



**EDCI 559: Diversity and Equity in Education  
Mesquite Cohort  
Course Syllabus for Spring 2016**

According to State of Texas HB 2504, this course syllabus must be submitted for review prior to the course's scheduled start date. Therefore, the instructor has the right to modify this syllabus and course calendar at any time between submission for publication and the first day of class. Furthermore, the instructor has the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the course itself provided that (1) such changes do not increase expectations or requirements beyond a reasonable equivalent and (2) students are given ample notification.

**Instructor:** Dr. Karen Nix  
**Office Location:** 2600 Motley Dr., PDC Metroplex Center  
**Office Phone:** 972-882-7393  
**Cell/Home Phone:** Will be provided during first class meeting.  
**Office Fax:** 972-882-7457  
**University Email Address:** knix@mesquiteisd.org

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Dates And Times:**

Face-to-Face Classes meet on the following dates from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the MPLX Center: January 27, February 24, March 23 and April 27.

**Materials Needed for the Course:**

The following books will be discussed during the course. You are responsible for reading two books. You may order books from Amazon or any other source. Both books assigned should be ordered and received prior to our first class.

**All students will read:**

What Great Teachers Do Differently by Todd Whitaker (ISBN 9781930556690)

**Students will be assigned one of the following titles to read:**

- Diverse Learners in the Mainstream Classroom: Strategies for Supporting ALL Students Across Content Areas: English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, Gifted/Talented Students  
Author: Reynaldo Ramirez, Yvonne S. Freeman & David E. Freeman  
ISBN 978-0325013138
- Strategy Instruction for Students with Learning Disabilities: What Works for Special Needs Learners Author: Robert Reid & Torri Ortiz Lienemann  
ISBN- 978-1593852825

- Helping Boys Succeed in School: A Practical Guide for Parents and Teachers  
Author: Terry Neu & Rich Weinfeld  
ISBN-978-1593631987
- English Language Learners: The Essential Guide  
Author: David Freeman & Yvonne Freeman  
ISBN- 978-0439926461

**Course Description:** “Diversity and Equity in Education” focuses on factors of diversity that teachers and schools must make regarding design and implementation of curriculum, teaching strategies, and materials in order to provide equity and excellence for all learners.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** By the completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. Reflect on personal and professional life developments as they relate to personal beliefs and practices as a teacher and identify unique strengths, specific behaviors that characterize those strengths and how those align with research-supported best teaching practices.
2. Utilize effective tools and processes to identify particular traits of effective teaching that one wishes to acquire or improve, develop an action plan for acquiring or improving those traits, and demonstrate growth toward achieving the action plan.
3. Be familiar with current and classical literature on the effects of diversity on student learning, e.g., SES, race, gender, achievement, handicapping conditions, etc.
4. Understand the various factors of diversity as they relate to the students in each classroom and the dynamics that affect individual and group interactions, teaching effectiveness, and student learning.
5. Understand and utilize the elements of reflective writing.
6. Identify and implement instructional and management strategies that are successful among diverse populations.
7. Utilize Microsoft Excel to store and analyze data related to student learning, sort data, use measures of central tendency, create summary tables, and insert tables into word documents.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. During each of the three units, you will work on various combinations of assignments; worksheets, activities, asynchronous threaded discussions, readings, literature searches, etc.

1. **Class Attendance.** Our class will meet face-to-face 4 times during the semester. See the Course Calendar for those dates. Attendance at all class meetings is required and essential to your success in this experience. Students are expected to be on time and actively participate. The rules of the University regarding class attendance will be followed in this course. The university policy on excused absences is explained in the University Catalog and includes: (a) participation in a required or authorized university activity; (b) illness that is verifiable; (c) death in the immediate family; (d) obligation at a legal proceeding in fulfilling responsibility as a citizen; and (e) other reason as determined by individual faculty

to be excusable. Although you are urged to notify faculty in advance, in the event you are not able to attend class, such notification does not constitute an excused absence. The consequence of one absence is a reduction of one letter grade in the course; two absences will result in a reduction of two letter grades; missing all three classes will result in an "F" in the course. In the event of any absence, you are responsible for obtaining class materials/assignments/notes from your colleagues and/or via *eCollege*.

2. **Participate Appropriately.** A noticeable trait of master teachers is the way in which they actively pursue and interact with their own learning journey. Your faculty will make a subjective judgment as to the overall quantity and quality of your class participation. Commit yourself to active learning by demonstrating the attributes of inquisitiveness, questioning, searching, struggling for answers to your questions, and contributing your own professional knowledge to the rest of the class. We expect that you will evaluate and modify your goals, your practice, and your aspirations over the cohort journey.
3. **Adhere to the Code of Conduct.** "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." In a program such as this, you are always working and interacting with others during classes. In that regard, you are expected at all times to behave in the same manner that you would expect your students to behave in your classroom. Please refrain from side conversations as they distract others and interrupt your learning. All cell phones and text devices should be silenced during class time. If you must make/receive a call or text during class, please step out of the classroom.
4. **Read and Discuss the course textbook and assigned professional book. (Student Learning Objectives 1-6)**

You will join a small group of your peers to discuss your textbook and one of several trade books. Please read your book thoroughly and reflectively and be prepared for small group interaction based on the schedule. Each group will decide the particular pages due each class session.
5. **Notes on Your Reading. (Student Learning Objective 3)**

You will read, prepare book notes and participate in book discussion groups for your textbook and additional professional book. Each set of book notes should follow the required format as provided in *eCollege* and will be submitted for a grade based on completeness, reflective thought and basic mechanics. Details are provided in the related *eCollege* assignment tab..
6. **Develop Two Sociograms. (Student Learning Objective 4)**

Sociograms are designed to collect data about student preferences for associating with other students in social and academic situations. You will administer and analyze two sociograms and write a reflection.
7. **Classroom Diversity Database. (Student Learning Objective 7)**

During the semester you will develop and maintain an Excel database on various factors of diversity among your students. The data you will enter includes but is not limited to: (a) class list; (b) academic ranking of class members; (c) socio-economic status; (d) student preferences for working with others; (e) special education categories; (e) gender; (f)

language preferences; (g) discipline referrals; (h) achievement data such as TAKS, TPRI, homework, and six-week grades.

**8. Exploring Diversity via Film. (Student Learning Objective 1, 4 & 5)**

From a list provided by the instructor, you will select a movie (you have not previously seen), view it and reflect on the content and how it relates to your life (childhood through adulthood) and teaching experiences. You will post responses in Threaded Discussion format, which will be evaluated for a grade.

**9. Case Study. (Student Learning Objectives 5 & 6)**

You will select one student under your care who meets at least one of the diversity factors included in our studies and who also represents a particular challenge to you. A rubric will be provided for you to follow as you develop your study. You will study this child throughout the semester and document what you did, what happened as a result, and what you learned. Your case study will be in the form of a report with sections such as a description of the child, why he/she was selected, background information, what you learned from examining the cumulative records, results of a parent interview, insight from other teachers or specialists who worked with your student, goals you established as part of the case study, plan for meaningful intervention, and end results.

**10. Reflection Paper. (Student Learning Objectives 2 & 5)**

You will submit a reflection about what influenced you to become a teacher and your career. In your paper you will discuss what you have learned, how it has affected your beliefs and practices. You will also share your reflections in small and large group.

**11. Microsoft Word and Excel.** Although not a requirement in the class, it is essential that you learn how to use Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel early in your cohort experience. If you need to learn the skills mentioned below, use this link to an online tutorial: <https://sites.google.com/a/mesquiteisd.org/technology-resources/system/app/pages/search?scope=search-site&q=excel>

You should use your district logon to access the site. Once logged on, choose Excel tutorial.

These are the programs that are compatible with eCollege and the faculty. Among the skills you want to acquire, if you haven't already, include:

- Microsoft Word: formatting pages, indenting, hanging indents, using bullets and numbering, modifying font features, modifying paragraph features, creating charts and graphs, inserting tables, inserting page numbers, adding icons to etc.)
- Microsoft Excel: spacing, inserting headers, adding and deleting columns and rows, modifying width and height of cells, sorting information, copying information to Word, using formulas to calculate (add, subtract, multiply, divide, average, etc.), create graphs and charts in Excel, transferring graphs and charts into Word documents, etc.)
- Attaching Word and other documents to email messages and eCollege.

## **GRADING**

Most assignments are graded on a scale of from 5 (highest grade) to 0 (lowest grade) based on the following criteria:

**5 - Exceptional – Exceeds Minimum Expectations in All Areas Addressed.** Well above average in thought, language structure, and word choice; extremely well organized; shows thorough understanding and assimilation of concepts; excellent sense of unity; polished transition between concepts or thoughts; frequent sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; quality word choice that may be unusually striking, vivid, or creative; virtually free of errors.

**4 - Above Average – Meets Minimum Expectations in the Majority of Areas Addressed and Exceed Expectations in Some Areas.** In general command of thought, sentence structure, and word choice; organized; shows some understanding of concepts; good sense of unity; good transition between concepts or thoughts; some sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; good word choice that may be vivid or striking; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; few if any errors.

**3 - Average - Adequate in some Areas and Inadequate in Others.** Problems in some of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organized and formatted appropriately; good unity, sequence, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**2 – Below Average - Inadequate in Several Areas.** Problems in several of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**1 – Unacceptable - Inadequate in Many Areas.** Problems in many of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**0 - Not Submitted or Not Accepted By Instructor.**

## **FINAL GRADE IN THE COURSE**

Your final grade in this course is based on your performance on all of the requirements and expectations for the class. Some assignments carry more weight than others. Once the final grade is calculated, it is then adjusted by absence and participation evaluation. Assignments, along with final point values, include the following:

## Determination of Final Grade.

### First

Grades on individual assignments are numerical and based on the table below. Grades are recorded in the eCollege grade book.

Product	Pts. Per Assign	Total Pts. Possible
Exploring Diversity via Film	15	15
Case Study	30	30
Database on Diversity (3 activities)	5	15
Sociograms (academic & social)	5	10
Reflection Paper	10	10
Book Study – Notes on Readings (2 books)	10	20
Total Points		100

### Second

Numerical grades are recorded in eCollege and available to you when you click on “Gradebook.” eCollege also calculates a “percentage score” based on the assignments completed to date and also based on the total number of assignments for the semester. The most important percentage is the one based on assignments completed to date.

### Third

At the end of the semester, numerical scores are converted to percentage based on the total assignments for the semester. Instructors use percentage scores to calculate a preliminary final grade on a scale of 91-100% (A), 81-90% (B), 71-80% (C), 61-70% (D), etc. The preliminary final grade is then adjusted upward for participation, enthusiasm, cooperation, and general code of conduct; adjusted downward for attendance, lack of participation, lack of withitness, and other factors that might apply.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

**Internet Connection.** Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

**Word Processor.** MS Word is the recommended word processor for eCollege

**Power Point.** You will need access to the Microsoft Power Point application to prepare a slide show presentation of your research proposal

**Operating Systems.** Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:  
<https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### **Questions about the course, assignments, syllabus, etc.**

Contact me via **email** any time 24/7. If you have not received a response within 48 hours, or if you have a more urgent need to contact me, please call me.

### **Submitting Assignments:**

All assignments are submitted through the eCollege Dropbox. All assignments have due dates and penalties are assessed for late work. I use a document called "Schedule of Assignments" to record every assignment along with the date and time each is due.

### **Announcements:**

Announcements are posted often during the semester on the course home page. In some cases I will also send the same announcement to you via the eCollege email system.

### **Email Correspondence**

**From me to you:** Emails from me will be sent to your MISD email if I have a question or need to contact you individually. Emails for communicating whole class will be through your University email account, not your work or home email. Therefore, it is important to go to Leo Mail often.

**From you to me:** Always send emails to me at my university email address provided on the first page.

### **Emergencies:**

Call my cell phone.

### **eCollege Student Technical Support:**

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by the following means:

- **Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- **Email:** [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- **Help:** Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### **Course/Department Specific Procedures/Policies:**

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##### **Late Work.**

Specific dates and times are established for every assignment. Grades for work not submitted when due are automatically reduced beginning immediately upon exceeding the deadline. For example, assignments typically have a midnight deadline. If you exceed that midnight deadline, your work is automatically reduced by one numerical grade. For each 24 hours period thereafter, the grade is reduced again by one numerical grade. No work is accepted after two days and a grade of "0" will be recorded. Work cannot be made up and extra work is not allowed to compensate for missing or later work. The final authority on time is the time recorded on your assignment by the eCollege clock.

##### **Appeal of the Final Grade (13.99.99.R0.05 Student's Appeal of Instructor's Evaluation, Effective September 1, 1996. Revised December 15, 1999, Revised February 8, 2007)**

1. The final grades awarded by faculty members are their expert judgment concerning student performance. Students challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was unfair based on:
  - a) some basis other than performance, or
  - b) standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section, or
  - c) a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus.
2. Students who believe their grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor.
3. If no satisfactory resolution is reached with the instructor, or if the instructor is unavailable, the student shall appeal to the department head. A grade appeal must be initiated in writing with the department head (or dean if the department head is the instructor) within six months of the last day of the semester in which the grade was awarded. The department head will examine the student's appeal to determine whether the student has established an apparent case of unfair academic evaluation as described in section 1. If the student has not established a case that appears to have merit, the department head will so inform the student and the instructor without delay.
4. If the case has merit, the department head will secure, from all parties, written statements and other such information as he or she deems helpful and will issue his or her findings and remedies, if any. In so doing, the department head will be guided by the principle the burden of proof lies with the student.

For additional information regarding the appeal of a final grade above that of the department head, please consult the latest version of the graduate catalog or contact the Head of the Department, Curriculum and Instruction, at 903-886-5537.



### **Academic Integrity/Honest Statement**

This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course, or brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university.

### **University Specific Procedures:**

#### **ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Gee Library 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

#### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).

#### **Non-discrimination Policy**

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.