Course Description
In this course, we will critically investigate what is understood by the term curriculum and the implications for schooling and society. Through discussion and readings, we will develop/expand our views of these issues, and articulate our support for these views. Utilizing in-class discussions and written assignments, we will continue our growth as responsible, self-reflective, and aware educators.

The fundamental question which emerges from the curriculum field is one of worth: What is it most worthwhile to know and experience? The answer to such a question presupposes a particular notion of the “subject” and the society of which one wishes to be a part. The question of worth will be the pivotal question in the course. We will explore a series of responses which the question has evoked during the last century. Related questions which will guide our exploration are:
• What are some of the perennial categories?
• What are the theoretical frameworks that focus curriculum inquiry?
• How does curriculum function as a shaping force in society?
• What are the politics of curriculum?
• How do race, class, gender and sexuality relate to curriculum?
• How has curriculum operated in a modern world?
• How might curriculum operate in a post-modern world?
• What are the factors that contribute to curriculum reform?
Throughout this exploration we will become acquainted with the predominant perspectives and paradigms in the field and the scholars who represent them. Each of us will attempt (in turn) to answer the question of worth for ourselves – a sobering but useful exercise! By the end of the semester, my hope is that we will have come to an appreciation of the complexity of educational experiences.

Course Objectives and Outcomes
• To become more familiar with prominent curriculum theorists and their contributions
To explore historical and current approaches to curriculum development
To explore implementation, evaluation, and policy making aspects of curriculum
To describe and critique curriculum theory and instructional practice
To engage in reflective exploration of our experience of curriculum development
To articulate an understanding of how curriculum frameworks inform practice

**Evaluation and Assignments**
Grades will be determined according to the following:

1) Reflective Journal entries (6) 30
2) Student-led Presentation on a Curriculum Theorist 20
3) Curriculum Theory Paper and Presentation 40
4) Class Attendance and Participation 10
Total 100

The following course requirements will be explained in detail at the beginning of the course.

1) **Reflective Journals**
The purpose of this assignment is to engage you in reflective exploration of your practice, the curriculum orientation(s) under which you make decisions, and possible alternatives or directions for you to consider in your own practice. This is an evolving project which will require you to write a reflection responding to questions raised, class readings, outside readings of theorists and curriculum books, and your own lived experience. Follow the themes develop in class and include critical insight into your emerging understanding of your practice in relation to the themes. Do not simply summarize the content of the readings.

2) **Student-led Presentation and Discussion**

*MS Students:*
The topic of your 30-minute presentation will be a curriculum theorist and her/his work. You will read the assigned reading from the class schedule and at least one other article by your theorist. You will spend the first 5-7 minutes of the presentation giving us some background about the theorist and briefly discussing the article that only you read. You will then lead the class in a discussion about the work by your theorist that the whole class read. Research discussion protocols and locate one that works well with what you would like us to discuss.

*PhD Students:*
The topic of your 30-minute presentation will be a curriculum theorist and her/his work. You will read the assigned reading from the class schedule and at least one other article by your theorist. You will spend the first 5-7 minutes of the presentation giving us some background about the theorist and briefly discussing the article that only you read. You will then lead the class in a discussion about the topic of the work by your theorist that part of the class has read. You may need to spend more time teaching here and be sure that you group PhD and MS students together in discussion groups. Research discussion protocols and locate one that works well with what you would like us to discuss.

3) **Curriculum Theory Paper and Presentation**
The purpose of this assignment is to offer you the opportunity to begin to construct your own curriculum theory by integrating your practice with the ideas you have thought about in this class. It also offers you the opportunity to begin to construct your way of thinking critically about what you teach, why you teach and how you teach. This set of ideas comprises a kind of paradigm out of which your aims and ideals emerge. You are being asked to reflect on your practice in relation to the history of philosophical thought. More details about the presentation will be provided in class.

You will write a paper and address the following:

**MS students:**
- an overview of the main points of one to two traditions with which you identify
- relevance to current situations in educational curriculum and instruction
- your personal situation (classroom, subject, school)
- state and societal situations (public education, private schools, etc)

This is a formal paper of about 5-7 pages and should follow APA guidelines. See rubric in Blackboard.

**PhD students:**
- an overview of the main points of two to three traditions with which you identify
- a critique using any of the frameworks raised in the text and/or discussed in class
- relevance to current situations in educational curriculum and instruction
- your personal situation (classroom, subject, school)
- state and societal situations (public education, private schools, etc)

This is a formal paper of about 7-10 pages and should follow APA guidelines. See rubric in Blackboard.

4) **Class Attendance and Participation**

Due to the nature of this course, active student participation is essential to overall successful class performance. It is very important that students attend class regularly and be fully present, engaging in all class discussions and activities. It is not enough to rely on others’ notes to make up for class activities and experiences. Additionally, failure to attend class regularly may place students at a severe disadvantage on all assignments.

Assignments are scored based on completion of assigned task, accuracy, content, grammar, and spelling mistakes. Grades are contingent upon the completion and quality of assigned work and are based on the subjective evaluation by the professor.

Letter grades will be determined by the following scale:

- A=92-100%
- B=83-91%
- C=74-82%
- D=66-74%

**Required Textbook and Resources:**

EDCI 5362/6324 Syllabus * Dr. Bethanie C. Pletcher
**MS and PhD students:**

Other articles as assigned by professor

**PhD students only:**

Doctoral students enrolled in this course will be required to complete additional readings related to course topics and discuss those readings in online doctoral discussion forums.

**Recommended Reading**
There are additional readings for this course. They will be available on Blackboard and/or in class.


**Class Schedule (TBD)**

**Late work**
No coursework will be accepted late without instructor approval. For each week an assignment is late, a letter grade will be dropped.

**Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage**
Cell phones, text messaging, and checking your cell phone, email, and text messages during class are all **strictly prohibited**. Come to class prepared to focus on class. Violations may result in being asked to withdraw from the course and/or failure of course. If there is a potential rising emergency, then prior notification of such possibility must be made known to me **before** the start of class and the phone set on vibrate.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you **must** initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. **Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.**

**Classroom/Professional behavior**
Professional decorum is expected.

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with
the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Disabilities Accommodations**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.

**Veterans**
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**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.