

**Argosy University**  
COURSE SYLLABUS  
**E7034**

October 31 – December 19, 2009

**"Critical Analysis of Problems and Issues  
in Education"**

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**Faculty Information:**

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**Meeting Dates:** November 21, December 12

**Course Hours:** 9:00am – 6:00pm

**Course Location:** Argosy University, Alameda, CA (TBA)

**Course Description:**

This course will provide students an opportunity to analyze and gain insight into current political and social controversies surrounding American public and private higher education. It will also enable students to gain understanding of the various controversial and opposing issues facing education today. Students will develop critical thinking skills regarding each theme discussed in the chapters and related supplemental material.

This course also allows students to use their analytical skills in working through specific cases by utilizing research materials from all

databases available to them, such as, abstracts, journals, professional literature, current dissertations and other professional articles.

The class assignments are designed to prepare students to gain valuable current knowledge through readings and activities during the course. The assignments consist of reading designated chapters in the textbook, as well as working on the papers at the end of each individual's selected topic discussed in class. Participation in class discussion and completing a final group project are crucial for students' learning outcome.

**Course Pre-requisites:** An inquisitive mind and positive attitude

**Course Length:** 8 Weeks

**Course Credit Value:** 3.0

**Required Text:**

McCarthy, Mary Rose, Nelson, Jack L. and Palonsky, Stuart B. (2007) *Critical Issues in Education: Dialogues and Dialectics* (6th Ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

(There is no one textbook that can cover all the critical issues in education. Therefore, supplemental materials, such as, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, will be required.)

**Course Objectives:**

The objective of this class is to help students become more aware of, and be able to critically analyze, the problems and issues which currently exist at the community college level. Through critical analysis, students will have enough substantive facts and knowledge to come up with their own solutions based on their own good judgment of the problems and issues. Students may use this information to exercise their leadership more effectively to influence the community college culture in a positive way. This course is divided into topics to provoke thought and discussion regarding critical problems and issues within community colleges. Students are required to read the related topics and work with their professor and interact with other students via email, discussion board as well as meeting in the class.

**The following are the specific goals for the course:**

- This course will explore current and controversial issues in education by focusing on problem areas that relate to the present and future of public and private higher education.
- Provide students with the knowledge and skills to discuss, analyze and carry out relevant research in the complex areas.
- Students will gain some working knowledge of public higher education system and alternative forms of education, as well as, technical and written skills that will facilitate online discussion and oral presentation in class.
- Students will experience the exchange of knowledge and ideas regarding contemporary problems and issues impacting public and private higher educational systems.

**The course seeks to:**

- Introduce students to the theoretical and practical foundations of debate concerning the policies and procedures of educational systems and organizations.
- Provide students with an opportunity to inquire, analyze and thus develop their abilities to critically evaluate alternative approaches to education policy making.
- Stimulate and provoke students to reflect on and hopefully modify their ideas and values in a way that will positively shape their teaching and leadership.
- Present an array of alternative solutions and problem-solving strategies in order to facilitate positive change within educational institutions.
- Integrate personal experience into the debate on contemporary issues and problems. Provide opportunities to use technological applications to access a wide variety of information necessary to keep abreast of developments in education.

**Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:**

- Identify major issues and challenge related to higher education policy today, especially in K-12 and community colleges.
- Distinguish between a significant problem or issue and a day-to-day tangential occurrence.
- Identify the cause and effect of problems and issues that transcend local, regional, and national levels of curriculum development and leadership.

- Differentiate between stakeholders in a discussion as (1) those involved in education and (2) the groups affected by educational controversies and appreciate their viewpoints.
- Identify and comment on specific contemporary reforms that are a direct response to acknowledged problems and issues in the field.
- Discuss the impact of mass media on defining problems and issues in the field, as well as the media's potential to influence solutions.
- Formulate a rational approach to addressing a problem or issue in the context of appropriate leadership levels.
- Effectively use the Internet to investigate and conduct research on current literature that relates to contemporary problems and issues.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Module Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
1 – 10/31	Introduction: Critical Issues and Critical Thinking	Chapter 1	<b>Autobiography due Wednesday 10/28.</b> Each student will be expected to follow the weekly assignments both in readings, papers & group projects
2 – 11/7	Whose Interests Should Schools Serve? Justice and Equity	Chapters 2, 3 & 4	Discussion online based on reading assignments <b>using email.</b>
3 – 11/14	Whose Interests Should Schools Serve? Justice and Equity (CONT.)	Chapters 5 & 6	Discussion online based on reading assignments <b>using email.</b>
4 <b><u>Meeting: 11/21</u></b>	Whose Interests Should Schools Serve? Justice and Equity (CONT.) & What Should Be Taught? Knowledge and Literacy	Chapters 7, 8 & 9	<b>Individual Presentations</b>  <b>3 Individual Papers Due</b> (2 on chapters from the text and 1 from the selected topic list)
5 – 11/28	What Should Be Taught?	Chapters 10 & 11	Discussion online based on reading

	Knowledge and Literacy (CONT.)		assignments <b>using email.</b>
6 – 12/5	What Should Be Taught? Knowledge and Literacy (CONT.)	Chapters 12 & 13	Discussion online based on reading assignments <b>using email.</b>
7 – 12/12 <b><u>Meeting: 12/12</u></b>	How Should Schools Be Organized And Operated? School Environment	Chapters 14 & 15	<b>Individual Presentations</b>  <b>3 Individual Papers Due</b> (2 on chapters from the text and 1 from the selected topic list)
8	How Should Schools Be Organized And Operated? School Environment (CONT.)	Chapters 16, 17 & 18	Discussion online based on reading assignments <b>using email</b>

**Supplemental Reading:** Students are encouraged to read *The Chronicle of Higher Education* for class discussion.

**Individual Presentations & Papers:** Each student is required to **select four chapters** (2 Chapters for the **11/21** meeting and 2 chapters for the **12/12** meeting) for a fifteen minute presentation for each chapter (30 minutes combined). You may use PowerPoint, Handouts, etc... Presentations on each chapter should cover both positions. Presentations on each chapter should be around **15 minutes per student**. Students are required to turn in a **5-6 page paper** on the selected topic and from the textbook on the day of the presentation (3 papers and 2 presentations per meeting).

**Course Evaluation:** The A-F grading system will be used for the course. Class grades will be given according to the following:

1. Attendance & Class Participation (20%)
2. Six Individual Papers (60%): 4 chapters + 2 selected topics
3. Four Individual Presentations (20%): on chapters

- A Denotes exceptional accomplishment relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- A-  
B+
- B Denotes superior accomplishment relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B-
- F Denotes failure in accomplishment relative to the level necessary to meet basic course requirements and is unworthy of credit

NOTE: No late work will be accepted without prior approval from the Professor or valid medical reason.

**APA style should be used for all papers and project reports, including the references.**

### **Selected topics for Individual Papers:**

The following topics should be written based on a controversial point of view. Please select one per meeting date.

- 1. Institutional Effectiveness as a Leadership and Management Process**
- 2. Basic Skills VS Academic Programs**
- 3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Having International Education/Students**
- 4. Importance of Student Support Services to Enhance Student Retention**
- 5. Strategies and Ethical Issues related to Marketing to Enhance Student Enrollment**
- 6. Importance of Diversity on School Campus**
- 7. Importance of Workforce Development and Vocational Programs**
- 8. Importance of Student Learning Outcomes in Academic Programs and Designs**
- 9. Enhanced Learning Effectiveness: Online VS Class Lecture**
- 10. Importance of Shared Governance in the Decision Making Process, such as, Hiring**
- 11. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Open Door Policies in the Community College System**
- 12. The Pros and Cons of the Funding Structure in K-12 system or Higher Education**

- 13.Acquired Other Sources of Revenue for the Institution, such as, Grants, Contract Ed, International Education, etc...**
- 14.Vocational VS Transfer Programs at the Community Colleges**
- 15.Leadership of Board of Trustees or Governing Board of the Higher Education System or Institution**
- 16.Entrepreneurial Management in American Higher Education**
- 17.Improving the Success Rates of Students in the School Systems**
- 18.The Roles of Student Services in the Response to Reduced Support Services**
- 19.Faculty Practices and Attitudes as Teachers and Scholars**
- 20.Expanding Partnerships between High Schools and Community Colleges or Universities**
- 21.Enhancing the Image of the School/University through Public Relation**
- 22.Strategic Management of Institution in a Dynamic Environment**
- 23.The Challenges and Obligations Facing the Education in the Twenty-First Century**
- 24.The role of Technology and Communication**
- 25.Globalization of the American Institutions**
- 26.The Role of the Principal/Presidents in the School Systems**
- 27.Articulation of Secondary and Higher Education, such as Community Colleges and Universities**
- 28.Open Door Admissions, Transfer and Terminal Curriculum of the Community Colleges**
- 29.Violence in Schools**
- 30.Inclusion and Mainstreaming**
- 31.Individual Proposed Topic**