

Stanford University
Graduate School of Education
Summer 2025

ED 268A: Teaching Ethnic Studies & History/Social Science
3:15 - 6:00 pm
CERAS 300

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Office Hours: After class or by appointment

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Education 268A is the first part of a three-part course in the teaching and learning of History / Social Science.

The summer quarter is a whirlwind introduction to the themes and issues we will explore until the end of our time together, nine months from now (C&I goes on for three quarters: summer, fall, and winter). Our course draws on the frameworks laid out in the [California History Social Science Standards](#). We also draw on California's [Common Core State Standards for History/Social Studies](#) (P. 81-89).

The study of history forms the core of Social Studies. This course will highlight the ways in which history can be taught to allow for counter narratives to be at the center and to allow the voices of the many groups and people who made history to be heard; narratives that may often be silenced by structures of power, including curriculum and textbooks and are central to Ethnic Studies. We believe it is possible to create history classrooms where those voices are heard without ignoring the curriculum that schools ask teachers to teach. We can do this by asking a series of questions. The first and most important is, "Why do we believe an account from the past?" By asking questions about how knowledge is constructed, we put our students in the role of active agents rather than the passive recipients of someone else's conclusions.

Our goal is to expose you to some ways of organizing classrooms that give students agency and ask them to do the heavy lifting of *thinking*. Continuing into the Fall and Winter, you will be introduced to instructional methods that integrate the teaching of history & Ethnic Studies with the teaching of reading and writing. Our goal is to help you become teachers of your subject matter, but *also* teachers who possess skills for developing students' literacy as they use their voices in society.

A common Social Studies teaching position is one in which you are teaching the 11th-grade United States History curriculum, the 10th-grade World History curriculum, possibly a 12th-grade Government/Economics course and/or the 9th grade Ethnic Studies course. *No teacher, starting out, can know everything about the myriad topics they'll have to teach!*

In this course you will start to develop *pockets of knowledge* about topics that typically get taught, but doing so from a perspective that goes beyond the flat narratives found in textbooks. This is known as “post-holing” (a metaphor that comes from planting posts deep in the ground when building a fence). Post-holing is the opposite of trying to “cover” everything—an approach that results in a curriculum that’s a mile long and inch deep. Over time, you will develop more and more “pockets.” To teach is to learn and history is happening every minute, so we all will engage in the learning process together. *Adapted from Sam Wineburg and Kristen Jackson

REQUIRED READINGS

- Reading/Materials on Canvas: <http://canvas.stanford.edu>

GRADES

The grading for this course is based on the following principles:

- The traditional system of grading stems from a history of oppressive practices, designed to sort and segregate students in education. Grades are not reflective of learning, and in fact, grades can distract from students’ learning.
- High expectations for learning are held for all students. The processes of feedback, reflection, revision, and consultation offer a more humanizing and meaningful learning experience than the process of assigning letter grades.

For this course, we are utilizing a grading structure we are calling a “**humanizing A.**”

That is: if you complete all of the requirements for the course: including attendance, thoughtful written assignments, active engagement in dialogue, community building and accountability assignments, you will earn an A for the course.

One intention of this grading structure is to detach notions of intellectual rigor from letter grades and instead to allow students to be accountable for their learning in more humanizing ways. You will also have the opportunity to revise any assignments that you feel you would like to improve.

If you are unable to complete course assignments, your grade will be lowered from an A accordingly.

This grading structure was created by Dr. Emma Fuentes and Dr. Melissa Canlas. School of Education, University of San Francisco

ASSIGNMENTS

Snapshot Autobiography: We will work on this assignment the first day of class. The “Snapshot Autobiography” is intended to be a short introduction to the themes of historical writing: issues of selection, significance, storytelling and truth. Take an 8 ½ by 11 sheet of paper and fold it, accordion-style, so that it forms three panels—or, counting front and back, six panels.

The *first* panel is the title page for your “Snapshot Autobiography”; the back page is reserved for an “*About the Author*” section. This leaves four panels. In each of the four panels select the four most important events that have shaped you as a person (everyone should begin, in Panel 2, with “My Birth”). Fill two-thirds of each panel with your narrative and use the bottom third as a place to illustrate your narrative with a small (hand-drawn) picture. Don’t spend a lot of time on the pictures or the narrative. Give your Autobiography *a title* that captures its essence. Have fun!

Discussion Leaders: A lot of what you will be doing as history/social science teachers is engaging students in discussion—finding ways to draw them out and having them formulate ideas in words. Cultivating a good discussion is not easy in face-to-face instruction. You will have an opportunity with your colleagues to lead a 15-20 minute discussion of the readings. Leading a discussion in C&I this summer will start the process of having you think about the kinds of questions that draw people out. (See [here](#) for schedule and tips)

“Restoring the Missing Chapter” - Complete Lesson Due 8/4:

For this assignment, you will create a one-day, 50-minute lesson that challenges students’ notions that history is already finished and that what appears in the textbook is “history.” (And, by extension, what’s not in the textbook lacks significance and thus is not part of “history.”) As part of a series called “Missing Chapter,” VOX has created 14 short (~15 minute) videos, each of which examines a topic in history that has been excluded (or covered minimally) from traditional textbooks. Each of you will choose a video and build a lesson around the topic of that video. After selecting your topic, you will need to supplement the video with several other texts, either short primary sources, political cartoons, or excerpts from secondary sources on your topic. (See [here](#) for the instructions for completing this assignment.)

SCHEDULE OF SUMMER READINGS / CLASSES

All readings, except for some readings that can be accessed through hyperlinks, are posted on Canvas

Session 1: Monday, June 30 **Introduction to Thinking like a Historian Framework**

Session 2: Tuesday, July 1 **Centering Ethnic Studies**

Read before class:

- Sleeter & Zavala (2020) “What’s all the fuss about Ethnic Studies”

Session 3: Wednesday July 2nd **Sourcing & Document Based Inquiries**

Read before class

- James Loewen, *Teaching What Really Happened*, Chapter 1
- Conway, Michael. The Problem with History Class. *The Atlantic*

Session 4: Monday July 7th **Opening up the Textbook**

Read before class:

- Wineburg, Sam, “Opening Up the Textbook,” *Education Week*.
- Goldstein, D. (2020). Two States. Eight Textbooks. Two American Stories. Links to an external site. (On New York Times* let Irene know if you do not access so she can email it to you please)

Session 5: Tuesday July 8th **Visit to San José**

Session 6: Wednesday July 9th **Beyond Debates- Structured Academic Controversy**

Read before class

- Amanda Ripley, [Complicating the Narrative](#), *Medium*
- Johnson and Johnson, Critical thinking through structured controversy. *Educational Leadership*

Session 7: Thursday July 10th **Visit to Oakland**

Session 8: Friday July 11th **Restoring the Missing Chapter - Workshop Wrap-Up**