This course provides an introduction to the theory and practice of teaching, with a particular focus on teaching for social justice in a diverse society. It is informed by the idea that a high-quality education for all children is the single most important ingredient of a just society.

This course will not give you all of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that you will need to be a successful and reflective teacher, by any means. It will, however, get you started on your journey, by providing you with an opportunity to explore the art and craft of teaching, to consider the complex and complicated relationship between teaching, power, knowledge, and learning, and to contemplate the role of the teacher as a “transformative intellectual” in contemporary society. Other issues and topics considered in the course include: critical theory and critical pedagogy; gender, racial, social class, and cultural differences in the classroom; the impact of educational policy on students and teachers; the ethical dimensions of teaching; curriculum planning and instruction; student motivation and teacher expectations; designing positive learning environments; ability grouping, evaluation, and grading; the use of instructional technologies; classroom management; and school reform and restructuring.

In addition, this course includes a substantial community based civic engagement component: You will be required to spend a minimum of 60 hours (~5 hours/week) over the course of the
semester serving as an assistant teacher in a local elementary school classroom. Your responsibilities will include tutoring, working with small groups, helping students with special projects, and assisting in other aspects of the classroom as necessary. This civic engagement experience is designed to enable you to contribute to the well-being of children in the local community, and to introduce you to the realities of public schooling. It will also provide you with the first of many opportunities to reflect on the relationship between theory and practice.

**COURSE GOALS**

In this course you will:

1. Explore the complex and multi-dimensional nature of teaching for social justice—in both theory and in practice.

2. Begin to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and expertise necessary to teach effectively, as reflected in Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standards (attached).

3. Investigate what it means to teach for social justice by analyzing the operation of power as it relates to the construction of knowledge and the preservation of privilege in the contemporary US, and by: (a) considering the values and politics that pervade educational institutions, as well as the more pragmatic issues of teaching and organizing schools; (b) asking critical questions about how taken-for-granted assumptions and conventions about theory and practice came to be, and who in society benefits from such assumptions; (c) attending to differences in gender, race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and ability that result in political, social, economic, and educational marginalization and inequality, particularly for children and youth in school; and (d) examining the connections among different forms of privilege, particularly as these relate to the experience of children and youth in school.

5. Continue to hone your intellectual skills, including comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; your ability and capability to engage in critical thinking; your expertise in written and oral expression; your capacity for both collaborative and independent work; and your ability to design lessons, to use instructional strategies and technologies, and to create a classroom environment that supports and encourages learning (see MITC STANDARDS 4-6).

**REQUIRED BOOKS**


**EXPECTATIONS**

This course will an ongoing conversation-dialogue about teaching for social justice, thus I expect regular attendance and active participation in all class activities. I also expect to be notified if you must be absent from class, and you will be responsible for any work missed. Failure to attend may lead to a warning, grading penalty, and/or dismissal from the course with a failing grade.

The bi-weekly in-class component of this course will consist primarily of discussion sessions, not lectures, so it is *very important* that you read the assigned readings prior to class and come prepared to participate fully in our consideration of those readings. We will share responsibility for initiating and leading these discussions—I will take primary responsibility during the first half of the course; each of you (as a member of a team) will take primary responsibility for initiating and leading discussion for one class session during the second half of the course. I expect that written assignments will be handed in on time; if they are you can expect me to return your work promptly; if they are not, you may forfeit the opportunity to receive any detailed feedback on your writing, and I can not promise when I will return your work. **I also expect that you will take your civic engagement role and responsibilities very seriously—if you do not, you will be dropped from the course.** The teacher and the students with whom you work will be counting on you to follow through on all of your commitments. Needless to say, there is a significant amount of work required for this course—reading, preparation, and writing as well as your work at your civic engagement site—so you must manage your time wisely (I expect the Colby standard of approximately 8 hours per week of reading/writing/preparation for this 4 credit course).

I expect that all of your work in the course will abide by Colby’s policy on Academic Honesty, as stated in the *Colby College Catalogue*: “Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses. For the first offense, the instructor may dismiss the offender from the course with a mark of ‘F’ and will also report the case to the department chair and the dean of students, who may impose other or additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion…A second offense automatically leads to suspension or expulsion.”

Finally, in keeping with our commitment to social justice, behaviors that create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating classroom climate because of bias based on gender, gender identity, race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

**PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT**

Students who are seeking Maine state teacher certification through our Professional Certification program are expected to engage in development of a portfolio to document their mastery of Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standards (attached) over the course of their Colby career.
In pursuit of this goal, students on the path to certification should plan to collect and reflect upon at least one item/artifact from this course for inclusion in their portfolio.

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss the details about the portfolio process at Colby. I have also suggested several certification standards that could be documented through each of the following assignments for this course:

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING*

*See course Moodle for more details and guidelines

1. Civic Engagement/Education in the News Journal

You are to keep an ongoing journal that contains one entry for every visit you make to your civic engagement site. Given that writing helps to create consciousness, your journal will thus provide you with the opportunity to record and reflect on your work in your classroom, and to make relevant connections between your civic engagement experience, the readings for the course, and the discussion of those readings in class. In addition, your journal is the place for you to record your observations and analysis about how K-12 teachers, students, and schools are portrayed in the news (newspapers, television, on-line, etc.). At least once per week I’d like you to find a news story about K-12 teacher, a student, or a school, record it in your journal, and briefly connect it to our ongoing readings and discussions in class. Additional information about journal-keeping will be provided throughout the semester. I will collect your journals three times during the semester—Friday March 6, Friday April 10, and Friday May 15, 2009. (10% of final grade) STANDARDS 3-10.

2. Take Home Demonstration of Mastery

I will provide you with a set of questions that focus on concepts and ideas about social justice and critical pedagogy--questions designed to enable you to demonstrate your mastery of the material we have covered so far. You will take the questions home, choose several of them to which to respond, and present your responses in the form of an essay (~2500 words). Due Friday March 20, 2009. (30% of final grade) STANDARDS 3, 6, & 7.

3. Classroom Observation

This assignment will provide you with the opportunity to observe, describe, interpret, and evaluate the teaching and learning that occurs in a classroom over the course of one class period. The goal of this assignment is to help you become a more reflective teacher, by systematically observing and analyzing the work of an experienced teacher. You will choose a teacher whose class you wish to observe for one class period. In the paper you will first describe as clearly and in as much detail as possible what happened in the class while you observed. You will then interpret what you observed, making specific connections both to social justice/critical pedagogy concepts and ideas from the first part of the course, and to concepts and ideas about classroom practice from the second part of the course. Finally, you will evaluate the teaching and learning
you observed, focusing on both the positive and the negative aspects of the teacher's actions, the students' actions, and their mutual interactions (~2500 words). Due Friday April 24, 2009. (30% of final grade) STANDARDS 1-10.


This final paper has two parts. In the first part (~1250 words) I will provide you with a set of questions designed to enable you to demonstrate what you have learned about teaching for social justice as a result of your work in the course. In the second part (~1250 words) I will ask you to prepare a self-evaluation of your work in your civic engagement site. This part should highlight both the skills, abilities, and attitudes that led to successful experiences and interactions for you during the semester, and those skills, abilities, and attitudes that you feel could be further polished and improved. This self-evaluation must be accompanied by your supervising teacher's evaluation of your work at your civic engagement site. Due Friday May 15, 2009. (30% of final grade) STANDARDS 3-10.

A note about grading: Successful completion of the four assignments listed above is required if you are to receive credit for the course. On the two major “graded” assignments (#s 2 & 3) I will be using a “revise and resubmit” approach. That is, if you complete all aspects of the assignment, show initiative and a desire to excel, and, most importantly, demonstrate genuine mastery of the content of the course (i.e., the concepts and ideas covered in the readings and class discussions), and an ability to use those concepts and ideas effectively in your writing, you will receive an A/A- for the assignment. If, however, there are aspects of the assignment that do not attain this level of mastery I will give the paper a provisional grade, and ask/encourage you to revise and resubmit the paper, in order to reach the A/A- level. If you choose not to revise and resubmit the assignment, your provisional grade will turn into the final grade for the paper. I hope my rationale for this approach will become clear as the semester proceeds—it has to do with trying to alter the motivational dynamics of the course, encouraging what is known as “mastery learning,” and attempting to give you as much power and responsibility as possible to determine your grade in the course.
**COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS**

**All readings marked by a “Moodle” designation are available on-line**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th. 2/5</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu. 2/10</td>
<td>Teaching for social justice: Understanding power, privilege, &amp; oppression (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th. 2/12</td>
<td>Teaching for social justice: Understanding power, privilege, &amp; oppression (II)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Recommended:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“A Class Divided” (Frontline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu. 2/17</td>
<td>The power of tradition: Public schooling in the US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G. W. Bush (2001). <em>No child left behind</em>. Moodle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Th. 2/19  Challenging tradition: The progressive approach to teaching and learning


Recommended:


Tu. 2/24  The enduring legacy: Savage inequalities in America’s schools:


Recommended:


Th. 2/26  Who really benefits from progressive education?


Tu. 3/3  How social class mediates success and failure in school


Recommended:

Th. 3/5  **Interrupting power, privilege, and oppression: The critical approach**


**Recommended:**


Tu. 3/10  **Teaching and learning as political action: The power of critical theory**


Th. 3/12  **Teaching and learning as political action: The promise of critical pedagogy**


Tu. 3/17  **Literacy with an attitude**


Th. 3/19  **Teaching other people’s children: The KIPP approach**


**Recommended:**


Tu. 3/24 & Th. 3/26  **SPRING BREAK!!!**

Tu. 3/31  **The skillful teacher: Meeting the standards**

State of Maine Learning Results. Moodle

Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standards. Moodle

**Th. 4/2**  
**Managing the classroom: Foundational “moves” [Group 1]**


**Tu. 4/7**  
**Managing the classroom: Discipline [Group 2]**


**Th. 4/9**  
**Teacher expectations and student motivation [Group 3]**


**Tu. 4/14**  
**Personal relationship building and classroom climate [Group 4]**


**Th. 4/16**  
**The responsive classroom [special guest, Nadene Mathes, Atwood School]**

The Responsive Classroom  

**Tu. 4/21**  
**Instruction [Group 5]**


**Th. 4/23**  
**Curriculum design: Objectives and learning experiences [Group 6]**


Tu. 4/28  
Assessment [Group 7]

Th. 4/30  
Teaching with technology—Closing the “digital divide” [Group 8]

Maine Learning Technology Initiative [http://www.state.me.us/mlte/](http://www.state.me.us/mlte/)


Digital Natives [http://www.digitalnative.org/Main_Page](http://www.digitalnative.org/Main_Page)

Tu. 5/5  
Service learning, civic engagement, and teaching for social justice [Group 9]

Tracy Hamler Carrick, Margaret Himley, & Tobi Jacobi. (2002). Ruptura: Acknowledging the lost subjects of the service learning story. [Moodle](http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/net/digdiv.html)


Gayle Seals (Ed.). (2000). *Service Learning in teacher education*. Ch. 1. [Moodle](http://www.state.me.us/mlte/)


Th. 5/7  
Teaching for social justice…with courage, hope, and critical consciousness
Maine’s Initial Teacher Certification Standards

In order to help all students achieve Maine’s Learning Results, the initial teacher candidate:

1. Demonstrates knowledge of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) s/he teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful to students.

2. Demonstrates the ability to integrate the concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures among the disciplines.

3. Demonstrates knowledge of the diverse ways in which students develop and learn by providing learning opportunities that support students’ intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development.

4. Plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, and curriculum goals.

5. Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies and appropriate technologies.

6. Creates and maintains a classroom environment which supports and encourages learning.

7. Demonstrates the ability to support students’ learning and well being by engaging students, home, school, colleagues, and community.

8. Understands and uses a variety of formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and support the development of the learner.

9. Demonstrates an awareness of and commitment to ethical and legal responsibilities of a teacher.

10. Demonstrates a strong professional ethic and a desire to contribute to the education profession.