the instructor and the student are using the same syllabus.

Date on syllabus: _____

Have you included all the requested information for each assignment?

- ❒ Graphic organizer of book **or** American Promise video/curriculum review (weight of 4)
- ❒ Interview (weight of 2)
- ❒ CBA of community issue (weight of 4)
- ❒ Response to court proceeding (weight of 2)
- ❒ iCivics.org Review (weight of 2)
- ❒ Reflection paper
- ❒ Time log
- ❒ Self-addressed, stamped envelope to return all of your assignments. (Note: I frequently travel taking assignments with me to evaluate. Thus, I want to return them by mail when I arrive at my travel destination. I do not usually take a computer so that is another reason for hard copy of assignments.)

After you have completed each assignment, it is a good idea to review the assignment sheet to determine if you included everything requested. Also, review the criteria for evaluation. This provides you with the opportunity to do a self-assessment before you turn in your assignments for grading.