

**EEDUC 5146.55 ISSUES IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS**  
**LESLEY UNIVERSITY**  
**Fall 2016**

Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Instructor:**

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**Office Hours:**

By appointment (please e-mail)

**Office:** Gutman Library 252  
Harvard Graduate School of Education

**Course Description:**

New teachers enter a profession characterized by the complex, imperfect, changing, political institution that is our nation's schools. They face challenging dilemmas on a daily basis. For example, what should a teacher do about a student with diagnosed emotional issues who frequently disrupts class, but who benefits from being mainstreamed? Should teachers resist grade inflation even if it helps their students in the college and labor market? Schools and school systems face challenging dilemmas as well. For example, does expanding a high-achieving "no-excuses" charter school that sends nearly all its graduates to college at the expense of a high attrition rates promote social justice? These kinds of questions are often addressed as technocratic challenges of leadership, legal compliance, or accountability. This course, by contrast, addresses the ethical dimensions of these challenges, emphasizing the role that values like justice, equality, and democracy play in both the difficulty of educational dilemmas and in our responses to such dilemmas.

This course has two primary aims. First, it orients teachers to the role schools play in American society and the values schools are meant to embody, protect, and impart. Second, this course examines the role of teachers within such an institution, paying particular attention to how our individual identities as teachers intersects with our professional role. We will engage with philosophical, theoretical, and empirical readings from a wide variety of disciplines. We will also grapple with case studies of dilemmas of educational justice from classrooms, schools, districts, and organizations within the United States.

**Course Goals:**

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and analyze complex ethical challenges that face education policy and practice.
- 2) Apply normative concepts and principles to questions of education policy and practice.
- 3) Reflect on the role of teachers within broader policy contexts.

- 4) Engage with diverse others to discuss complex ethical judgments across multiple lines of difference.
- 5) Draw on discussion protocols, heuristics, and key normative concepts to continue developing their ability to face ethical dilemmas and make thoughtful, reflective decisions.

### **Course Expectations and Assignments:**

Class participation: I expect you to attend class each day, complete your readings and assignments on time, listen actively, participate thoughtfully in discussions and other activities, ask questions when you have them, and collaborate with your peers and the teaching team to co-construct focused, analytic class discussions in a collaborative and inclusive framework. If I have concerns about your participation, I will contact you as soon as possible. Likewise, if you have questions or concerns, please reach out to me.

Daily readings: I expect you to read all the assigned texts before coming to class. Read “actively” – i.e., highlight the text, take notes, write marginal comments and flag important passages with sticky notes, talk with others about the material, ask questions, draw connections, etc. in order to comprehend and process the readings before class begins.

Brief weekly feedback: I ask that you let me know what you’re thinking about after class once per week through a Google survey form I will e-mail out after class. You need only write a couple of lines, although you’re welcome to write more if you wish. You may mention: a question that’s on your mind; an issue you want to probe more deeply yourself, or that you wished we had probed more deeply in class; an idea you’re excited about; a frustration you had; something you’re confused about; a suggestion; what you wish you had thought of and said in class; something someone said that offended or disturbed you; etc. Your responses will be ungraded, and you will designate them as private or public. They are extremely helpful as I try to keep track of and stay responsive to what you and your classmates are thinking and learning.

Family Education Tree: For the second week of the course, you will create a family education tree that responds to at least three of the following prompts (your choice): Why do you or your family value education? What’s the highest level of education achieved in your family, including yourself? What types of schools have you and your family members attended? Have there been any experiences that hindered or enabled access to an education for you or your family members? How has your educational experience shaped your life? How has the educational experience of a family member shaped their life? You may choose to write a 500-word reflection, create a poem, or design a visual or graphic to complete this assignment. This assignment is itself ungraded, but will count as part of your participation grade.

Reading Responses: Each week, one apprentice will individually write a short analytic paper (500-word maximum) to the assigned readings that addresses one of the weekly framing

questions. An analytic paper develops a thesis statement to organize the response that is not simply a summary of an author's argument. These papers are due by **5 PM on the Thursday before class**. In addition, two apprentices will collaboratively develop three to five questions, criticisms, or thoughts that emerge from the assigned readings. Each group will share their responses during class. The presentation should not be longer than 5-7 minutes. This means that each student will complete **one** analytic response and **two** presentations.

Final Analytic Paper: Each apprentice will write an 1800–2000-word analytic paper that addresses a particular educational dilemma of policy and/or practice. The paper should (1) argue for a particular resolution to the dilemma, (2) evaluate multiple resolutions, or (3) show how a value or set of values clarify the nature of the dilemma and suggest possible resolutions. More details will be available when the assignment description is available toward the end of the course. This paper will be due **Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM**.

Summary of Due Dates and Assignments:

Due Date	Assignment
Every Friday	Complete readings in advance and participate in class
Weekly	Complete feedback survey
September 23 <sup>rd</sup> , for class	Family Education Tree
Rolling, due by 5 PM on the Thursday before class	500-word reading response
Rolling, for class on Friday	Collaborative 3-5 questions, criticism, thoughts to present to peers
December 18 <sup>th</sup> , by 5 PM	1800–2000-word Final Analytic Paper

### Grading

Grading will be calculated as follows:

Attendance: 10%

Participation: 20%

Reading Response/Presentation: 20%

Final Analytic Paper: 50%

### Course Readings and Required Texts

GF – Some of the readings for this course can be found online in the Google Folder prepared for you by the Teacher Training Course. These are marked “GF” on the syllabus.

OL – Some of the readings for this course can be found online. They will be marked “OL” on the syllabus and the link will be provided.

RT – This course has one required textbook. Readings from this text are marked “RT” on the syllabus. Please purchase through Harvard Educational Press, and use the code DEE16 to receive 20% off.

Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

## Syllabus

### Friday September 16<sup>th</sup>: Introduction

**What are educational dilemmas? What is an ethical approach to educational dilemmas?  
What do we mean when we talk about justice in education?**

RT - Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (1–8, 9–13).

*This class will be taught by Desiree Ivey, Director, TTC.*

### Friday September 23<sup>rd</sup>: Values, and the Value of Education

**Why should we educate children? What values matter to education?**

OL - Allen, D., et al. (May 9, 2016). What is education for? *Boston Review*. Retrieved from: <https://bostonreview.net/forum/danielle-allen-what-education> (Please read the opening statement and each of the responses).

GF – Levinson, M. (2012). *No citizen left behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (1–22).

### Friday September 30<sup>th</sup>: Reforming Schools

**Who should have authority over children’s education? What values should guide efforts to reform schools?**

GF – Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (19–47).

GF – McGuinn, P. (2012). The Federal Role in Educational Equity: The Two Narratives of School Reform and the Debate over Accountability. In D. Allen & R. Reich (Eds.) *Justice, democracy, and education* (222–242).

Friday October 7<sup>th</sup>: Schools for who?

**How have the historical trends of segregation, desegregation, and integration shaped American schools? How should we respond, if at all, to these concerns today?**

RT – Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (143–150, 160–178).

GF – Formisano, R.P. (1991). *Boston against busing: Race, class, and ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. (1–21).

Friday October 14<sup>th</sup>: School Choice and Charter Schools

**What values are realized or impeded by school choice? What makes a public school public?**

RT – Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (179–210).

GF – Wilson, T. (October 3, 2015). Contesting the public school: Reconsidering charter schools as counterpublics. Paper presented at Spencer Foundation Conference on Hybridized Education and the Intersection of Public and Private.

Friday October 21<sup>st</sup>: Where do teachers fit in?

**How do teachers fit into the changing landscape of American education? What are our obligations to our students? What are the limits of our obligations?**

GF – Santoro, D., & Morehouse, L. (2011). Teaching's conscientious objectors: Principled leavers of high-poverty schools. *Teachers College Record* 113(12), 2670–2704.

RT – Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (9–13).

### Friday October 28<sup>th</sup>: Teaching Controversial Issues

**How are classrooms, if at all, political spaces? How should teachers approach divisive contemporary issues in the classroom?**

OL – Covino, D., & Levinson, M. (2016). “Holding the Trump card: How should schools address controversial issues in the 2016 presidential election?” <http://www.justiceinschools.org/2016-election>

GF – Hess, D. (2009). “Teaching in the tip: Controversies about what is legitimately controversial,” in *Controversy in the classroom: The democratic power of discussion*. (113–129).

### Friday November 4<sup>th</sup>: Student Achievement

**How should teachers assess student work? How do grading practices reflect and challenge the ideal of merit in education?**

RT – Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (107–121, 127–136).

### Friday November 18<sup>th</sup>: Inclusion?

**How should teachers balance diverse student needs? What practices can enable this work?**

RT – Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (39–72).

OL – Please spend some time watching the introductory videos about Universal Design for Learning (UDL) found here:  
[http://www.udlcenter.org/resource\\_library/videos/udlcenter/guidelines#video0](http://www.udlcenter.org/resource_library/videos/udlcenter/guidelines#video0)

### Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup>: Discipline

**How can school discipline policies shape student identity? How should educators balance concern for individual students with institutional rules? What roles, if any, should educators play in trying to disrupt policies like the school-to-prison pipeline?**

RT – Levinson, M., & Fay, J. (2016). *Dilemmas of educational ethics: Cases and commentaries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. (73–82, 93–106).

GF – Nygreen, K. (2013). *These kids: Identity, agency, and social justice at a last chance high school*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (1–18).

Friday December 16<sup>th</sup>: Wrap up

*Readings and activities to be determined*

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**LESLEY UNIVERSITY AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENTS**  
**Updated August 1, 2014**

**LESLEY UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES**  
**Added January 2015**

**Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic honesty and integrity are essential to the existence and growth of an academic community. Each member of the Lesley community is charged with honoring and upholding the University's policy. Students are full members of the academic community and, as such, are obligated to uphold the University's standards for academic integrity. Students should take an active role in encouraging others to respect these standards and should become familiar with Lesley's policy. The policy details students' roles and responsibilities, and provides examples of violations, which include information about failing to document sources, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication or falsification of data, multiple submissions of work, abuse of academic materials, complicity/unauthorized assistance, and lying/tampering/theft. The complete policy can be found in the 2014-2015 Graduate Academic Catalog.

**Portfolio Development**

Graduate School of Education Master's degree and licensure candidates\* are required to develop a program portfolio, comprised of the key assignment from each course in their programs. Through these identified key assignments, students will demonstrate acquisition of both

knowledge and skills and will demonstrate professional growth over time. The portfolios will be used for institutional and teacher self-evaluation as well as for review by accrediting agencies. They will also provide evidence that students are meeting required state and professional standards, and will confirm that Lesley's programs are meeting their stated outcomes.

Students will build their portfolios in one of two ways, depending on their program start dates.

**If you began your off-campus or online program after October 25, 2010, or your on-campus program after January 1, 2011:**

- You will be required to use MAP (My Assessment Portfolio).
- You must upload the key assignment for each of your courses into your MAP program portfolio. Your faculty member will use the rubric that is posted in MAP to assess how effectively you completed the key assignment.
- Technical issues related to the use of MAP can be directed to [map@lesley.edu](mailto:map@lesley.edu) or by calling 617.349.8632.

**If you began your off-campus or online program before October 25, 2010 or your on-campus program before January 1, 2011:**

- You must complete a key assignment for each course and submit your assignment directly to the faculty member teaching the course, and not via the MAP system. Your faculty member will give you directions regarding the format for the submission.

*\*Students enrolled in the following programs are exempt from the portfolio requirement at this time:*

- *M.Ed. Individually Designed Program for Educators*
- *M.Ed. in Moderate or Severe Disabilities: Individually Designed*

### **Disability Services for Students**

*Lesley University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and to benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and must provide documentation of the disability. Eligibility for reasonable accommodations will be based on the documentation provided.*

*If you are a student with a documented disability, or feel that you may have a disability, please contact the appropriate disability administrator:*

#### *Learning Disabilities, Attention Disorders, and Asperger Syndrome for On-Campus Students*

Kimberly Johnson, Director LD/ADD Academic Support Program

Doble Hall 214

Phone: 617-349-8462 Fax: 617.349.8324

[kjohnso7@lesley.edu](mailto:kjohnso7@lesley.edu)

#### *Physical, Sensory, and Psychiatric Disorders*

G. Ruth Kukiela Bork, Director of Access Services for Students with Disabilities

11 Mellen



Phone: 617.349.8194 • Fax: 617.349.8558 • TTY: 617.349.8544  
[rbork@lesley.edu](mailto:rbork@lesley.edu)

*Learning Disabilities and Attention Disorders for Off-Campus Students*

Daniel Newman, Lesley University ADA/504 Coordinator  
Doble Hall 208

Phone: 617.349.8572 • Fax: 617.349.8324  
[dnewman@lesley.edu](mailto:dnewman@lesley.edu)

### **Attendance Policy**

The academic integrity of our programs depends on students attending all scheduled class meetings. Students should discuss with faculty, in advance, any portion of a class meeting they cannot attend. Absence from class may be reflected in the student's grade. The complete attendance policy may be found [here](#).

### **Official Format for Student Work**

The Lesley University Graduate School of Education has adopted the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition [2009] as the official format for student papers, citations, and bibliographies. The Graduate School of Education will not accept other publication guidelines, such as the Modern Language Association. The Sherrill Library [APA page](#) also provides helpful information on APA guidelines.

### **Lesley University Library Services**

Students and faculty are encouraged to use the Lesley University Library for high-quality academic information for their assignments. The myLibrary tab on [Blackboard](#) offers access to multiple services and resources for academic research:

- The [FLO library catalog](#) provides information on books, tests, videos, and teaching resources. To find articles, e-books images and streaming videos, consult the library [databases](#).
- Find help with library research through our [Ask-A-Librarian](#) service, as well as online guides to [APA](#) and [MLA](#) citation formats.
- Visit our two libraries: [hours](#) / [directions](#) / [reserve study rooms](#)

**Sherrill Library**, the main university library, Brattle Campus, 617-349-8850

**Moriarty Arts Center Library**, Porter Campus, 617-349-8070