CI 3338 Social Studies in the Elementary and Middle School  
Summer 2015  
Section 1: Monday-Friday 8-9:40am  
Section 2: Monday-Friday  
Location: EDB 3038  

Texas State University  
College of Education  
Department of Curriculum & Instruction  

Professor: Dr. Christopher L. Busey  
Email: CLB282@txstate.edu  
Phone: (512) 245-8762  
Office Location: EBD 3030  
Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday  
9:45-11:45am or by appointment  

Please use my office hours if you have any questions. I am here as a resource.  
Syllabus may change due to inclement weather or class cancelations.  

Course Catalog Description  
The course provides learner-centered approaches to social studies knowledge, instruction, equity, communication, and professional development and prepares educators with strong foundations for powerful social studies teaching and learning practices including: (a) deep understanding/appreciation, (b) increased awareness of non-traditional approaches, (c) practical methods and applications, and (d) daily integration into teaching.  

Big Idea Questions for the Course  
1. What is social studies and why is it necessary?  
2. What is powerful and purpose-driven elementary social studies?  
3. What are some challenges and rewards to teaching elementary/early childhood social studies from a multicultural perspective?  
4. Why is it important to expand pedagogical content knowledge for the purpose of engaging young children in multicultural social studies?  

Course Outcomes  
As a result of this course, pre-service teachers will be able to do the following:  
1. Reflect on their beliefs, positions, and purposes for teaching social studies to elementary learners.  
2. Research issues regarding the teaching of social studies at the elementary level.  
3. Familiarize themselves with the purposes, rationales, and ten thematic strands for teaching social studies as proposed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).  
4. Critically analyze the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for social studies and align them with the ten thematic strands and purposes for teaching social studies as proposed by NCSS.  
5. Critically examine the TEKS for social studies and acknowledge their limitations for multicultural approaches to social studies education at the elementary level.
6. Create a plan for each grade level (K-6) for teaching social studies.
7. Engage in dialogue and discussion pertaining to multicultural approaches towards teaching social studies at the elementary level.
8. Design and implement upper-elementary (4th-6th grade) lesson plans that use historical thinking strategies.
9. Design an integrated and interdisciplinary unit plan for early elementary grades (EC-3) with social studies as the focus.
10. Propose scholarly literature that outlines best practices for teaching elementary social studies to English Language Learners.
11. Develop a resource set that can be used to teach a social studies concept at the elementary level.
12. Differentiate between conceptual approaches towards teaching social studies versus the teaching of facts.
13. Construct authentic assessments for social studies that have value beyond school, involve disciplined inquiry, and facilitate the construction of knowledge.
14. Discuss approaches and beliefs towards addressing potentially controversial issues in the elementary social studies classroom.
15. Read and watch historical fiction/non-fiction on a selected topic to strengthen social studies content knowledge.

**Dr. Busey’s Conceptual Teaching Framework**

Teaching is a scholarly discipline whose art is vital in shaping and transforming the world one student/classroom at a time. In understanding the significant role that teachers play in this world, it is critical that the preparation of teachers reflects the multi-faceted, complex yet rewarding lifetime journey of learning. My mission of supporting and preparing teachers [teacher educators] is built upon four philosophical stances:

1. **Inquiry:** It is imperative that we ask critical questions about society and its influence in the classroom. Challenging and questioning assumptions as well as complacency is vital in forming a mutually beneficial relationship between teachers, the curriculum, students, schools, and subsequently the community.

2. **Humanity:** Education is more than a process by which information is exchanged, but it plays a significant role in shaping humanity. Pedagogy, curriculum, and the student are not mutually exclusive; they play an interrelated role in molding thoughts and attitudes. Education is more than information and methods; it is a humanistic process.

3. **Critical Transformation:** Education is the window to society. We use education to evaluate aspects of society but we also use education as a tool to bring about change in the way that people think, act, and feel towards others as well as institutions. It is important that teachers understand we play a vital role in helping to transform society.

4. **Reflection:** The practice of teaching is an art in which educators must consistently reflect and think critically about the purpose and outcomes of their practice. To
improve our practice we must think critically about the relationship between our pedagogy, curricular choices, and students.

About the Course

Course Rationale. This class is meant to assist prospective elementary and middle school teachers in the teaching of social studies. The development of this course involved several stages in which I conducted a review of scholarly publications to ascertain the most pressing issues facing elementary social studies teachers, examined TExES certification exam requirements, talked with local teachers and administrators, and relied upon my prior experience as a social studies teacher. I hope you find this course beneficial not just presently, but in your future teaching experience. This class blends a mix of content with social studies pedagogy that will facilitate critical thinking about our pedagogical content knowledge.

Research in the field of social studies education shows that elementary social studies is often marginalized. This is due to a multitude of factors such as standardized testing’s emphasis on math and language arts in addition to the overall perceived unimportance of social studies. Furthermore, there is an increased focus on treating elementary social studies as the “integrative” topic, which has led to a superficial approach to social studies education in elementary schools as well as in teacher education programs. While we will discuss aspects of social studies that can be integrated with other subjects--mainly literacy approaches and reading--this course is designed to reprioritize social studies as an integral subject that should be taught using disciplinary specific methods at the elementary level.

Pedagogy. It is my philosophy to rely upon various pedagogical strategies to engage students in course material. I believe that discussion and dialogue are the most democratic pedagogical practices, and thus it is important that students complete reading assignments and come prepared to discuss implications of the readings as they relate to schooling. We will also use small breakout groups, jigsaws, cooperative learning, and other pedagogies that allow for constructivist learning.

Hybrid
This is a hybrid course meaning that no more than fifty percent of the course is conducted online. For most weeks class will be conducted face-to-face at least three days, while the remaining two days will be conducted online. Because this is a shortened summer course, the workload can be daunting at times. Expect to use some of the hybrid days to complete course assignments in addition to discussion assignments indicated in the course assignments description below.

Relevance. My goal is to create a course that is as relevant as possible. This means that we will tackle issues through discussion and dialogue that may not be comfortable, but necessary to discuss for teacher and student growth. Being uncomfortable and disagreeing with one another is okay, in fact, they are concepts interwoven into the fabric of American society. With that said, culture, language, race, gender, and socio-
economic inequality are at the heart of American schooling and have always been. Expect some of our class discourse to reflect and draw upon these very topics. Although these topics have political connotations, always keep in mind that elementary students are completely vulnerable to the influences of culture, race, language, gender, and socio-economic status and are merely trying to navigate through these aspects of life in light of institutional forces.

I also want this course to be pertinent to current trends, topics, and movements that are influencing education at all levels. What this class will not be is a three credit hour course on tips and tricks for teaching social studies. Rather, I want you to think deeply about what you teach, why you teach, how you teach, and how you view students in lieu of social studies content. I want you to leave this course with an understanding of how to teach social studies “like your hair is on fire” and the implications of this type of pedagogy. I want you to leave this course able to conceptualize that the way you view and care about your students is displayed in your interpersonal interactions, pedagogical decisions, and curricular choices for social studies.

**Professional Dispositions.** I expect for students to exhibit the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for becoming an effective teacher in the future. You should be knowledgeable about your respective content area as well as current trends in education. You should possess the pedagogical and social skills necessary for establishing a safe, fun, engaging, and constructivist learning environment.

I applaud you for choosing the teaching profession as your career path. Please note that I refer to teaching as a profession and not a job, because being a teacher says a lot about who you are as opposed to simply what you do.

**Course Texts**

**Required**

3. Texas Essential Knowledge Standards (TEKS) for elementary social studies. Please download the TEKS from [http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/index.html](http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/index.html) and have them readily available for class as we will refer to them often throughout the semester. You will need Subchapter A (K-5) and Subchapter B (6-8) for this course.
5. Other course readings will be required as a part of this course. Course readings in the form of journal articles, blogs, etc. will be made available through TRACS.

**Suggested**

**Recommended Scholarly Journals**
- Social Studies and the Young Learner
- The Social Studies
- Social Education
- Middle Level Learning
- Journal of Social Studies Research
- Theory and Research in Social Education
- Middle School Journal
- The Clearing House
- Phi Delta Kappan
- Rethinking Schools

**Web Resources**
- National Council for the Social Studies- www.socialstudies.org
- Texas Council for the Social Studies- www.txcss.net
- Teaching for Change- http://www.teachingforchange.org
- Teaching Tolerance- www.tolerance.org

**Course Policies**

**Assignment Submission**
All assignments should be typed and saved digitally, although some assignments will be submitted in paper format unless otherwise indicated. Each assignment should be typed according to the guidelines set by the APA Manual, 6th Edition. This includes cover pages, headings, font, spacing and references. All papers are to be double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt. font. Here is a great website to refer to for APA formatting: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/.

**Late Work and Revisions**
Late assignments are not accepted without prior (sufficient) notification and approval from the instructor. All assignments are due at the time indicated. Failure to submit assignments in a timely manner will result in a 0. In the event that the instructor asks you to submit a revision for an assignment, please note that all revisions will receive reduced point values (a letter grade reduction) to be fair to other class members.

**Technology**
Technology is a valuable addition to classroom instruction; in fact you will need internet access and a laptop/tablet for each class. I encourage you to practice environmentally
conscious decision making by using technology to download readings, TEKS, and other course materials. However, please limit your use of technology to course-related concepts. Text messaging, Instagram, Facebook, SnapChat, Kik, Facetime and Twitter are all really cool methods for exchanging information, but please reserve them for your respective social settings and not during class.

**Information**
I will send out an update to you weekly. Please check your email as well as TRACS for updated messages. Any changes to the syllabus, class times, or an assignment may be sent out through this weekly update.

**Inclement Weather**
Unfortunately weather in the state of Texas can be unpredictable at times. In the case of inclement weather class maybe canceled and rescheduled for a later date. I always adhere to university decisions with regards to class cancelations in the event of unsafe weather conditions.

**Attendance Policy**
You are expected to arrive to class on time. If you will be absent you must make every effort to notify (in advance if possible) the professor.

**Absences**
Excused Absences: Excused absences are only those allowed by the University—religious observance, documented injury or sickness, university sponsored event, required participation in military service, or death in the family.

Unexcused Absences: *You are allowed one unexcused absence* for the class. Beyond one unexcused absence, grade penalties are as follows:

a. A 2nd unexcused absence will result in your final course grade lowered 1 full letter grade (for example, from an A to a B). Documentation will also be submitted to the department regarding your “Fitness to Teach”.

b. 3 or more unexcused absences will result in failure for the course.

c. Please note that leaving class early counts as an absence.

**Tardiness**

a. You have a ten-minute window to arrive to class. If you arrive to class more than 10 minutes late you will be considered tardy. Two (2) late arrivals are the equivalent of 1 unexcused absence.

NOTE: Because situations may arise that are not covered by the above (i.e., the birth of a child, family medical emergency, etc.) the course instructor and/or other faculty will determine the course of action, giving full consideration to the circumstances, the needs of the student, departmental attendance policy and University policy.
**Professionalism and Etiquette**

- All papers and assignments should be stapled, not folded or paper clipped as papers can get shuffled.
- As a professional entering the teaching profession, you are required to conduct yourself like one during class. It is my goal to promote healthy dialogue, which means others’ views, and opinions are respected.
- All written communication should demonstrate professional etiquette. This includes discourse via the discussion board as well as email.

**Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with university policy and federal law, all members of the university community are responsible for ensuring that students are not discriminated against because of a disability. To accomplish this goal, reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations may be necessary for qualified students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services will coordinate with faculty members to facilitate necessary accommodations for students with disabilities.

**Academic Honesty**

Preservice teachers are expected to pursue education with a commitment to honesty, a sense of personal honor, and a respect for knowledge and reflection. All writing must be your own and must be meticulously referenced according to APA style. Directions for APA style are available at [http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/apa_index.htm](http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/apa_index.htm), [http://apa.org](http://apa.org) and many other places on the web. If you wish, you can purchase the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* published by the American Psychological Association (6th ed. American Psychological Association: New York. 2013). Failure to appropriately reference your work often constitutes plagiarism according to Texas States’ “university policy and procedures regarding student cheating and plagiarism,” [http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html). Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty can be punishable by an “F” on an assignment or an “F” in the entire course and/or puts you at risk of being dismissed from the teacher education program.

Follow the honor code for the course (inclusive of your dealings with WMS students, staff, and faculty): be conscientious, respectful, and honest. You can access the honor code here [http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01-att1.html](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01-att1.html).

**Grading Policy**

Rubrics are provided for each assignment due as well as for your contributions to classroom discussion. There are subjective components to every assignment in any course, but I do my best in designing my rubrics to objectify each aspect of the assignment. However, what is most important to note is that your grade is not indicative of your personality or character. Teaching is a life-long process of learning and I do not expect for you to grasp and master every concept presented in the class because you are in the beginning of your journey. Albeit, I do expect for you to put forth your best effort
with every assignment. Please understand that the course assignments were designed to put you on the path to effective teaching.

Here are a few important notes about grades:

- Grades can only be discussed face to face and not electronically.
- When students are on the borderline between one grade and another, the grade will be determined by the professor’s assessment of student professionalism (attendance, participation, academic honesty, etc.).
- According to your program of study all “professional responsibility and pedagogy courses” (I.E.- this course) must be completed with a grade of “C” or higher. In cases that apply, a grade of I-Incomplete or U-Unearned Failure maybe assigned.
- If you choose to dispute a grade a 24-hour window applies. You will be asked to use the rubric to self-assess the assignment you are disputing and bring the assignment along with the rubric with you when we meet to discuss the grade.

**Grades**

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

**Course Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Total Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies Creed</td>
<td>June 9th</td>
<td>15 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book and Film Review</td>
<td>July 1st</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies at the Center</td>
<td>July 2nd</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviated Lesson Study</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid Hour</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>20 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation and Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10 points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

125 Total Possible Points  
Total Points Earned  

*Discussion board assignments are ongoing and graded cumulatively. Please see the course schedule for when specific discussion board assignments are due.

**Assignment Descriptions**

**Note: The following are simply descriptions of each assignment. You should ultimately refer to the rubric for complete details regarding each assignment.**

**Social Studies Creed-15 points**
This assignment is designed to help you self-evaluate your own teaching philosophy pertaining to social studies. First begin by reading John Dewey’s Pedagogic Creed (http://www.infed.org/archives/e-texts/e-dew-pc.htm) for an example of what is being asked in this assignment. Secondly, create a minimum of 5 statements about teaching social studies that demonstrate what you believe. Under each statement (I.E.- “I believe that students need to know the history of the United States.”) write a paragraph explaining/expanding on why you hold this belief. You can use the five concepts outlined by Dewey or you can create your own. Your creed should be no more than 2-3 double-spaced pages excluding your cover page.

**Book and Film Review-30 points**
The development of pedagogical content knowledge is critical in social studies teacher education courses. The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate the growth of content knowledge over the course of the semester by reading one non-fiction book and watching a film related to the book you read. Ideally preservice teacher candidates will choose a period of history or social studies topic in which they perceive their content knowledge to be limited. The book must be non-fiction but the film can be historical fiction, a documentary, a mini-series, etc. related to the book. In your paper you will first provide a rationale as to why you selected the book, a summary of the book and film, and a reflection as to how your content knowledge has developed regarding the particular concept/time period you selected. Finally you will develop and submit a 25-35 minute lesson plan for a grade level of your choice that is related to the book and movie you read. Maximum length of 5 pages excluding cover letter and references, which must be provided.

**Abbreviated Lesson Study-20 points**
A recent study by Fitchett, Heafner, and VanFossen (2014) indicated that elementary teachers who used discipline-specific methods integrated with language arts were more likely to appropriate more time towards social studies instruction. The goal of this lesson study assignment is to help you become more familiar with social studies and historical thinking methods. Working in pairs or groups of three, you will carry out three of the five steps of lesson study method as indicated by Halvorsen and Lund (2013):

1. Co-plan a lesson.
2. Teach the lesson.
3. Debrief, reflect, and revise the lesson (lessons maybe recorded for your reflection purposes).

The lesson that you plan and teach should aim towards upper elementary content (grades 4-6) and last 15-20 minutes. You will sign up on the first day of class for the historical thinking strategy you will incorporate/model for your lesson study. You can use a historical time period or concept of your choosing for content. The method will be discussed and/or modeled for you before you carry out your lesson study. You will submit the original lesson plan, a 1-2 page reflection, and a revised lesson plan at least one week after you teach.
**Hybrid Hour-20 points**

Throughout the semester you will be asked to complete activities, respond to prompts, or react to readings using the TRACS forum. The assignments are a supplement to our face-to-face time and are critical for reflecting on learned knowledge as well as engaging in some of the concepts we are unable to explore due to the abbreviated nature of our course. Your participation in the hybrid activities will be graded cumulatively although I will be active in responding to your posts on the respective dates. Stipulations such as word count and completion requirements are indicated in the hybrid hour activity descriptions, as they are all different. Be prepared to discuss some of our interactions and activities from the hybrid hour in our face-to-face meetings.

**Social Studies at the Center-30 points**

As a final assignment for the course you will create an interdisciplinary unit plan for grades P-3 entitled *Social Studies at the Center*. You will choose a social studies concept based on the TEKS for a grade level of your choice and devise a 3-day unit plan that has interdisciplinary approaches. The focus of the unit plan must be social studies oriented, but the concept chosen can be used to teach math, science, or another subject not English Language Arts. The TEKS must align across grade level. For example, if you choose a concept from the 2nd grade social studies TEKS and want to incorporate math, then the math standards must be from 2nd grade TEKS as well. You must choose at least two other subjects to integrate with the social studies concept you choose. Here is what should be included in your unit plan:

- **Title**
- **Rationale:** Why are you teaching this content? Why is it important for students to know?
- **Interdisciplinary Concept Description (at least two paragraphs):** What is it specifically that the students will know in each content area as a result of this unit? Dedicate at least one paragraph specifically to social studies content.
- **Scope and Sequence:** What am I teaching on each of the 3 days and how?
- **Standards:** What standards are addressed in this interdisciplinary unit?
- **Social Studies Themes:** What thematic strands (NCSS) are addressed in this unit plan?
- **Skill based objectives:** What skills and knowledge will students acquire as a result of this unit? What are some social studies specific skills (primary sources, historical thinking, mapping, geographical spacing, etc.) that students will acquire as a result of this unit?
- **Vocabulary (at least 5):** What vocabulary will students need to know in this unit?
- **Technology:** How will my unit incorporate technology?
- **Resources (total of 5):** What sources can I use to inform this unit (children’s literature, primary source database, etc.)?
- **Multicultural perspective:** In what ways will I make the unit plan be something that students, regardless of cultural background, can understand and relate to?
- **Global perspective:** What can I do to ensure that students can also gain a global perspective of the content?
- **ELL Accommodations:** How can I make changes to the content or teach it in a way so that English Language Learners can understand and relate to it?
• Assessment: What are some authentic and creative ways that I can assess students on their understanding of the content presented in the unit plan?

A rubric will be provided. You can work in pairs or groups of 3.

**Preparation and Participation-10 points**

I am asking that as a part of this course you come prepared and participate in class. You should have all readings complete, engage in course dialogue, and bring the materials necessary to accomplish the goals of each class. There will be times in which I will ask you to bring a story, a historical image, a primary source, etc. to class so that we can practice what we are learning. There will also be times during the class in which we will work collaboratively to accomplish a goal that will benefit you in your future teaching (I.E.-developing a scope and sequence, community labs, etc.). Through preparedness and participation we will fully accomplish the goals for the course while making it an engaging and fun learning experience for all.