Appendix A

100K in 10 Sample Syllabus

Working Course Title: Schooling in America
Through Racial Equity and Social Justice Lenses

Background

Rationale and Intent of the Course

Education has a diversity problem. The educator workforce in United States public schools is overwhelmingly white. However, students are increasingly more racially and linguistically diverse, and the research shows that students have more positive outcomes when they are taught by some teachers who share their identity and all students benefit from increased teacher representation.

Currently, many students who decide to enroll in a traditional introductory education course are those who already know that they want to become teachers, which means that they are also often white. If educator preparation programs are committed to teacher diversity, then something different needs to be done, and it needs to be done at scale. One of the strategies that could be considered low-hanging fruit is to repurpose introductory education courses to be a class that is used to recruit students into teaching by marketing and offering content that is appealing to a cross-section of students, particularly those who may not have considered teaching prior to enrolling in this course. As a result of taking this course, some students–particularly those from traditionally underrepresented identities–may become interested in pursuing teaching as a career because they can see the power that education has in this country. Others who take the course but decide not to become teachers also will benefit because they may become parents, future school board leaders, and/or legislators and will have a more informed perspective about education.

The intent of this course is to:
- Introduce a broader spectrum of students to education
- Excite students to pursue teaching as a career because they learn about the power of teachers as change agents.
- Shift away from a singular focus on having students begin their coursework by learning about pedagogy and instructional strategies and toward a shift in equity principles and learning the broader context of education.
- Fulfill a general education or other graduation requirement

Course Coding

This course is designed to be co-listed as an education course and a humanities or social sciences course. In doing so, this course should count toward fulfilling general education and/or equity course requirements for students. In absence of this, the course may only count toward degree completion for those who major in education. Therefore, there is not only a lack of incentive but actually a barrier present for those who may be curious–but not certain–about teaching in taking this course. It also could potentially dissuade those who just may be interested in learning more about the intersectionality between racism, equity, social justice, and education if it does not fulfill a general education requirement.

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Data

The current teacher workforce is overwhelmingly white, and, therefore, does not reflect the growing diversity of our nation's student body. Over the past twenty years, the population of students in K-12 schools has shifted. The majority of students in public schools are students of color, and yet, many of these students attend schools where they never have a single teacher of color.

Even as the student body has grown more diverse, there has been a stagnation (and even decline in some states) in the percentages of teachers of color over the years (see also Figure A.1). And now, with the impact COVID-19 disproportionately affecting black and Latinx college students, there is a serious concern that the already shrinking pool of future teachers of color will be even further diminished. A recent report put out by the United States Department of Education found the following:

- **"COVID-19 has raised new barriers** for many postsecondary students, with heightened impacts emerging for students of color, students with disabilities, and students who are caregivers, **both for entry into higher education and for continuing and completing their studies**.
- Many **institutions of higher education that disproportionately serve students of color and students from low-income backgrounds have seen declines in enrollment since the pandemic began**. During the 2020-21 academic year historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) also had declines in enrollment that in some cases far outpaced enrollment declines in their predominantly white peer institutions. Higher-education institutions also reported a **sharp drop-off in enrollment in 2020 of students graduating from high-poverty high schools compared to pre-pandemic numbers."**

Given that entry into the teaching profession requires a college degree, these findings are alarming.

Syllabus Information for Students

Course Description

Few people have been taught that the education system is controlled by those who have power and how that power is wielded to maintain power dynamics. This course is designed to provide students with an understanding about the history and intent of schooling in America through a racial equity and social justice lens from the Reconstruction era through the present. As a result of participating in this course, students will have a better understanding of how education has reinforced societal norms and priorities to assimilate all people into the ways of the dominant culture and the power of change agents to ensure America pivots to have a more inclusive educational experience for students.

Course Focus and Goals

Receiving a K-12 education is the one common experience available to all people in the United States. Schooling also provides a singular platform for the political will of leaders to shape the experience of students. This makes schooling an incredibly important opportunity to shape the thinking and social norms of millions of students.

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This course is intended to be of interest to a broad cross-section of undergraduate students, particularly BIPOC students who are underrepresented in the field of education, not just those who have already decided to become teachers. By looking at the relationship between historical events in the United States and its influence on education policy and schools, students enrolled in this course will be able to:

- Understand the mission of schooling and analyze who has benefited and who has been marginalized throughout history
- Discern who has controlled the narrative of curriculum and textbooks
- Interrogate how sources of information influence how and what is included in school curricula, policies, and practices
- Have a better understanding of how schools have reinforced the racist attitudes and policies, both de jure and de facto, of the country, as well as perpetuated gender norms
- Articulate how education can be a powerful tool to reinforce equity-minded principles, policies, and pathways
- Identify the power of education to lift people out of the cycle of poverty
- Recognize that educators have the potential to be change agents to push the system to support equitable outcomes for students

Course Framework

1. **Understand the purposes of education/ schooling past and present in the United States**

   Learning Outcomes
   - Describe the emergence and development of the American education system with a focus on the civic, social, economic, and individual aims of education
   - Articulate how education can be a powerful tool to reinforce equity-minded principles, policies, and pathways within classrooms and school districts
   - Learn about the mission of schooling and analyze who has benefited and who has been marginalized throughout history.

   Guiding Questions: What are the purposes of education/ schooling, and for whom?
   - What were the purposes at the time that common schools began, and how have these purposes have changed over time, or not? What forces have influenced these changes? How do different purposes connect or conflict?
   - What are the benefits and consequences for different student populations at key points in historical educational reforms?
   - How can education create economic and social mobility/opportunity but also perpetuate inequality across race, class, gender, and other axes of difference?

2. **Understand the infrastructure of schools: Economic, legal, and political context/ forces impacting schools**

   Learning Outcomes
   - Interrogate how sources of information such as legislations, reports, media (i.e., NCLB, A Nation at Risk) influence how and what is included in school curricula, policies, and practices

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- Identify the roles that federal, state and local governments play in consideration of equal education provision, comparing types of schools (public, charter, private, virtual) and the ways they are organized and supported
- Explain the importance of social identities, social justice issues, cultural and linguistic diversity and civil rights struggle and their impact on educational structures, curriculum and pedagogy.
- Articulate how schools have reinforced policies and attitudes regarding race, ethnicity, gender, ability, and social class and its impacts

Guiding Questions: How do schools work, and for whom?
- How does power manifest in schooling? What are the economic, legal, and political forces impacting schools?
- What systems influence the inequities in schools? How are individuals, groups and institutions disproportionately impacted by the educational system?
- Which policies and attitudes impact student populations who identify with axes of difference?

3. **Understand teaching and learning: Culturally responsive and inclusive education**

. **Learning Outcomes**
- Recognize that educators have the potential to be change agents to push the system to support equitable outcomes for students
- Discern who has controlled the narrative of curriculum and textbooks.
- Investigate culturally responsive and inclusive learning, and what is involved in fostering it.
- Explore how what students bring affects what happens in class, and the nature and role of instruction in that process.
- Describe ways diverse students learn and ways teachers teach in response to their students
- Explore what it means to be an effective, culturally responsive educator.
- Emphasize finding ways to maximize learning opportunities to ensure an equitable education for all students, and preparing to work with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families in today's schools
- Identify various dimensions of educational exclusion (race, social class, ethnicity, English language proficiency, gender, sexuality, ability) and consider the role of teachers in creating inclusive learning environments for all students

Guiding Questions: How do we teach equitably and effectively? How do students learn and experience schooling?
- What are some of the most widely held notions about how to make schools work better? How is the education system organized? What is involved in improving schools? How do we know what works and doesn't work?

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- How do we increase teachers' awareness of their own biases and experiences with differences? Consider and reflect on how their life experiences affect their view of diversity.
- How do we recognize knowledge, skills, dispositions and ethical responsibilities of the professional educator?
- How do teachers' understanding of cultural, historical, and political aspects of schooling relate to who they are as an educator, and how they teach?
- What are examples of anti-bias/ anti-deficit teaching strategies?
- What are the legal rights and ethical duties of a teacher? How have the rights and responsibilities of teacher, student, and parent changed in school settings over time?

Pedagogical practices to include to support equity in student learning

The impetus for this course is to resolve the lack of diversity in the education field. In order to address this problem, it is important to create an inclusive environment through inclusive pedagogical practices. Active learning techniques such as discussions, group work, experiential learning, and presentations can help provide avenues to recognize and elevate student voices and interests and foster a collaborative learning environment. Reflective practices are also a key aspect of culturally relevant pedagogy and should be embedded throughout the course in various ways such as weekly journals, short reflections to accompany larger assignments that focus on progress and self, and autobiographical reflections that make connections between the content and students' own experiences.

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