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### EDU 407E.R01: Ethics and Policy Issues

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**University of Montana**  
**Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences**

**407E-- Ethics and Policy Studies: A Philosophical and  
Historical Exploration of the American School**

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**Instructor: Dr. Matthew Schertz**

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**Office: 304 Education Building**

**Phone #2163**

**Office Hours: by appointment in summer**

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to familiarize you with foundational texts that have shaped the evolution of the American School. A variety of historical accounts and philosophical essays will form the theoretical basis for our exploration. The chosen readings are roughly chronological and highlight many of the religious, political, economic and social movements that have shaped the diffuse array of schooling experiences that exist in this country. For the first few weeks of class we will focus on these foundational readings. We will then spend time examining contemporary ethical quandaries experienced by teachers. We will conclude the course by examining educational law.

As I am a firm believer in dialogical pedagogy, and since these readings lend themselves to conversation, much of this class will consist of discussions that focus on the chosen course materials. Although I may lecture from time to time in regards to specific topics, you will be expected to discuss issues, problems and questions that arise both from the assiduous reading of texts and in reaction to the comments of your fellow classmates. In other words, you must read the assigned papers and you must participate in discussions by reading and responding to the points made in class.

Ultimately, I hope this class serves as a gateway for you to explore the inherent complexity and theoretical richness of the educational endeavor. Moreover, since the study of schooling essentially becomes a study of values, in that schools seek to reproduce the values of a given culture, this course will also constitute a cultural study of American identity. I hope you enjoy it.

**Course Objectives:**

- 1) Students will broaden their knowledge of education by reading and discussing historical and philosophical foundations of education.
- 2) Students will critique contemporary ethical dilemmas experienced by teachers
- 3) Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of educational law.

**Required Readings:**

*A Teachers Pocket Guide to School Law.* 2014 Essex, Nathan. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Allyn and Bacon

Most of the readings are posted on Moodle.

## **Grading Policy**

Please note that I expect well-written work. Please edit your ethics paper and have a capable peer read it over before handing it in.

A work is thought provoking, analytical, original, exceeds my expectations and is written in clear, compelling prose.

B work indicates enduring understanding of the assignment and has a minimal amount of prose issues.

C work indicates that you understand the assignment but have neglected to spend the necessary time or effort to explore it in a thorough and carefully planned manner. Sloppy prose.

D work indicates a complete lack of effort throughout the assignment.

F work is even worse.

## **Absence Policy**

You are allowed to miss the equivalent of one class session without an excuse. If you choose to not be in class for a session, I do not need an excuse or reason. However, if you have medical emergency or family emergency please send me an email prior to our class session. Please bring a copy of the doctor's note to the next class session. That way I can excuse your absence. If you miss more one class without a verifiable excuse your final grade will be negatively impacted. 10 points per absence will be subtracted from your final average.

## **Academic Integrity Policy for this class:**

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

## **NEED HELP?**

All students face obstacles that may interfere with academic success. I want you to succeed and will do my best to help you meet the standards of our course despite problems that may arise. However, you must talk with me in a timely way. If issues or concerns arise then please email me or come see me during my office hours.

Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations for this course. To request course modifications, please contact me as soon as possible. I will work with you and Disability Services in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the [Disability Services website](#) or call 406.243.2243 (Voice/Text).

## **Campus Safety and Emergency Procedures**

[Campus safety](#) is of the utmost importance at the University of Montana and the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences. *Emergencies are rare*, but if one should arise during class, everyone will need to work together. Be aware of your surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts. Emergency procedures will be discussed during the first class of each semester or session. Above all, remember to dial 911 to report all emergencies.

Emergency procedures are posted in every classroom. Should a building evacuation become necessary, know the evacuation route, the location of the nearest fire extinguisher and the location of the nearest area of refuge. (Areas of refuge are located at the elevator doors on the second and third floors.) Please notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester if you have special needs or will require assistance during an emergency situation.

[UM's emergency notification system](#) notifies the campus community of emergencies by sending subscribers a text or email. Sign up for notifications through Cyberbear.

Please report suspicious activity by calling 911 or (406) 243-4000. [An online form is also available](#). You may elect to remain anonymous when making a report.

[Active shooter preparedness](#) requires that we develop a survival mindset. [UM recommends the "Run, Lock, Fight"](#) response for an [active shooter](#) incident.

## RUN

- Quickly assess your situation.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Keep your hands visible for law enforcement.

## HIDE

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view.
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors.
- Silence your cell phone and/or pager.

## FIGHT

- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger.
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter.

Finally, stay current with campus safety information by following [UM's Police Department](#) on Twitter @UMPublicSafety.

## **Course Requirements**

**Reading notes assignment: 100 points** You are required to complete a forum post for readings throughout the semester. You should include one observation, one question, one connection and one surprise. Your forum posts should demonstrate that you have both read the reading and given it some serious thought. Please title your post with a question you have from the reading. Forum posts are due by 11pm the night before class. Reader notes that are posted late will automatically be deducted 5 points. Forum requirements include class participation in the class pertaining to the post. I expect everyone to participate in class activities and dialogue. Students who don't participate and/or who spend their time on social media at the expense of class participation will have points deducted from their forum grade.

**Ethics Case Analysis: 100 Points** I will provide a detailed outline of how to complete this assignment. The case analysis will count a maximum of 100 points. I accept late papers but with one letter grade deducted for each day late.

**Law Test: 100 Points** Using the Pocket Guide to Law, the shared presentations and the study guide, prepare for a final law test during exam week.

## **Graduate Increment:**

All graduate students must complete a graduate increment for this course. The graduate increment for all the Ethics sections participate in an online seminar.

I will provide a series of papers for you to read and react to in an online forum. For this assignment you must read the papers and participate in an accompanying forum.