

**YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BEEGHLY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**THEORIES OF INQUIRY (FOUND 8110)**

**FALL SESSION 2009**

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Instructor: Dr. Paul Carr  
Office: BCOE, Room 4106  
Office hours: M (14:00 - 16:00); T (14:00 – 16:00); W (11:00 – 12:00)  
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Course Code: 44011 (Section A) and 44012 (Section B)  
Meeting-time: Section A (8:30-12:00) and Section B (13:00 – 16:30)  
Classroom: BCOE, Room 4404  
First class: (Saturday) August 22, 2009  
Second class: (Wednesday) September 23, 2009  
Third class: (Wednesday) October 28, 2009  
Fourth class: (Saturday) November 21, 2009  
Last Class: (Saturday) December 12, 2009

[NOTE: Apart from the face-to-face classes on campus noted above, the rest of the course will be undertaken through WebCT.]

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<b>1. Course Description</b>
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Catalogue description: This course investigates historic and contemporary theories of how one comes to or goes about knowing something. Ways of knowing, believing, categorizing and arriving at certainty, the development of statements of validity and truth, and construct validity will be examined. A critical interrogation of epistemology will figure into the fiber of the course. Prerequisites: Doctoral admission and FOUND 6901.

(Appendix 1 contains a description of how this course corresponds to, and reflects, national standards (NCATE).)

<b>2. Course Objectives</b>
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The purpose of this course is to familiarize students, and enhance their understanding and preparedness working, with theoretical foundations to/in education. Students will critically examine how they construct knowledge, and how the education systems in

which they are immersed have been structured in relation research, epistemology, indoctrination, ideology, culture and theory. Students will reflect, and undertake research, on their own understanding and implication in education. Conceptualizing the experiences of “others” will be a key consideration. Ultimately, the course aims to further prepare students to recognize and deal with:

- (1) the complexity, plausibility and validity of diverse vantage-points;
- (2) the construction of theory, and ways of knowing (epistemology), in shaping culture and education; and
- (3) the intricate and systemic workings of educational institutions, which are not always congruent with the needs of diverse populations;
- (4) the prevalence of ideology in guiding our understanding of education and the world.

Similarly, the course seeks to provide students with skills to effectively diagnose educational philosophies, which should be invaluable in assisting them to work through their doctoral dissertations.

### 3. Course Format

This course will involve a manageable amount of conceptual, theoretical and applied readings. In order to become effectively engaged in the course, students will need to submit their required assignments electronically through WebCT technology, and also follow and contribute to on-line debates. The objective for the first part of the course is to provide students with a broad range of concepts, models, tools, techniques, and terminology so as to be able to undertake research in the second half of the course. Although the instructor has mapped out a structure for the course, and will provide a context for our discussions, including some brief presentations, his role is primarily that of a facilitator, aiming to ensure that we touch on an eclectic and germane mix of issues in an equitable and rigorous manner. Student input, therefore, is valued highly. I believe that we, as a group, can best learn from each other by working through issues and problems at different levels concurrently, taking into consideration the real-life dilemmas we face in education. Ultimately, it is hoped that students will develop research approaches and perspectives that will assist them in advancing their doctoral thesis proposals and research as well as assisting them in their leadership positions in education.

### 4. Academic Guidelines

- a. A fundamental principle for the teaching and learning in this course is the free and open exchange of ideas in a climate of mutual respect, reinforcing an academic environment in which we can expand our horizons at the individual and collective levels.
- b. **Academic Dishonesty:** Please refer to student handbook, noting sections on plagiarism and dishonesty. Failure to comply with these standards will result in an

“F” for the course. All candidates are expected to comply with generally accepted professional ethics of Academic Honesty in meeting their course requirements (<http://penguinconnection.ysu.edu/handbook/Policies/POLICIES.shtml>). Candidates are expected to submit materials that are respectful of intellectual property rights, as well as complying with all Federal Copyright Laws (<http://www.copyright.gov/>). Any breach of this code of ethics will be handled according to the YSU Student Handbook. Any proven acts of cheating, plagiarizing, or engaging in any form of academic dishonesty, could result in a severe disciplinary action, an “F” grade for the assignment or course, and possible referral to the Office of Student Affairs for disciplinary action.

- c. Diversity and equity are concepts of central importance within an academic context, and we should be cognizant of the experiences, approaches and presence of our colleagues. Everyone should be made to feel comfortable in our classroom.
- d. Attendance in class, preparation to discuss readings and assignments, submitting work on time, and following the structure and rhythm of the class are the responsibility of students.
- e. The readings for this course are extremely important, and will assist students greatly as they undertake the three required assignments. In terms of quantity, there is not a large volume to read for this course but the readings demand critical reflection to be fully understood.
- f. Being able to write clearly, in good English, in a structure and style that is both effective and easy to follow, is important for this course. Students are encouraged to re-read and re-work their assignments before submitting them. The Instructor’s website contains a summary of points that will assist in writing an effective paper.
- g. In accordance with University procedures, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You must be registered with CSP Disability Services, which is located at Wick House, and provide a letter of accommodation to verify your eligibility. You can reach CSP Disability Services at 330-941-1372.
- h. The instructor will be available at designated times, before and after class, through WebCT and by telephone. This syllabus is purposely detailed so as to provide a clear guide to where we are headed, what is expected, and how assignments will be evaluated. Please contact me through WebCT as opposed to e-mail as I will be checking and responding to queries this way on a daily basis.
- i. ***Americans with Disabilities Act:*** Anyone requiring special adaptations or accommodations should inform the instructor as soon as possible. In accordance with University procedure, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact the office of Equal Opportunity and Disability Services at the beginning of the semester or

when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services' (330-941-1372) intake procedure.

- j. ***Candidate Disposition Alert Process:*** The purpose of this alert is to identify candidate performance or conduct that fails to satisfy professional expectations associated with professionalism, inclusivity and collaboration determined by the BCOE faculty as necessary standards to effectively serve all students or clients. The Candidate Performance Alert form is completed when a concern is raised about a candidate's performance during any class, sponsored activity by the Beeghly College of Education, or during a YSU required field or clinical experience. This form may be used when a candidate engages in conduct, irrespective of its time or location, which raises substantial questions about the candidate's ability to perform his or her role as an educational professional. The Candidate Performance Alert form can be used by university faculty, staff, supervisors, cooperating teachers, or other school personnel when they have a concern, other than one that can be effectively addressed through routine means of supervision.
  
- k. ***Incomplete Grade Policy:*** An incomplete grade of an "I" may be given to a student who has been doing satisfactory work in a course but, for reasons beyond control of the student and deemed justifiable by the instructor, has not completed all requirements for a course when grades were submitted. A written explanation of the reason for the "I" and a date (which must be within one year) by which all course requirements will be completed, must be forwarded to the Ohio Registrar for inclusion in the student's permanent record, with copies to the student and department chairperson.

The instructor will initiate a grade change upon completion of the course requirements. If no formal grade change occurs within one year, the "I" automatically converts to an "F". If graduation occurs within the one-year time period, the "Incomplete" grade will be converted to an "F" prior to graduation.

Department chairs are granted authority to convert grades of "I" into final grades in cases where instructors may have severed connections with the University or have become incapacitated before converting the grade.
  
- l. ***\*Critical and Essential Tasks are performance-based assignments that reflect a candidate's knowledge, skills and/or dispositions aligned with the standards for teacher preparation of the licensure area (NAEYC). These tasks assess a candidate's ability to move through the teacher preparation program in an effective way, meeting and/or exceeding expectations in these professional standards. Therefore, candidates must effectively pass a critical task to pass the course. Failure to effectively pass the critical task(s) will result in remediation through repetition of the course to guarantee that all teacher candidates are prepared to be an effective educator once they leave Youngstown State University. [Applies for Undergraduate courses and Master ECE & Literacy courses: For 8110, the Critical Task is considered to be an Essential Task, meaning that the consequence of failing on this particular activity does not constitute failure in***

*the course. Data are gathered on this activity to improve the course and provide assessment reporting to the students, the College and assessment bodies.]*

<b>5. Course Assignments and Evaluation</b>
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**1. ASSIGNMENT A: A 1200-WORD PAPER ON EPISTEMOLOGY IN RELATION TO HOW WE BELIEVE WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE TRUE, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO EDUCATION TO BE POSTED ON WebCT (20%)**

- a. During Week 4, students will post a 1200-word paper on WebCT on the subject of the political and philosophical thinking in education.
- b. Building on the readings, this paper should discuss how epistemology, politics and philosophy are connected in education. How is our education shaped by philosophy? What do we feel are the key components underpinning our own understanding of philosophy in education? What is the role of ideology in our society, and how is it connected to education? Is philosophy too aloof and nuanced for the masses, or is it something fundamental to the way education is structured? How do we know what we believe is the right belief or that it can be believable? These are a few of the questions that may be considered for this assignment.
- c. The paper should be double-spaced, size 12 font, and be focused on providing critical insight into the area of epistemology and philosophy in education. At least 5 peer-reviewed, academic references should be used to bolster the contents of the assignment.
- c. Student papers should be presented on-line during Week 4.
- d. Students are expected to review and comment on the work of others through WebCT.

**2. ASSIGNMENT B: AN ORAL PRESENTATION (20%) ON TWO QUESTIONS IN THE TINDER BOOK**

- a. Presentations (approx. 25 minutes) will take place during the second and third classes. The focus should be on elucidating and critiquing the key themes in the chapter covered. Try to raise issues and concerns, and also bring forth applied examples and problems.
- b. Presentations should also include 2-3 page critical analysis of the theme(s) discussed, which should be sent out to classmates through WebCT at least three days before the class meets.

**3. ASSIGNMENT C: AN ORAL PRESENTATION (15%) AND A WRITTEN PAPER (25%) ON IDEOLOGY IN EDUCATION BASED ON THE KINCHELOE TEXT**

- a. Each student will develop, undertake, draft and present a research project on the theme of ideology and philosophy in education, based on the Kincheloe text, and related to the students' place of work.
- b. Assuming that this is a School District, students might ask, among other things, the following:
  - a. How is ideology formed in this district?
  - b. What is there a critical pedagogical vantage-point?
  - c. How is philosophy considered, conceptualized, operationalized and infused into the culture of the organization?
  - d. How is ethics considered?
  - e. What are the key tenets of philosophy, and can they be categorized?
  - f. What are the epistemological considerations in understanding how education is developed and delivered?
  - g. What can be said about equity, diversity and power relations based on philosophy?
  - h. Is neo-liberalism understand within the institutional culture, and what are the implications?
  - i. Is critical pedagogy worth considering in relation to transformational change in education?
- c. The oral presentations (roughly 30-40 minutes) will serve as a time for gathering feedback from the Instructor and colleagues so as to compare and contrast experiences, and also to solidify our understanding of philosophy and ideology in education. Although we may not agree with Kincheloe, he has a well-developed and intricate argument about how we have perceived the role of education, not to mention a strategy to improve education for all segments of society, and we should carefully consider the prevailing, normative interpretation of merit, justice, fairness, democracy, and truth in our society. Be critical of Kincheloe and of your school boards in seeking to ascertain the truth. Be sure to develop a rigorous epistemological vantage-point of what is constructed in your educational environments, and dissect how and why.
- d. The final papers should include a strong academic grounding in order to underpin the research undertaken. At least 12 academic, peer-reviewed resources should be used to underpin the individual papers. At a minimum, the final papers should include sections on: a) defining the research problem; b) the context; c) the methodological approach and issues; d) elaborating on the philosophy of the selected organization; e) findings; and f) discussion. The papers should be no longer than 2500 words (double-spaced, size 12 font), due on December 6.

The paper for this assignment will constitute a **CRITICAL OR ESSENTIAL TASK**, and aggregate data may be gathered so as to gage student achievement. See Appendix 2 for a description of how this **TASK** will be evaluated.

**4. WebCT AND PARTICIPATION (20%)**

- a. Student participation in this course, which includes both classroom and WebCT work, is important, and 20 points will be allocated for this component.
- b. WebCT is an integral part of the course, and students are expected to send in postings to the course-site as required. Such postings should be concise, focused on a critical analysis, and contain 1-2 questions that the entire group will then be able to ponder. On average, a typical posting in relation to the readings for a given week might be in the area of 200-250 words. Keep in mind that the objective is to construct a more in-depth and meaningful analysis of the issues being raised, and to not merely summarize articles.
- d. The Instructor will participate in, and sometimes lead, the discussion. However, the intention is for the class to evolve and become informed together, not to merely send in a comment and then drift out of the conversation.
- e. Lastly, it is hoped that the usage of this technology will enhance learning, and will not become an obstacle to it. If there are any problems accessing the technology, please speak to the Instructor.

<b>6. Grading Summary</b>
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**1. OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS**

1.	Assignment A: Paper	20
2.	Assignment B: Presentation	20
3.	Assignment C: Presentation (15) and Paper (25) on Ideology in Education Based on the McLaren Text	40
4.	WebCT and Participation	20
		100
TOTAL		100

*NOTE:* Contributions to class lectures and discussion will positively affect grades while each absence will negatively do so.

## 2. GRADING FRAMEWORK

A = 90-100  
B = 80-89  
C = 70-79  
D = 60-69  
F = 59 and below

## 3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

### a. WebCT

Responses should be submitted on time, and conform to the articles or assignments for the particular week in-question. The Instructor will be looking for well-written messages that critically examine the subject-matter, identifying salient issues and concerns, developing and presenting important insights, integrating personal experience, where appropriate, providing useful descriptions and summaries (without focusing uniquely on that area), analyzing abstract concepts, and, generally, participating in conversations. Quality is much more important than quantity when using WebCT. Raising pertinent questions and issues will also be of value to the class, and will be considered in the evaluation-process.

### b. Papers

In addition to what is described above for these assignments, it will be important for students to write clearly and effectively at an advanced academic level, focusing on a critical analysis, moving well beyond a description of phenomena, incorporating academic references and data. The Instructor will be looking for a clear statement of purpose and identification of the issue(s), a clear, coherent structure and organization for the text, solid arguments that frame the paper, and a strong, relevant and justifiable conclusion. The Instructor's website contains information on writing effectively as well as some suggestions for undertaking and developing a critical analysis.

### c. Presentations

In addition to what is described above for the presentations, as with the papers, students should consider critically analyzing and presenting their subject-matter in an engaging format that will facilitate group-discussion. Prepare some questions and issues for the class to ponder. Focus on a few areas that require further enquiry, and seek to de-mystify the concepts, terminology and problematic issues related to the topic-area. Powerpoint presentations are encouraged. Students should do all of the readings so as to be able to participate in discussions.

## 7. Readings and Resources

There are two required texts for this course, which are available in the YSU bookstore.

Tinder, Glenn. (2004). *Political Thinking: The Perennial Questions*. New York: Pearson Longman. (ISBN 0-321-00527-9)

Kincheloe, Joe. (2008). *Critical Pedagogy Primer*. New York: Peter Lang. (ISBN 978-1-4331-0182-3)

In addition, there are a number of articles to be read that can be downloaded from the YSU library website through OHIOLink. There is no cost for these articles. Please refer to my website at <http://www.coe.ysu.edu/~paulcarr/> for supplementary resources that will be useful in doing academic research.

## 7. Organization of Course

### Week 1 FIRST FACE-TO-FACE

- a. Introductions
- b. Preliminary comments
- c. General discussion on the philosophy of education
- d. A look at some quotes
- e. *Manufacturing consent?*
- e. Review of course outline and requirements

### Week 2 ELECTRONIC CLASS

- a. Go to this website: <http://www.philosophersnet.com/games/> . Play the games. Think about what this means, if anything, and then submit a posting through WebCT.
- b. Read and then post on: James Scott Johnston. (2009). Prioritizing Rights in the Social Justice Curriculum, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 28:119–133 [http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Johnston\\_James\\_Scott.pdf?issn=00393746&issue=v28i0002&article=119\\_pritsjc](http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Johnston_James_Scott.pdf?issn=00393746&issue=v28i0002&article=119_pritsjc)

### Week 3 ELECTRONIC CLASS

- a. Read: Extending the Framework of Inquiry: Theories of Change in Conflict Interventions (Llana Shapiro, 2006) ([http://www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/dialogue5\\_shapiro\\_comm.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/uploads/download/dialogue5_shapiro_comm.pdf)) and Per-Anders Forstorp. (2008). Who's Colonizing Who? The Knowledge Society Thesis and the Global Challenges in Higher Education, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 27:227–236.

[http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/article.cgi?issn=00393746&issue=v27i0004&article=227\\_wcwtkstgcihe](http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/article.cgi?issn=00393746&issue=v27i0004&article=227_wcwtkstgcihe)

<b>Week 4</b> <b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. Read preface, introduction and Chapter 1 of Tinder book. Submit a posting.
- b. Stables, Andrew. (2009). The Unnatural Nature of Nature and Nurture: Questioning the Romantic Heritage. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 28:3–14.  
[http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Stables\\_Andrew.pdf?issn=00393746&issue=v28i0001&article=3\\_tunonanqtrh](http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Stables_Andrew.pdf?issn=00393746&issue=v28i0001&article=3_tunonanqtrh)

<b>Week 5</b> <b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. Go to: <http://radicalacademy.com/homepage.htm>. Select a philosopher, and write a posting, connecting his or her contribution to contemporary times and to education.

<b>Week 6</b> <b>SECOND FACE-TO-FACE</b>
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- a. Student presentations on Tinder book

<b>Week 7</b> <b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. Go to: <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/pages/mclaren/> and read some of McLaren's work. Posting, as well, on Kincheloe book. What do we think of critical pedagogy? What is its value? How is it used, applied, valued or not? Would we be better off if we taught from a critical pedagogical vantage-point? What did we learn from Kincheloe's book that we may not have known before-hand? How does critical pedagogy tie into the philosophy and foundation of education? Should we practice *radical love*? Is neo-liberalism an educational philosophy?

<b>Week 8</b> <b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. Discussion on Tinder book, and on Ari Sutinen (2008). Constructivism and education: education as an interpretative transformational process, 27:1–14.  
[http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Sutinen\\_Ari.pdf?issn=00393746&issue=v27i0001&article=1\\_caeeaitp](http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Sutinen_Ari.pdf?issn=00393746&issue=v27i0001&article=1_caeeaitp). Submit a posting.

<b>Week 9</b> <b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. Post on the Kincheloe book. What's on your mind?

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. Read these articles on Ruby Payne's approach to addressing poverty: <http://www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v002n001/a004.shtml> and [http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/21\\_02/sava212.shtml](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/21_02/sava212.shtml) . Why is Ruby Payne so popular among teachers but not among academics? Is her solution too simplistic? How academics too critical because they haven't found the right answer? Why is there a tendency to be respectful to those making an effort but not those who may seem to be more militant, strident and critical? Are these questions loaded or thought-provoking? Please provide a posting on all of this.

<b>Week 11</b>	<b>THIRD FACE-TO-FACE</b>
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- a. Presentations (Assignment C)

<b>Week 12</b>	<b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. OPEN

<b>Week 13</b>	<b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. OPEN

<b>Week 14</b>	<b>FOURTH FACE-TO-FACE</b>
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- a. Presentations (Assignment C)

<b>Class 15</b>	<b>ELECTRONIC CLASS</b>
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- a. OPEN

<b>Class 16</b>	<b>FIFTH FACE-TO-FACE</b>
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- a. Presentations (Assignment C)

<b>APPENDIX 1</b> <b>FOUND 8102 AND NATIONAL STANDARDS</b>
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The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is an accrediting agency established to help increase the quality of departments, schools, and colleges of education. NCATE accreditation is a voluntary peer review process of the professional education units responsible for the preparation of teachers and other professional school personnel based on national standards developed by professors and practitioners. Accredited institutions are reviewed on a five-year cycle.

The Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) is an affiliation of three administrator groups (ASCD, NAESP and NASSP). It is authorized by NCATE to review preparation programs for educational administrators using standards developed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). The ELCC conducts rigorous peer reviews of departments of educational administration on behalf of NCATE and determines which programs are deserving of “National Recognition”.

YSU’s programs in Educational Administration have gone through the NCATE accreditation process, and have gained “National Recognition” for its programs by the Educational Leadership Constituent Council, indicating that they have addressed the appropriate Standards for Advanced Programs in Educational Leadership.

ELCC is housed within the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and is affiliated with the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. For the complete standards, see [www.npbea.org/ELCC](http://www.npbea.org/ELCC) .

There are a range of ELCC standards which distinguish between the knowledge, skills and priorities expected of “school building leaders” and “school district leaders”. For a complete listing of the over 70 standards and sub-standards, see [http://www.npbea.org/ELCC/ELCCStandards%20 5-02.pdf](http://www.npbea.org/ELCC/ELCCStandards%205-02.pdf) .

**APPENDIX 2**  
**ESSENTIAL TASK – Critical Analysis of Philosophy and Ideology in Education**

<b>Unsatisfactory 1</b>	<b>Satisfactory 2</b>	<b>Competent 3</b>	<b>Exemplary 4</b>
<p>Candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• displays minimal, contextualized knowledge of topic;</li> <li>• demonstrates a weak, critical analysis, inconsiderate of diverse perspectives;</li> <li>• does not incorporate a meaningful connection to education in the analysis;</li> <li>• produces a paper that is poorly written (limited vocabulary, grammatical problems and structural issues).</li> </ul>	<p>Candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• displays satisfactory, contextualized knowledge of topic;</li> <li>• demonstrates a good, critical analysis, inclusive of diverse perspectives;</li> <li>• incorporates a meaningful connection to education in the analysis;</li> <li>• produces a paper that is well written (enhanced vocabulary, and few grammatical problems and structural issues).</li> </ul>	<p>Candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• displays a well-developed, contextualized knowledge of topic;</li> <li>• demonstrates a strong, critical analysis, inclusive of diverse perspectives and nuanced interpretations;</li> <li>• incorporates a strong and critical connection to education in the analysis;</li> <li>• produces a paper that is extremely well written (enhanced and appropriate vocabulary, and practically no grammatical problems or structural issues).</li> </ul>	<p>Candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• displays an excellent, contextualized knowledge of topic;</li> <li>• demonstrates an insightful, critical analysis, inclusive of diverse perspectives and nuanced interpretations, and moves well beyond description to include original analysis;</li> <li>• incorporates an extremely well-developed, critical connection to education in the analysis;</li> <li>• produces a paper that is flawlessly written (enhanced, appropriate and accurate vocabulary, and virtually no grammatical problems or structural issues).</li> </ul>