

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
College of Education
Department of Educational Organization and Leadership

EOL 440: Professional Issues for Teachers
Fall, 2008

Class meets on Fridays, Two Sections: 9 – 9:50a and 10 – 10:50a in Room W109 Turner Hall

Instructor

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Course Overview

This course provides an orientation to the organization of public schools and the professional roles and obligations of public school teachers. This course will examine school organizational issues, legal and professional issues, and issues of continuing interest to school practitioners. Lectures will explore a variety of basic school issues, provide a foundational knowledge of school governance, establish a fundamental understanding of school personnel functions, and sponsor an increased awareness of values and beliefs regarding the teaching profession.

Course Objectives

- Become familiar with significant professional and legal issues pertinent to teachers.
- Gain a foundational knowledge of the governance and organizational structures under which schools operate.
- Consider the professional roles and obligations of public school teachers.
- Examine and analyze the legal and professional issues relating to the rights and responsibilities of students and teachers.
- Acquire a basic understanding of the work of teachers' organizations and contracts, and the expectations of district and building administration.

Course Topics

- Introduction to Professional Issues
- The Place of Teachers in the Public Schools
- The Purpose of Public Education
- The Legal Basis of Public Schools
- The Governance Structure of Public Schools
- Student Rights and Obligations in the Public Schools
- Students' Constitutional Rights
- Teachers' Legal Obligations in the Public Schools
- Teachers' Constitutional Rights
- Teachers' Contractual Obligations
- Teachers' Contractual Rights
- Teachers as Professionals

Course Association to UIUC Conceptual Framework for Teacher Preparation

The objectives of this course are directly associated with University and College of Education Professional Education Program goals in the following areas:

- Establishing community in teaching and learning environments.
This course examines the legal and organizational issues that determine and shape the school culture and educational practices.
- Guiding the development of inquiring and reflective minds.
This course emphasizes a reflective approach to understanding school governance and the administrative hierarchy, focusing particularly on critical analysis of the governance structures in place at the district and building levels.
- Fostering a commitment to service.
This course explores the essential role and commitment of educators to serving the professional and school communities.
- Pursuing the understanding and application of technology.
This course explores the use of technology by professional educators.

Course Association with Content Area Standards for Teacher Preparation

The approach and content of this course directly utilizes the following content area standards for the preparation of teachers:

- Facilitating a vision of educational excellence.
This course requires students to study applications of legal and professional ideals in the development of a productive and inclusive school environment.
- School culture, learning environment, and instructional program.
Students will consider the effect of school organization and governance on school cultures and instructional programs
- Management.
This course asks students to explore theories and methods of school organization and management and to consider how they may support a positive teaching and learning environment.
- Collaboration with families and communities.
Students will consider and examine administrator and teacher roles in communicating with and in working with members of the school community.
- Acting with integrity, fairness, and in compliance with legal and ethical standards.
Students will consider and examine the application of legal rights and obligations of public school teachers, students, and others.
- The political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
This course prompts students to seek comprehension of the legal and political contexts in which public schools function and to understand the influence of these contexts on public school operations, on union organizations, on collective bargaining, and on continuing professional development.

Course Requirements and Expectations

The organization of course content and the emphasis given specific topics reflect the major intent of the course. Class activities will include lecture, reflective writing and opportunities for questions and discussion. Additional responses to student questions outside of class sessions will be available by contacting the instructor through the email address provided or office appointment.

Evaluation of student progress in this course will be determined by a mid-term test, a final examination and a variety of reflective writing activities. The grade for this course will be determined by student performance utilizing the aforementioned criteria. The mid-term test grade will be valued as 30% (300 points) of the course grade. The final test grade will be valued as 50% (500 points) of the course grade. The writing activities will constitute the remaining 20% (200 points) of the grade. Students may use the personal notes that they take in class during the mid-term test and the final test.

Grade scale:

100%	A+	96%	A	92%	A-
88%	B+	84%	B	80%	B-
76%	C+	72%	C	68%	C-
64%	D+	60%	D	56%	D-

Journals

You will be expected to keep a weekly journal that will contain your quick writes and reflective pieces. We will collect these journals randomly three (3) times during the semester. Each time we collect the journal you will be awarded 66 points if all entries are included and done satisfactorily. Completion of all entries when collected will compile a total of 200 points ($3 \times 66 = 198 + 2$ bonus points).

Attendance will be expected at each class session. Each session will begin promptly and all students are expected to be in class on time. Any student who is unable to attend a class session should contact the instructor via email prior to the class. If you miss a class session without an excuse and your journal is scheduled to be collected the subsequent points that you would earn would be deducted. Such a penalty may mathematically result in the lowering of one grade. For example if a student earned 300 points on the mid-term, 500 points on the final, but only 132 points for the journal entries the total number of points would be $932 = 932$ points. Hence a student would drop from a potential A+ (1000 points) to an A-.

Conferences

Any students who believe they would benefit from an individual or small group conference to inquire about course content or procedures at any time during the semester should contact the instructor via email to arrange conference time.

Class Session Schedule:

Session #1	08/29	Introduction/Course Outline & Expectations
Session #2	09/05	Introduction to Professional Issues/Teaching As A Profession
Session #3	09/12	The Place of Teachers in the Public Schools
Session #4	09/19	The Purpose of Public Education
Session #5	09/26	The Legal Basis of Public Schools
Session #6	10/03	The Governance Structure of the Public Schools
Session #7	10/10	NO CLASS
Session #8	10/17	Rights and Obligations of Students
Session #9	10/24	Constitutional Rights of Students & How We Respond
Session #10	10/31	In-Class Mid-Term Test
Session #11	11/07	Teachers' Legal Obligations
Session #12	11/14	Teachers' Constitutional Rights
Session #13	11/21	Teachers' Contractual Obligations/Rights
Session #14	12/05	Teachers as Professionals
Session #15	12/12	In-Class Final Test

(NOTE: This will be a 2-hour exam from 9a – 11a, with both class sections will be combined. This exam will probably take place in the lecture hall at Temple Buell)