I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Educational functioning from a political systems perspective; internal and external political forces influencing organizational effectiveness; shaping of educational policy; functional means of attaining and utilizing political power.

II. RATIONALE:

Education, both k-12 and postsecondary, is probably facing unprecedented criticism—attacks—from stakeholders like never before in history. Hersh and Merrow (2005) actually began their text with these words: “Higher education, long viewed as the crown jewel of American education, is tarnished” (p. 1). With regard to k-12 education, Spring (2005) wrote that lessons from history teach us that “politicians are reluctant to praise public schools” (p. 3). What is wrong with education that it is the recipient of such contempt? I would argue the issue has little to do with education as education and more to do with education as a political pawn. Spring summarized it aptly: “Of course, state and local politicians, educational administrators, teachers’ unions, special interest groups, parents, and the general citizenry (have) their own interests in educational policy” (p. 1). Educational outcomes, then, are not necessarily a matter of teaching and learning, but who controls the education political agenda. This course looks at control and political agendas.


III. STATE ADOPTED PROFICIENCY DOMAINS: N/A

IV. TExES COMPETENCIES: N/A

V. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES:

There are SIX (6) major learning objectives associated with this course:

1. Construct a significant education political position as a result of assessing key political conflicts.
2. Identify the key issues critical to the formulation of a dominant k-12 or higher education political position.
3. Identify how political factions vie for control over various educational contributions to society.
4. Differentiate the impact of various political decisions on the success of education.
5. Summarize how scholarly literature relates to the political landscape of education.
6. Interpret how scholarly literature applies to the politics of education.
VI. COURSE TOPICS:

- Educational political position
- Political decisions on the success of education
- Scholarly literature related to the political landscape of education
- Application to the politics of education

VII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

- Discussions
- Case studies analysis

VIII. Required Texts


  - ISBN-10: 0787973823


  - ISBN-10: 0415884403


EndNote Software – Available FREE at [http://it.tamucc.edu/downloads](http://it.tamucc.edu/downloads) You will need your Island ID and Password to sign-in and download. You will find the product key on the site with the download.

RESOURCES


OWL at Purdue – [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
IX. EVALUATION, GRADE ASSIGNMENT, AND DELIVERABLES
Grades will be calculated based on A = 90-100%; B = 80-89.9%; C = 70-79.9%; D = 60-69.9%; F < 60%

Discussion and Participation (Online) 40%
Reflexive Journal 20%
Paper – Final Assignment 40%

DELIVERABLES
- Readings from two texts.
- Online discussion
- Reflexive Journal
- Paper – Final Assignment

REQUIREMENTS FOR DELIVERABLES
Additional detailed handouts with instructions and rubrics for each assignment will be provided and discussed over blackboard.

Projected course content and timeframes may be modified as we move through the course. These modifications will be based on student needs, content mastery, time needed for projects, and changes deemed appropriate by the professor in order to meet student and course objectives.

Successful completion of the following written deliverables:

1. A reflexive journal with at least two entries per week (5 weeks) for the duration for the class, due July 2nd, 2015.

Maintain a reflective journal of insights acquired during the course from readings and your own thinking regarding your personal approach to the politics of education. This journal should identify (1) your insights, (2) how you are making meaning/connections out of the readings, class discussions and learning activities, (3) an explanation of why these are meaningful to you, and (4) their application to your professional setting/previous experiences (as appropriate). You should journal at least two insights for each class period (one for reflections on class discussions/learning activities and one related to the readings associated with that class and be prepared to share during class). These reflections are intended for you to think DEEPLY and to utilize HOTS – higher order thinking skills (application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation). Provide literature references and/or web-sites that provide additional support of your insights where appropriate.

2. Online Discussion: There is one discussion bridging the entire course.

It begins with a basic topic and each week will branch into additional areas. It begins Monday, June 1st and ends Thursday, July 2. It is important that you engage in the discussion every week. The discussion assignment is worth up to 40% of your grade, you will engage in discussions every week. Additional and specific instructions regarding online discussion will be posted in our Blackboard site.
   - A written report (10-15 pages) of the analysis will be due July 3rd, 2015
   - Materials and additional instructions will be provided during sessions.

Students will work to complete a case study analysis. The analysis shall address the following points:

(1) What are the decision issues presented in the case?
(2) What facts are essential for understanding and dealing with the issues?
(3) What additional information is needed to address the issues identified?
(4) Who are the principal decision makers and what roles do they play?
(5) Are there any theories / current literature that is relevant and can be used to inform the decision issues?
(6) What course of action (long-and short-term) should be taken?

Student will provide a written report (10-15 pages) of his/her case analysis addressing all of the points outlined above.

**General Requirements Related to Assignments**

- All written material should be double spaced, in Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins all around, with left justification only.
- Please use APA style of citation and references in your papers.

**X. Course Expectations and Policies:**

1. **Participation:** This class requires you to invest time for preparation, assignments, and application of critical concepts in politics of education. You will need to stay on top of things in order to perform well. While you might be an independent learner, and perhaps a strong performer, the research is consistent on the value of social learning and reviewing difficult concepts. Your respectful and meaningful participation in discussions will be required for your final grade.

2. **Competencies:** There are some basic competencies that I expect you will have in order to perform well in this class. These are:
   a. Ability to proof read your work before submitting
   b. Ability to use APA style to write and cite references when making general and/or specific statements that are not entirely your own
   c. Ability to communicate effectively when you do not understand the instruction or expectations about assignments
   d. Ability to connect to the Internet, download required materials, and transmit required materials as needed. I will not entertain excuses emerging from last minute computer troubles. Therefore, plan ahead and have back up plans in place should something go wrong.
3. **Courtesy to Peers:** I see us as professional scholars and therefore we should treat our learning environment with professional respect. There will be no exceptions. I will NOT negotiate participation at the end of the semester. Make sure you communicate with me if you have any extenuating circumstances.

4. **Special Accommodations:** It is the policy of the Texas A & M Corpus Christi’s to accommodate students with disabilities pursuant to federal law, state law, and the University's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example in seating placement or in arrangements for examinations, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course with a letter from Disability Services in Driftwood 101 (361-825-5816). I will not be able to make accommodations without a letter from disability services. Texas A & M Corpus Christi does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations. *The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor (at the beginning of the course) of any disabling condition, which will require modification to avoid discrimination.* Faculty is required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

5. **Professional Conduct and Academic Honesty:** Professional conduct is expected in this course. Professional conduct includes, among others, interactions with peer colleagues, faculty, timely completion of assigned tasks and responsibilities; adherence to professional ethical standards; and adherence to University policies regarding plagiarism. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary actions. All written work submitted must be the student’s original work and conform to the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) available online and via their publications. This means that any substantive ideas, phrases, sentences, and/or any published ideas must be properly referenced to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency in the selling of term papers of other academic materials. It is the student’s responsibility to know all relevant university policies concerning plagiarism. Any documented cases of plagiarism can and will result in dismissal from the course with a failing grade, and may result in other more serious sanctions by the College of Education and the University.

6. **Diversity Statement:** The department aspires to create a safe and diversity-sensitive learning environment that respects the rights, dignity, and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. Diversity means the fair representation of all groups of individuals, the inclusion of minority perspectives and voices, and appreciation of different cultural and socioeconomic group perspectives. We aspire to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Departmental courses will strive to provide opportunity for all students to discuss issues of diversity including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

7. **End of Semester Negotiations:** I will support you in every way possible during the semester to ensure that you perform well in the class if you communicate any difficulties or concerns with the material with me. Therefore, I recommend that you take full advantage of a supportive learning environment designed to ensure your success. However, I will not entertain any end of semester negotiations about grades, and your grade in the course is a direct reflection of your engagement in your own learning process.
8. **Statement of Academic Continuity**: In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Please understand that, despite the strict expectations and policies outlined above, I do care about you as an individual and am always willing to listen and be flexible in order to help you have a successful semester if you are faced with unusually difficult circumstances. I encourage you to get in touch with me if you want a conference to explain your circumstances. Do not wait until you have accumulated absences, fallen behind, and failed to do the required work to discuss any personal difficulties that are affecting your performance.

**XI. Course Schedule**

**OL = Online—Blackboard**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>REQUIRED READING AND ACTIONS</th>
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| WK 1 – June 2 | Overview:  
- Syllabus / Goals / Objectives  
- Discuss deliverables, & required texts  
*Public Good and Politics of Education* | OL – Instructor facilitate session  
Kezar – Chapters 1, 2 & 3  
Spring – Chapter 1 |
| WK 2 – June 9 | *Public Policy and Political Environment* | OL – Class facilitation  
Kezar – Chapters 4-7  
Spring – Chapters 2 & 3  
Familiarize yourself with APA Manual  
Acquire & Install EndNote |
| WK 3 – June 16 | *Societal Good and Ideology* | OL – Class facilitation  
Kezar – Chapters 8-10  
Spring – Chapters 4 & 5 |
| WK 4 – June 23 | *Governance, Leadership, and Political Control* | OL – Class facilitation  
Kezar – Chapters 11-13  
Spring – Chapters 6-9 |
| WK 5 – June 30 | Conclusions | OL – Instructor facilitate session  
*By the end of this week (July 3rd) due Final Paper and Journal* |

*Parts of this syllabus may be subject to change based on class needs. Students will be notified of all changes. Additionally, I reserve the right to widen point ranges on assignments as needed.*