

**METHODS OF TEACHING SOCIAL SCIENCE: SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
**History 4010 • Section 22 (30519) • Fall 2021**  
**T/TH, 3:30-4:45, 222 CENTRAL CLASSROOM BLDG.**

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*office:* 211 Central Classroom  
*office hours:* T/Th, 12:30-3:00 p.m.,  
or by appt. on Teams

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 Senior Experience requirement in the History major for students who complete the social studies licensure program. As such, I expect that students in this course will have content expertise in one or more social studies 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*  
(revised and updated edition, 2008)

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 Canvas. 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. All written work should be uploaded to Canvas unless otherwise indicated.*

Attendance/participation: 20%

Textbook evaluation paper: 15%

Teaching method presentation: 20%

Show and tell: 5%

Group primary source presentation: 15%

Unit plan: 25%

*Mask policy:* Students are required to adhere to MSU Denver's mask guidelines. As of the beginning of this semester, University policy requires everyone to wear masks indoors, with the exception of vaccinated instructors in class who can distance from students while teaching (which I will try to do). If the mandatory indoor mask policy changes, those who still wish to wear a mask indoors are encouraged to do so. On a related point, those who have not yet gotten vaccinated are strongly encouraged to do so.

*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 silence all electronic devices before you enter the classroom and use them only when necessary for the purposes of the class.**

*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). **Be sure you're using a textbook designed for secondary school, not college. You can check the publisher's website (or ask me) if you're not sure.** 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.

*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

*All groups are required to demonstrate how your lesson integrates instructional modifications and assessment accommodations for English Language Learners. You should make these modifications clear in your lesson presentation and in your individual lesson plans.*

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-page reflection on the lesson's effectiveness and thoughts for improvement.

*Teaching method presentation:* This will be a group assignment in which students (in groups of about 3-4) will research and plan a lesson on an assigned topic (assigned topics will draw from typical social studies classes: American history, world history, geography, civics, and/or economics). Your lesson should last about 50 minutes, with the remainder of the class devoted to discussion and critique. Most importantly, your lesson should make use of *at least two* teaching techniques. Some techniques might overlap (i.e., a small-group discussion of a primary source), but your lesson needs to include two different segments in which students are doing different things. You may choose from the following categories:

1. Lecture
2. Small-group work
3. Working with primary sources
4. Working with visual sources other than primary sources (i.e., maps, charts, graphs, etc.)
5. Whole-class debate
6. Whole-class discussion
7. Gallery walk (or something similar that involves movement around the class)
8. Simulation (such as a mock trial)

*All groups are required to demonstrate how your lesson integrates instructional modifications and assessment accommodations for English Language Learners. You should make these modifications clear in your lesson presentation and in your individual lesson plans.*

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 two-page reflection on the lesson's effectiveness and thoughts for improvement, with particular attention to how the teaching methods helped you achieve your objectives.

*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. You can create this unit as a set of files that you turn in on Canvas, or you can create the unit on Google docs, or on a website that you can share with me. 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 in the “Course Information, Policies, and Resources” module on Canvas.

*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/>

Students are responsible for full knowledge of the provisions and regulations pertaining to all aspects of their attendance at MSU Denver, and should familiarize themselves with the policies found in the MSU Denver Catalog: [MSU Denver Catalog](#). For more information and recent updates, go to the CLAS website: <https://msudenver.edu/las/studentinformation/forms/>

The College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences is committed to, and cares about, all students. To help you manage personal challenges and basic needs security, the university offer several resources. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (303-615-0220 or 303-615-0423), the Gender Institute for Teaching and Advocacy (303-615-2052), or our CLAS office (303-615-0995 or 303-615-1301) for support.

*For more information, please see the information on CLAS policies and deadlines posted in the “Course Information, Policies, and Resources” module on Canvas.*

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

*Any readings marked with an asterisk (\*) are available in the modules for weekly readings on Canvas..*

#### WEEK ONE: August 23-27

*Readings: 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" (*New York Times*, March 2010)

\*"Changing Standards in Texas"

\*Doonesbury cartoon on the Texas US history standards

August 24: Introductions

August 26: Keeping standards in mind

#### WEEK TWO: August 30 - September 3

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

August 31: A Brief History of American School Reform, Part 1

September 2: A Brief History of American School Reform, Part 2

#### WEEK THREE: September 6-10

*Readings: The Teacher Wars*, chapters 7-8

\*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?" (KUNC Public Radio, June 2017)

\* Valerie Strauss, "It's a Really Bad Way to Fund Schools – But Texas May Adopt It Anyway" (*Washington Post*, January 2019)

September 7: School reformers: intentions and results

September 9: Educational policy on the ground: how policy affects practice

**\*\*\* BY THE END OF WEEK THREE, YOU SHOULD SEE ME (TEAMS OR FACE-TO-FACE) FOR A DEGREE PROGRESS REPORT CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE ON TRACK FOR STUDENT TEACHING. THIS MEETINGS CAN HAPPEN WHEN I SIGN YOUR STUDENT TEACHING VERIFICATION FORM. \*\*\***

**WEEK FOUR: September 13-17**

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

- \*Excerpts from four textbooks (bring to class on 2/11 in hard copy or on a readable screen)
- \* Articles relating to the recent *New York Times* study of textbooks
- \* Donald Yakovne, “Textbook Racism: How Scholars Sustained White Supremacy” (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 2018)
- \* Michael Harriot, “We Found the Textbooks of the Senators Who Oppose *The 1619 Project* and Suddenly Everything Makes Sense” (*The Root*, May 2021)
- \* Bennett Minton, “The Lies Our Textbooks Told My Generation of Virginians about Slavery” (*Washington Post*, July 2020)
- \* Courtney Tanner, “History Packets for Utah High Schoolers Pulled for Claiming ‘Most Slaves Were Generally Treated Kindly’” (*The Salt Lake Tribune*, August 2021)
- \* “U.S. History”: *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (video)

September 14: The trouble with textbooks

September 16: Myth, memory, and contemporary politics

**WEEK FIVE: September 20-24**

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

- \* James Oliver Horton, “Slavery in American History: An Uncomfortable National Dialogue”
- \* Valerie Strauss, “Teachers are Told Not to Get ‘Political’ In the Classroom...” (*Washington Post*, January 2019)
- \* Erica Breunlin, “Denver’s Black Students Are Raising Their Voices to Redesign the Curriculum, Ensure Their History is Taught” (*Colorado Sun*, January 2020)
- \* Jacey Fortin, “Critical Race Theory: A Brief History” (*New York Times*, July 2021)
- \* *The 1619 Project* (skim, read one or two articles of your choice)
- \* The final report of the 1776 Commission
- \* Robert Pondiscio, “Seizing the Moment to Improve Civics Education” (Fordham Institute, 2017)
- \* “A Roadmap for Excellence in History and Civics,” by Educating for American Democracy (skim report and roadmap)

September 21: What is Critical Race Theory, exactly?

September 23: Civics in the classroom: educating citizens

**WEEK SIX: September 27 - October 1**

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?” (*AHA Perspectives*, January 2007)

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

September 28: Historical thinking and historical interpretation

September 30: Using visual sources in the classroom: each student should bring *one* visual source (still, film, or interactive) relevant to any social studies topic

**\*\*\* TEXTBOOK EVALUATION RUBRICS AND PAPERS DUE OCTOBER 1. \*\*\***

## **WEEK SEVEN: October 4-8**

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

“*Why Won’t You Just Tell Us the Answer?*” any TWO of chapters 4-8

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

\* Watch any three videos of teaching strategies presented by Facing History and Ourselves; take notes on advantages or disadvantages of the strategies you chose, as well as the topics that might work well with these strategies

October 5: Nuts and Bolts: Lesson plans and lectures

October 7: Nuts and Bolts: Discussions, debates, and collaborative learning in the classroom

## **WEEK EIGHT: October 11-15**

*Readings:* None

October 12: Group primary source presentations (groups A and B)

October 14: Group primary source presentations (groups C and D)

**\*\*\* LESSON PLANS AND REFLECTIONS FROM GROUP PRIMARY SOURCE PRESENTATIONS DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15. \*\*\***

## **WEEK NINE: October 18-22**

*Readings:* \*Harm de Blij, *Why Geography Matters: Three Challenges Facing America*, chapter 1

\* Review Colorado Social Studies Standards (Geography)

\* Review the following blog sites: <https://geonet.esri.com/community/education/blog>,  
<http://spatialreserves.wordpress.com>

\* Reacting to the Past: Faculty Perspective (video)

\* Reacting to the Past: Student Perspective (video)

\* Reacting to the Past Institute Series: Games at Play (video)

October 19: Strategies and tools for teaching geography: guest presentation by Ms. Sarah Hurd

October 21: Simulations: a demonstration of Reacting to the Past

## **WEEK TEN: October 25-29**

*Readings:* *Teaching World History*, Parts II-IV (skim)

\* 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

October 26: Organizing a world history class: guest presentation by Dr. Kim Klimek

October 28: Differentiation from a parent’s perspective: guest presentation by Dr. Kim Klimek

## **WEEK ELEVEN: November 1-5**

*Readings:* None – focus on researching and planning teaching presentations

November 2: Teaching ideas for economics: guest presentation by Mr. Jay LeBlanc

November 4: Lesson planning for presentations – come to class and work in groups

**WEEK TWELVE: November 8-12**

*Readings:* None – focus on researching and planning teaching presentations

November 9: Teaching methods presentation: group 1  
November 11: Teaching methods presentation: group 2

**WEEK THIRTEEN: November 15-19**

*Readings:* None – focus on researching and planning teaching presentations

November 16: Teaching methods presentation: group 3  
November 18: Teaching methods presentation: group 4

**WEEK FOURTEEN: November 22-26 – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**WEEK FIFTEEN: November 29 - December 3**

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

November 30: Nuts and bolts: assessments and unit plans  
December 2: Day off to work on unit plans

**\*\*\* WRITTEN WORK FROM TEACHING METHODS PRESENTATIONS (LESSON PLANS AND TWO-PAGE REFLECTION) DUE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3. \*\*\***

**WEEK SIXTEEN: December 6-10**

*Readings:* None

December 7: Professional development: interviews, cover letters, résumés, and job-market etiquette  
December 9: What lies in store: a visit from former field experience students.

**\*\*\*\* UNIT PLAN DUE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17. \*\*\*\***

**\*\*\*\* REQUIRED SENIOR EXPERIENCE PAPERWORK DUE FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17. \*\*\*\***