



MTI 596 BM: Discussing Controversial Topics

DISTANCE COURSE FOR DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

Instructor Information:	
Instructor Name:	Brandon Marren
MTI Grading:	grades@midwestteachersinstitute.org
MTI Email:	info@midwestteachersinstitute.org
Instructor Background:	Mr. Marren started his education with a Bachelor's Degree in History & Secondary Education from Saint Xavier University. He continued on to receive a LBS I Certification and a Masters in Teaching & Learning from the University of Saint Francis. He has spent the past seven years teaching courses at the high school level in Social Studies along with some courses in Special Education. Courses taught include US History, Global Issues, and Chicago History among several others. He has also spent seven years coaching a variety of sports at the high school level. The valuable knowledge gained through those teaching experiences as well as his educational experiences has served him well as a graduate course instructor.

Course Information	
Course Format (distance learning, online, webinar, experiential onsite courses):	<p>Distance Course</p> <p>Once you have registered for this course, your textbook will be sent to the address you used at checkout. The cost for the textbook has been included in your course price, there are no additional fees that apply. The textbook is yours to keep for further reflection at the conclusion of the course. Approximately 45 hours of instructional time is devoted to this course.</p> <p>Please see rubrics below for assessment and grading criteria. MTI Instructor will evaluate, grade, and process your final work within 7-10</p>

	<p>business days of receiving it. Grades will be posted within 14 days and a grade report via email will be sent to the student.</p> <p>ALL questions, customer service, grades and transcript questions are to be directed to MTI, NOT Dominican University, for this course.</p> <p>All distance courses allow you to work at your own pace as your schedule permits. All coursework is due within one year of the registration date. If you need more time due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact MTI at the address provided above to request an extension.</p>
<p>Formatting Requirements</p>	<p>All assignments should be included in the same document. Please do not submit separate documents for each portion of the course. The first page of your submission should include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name ● Home address ● Email address ● School district name, address ● Date of submission <p>All following assignments must be submitted in the same order as they appear on the syllabus. Please name your document with your course number and full name (ex. 500JohnSmith). You may submit a Microsoft Word document or a Google document (if using Google, please make sure to allow the grader to comment on the assignments). Any missing assignment will be treated as a zero.</p> <p>Once you have completed all of your assignments, please submit them to grades@midwestteachersinstitute.org to be graded by your instructor.</p>
<p>Prerequisites and Credit Limits</p>	<p>All MTI courses are designed for educators who have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and professional educator license. Prior to beginning the course, check with your district office to ensure that credit will be accepted for salary increase and professional development. All courses are for 3 graduate semester hours (credits).</p>
<p>Required Books and Materials</p>	<p>Teaching Controversial Issues Nel Noddings and Laurie Brooks (2017) Teachers College Press, New York, NY</p>
<p>Learning Outcomes/Competencies:</p> <p>At the completion of this course, the learner will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand what controversial topics should be discussed with your students. 2. Apply best practices in implementing the discussion of difficult topics into your classroom. 	

3. Identify which difficult topics should be discussed with students in your particular courses and with the age group of students that you teach.
4. Research strategies that can be used to best teach your students to critically think and engage about topics they may have previously had some discomfort with.
5. Reflect on how teaching controversial topics and having tough conversations with students can serve your students as they grow to become young citizens.

Course Description: This course prepares teachers of all disciplines and grade-levels to address controversial issues in their classroom. Educators will learn research-based strategies for how to have conversations about tough topics, and how to teach these topics to create well rounded students. Teachers of students of all ages will gain methods for implementing conversations about tough topics into their classes. This course will challenge teachers to step out of their comfort zone so that they can best prepare themselves to serve all of their students in helping them develop the critical thinking skills needed to become an educated citizen. This course is for every educator from K-12 and beyond!

Learning Strategies: Personal reflection, interviews, individual assignments (applications, research projects and evaluation essays).

Experiential Learning Opportunities: Educators will use this course to develop strategies and techniques to manage their students in their classroom and have those difficult conversations.

Assessments		Approximate contact hours for each assessment
Text questions-(Ten questions at 9 points each)	90 points	10 hours
Applications- 2 @ 45 points each	90 points	10 hours
Action research project	100 points	12 hours
Study and reflection time		3 hours
Final evaluation essay	100 points	10 hours
Total points possible	380 points	45 hours

Grading Scale: A (90-100%); B (80-89%)

****Anything below a B will not receive graduate credit and result in a failing grade of F.***

If you do not receive a B or higher, your work will be returned to you for further correction and completion. You will be allowed one (1) re-submit to your instructor to achieve a grade of B or higher. If after your re-submit, you still do not achieve a B or higher you will receive a failing grade of F and therefore forfeit the 3 graduate credits.

Text Question Rubric- 10 questions @ 9 points each			
Category	Superior (3 pts)	Sufficient (2 pts)	Minimal (1 pt)
Supporting Evidence in Practice ___/3	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.
Accuracy ___/3	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.
Grammar and Spelling ___/3	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.

Application Rubric-2 assignments @ 45 points each			
Category	Superior (15-13 pts)	Sufficient (12-10 pts)	Minimal(9-7pts)
Supporting Evidence in Practice ___/15	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.
Accuracy ___/15	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.
Grammar and Spelling ___/15	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.

Project Rubric- 100 points			
Category	Superior (20-18 pts)	Sufficient (17-16 pts)	Minimal (15-14pts)
Understanding of web tool ___/20	Shows strong understanding of activity, concept, or tool and maximize learning	Shows adequate understanding of activity, concept, or tool and benefit learning.	Shows little understanding of activity, concept, or tool and may not benefit learning.
Practical evidence ___/20	Shows strong evidence of ideas and insights gained from this course and how they are applied to classroom.	Shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to classroom.	Shows little evidence of ideas and insights from this course or how they are applied to the classroom.
Completion ___/20	Completed in a thoughtful and meaningful manner.	Completed, but with minimal quality.	Not all projects are completed and of those that are, some are minimal quality.
Grammar and Spelling ___/20	Includes no mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Includes few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Includes numerous grammar and spelling mistakes.

Sequencing ___/20	Sequenced, showing if-then thinking and the logical order required to complete skill, solve problem, or use tool.	Not always sequenced, showing incomplete if-then thinking and understanding of logical order required to complete skill.	Confusing making it difficult to replicate activities; little understanding of logic or if-then thinking evidenced.
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Evaluation Rubric- 100 points				
Category	Superior (20-17 pts)	Sufficient (16-13 pts)	Minimal(12-9pts)	Below Standard (8 pts)
Supporting Evidence in Practice ___/20	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows little evidence of ideas and insights from this course and there is little evidence they are applied to the classroom.
Accuracy ___/20	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Many of the supporting facts and statistics are inaccurately represented.
Grammar and Spelling ___/20	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes numerous grammar and spelling mistakes.
Logical Sequencing ___/20	Response is written in a clear, concise, and well organized manner. Thoughts are presented in a coherent and logical manner.	Response is mostly clear, concise, and well organized. Thoughts are presented in a coherent and logical manner.	Response is somewhat unclear and/or disorganized. Some thoughts are presented in a coherent and logical manner.	Response is mostly unclear and/or disorganized. Many thoughts are presented in an incoherent and illogical manner.
Reflection ___/20	Response demonstrates an in-depth reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.	Response demonstrates some reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.	Response demonstrates a minimal reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.	Response demonstrates no reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.

Course Assignments
<p>Text Questions: Read and Reflect (90 points)</p> <p>Each text question is designed to get you thinking about the concepts provided by the author. As you read the text, use the questions to help you reflect and how the information can be related to your current work. Each response is expected to be one paragraph or more.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1: The Sources of Morality

In Chapter 1, the authors talk about the importance of “character education.” What is character education and what role do you think it should play in our classrooms and in the overall education of students?

2. *Chapter 2: Authority*

“Students learn most avidly and have their best ideas when they get to choose which questions they will explore” (p. 19). Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Does student choice play a role in your classroom, and will you expand student choice in your classroom based on what you have read?

3. *Chapter 3: Critical Thinking*

On p. 27, the authors state “it is odd that teachers so seldom ask students to “revise and resubmit.” Explain their argument for why teachers should do this more. Do you agree or disagree with the authors? Is there anything you would consider adapting in your teaching practice based on what you read?

4. *Chapter 4: Religion*

Summarize the authors’ views on how students should be able to think critically about religion. Do you find that it would be beneficial to students in your school to be able to think about religion in these ways?

5. *Chapter 5: Race*

What are the racial demographics like in your school? What can you take from this chapter that you can implement in your classroom or in your school that can benefit students in their thinking about race?

6. *Chapter 6: Gender and Public Life*

From the text, identify and describe one way that you can improve the way you think about and talk about gender in your classroom, and one way that you can teach your students to better think about gender.

7. *Chapter 7: Entertainment, Sports, Media*

Choose either entertainment, sports, or media, and describe some of the harms that the author argues it inflicts on our students. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Provide a possible solution if you agree, and make sure to counter the authors’ argument if you disagree.

8. *Chapter 8: Capitalism & Socialism*

On p. 100, the author states that “we can agree that a good job is a desirable outcome, but is there nothing else we should seek from a good education?” Identify what the author sees as other necessary outcomes from education. To what extent do you emphasize these other outcomes in your teaching?

9. *Chapter 10: Equality, Justice, & Freedom*

On p. 132, the authors state the importance of increasing the amount of student talk in our courses. What ideas from the text would you like students to talk more about in your class, and what strategy can you use to make that happen?

10. *Chapter 11: Patriotism*

The chapter closes with a story about two men who appear to have drastically different beliefs, but realize that if they talked, they would have a lot in common. What strategies can you use with students to help them improve at talking with people they have different beliefs than?

Application #1

On p. 100, the authors' state that, "we can agree that a good job is a desirable outcome, but is there nothing else we should seek from a good education?" Much of the book is suggestions of how we can improve our students' lives and make them better young citizens outside of the main goal of getting a good job at the end of their education. Based on the text, pick three other major outcomes for your students other than getting a good job. Provide a 2-3 page explanation of what the text says about each of the outcomes of education that you choose, as well as your personal opinion on the outcome and how you can help students towards those outcomes.

Table 5.4 located on pg. 99 explains in detail Mosston and Ashworth's Reproductive and Productive teaching styles. Choose a physical movement or activity of your choice and write two scripts. One script will be written in the reproductive teaching style and the other script will be in the productive teaching style. In addition to these two documents, provide a 2-3 page explanation of the major differences in the two scripts. When is it best to use the reproductive style, and vice versa? What specific population may benefit from each style?

Application #2

Each chapter of the book discusses one topic or several topics that the authors believed need to be taught to students. Pick one topic, or several small closely related topics, and write about how you would specifically create a lesson or short unit in your class based around the topic. Write a 2-3 page explanation of what strategies you will use to implement the topic, what challenges you might face, and how students' critical thinking skills will improve based on the lesson that you implement.

Research project

Research and find two articles online, in newspapers, or from a magazine where addressing controversial topics with students is discussed. Compare the thoughts of Nel Noddings and Laurie Brooks (from your textbook) and those of your researched articles. Then, compare them to your own teaching prior to taking this class. In what ways are they similar? In what ways do they differ? You may complete your assignment in a 3 to 5 page research paper following APA format. Please include your articles when submitting your work.

- Article must be recent, having been published within the last 5 to 7 years
- Cited, you must provide the web address or other identification for the research you conducted. Include the date that it was published/retrieved, as well as the author(s).

Evaluation assignment

After reading the book, how do you feel the book's content and strategies will help you and your students? Will it help you with any of these topics as a teacher? Will it help you to help your students to become better young citizens? In what ways will it or will it not improve your teaching and your students' growth? What did you take away from the course that you will specifically incorporate? Explain in detail.

- 3-5 pages in APA format
- Utilize the textbook

End of Course Survey

Now that you are finished with this class, please take the time to help us improve our product. In order to make sure that we are providing the best possible service, please take our [survey](#). We appreciate your help and your commitment to the profession.

The ten INTASC standards are listed below. Specific standards for knowledge, dispositions, and performances accompany each principle, but space does not permit listing them below. For a complete copy of the INTASC standards, contact Jean Miller, Director of INTASC, Suite 700, One Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington DC 20001-1431.

The InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (April 2011)

The Learner and Learning

Standard #1: Learner Development

The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Standard #2: Learning Differences

The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Standard #3: Learning Environments

The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Content Knowledge

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Standard #5: Application of Content

The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

Instructional Practice

Standard #6: Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross- disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

Professional Responsibility

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.