

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**  
**SYLLABUS**  
**Spring 2014**

- 1. Course Number:** EDLD 8300  
**Course Title:** Curriculum Theory and Practice  
**Credit Hours:** 3 Semester hrs.  
**Prerequisites:** EDLD 7330 or other General Curriculum course

**2. Date Syllabus Prepared:** Spring 2014

**Instructor:** Dr. Frances Kochan

**Office Hours:** Wed – 9-11 and 2-4  
Appointments can be made at other times.

**Class Meeting Times:** Weekend course

Jan 17, 18; Feb. 21, 28, April 5,6,18  
**\*subject to change based on group consensus**

**Contact Information**

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- 3. Special Accommodations.** Any participant needing special accommodations should contact Mr. Tracey Donald, Director of the Program for Students with Disabilities, located in 1244 Haley Center, Telephone: 334-844-2096 (Voice/TDD). Office Hours: 7:45 –1145 a.m. and 12:45 – 4:45 p.m.

**4. Texts:**

Dewey, J. & Jackson, P.W. (1991). *School & Society/Child & Curriculum*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. ISBN 9780226143965

Schubert, W.H. (1986). *Curriculum: Perspective, paradigm, and possibility*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Company. ISBN 0-02-407760-7.

**5. Course Description:**

This course is an advanced application of curriculum theories with an emphasis on the impact of philosophical and theoretical beliefs on practice. This course provides a foundation for those who will be providing administrative leadership in the area of curriculum. School and university curriculum leaders must have an understanding of how theory can and should be reflected in practice. This course is designed to enable graduate students to become reflective about their own theories and practices and those within their organizations.

**6. Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the impact of the major historical, sociological, political, and philosophical beliefs that have impacted curriculum theory development
2. Describe the major curricular theories.
3. Compare and contrast curricular theories

4. Identify the major issues related to the interrelationships between theory and practice
5. Describe the relationship of each curriculum paradigm to the teaching and learning context
6. Describe their theory of curriculum and their rationale for it.
7. Compare and contrast espoused and implemented theory as practiced in the field
8. Gain an increased understanding of positions for curriculum experts in the educational realm.

## 7. Course Content and Requirements

**A. Curriculum Theory Group Presentation. Description:** Members of the class will participate in a group project presentation (2-3 members per group) which focuses on an assigned subject/topic area of curriculum theory. As members of this group, you will become experts on this subject/topic area. Each member is expected to share equally in the research and in the presentation of the topic. While Powerpoints are not always necessary they are helpful, but groups are encouraged to also use other means of visual presentations and/or activities that will engage the class. The presentation should include: a description of the initiative, the theoretical groundings for it, the design, delivery, and assessment that would be used, strengths and weaknesses, application/relevance for leaders, potential research ideas for those interested in the topic. Each presentation should last no more than 30 minutes. **February 21 and February 28 (15 points.)**

### Topics:

Group 1	A.S. Neill's Summerhill School
Group 2	Foxfire Approach
Group 3	Padeia Schools
Group 4	John Dewey Laboratory School
Group 5	Progressive Education Association
Group 6	Debra Meier's Central Park East Schools

Presentations should include an overview of the topic/ school/ approach and its history, the philosophical and theoretical assumptions underlying it, the type of curricular activities that occurred and why, the positives and negatives of the initiative, research that might be of interest in studying this topic more completely.

**\*Another topic may be selected with permission of the professor.**

### B. Curriculum – Theory into Practice Interview

You will interview a person who holds responsibility for curriculum development, implementation, and/or assessment **in a setting that you are not familiar with and one which you might be interested in doing or learning more about.** The first purpose of this assignment is to help you to become familiar with the role of someone in a position that deals with curriculum in some manner or role that you would like to know more about. The person can work in curriculum development, implementation, assessment, and/or research. The second purpose is to enable you to reflect upon the relationship between espoused theory and theory in practice and the reasons for similarities or differences between them. A third purpose is to provide you with an opportunity to engage in data analysis and synthesis.

You will interview the person about their role and about specific outcomes of their work. You

may wish to tape record the interview so that you can effectively analyze the data. Ask the person to complete the *Cognitive Inventory* so that you can compare the results with the espoused and practiced theories. If that does not seem comfortable, you may add questions to the interview to try to capture the person's beliefs. You should ask the person for documents related to the position such as a job description and any curricular products that have been developed and are being used. **Due March 23 (20 points). You should be prepared to discuss this in class on April 5.**

You will submit a paper on the interview. The paper will include your reflections on the position, the espoused theory and the theory in practice which is being implemented. You should use specific quotes and/or combined data to support your findings.

The paper should be 10-15 pages (can be longer if you need it to be) and include the following:

1. Why you selected this person/role
2. Professional background information about the person (i.e. how he or she prepared for the position)
3. A description of the position - (include the formal job description and what the person describes as their role)
4. Your understanding of this person's concept (image) of curriculum (refer to those in our text)
5. The advantages and disadvantages of this position based on what the person says and your own insights based upon the interview.
6. The primary curriculum theory you heard this person espousing (give examples of what the person said or what the person does on the job or the materials you reviewed to justify your statements and/or the *Cognitive Inventory*). Use either Schubert or Habermas's terms.
7. The primary curriculum theory you believe this person is implementing. Give specific examples of why you made this judgment based on any materials you have examined or the manner in which the person functions or what was said in the interview.
8. Your reflection upon the relationship between the theory being espoused and the theory being practiced.
9. The most important lessons you learned from this experience.
10. The most surprising things about the interview and/or your findings and why.
11. How this interview has impacted your thinking about curriculum theory and implementation.
12. How this experience has impacted your thinking about your future (if applicable)
13. What you would do differently if you were conducting this interview again.
14. What else you would like to know or learn about this situation.
15. The value of the interview

**C. Teaching/Learning Curriculum Research Paper-** The purpose of this activity is to foster your understanding and perception of curriculum theory in practice in a teaching/learning situation. The activity is similar to the curriculum position interview, but it involves curriculum as it is being implemented in a teaching/learning situation. **(We will share these in class informally on April 18).**

You are to examine a teacher at the preparation, teaching, and assessment stages of teaching, and determine the degree to which the teacher, the culture, the participants, the policies are impacting the espoused and practiced teaching/learning theory you observe. You should interview the

teacher to help determine the teacher's espoused theory, the espoused theory of the culture in which the teacher is functioning and the espoused theories of any policies that impact the teaching/learning environment. If there are documents to assist you in making these judgments, use them.

You should ask the teacher to complete the *Cognitive Inventory*. You will need to gather information about the purposes of the lesson you are going to observe, how it was created, the ways it will be assessed. You should determine the espoused theory, observe the lesson, and then determine the theory in practice. **Due April 25 (30 pts.) This may be a job embedded activity or one that is in an environment unknown to you. (You should be prepared to discuss this in class informally on April 18).**

You will submit a 15-25 research page paper on the interview and observation . The paper will include your reflections on the espoused theory and the theory in practice which is being implemented. You should use specific quotes and/or combined data to support your findings.

The paper should include the following:

1. Why you selected this person/role and your relationship with/to the person or context
2. Professional background information about the person.
3. The results of the *Cognitive Inventory* and the primary curriculum theory you heard this person espousing (give examples of what the person said or did).
4. The primary curriculum theory being supported by policies that relate to this teaching/learning environment.
5. The primary curriculum theory being supported in the culture/context in which the teacher is working.
6. The primary curriculum theory you observed or believe this person is implementing. Give specific examples of why you made this judgment based on the materials or the manner in which the person functioned in the teaching/learning environment.
7. The reaction of the students to the theory being implemented.
8. The relationship of the culture in the classroom to the espoused and practiced theory.
9. Your reflection upon the relationship between the theory being espoused and the theory being practiced.
10. Your reflections on why you believe there is or is not a relationship between the espoused and practiced theory- GIVE SPECIFIC IDEAS gleaned from the interview, your observation and or your knowledge of the situation or setting in which the curriculum is being developed and implemented.
11. The most important lessons you learned from this experience.
12. The most surprising things about your findings and why.
13. How this experience has impacted your thinking about curriculum theory and implementation.
14. How this experience has impacted your thinking about your own espoused and practiced theories (if applicable)
15. What, if anything you believe you needed to know more about in order to make your judgments.
16. The value of this experience.

**D. Readings and Guided Questions;** You are expected to read all assigned chapters in the Schubert and Dewey books and complete the guided questions. You will need to do this in order to be prepared for the class session discussions and activities. **These completed guided**

questions should be submitted for each class session. They should be brought to class either on your computer or on hard copy so that you can use them in small and large group discussions. They should be submitted on canvas prior to each class session (15 pts.- 5 per session). Each chapter set of question follows the text in the chapter and includes one question for you to reflect on an issue presented in the chapter. The first purpose of this chapter is to guide your reading to assure that you focus on issue that are the most important. The second is to have everyone have similar foci from their readings in order to conduct group work in class. The third purpose is to have you reflect on a specific issue. The questions are grouped by the categories in the book and each includes a variety of chapters. **It is important that you read these chapters consistently throughout the semester rather than trying to read and record your answers all at one time. The readings are important for you to gain an understanding of these topics so please think of them as learning experiences rather than as an assignment that has to get done.**

Summary of Assignments, Value and Due Dates		
Curriculum Theory Group Presentation	15 points	Feb 28
Curriculum Interview	25 points	March 23
Curriculum Position Research Interview paper or Teaching/Learning paper	35 points	April 25- discussion and sharing April 18
Guided Question Responses	15 points ( 5 per assignment)	Due the day before each of three class meeting (Jan 17, Feb 21. April 3)
Participation	10 points	

**Due Dates-** Assignments are due on the date specified. Except under extreme circumstances, points will be deducted for assignments that are submitted after the due date. If you wish to have me look at your work prior to the due date for feedback, please let me know and I will make arrangements with you to do that.

**Class Participation.** As graduate students, you are expected to attend class **regularly** and **on time**, be prepared, and meaningfully participate in class discussions and activities. Being prepared means that you will have read and thought about the assigned readings and that you will have thoughtfully prepared any assignments that will be discussed in class. Participation will be graded on the following scale. Students will have an opportunity to share their own assessment of their participation, will be graded by others in the class, and will be evaluated by the professor. The scale for this grade will be:

**Outstanding Contributor:** Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are always substantive; provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. Attendance is excellent. Student is prepared for class session, helps to lead group discussions and activities, provides help and assistance to the group and supports other group members. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly. **Points 8-10**

**Good Contributor:** Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive; provide good insights and sometimes direction for the class. Challenges are

well substantiated and often persuasive. Student is prepared for class, is an active participant in group activities, helps and supports other group members. Attendance is very good. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished. **Points- 6-7**

**Adequate Contributor:** Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Student participates in group activities but does not offer leadership and is not always supportive of others. Challenges are sometimes presented, fairly well substantiated, and are sometimes persuasive. Student is absent a number of times. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat.. **Points- 4-5**

**Poor Contributor:** Student is not adequately prepared to be able to make contributions to group work or discussions and seldom offers constructive ideas to the completion of activities. Challenges often are not well grounded. Student is often absent or late. Lack of participation or responsibility sometimes hinders other students' work. There is however, some support for others in a limited manner. **Points 2**

**Non-Participant:** This person says little or nothing in class. Hence, there is not an adequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not be changed. Student is absent an inordinate number of times. **Points- 1**

**Unsatisfactory Contributor:** Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive; provide few if any insights and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable air-time would be saved. Students is absent an inordinate number of times. **Points-0**

The following grading scale of points will be used:

100 –90	= A
89 – 80	= B
79 – 70	= C
69 – 60	= D
Below 60	= F

### **Class Policy Statements: Grading and Evaluation Procedures:**

**Attendance Policy:** Because this is a weekend course, and students have agreed to the times and places we will meet, students who miss class during this semester will receive a reduction in grade **and/or** an incomplete **and/or** will be asked to make the time up during the semester by doing additional library and one-to-one assignments with the instructor.

### **Additional statements concerning attendance and participation:**

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Excessive class absences will result in a grade reduction. Those students seeking certification seriously jeopardize their standing when classes are missed. See the *Tiger Cub* for a complete explanation of the University's attendance policy. The *Tiger Cub* is also available on-line at [www.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/rules\\_regs\\_policies](http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/rules_regs_policies). Excerpts from the policy are presented here to help guide the student in their graduate studies.

From *Tiger Cub Rules: Faculty Responsibilities in the Instructional Program*:

“Students are expected to attend all their scheduled University classes. College work proceeds at such a pace that regular class attendance is necessary to receive proper instruction. Specific policies regarding class attendance are the prerogative of individual faculty in writing at the **beginning** of the course regarding the effect of absences on the determination of grades” (page 3: Class Attendance, Rule 2).