

**METHODS OF TEACHING SOCIAL SCIENCE: SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
**History 4010 • Section 21 (51050)**  
**T/TH, 3:30-4:45, 157 WEST CLASSROOM BLDG.**

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*office:* 211 Central Classroom  
*office hours:* T/Th, 11:00-1:30 p.m.

What do teachers do, and how do they do it? This semester, we will begin to answer these questions. This course will introduce you to the practice of teaching history and social sciences in the secondary school classroom. We will focus on two principal areas of inquiry. First, we will explore the theories and philosophies of teaching history and the social sciences: the relationships between institutions, politics, and educational practice. Second, we will look at the nuts and bolts of planning lessons, carrying out classroom activities, and assessment. Our overall goal will be to prepare you for student teaching and – more broadly – to reflect on what it means to teach history and the social sciences in the contemporary classroom.

This course fulfills the capstone requirement in the History and Behavioral Science majors. As such, I expect that students in this course will have content expertise in one or more of those fields, preferably history, political science, and/or geography. This course is intended for students who have completed most of the requirements for their majors *and* the secondary teacher licensure program at MSU-Denver, and you will be expected to apply content expertise in most of the requirements for this course.

**Required Readings:** The following books will be available at the Auraria Bookstore (bargain-hunters should also try the selection of used books on Amazon.com and Bookfinder.com, but make sure you get the right editions). I have also placed copies on reserve at the library.

Dana Goldstein, *The Teacher Wars: A History of America's Most Embattled Profession* (2015)

Bruce Lesh, *"Why Won't You Just Tell Us the Answer?": Teaching Historical Thinking in Grades 7-12* (2011)

James Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (second edition, 2007)

Gary B. Nash et al., *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past*

Heidi Roupp, *Teaching World History in the Twenty-first Century: A Resource Book* (2010)

Additional materials will be assigned. These will be available in class, online, or as PDFs on Blackboard. On occasion, you will also be required to locate and read articles, editorials, or teaching materials of your choosing and bring these to class as part of a class discussion.

**Assignments, Grading, and Course Policies:** The course requirements and their value toward your grade are as follows. *You must complete all of these components in order to pass.*

Attendance/participation: 20%

Textbook evaluation paper: 15%

Lesson Study project: 20%

Show and tell: 5%

Group primary source presentation: 15%

Unit plan: 25%

*Attendance policy:* I expect regular attendance and will take roll. Everyone is allowed two "byes" – unexplained absences – in the class. After that, any absences – except in the case of legitimate and documented emergencies, medical or otherwise – will detract from the attendance/participation portion of your grade. You are responsible for making up the work you miss during any absence, excused or otherwise. *Attendance for group presentations or practice teaching days is mandatory; there will be no opportunities to make up that work.*

Classes will generally include some combination of group activities and discussion. There will also be several smaller assignments (not mentioned in the breakdown above) that will figure into your participation grade. Your level of preparation and participation will both improve the quality of class meetings and boost your participation grade.

In this class, you are learning to be a professional. It should go without saying (but often doesn't) that when you attend class, you will refrain from disruptive behavior, including (but not limited to) talking amongst yourselves, reading the newspaper, or text messaging. **Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices unless you are using them for classroom activities.**

*Show-and-tell:* Each person will sign up for one day to bring a show-and-tell item: some object or reading that has something to do with the practice of or politics surrounding contemporary secondary education (ideally social sciences education, but you could also consider broader political issues or controversies). Examples could be an article, a film clip, a textbook, a resource that might make a good basis for a lesson, etc. If you'd like, you can pre-circulate articles or online sources so your classmates can read/view them in advance. On the day of your presentation, you should plan to show the item, talk for about 10 minutes about its content and significance, and field questions.

*Textbook evaluation paper:* After reading Loewen's book, you should use the rubric that our class will create to evaluate a secondary (high school or middle school level) history textbook. You can find sample textbooks in the Auraria Library or in the Denver Public Library (focus on call numbers starting with E.178). After using your rubric to score the textbook, you will write a short paper (3-4 pages) that will elaborate upon your evaluation, using specific examples from the textbook and explaining your criteria. *Turn this in on Blackboard and in hard copy.*

*Group primary source presentation:* Each small group will choose a lesson topic and teach a 20-25 minute lesson that uses multiple primary sources. You may choose any topic pertaining to history or one of the social sciences and are free to be creative with both your choice of primary sources and your structure for the lesson. In other words, you may use any combination of lecture, discussion, PowerPoint, handouts, small-group activities, and so forth. All students, however, will use the strategies discussed in Drake (chapter 7) to teach the lesson, and all students must choose at least three items from at least two of the following categories of sources to teach the lesson:

1. *text:* newspapers, letters, diaries, folklore, laws and court decisions, posters, etc.
2. *images:* photographs, visual arts, cartoons, etc.
3. *maps or charts* (historical or recent)
4. *architecture or material culture:* buildings, monuments, furniture, clothing, tools, etc.
5. *music:* songs, dance, sheet music, recordings, etc.
6. *short film clips:* documentary or feature films, historical or fictional

After your group presents its lesson, each member should submit an *individual* lesson plan that includes the following components: an outline of objectives, procedures, assessment, and sources/materials, along with a one-paragraph reflection on the lesson's effectiveness and thoughts for improvement. *Turn in your individual written assignment on Blackboard.*

*Lesson Study:* This will be a group assignment in which students will research and plan a lesson on an assigned topic and present it in two phases before undergraduate survey classes. Each group will consist of approximately four students, who will create the lesson plan together. Prior to delivering the lesson, all students are required to meet with the instructor of the class(es) in which the presentation will take place. In the first run-through, half the students in the group students will teach, and the others will take notes on both the teaching performance and the class's reactions. We will then have a debriefing session in which groups can revise and refine their lesson plans. Then, the students who observed the first time will teach the same lesson the second time (which will be in a different section of the same undergraduate survey course). As a follow-up to the lesson, all students will turn in the following written components (*in hard copy*):

1. Lesson Study time and effort form (to be handed out later)
2. Lesson plans for both the original and revised lesson
3. A two-page reflection on the process of designing, delivering, and revising the lesson

*Unit plan:* as the capstone project for the class, each student will complete a unit plan that might be used in a hypothetical history or social science class. *Turn in the unit plan and rationale in hard copy and on Blackboard*). The unit plan should include the following:

1. A three-page rationale for the unit, including how it might fit into a specific course you might teach, how it fulfills applicable disciplinary standards, an explanation of the teaching strategies and sources you expect to use, and an explanation of how the assessments that you have designed will help you evaluate student learning.

2. A sequence of lesson plans for a two-week unit. Each lesson plan should have a title and follow the four-part outline (objectives, procedures, assessment, and materials/sources) that we will have employed elsewhere in the course. You should include, where possible, copies of all materials and sources that you will use in this unit (for film clips or music, a citation or website listing will suffice). Lesson plans should incorporate a diverse array of teaching strategies. No lesson plan should include a film that takes the whole class.

3. A minor and major assessment for the whole unit. Minor assessments can include a quiz, writing exercise, or structured discussion and should focus on a small portion of the material. The major assessment should be a test, project, presentation, or the like.

*Deadlines:* All assignments are due at the beginning of class, unless otherwise noted, and all students are expected to take part in class activities on the specified dates. Late work will be graded down one-third of a grade (A to A-, etc.) for every day it is late, starting after the beginning of class. Papers will not be accepted late or via e-mail, except with a valid excuse (medical or family emergency, etc.) AND prior approval from me.

*Special Needs:* Students who need accommodations – for disability, religious observance, military service, or any other reason – should let me know within the first two weeks of class. A full statement on accommodations covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act is available on Blackboard, in the “Syllabus and Policies” folder.

*Cheating and plagiarism:* Either offense is grounds for a zero on the assignment and failure in the course. If you are unsure of what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, I strongly encourage you to check with me *before* you hand in your assignment. Please also note that any student who cannot or will not produce the notes, outlines, and other preparatory work for his or her paper will be considered guilty of cheating or plagiarism and subject to the same penalties. The policy in this class is quite simple and is as follows. In the first documented instance of academic dishonesty (as described in the University guidelines, linked below), the student will receive a zero on the assignment. In the second instance, the student will fail the class. All code of conduct violations will be reported.

*Metro State's Academic Integrity Statement:* "As students, faculty, staff and administrators of Metropolitan State University of Denver, it is our responsibility to uphold and maintain an academic environment that furthers scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge. We will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all activities related to our learning and scholarship. We will not plagiarize, fabricate information or data, cheat on tests or exams, steal academic material, or submit work to more than one class without full disclosure."

For more information on academic dishonesty, see

<http://www.msudenver.edu/studentengagementandwellness/studentconductandconflictresolutionsservices/studentconductservices/academicintegrity/academicdishonesty/>

*For more information, please see the information on LAS policies and deadlines posted in the "Syllabus and Policies" folder on Blackboard.*

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

Any readings marked with an asterisk (\*) are available as PDFs and links in the "Assigned Readings" folder on Blackboard.

### WEEK ONE: August 21-25

Readings: *History on Trial*, prefaces and chapters 1-2  
*Lies My Teacher Told Me*, introductions and chapter 1  
\*Colorado Social Studies Standards (browse)  
\*NCSS Standards (browse)  
\*James C. McKinley, Jr., "Texas Conservatives Win Curriculum Change"  
\*"Changing Standards in Texas"  
\*Doonesbury cartoon on the Texas US history standards

August 22: Introductions

August 24: Keeping standards in mind

### WEEK TWO: August 28 - September 1

Readings: *The Teacher Wars*, introduction and chapters 1-6

August 29: A Brief History of American School Reform, Part 1

August 31: A Brief History of American School Reform, Part 2

### WEEK THREE: September 4-8

Readings: *The Teacher Wars*, chapters 7-8  
*History on Trial*, chapters 3-6  
\*Excerpt from Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*  
\* Anne Marie Awad, "Do Mandatory Evaluations Contribute to Colorado's Teacher Shortage?"

September 5: School reformers: intentions and results

September 7: Educational policy on the ground: how policy affects practice

**\*\*\*\* BY THE END OF WEEK THREE, YOU SHOULD SEE ME FOR A REQUIRED DEGREE WORKS CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE ON TRACK FOR STUDENT TEACHING NEXT SEMESTER.\*\*\*\***

**WEEK FOUR: September 11-15**

*Readings:* *The Teacher Wars*, chapters 9-10, epilogue

*History on Trial*, chapters 7-9

Roupp, ed., *Teaching World History*, chapter 25: "The Importance of Teaching about Religion in the Classroom"

\*AP US History Standards (revised, 2015) (browse chapter on curricular framework)

\*Pema Levy, "What's Driving Conservatives Mad about the New AP History Course"

\* Karen Tumulty and Lindsey Layton, "Changes in AP History Trigger a Culture Clash in Colorado"

\*Zoë Schlanger, "Revised AP US History Standards Will Emphasize American Exceptionalism"

September 12: Classroom controversies

September 14: The politics of what we do

**WEEK FIVE: September 18-22**

*Readings:* *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, chapters 2-6

\*Excerpts from four textbooks (bring to class on 2/16 in hard copy or on a readable screen)

\* James Oliver Horton, "Slavery in American History: An Uncomfortable National Dialogue"

\* Tracy Thompson, "The South Still Lies about the Civil War"

\* James Loewen, "Why Do People Believe Myths about the Confederacy? Because Our Textbooks and Monuments Are Wrong."

September 19: Textbooks and race

September 21: Myth, memory, and contemporary politics

**WEEK SIX: September 25-29**

*Readings:* *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, chapters 7-9

*Teaching World History*, part I and part III, chapter 14 ("Stimulating Through Simulating")

"*Why Won't You Just Tell Us the Answer?*" introduction, chapters 1-3

\*Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*, chapter 1

\* Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What Does It Mean to Think Historically?"

\* Browse the Stanford History Education Group website (especially the section on "Reading Like a Historian")

September 26: Historical Thinking

September 28: Teaching Historical Interpretation

**\*\*\*\* TEXTBOOK EVALUATION RUBRICS AND PAPERS DUE SEPTEMBER 28. \*\*\*\***

**WEEK SEVEN: October 2-6**

*Readings:* \*Frederick Drake and Lynn Nelson, *Engagement in Teaching History*, chapter 7

*Teaching World History*, Part III

October 3: Using visual sources in the classroom: each student should bring *one* visual source (still or film) relevant to any social studies topic

October 5: Auraria Library Visit: finding primary sources for teaching

**WEEK EIGHT: October 9-13**

*Readings:* *Teaching World History*, parts II and IV

- \* World History for Us All, browse “Questions and Themes,” and any three Big Eras
- \* World History Standards, National Center for History in the Schools (browse)
- \* World History Matters, browse the section on World History Sources
- “*Why Won’t You Just Tell Us the Answer?*” any TWO of chapters 4-8

October 10: Themes in World History (guest speaker: Prof. Peter Melbach, retired teacher from Jefferson County School district and current MSU-Denver instructor)

October 12: Using debate, discussion, and collaborative learning in the classroom

**WEEK NINE: October 16-20**

*Readings:* None

October 17: Group primary source presentations (groups A and B)

October 19: Group primary source presentations (groups C and D)

**\*\*\*\* LESSON PLANS FROM GROUP PRIMARY SOURCE PRESENTATIONS (WITH REFLECTIONS) DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, ON BLACKBOARD. \*\*\*\***

**WEEK TEN: October 23-27**

*Readings:* *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, chapters 10-13, afterword (read for Tuesday)

- \* Explore Teaching History website on Lesson Study:
- \* Stan Pesick, “‘Lesson Study’ and the Teaching of American History: Connecting Professional Development and Classroom Practice”

October 24: Why is history taught this way?

October 26: Begin planning for Lesson Study

**WEEK ELEVEN: October 30 - November 3**

*Readings:* None – focus on researching and planning Lesson Study

October 31: Time in class for group work to prepare for Lesson Study

November 2: NO CLASS – use this time to prepare for Lesson Study

**WEEK TWELVE: November 6-10**

*Readings:* None – focus on researching and planning Lesson Study

November 6/7/8: No regular class meeting; lesson study groups will meet in assigned classes for guest teaching

November 9: Class time to debrief on lesson study and revise lesson plans for next week’s teaching presentations

**WEEK THIRTEEN: November 13-17**

*Readings:* None – focus on revising and reporting on Lesson Study

November 13/14/15: No regular class meeting; lesson study groups will meet in assigned classes for guest teaching

November 16: Class meeting to debrief on lesson study and discuss the preparation process

**\*\*\*\* WRITTEN WORK FROM LESSON STUDY (ORIGINAL AND REVISED LESSON PLANS, TIME AND EFFORT SHEET, AND TWO-PAGE REFLECTION DUE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16. \*\*\*\***

**WEEK FOURTEEN: November 20-24 – No Class (Thanksgiving Break)**

**WEEK FIFTEEN: November 27 - December 1**

*Readings:* \*Frederick Drake and Lynn Nelson, *Engagement in Teaching History*, chapter 10  
*Teaching World History*, Part III, chapter 15 (“Improving Student Writing”)  
“*Why Won’t You Just Tell Us the Answer?*” chapters 9-10

November 28: Workshop: assessments and unit plans

November 30: Key concepts and questions in economics and sociology

**WEEK SIXTEEN: December 4-8**

*Readings:* \*Harm de Blij, *Why Geography Matters: Three Challenges Facing America*, chapter 1  
\*Phil Gersmehl, *Teaching Geography*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., chapter 1  
\*Review Colorado Social Studies Standards (especially fields other than history)  
\* Review the following blog sites: <https://geonet.esri.com/community/education/blog>,  
<http://spatialreserves.wordpress.com>  
*History on Trial*, chapter 10, epilogue

December 5: Key concepts and teaching strategies in Geography (guest speaker: Dr. Joseph Kerski, Education Manager at Environmental Systems Research Institute [Esri])

December 7: Civics in the classroom: Can we teach engagement? Should we?

**\*\*\*\* UNIT PLAN DUE DURING FINALS WEEK, DATE TBA. DURING OUR SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM TIME, YOU WILL PRESENT YOUR UNIT PLANS AND COMPLETE REQUIRED SENIOR EXPERIENCE PAPERWORK. \*\*\*\***