RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
First-Year Seminar
“Haters Gonna Hate, Players Gonna Play, Teachers Gonna Teach:”
Integrating Your Identity into the Modern Classroom

Course Information
Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites: First-time, first-year student status
Class Meeting Day(s), Time and Room Location: Tuesdays, 6:00pm-9:15pm, A100

Instructor Information
Instructor's Name, Title: Thomas W. Ng, MSEd
Office Location & Phone No.: A-101, 267-325-6582
Office Hours: By appointment
E-mail: tomng14@gmail.com
Mailbox Location: A-101

Common Course Description
Designed for first-time, full-time, first-year students, First-Year Seminar (FYS) provides a comprehensive introduction to college-level learning. Seminar courses are developed around an academic theme or topic that is based on one of Ramapo College’s academic pillars. First-Year students will have the opportunity to select a seminar that best suits their interests while learning about Ramapo’s academic foundation. The First-Year Seminar course helps students in their transition from high school to college life both in and out of the classroom. The common learning outcomes of FYS are: critical and creative thinking, college-level writing, oral communication, information literacy, and technological competency. FYS classes are small to emphasize open discussion and experiential learning within the context of the theme of the seminar course.

Peer facilitators play an essential role in each FYS class ensuring that first-year students have guidance from a more experienced student. FYS is also the home of the Ramapo Summer Reading Program; all first year students read the same book and discuss and write about it in their seminars. FYS encourages new students to participate in a community of learners, to strengthen their critical thinking skills, and to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Course Description of Section
When asked why they chose to pursue a career in education, most educators cite at least one of the following reasons: a desire to support young people in their development; the teachers own positive experience as students throughout their lives; or their passion for time off during summers. The purpose of this course is encourage students to see past these popular and overly simplistic portrayals of educators motivations and practices in order to best understand the complexities of the field of education.

Students will develop the skills necessary to become reflective practitioners who are able to find their voice as both students and future teachers. Through experiential learning opportunities and reflection regarding their own education, students will develop a comprehensive understanding regarding how they fit into the American educational landscape and how educators can succeed in a way that is true to their own identity and values. Students will explore the process of self discovery through adolescence to young adulthood to understand their own identities as individuals, students, and educators.

This course is meant to help frame future teacher education by creating a foundation of knowledge regarding the educational process, mindsets of effective educators, and an understanding of culturally competent practices in order prepares students to be transformational educators committed to their own continued success.

Course Goals
At the completion of the course, students will:

- Have been exposed to global perspectives on education, including understanding education in suburban, urban, rural, and international landscapes.
- Have a working understanding of American educational systems
- Have developed effective reading, writing, presentation, and empathetic understanding skills
- Show increased self awareness through the process of creating a personal education philosophy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students will:</th>
<th>Class discussions and essays</th>
<th>Field Trip, Convocation and Majors Fair</th>
<th>Interview &amp; School Visit/ Observation</th>
<th>Final Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate proficiency in written communication</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate proficiency in oral communication</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate informational literacy and technological competency</td>
<td>X</td>
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Peer Facilitators

As an added resource for first-year students, each section of First-Year Seminar (FYS) will have a peer facilitator. These upper-level students will attend FYS classes and assist the instructor with the academic topics covered in this seminar. They will serve as discussion leaders on issues that pertain to students personal and social development and they will facilitate weekly discussions on the class readings. Student peer facilitator will be class mentors and will be available to provide guidance on navigating the different personal and social hurdles that students may encounter in their first year at Ramapo.

First-Year Academic Advising

Each First-Year Seminar course is assigned a professional Academic Advisor from the Center for Academic Advising and First-Year Experience (CAAFYE) who serves as your Academic Advisor during students first year. This advisor will attend the First-Year Seminar class for a group advisement session to review general academic advising policies and procedures. They will also be available to answer any general questions regarding college policies/practices. Students are encouraged to schedule individual appointments with their CAAFYE Advisor for assistance with course selection and the development of a personal academic plan. If you have any questions regarding Academic Advisement please call CAAFYE at (201) 684-7441 or via email at: caafye@ramapo.edu

Texts, Readings, Materials

In order to present a comprehensive perspective into modern education, short excerpts will be taken from a variety of texts. These readings can be accessed through the Library Database and will not require purchase.

Short Excerpts will be taken from:

Course Requirements

General Course Policies
You are expected to devote at least two hours of study time outside of class for every hour of class time. Talking and texting on your mobile phone are strictly prohibited activities in the classroom.

Classroom Participation
In seminar courses, student participation is key! A successful and lively class requires engaged students who prepare for the class by completing all of the required readings and by engaging in class discussions.

Writing Assignments
Essays on summer reading (10%)
• One 2-page essay question to be assigned on the first day of classes
• One 2-page essay to be assigned after the Convocation address
Teaching Philosophy Paper (20%)
• 4- to 6-page research/reflection summarizing student beliefs regarding what makes an effective educator, how students learn and
Classroom Observation Reflection (20%)
• Included as part of the School Interview/Observation Presentation. Students will complete a 4-5 page reflection paper identifying and analyzing their interview and
observation, as well as comparing this educational model to that which they were exposed to as a student.

Assessments

- **Class Participation** - 20%: Includes positive contributions to class discussion, participation in field trips, Opening Convocation, and completion of experiential learning opportunities.
- **Summer Reading Essays** - 10%: Students will write a 2 page reflection essay on the summer reading, noting their feelings about and connections they found in the text. They will then attend the Convocation and write an addendum to their essay, incorporating the author's comments in their statement.
- **“Teach Me How To” Presentation** - 10%: Students will prepare a 5-minute Mini-Lesson on a topic of their choice to present over the course of the first two months of school. This lesson will be evaluated on clarity, creativity in presentation, student’s effort to apply personal passion for content, and ability to apply their own personality to their budding teaching style.
- **School Interview/Observation Presentation** - 20%: Students will observe a classroom setting different from the one that they have observed and interview the teacher. Students will analyze what they saw, as well as compare and contrast the educational model they observed with their own experience. They will then complete a 4-5 page reflection paper analyzing their interview and observation.
- **Education Program Research Presentation** - 5%: Students will research and make a brief presentation on a method of teacher certification/professional development.
- **Teaching Philosophy Final Paper** - 20%: Students will create a teaching philosophy and teacher reflection portfolio explaining student understanding of how students learn and illustrating own growth as students/educators. This can be used for future classes in the teacher education program, as well as can be referred back to throughout one's career to help illustrate one's growth and development.
- **Weekly Reflection Journal** - 20%: Students will complete a short, weekly journal reflecting on themes from class and connecting them to life experiences as First Year College Students.

General Education Program Course

This course fulfills the First-Year Seminar category of the general education curriculum at Ramapo College. Common to all First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses, you will develop critical thinking skills that are basic to college level study, regardless of your area of interest. You will be reading, writing, and participating in thoughtful group discussions with the aim of developing the skills of a scholar. You will learn to support your arguments using a foundation of knowledge and facts rather than simply using personal opinions and experiences.

This course will fulfill a variety of FYS objectives including

- experiential learning
  - Students will interview and observe educators in a learning environment.

- international education & intercultural understanding
  - Students will examine the educational systems in other countries.

- interdisciplinary studies.
  - Students will explore various careers in the field of education in a variety of subject areas.

Writing Intensive (WI) Course

Writing will be integrated into the life of this course. You will receive comments, direction, and support as you work on strengthening your writing skills. Your writing will be evaluated and returned in a timely fashion, allowing you to incorporate my comments into your future work. For help outside the classroom,
please see me during my office hours and/or work with a writing tutor in the Center for Reading and Writing (CRW), Room: E-230, x7557, cas@ramapo.edu.”

**Weekly Class Schedule**
For each class meeting, indicate date, topic and required readings and assignments. Indicate due dates for papers, assignments, quizzes, and exams where possible. With as much detail as possible, a syllabus will provide students with a sense of the course's structure and sequence so that they can perceive a relationship between the goals of the course and the topics of materials to be covered. The calendar should include notice of when exams are to be given, or are due, or conferences to be held. The calendar should also include important deadlines such as add/drop, withdrawal, and incomplete requests. The ARC reminds faculty that tests/quizzes may not be scheduled on days of religious observances, as posted on the Academic Calendar. Web for Faculty is updated prior to the start of semester to show the Final Exam Fall schedule for the upcoming semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 9/3/12</th>
<th>Topic/Key Questions</th>
<th>In-Class Activities</th>
<th>Homework</th>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2 9/10/12</th>
<th>Topic/Key Questions</th>
<th>In-Class Activities</th>
<th>Homework</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education in America: What is the purpose of education? Can we use our experiences to be effective educators?</td>
<td>-Peer Facilitator Session -Reading Discussion (Dewey&amp; Lortee) - Reading Discussion: What is the Purpose of Education in America? (Excerpt: Varenne, H. and R. McDermott.) -Activity: Gallery Walk -Introduce “Teach Me How To” Project</td>
<td>Read and Reflect: - Lake, R. (1990). An Indian Father’s Plea. - Wehmeyer, M.L. The impact of disability on adolescent identity. Teach Me How to ________: Students will prepare a 5-minute Mini-Lesson on a topic of their choice to present over the course of the first two months of school. Sign up times will be distributed</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3 9/17/12</th>
<th>Topic/Key Questions</th>
<th>In-Class Activities</th>
<th>Homework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Opening Convocation**
September 20, 1:00 – 2:30 PM
| Week 5 10/1/12 | **Student Identity:** How does our identity affect how we learn? (race, class, gender, and sexuality) | **Peer Facilitator Session**
- “Teach Me How to” Presentations
- Reading Discussion (Lorde, Steele and “Color of Wealth”)
- Lecture/Discussion: Social Reproduction Theory
- Debate: Agency v. Institutional Inequity | **Read and Reflect:**
- Giroux, H. - “Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals.”
**Journal Reflection:** Describe an experience when your race, class, gender and/or sexuality has oppressed/liberated you. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week 6 10/8/12 | **Teacher Identity:** How can we be true to ourselves and our values in a classroom setting? | **Peer Facilitator Session**
- “Teach Me How to” Presentations
- Reading Discussion (Giroux)
- “Story of a First Year Teacher” - Presentation & Discussion
- In Class Reflection: What kind of teacher do I want to be (Philosophy Draft) | **Read and Reflect:**
- Ball, D. L. & Wilson, S. W. - Integrity in teaching: Recognizing the fusion of the moral and the intellectual. |
| Week 7 10/15/12 | **Ethical Responsibilities as Educators:** What responsibilities do educators have to their communities? | **Peer Facilitator Session**
- “Teach Me How to” Presentations
- Reading Discussion (Ball and Wilson)
- TED Talk: Sir Kenneth Robinson (Creativity)
- Group Discussion: What responsibilities do educators have to their students, families, administrators, and themselves? | **Read and Reflect:**
- Tyack, D. and Cuban, L. - Why the Grammar of Schooling Persists |
| Week 8 10/22/12 | **Brief History of Education:** How has role of education and educators changed over time? | **Peer Facilitator Session**
- “Teach Me How to” Presentations
- Activity- Timeline (Major Events, National Policy, Local Policy, Personal Experience)
- Discussion of Cause and Effect
- Reading Discussion (Tyack and Cuban)
- Discussion: What was the original purpose of American education? Has it changed? | **Read and Reflect:**
- Payne, C. - *So Much Reform, So Little Change.*
- Stevenson, H.C. - “Missed, dissed, and pissed.” |
| Week 9 10/29/12 | **Educational Contexts:** How is education different in suburban, rural, urban, and international settings? | **Peer Facilitator Session**
- “Teach Me How to” Presentations
- Reading Discussion (Payne and Stevenson)
- Independent Reflection on Personal Experience: Share to class
- Video Walkthroughs/ Interviews of Teachers experience around America and World | **Read and Reflect:**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Social Expectations on Educators: How does the media portray educators? Are the expectations of teachers? Is it fair and/or accurate? What happens when teachers don’t meet these expectations?</th>
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</table>
| 11/5/12 | -Peer Facilitator Session  
-Reading Discussion (Nieto)  
-Film Analysis: “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off,” “Stand and Deliver,” “Freedom Writers,” “Dead Poets Society,” and “Bad Teacher.”  
-Jigsaw: News clippings of teachers in Modern America  
-Group Discussion/Jigsaw Reflection: Is there value to pushes for funding, Merit based pay, tenure |
| 11/12/12 | Mid-Term Observation Presentations |
| 11/19/12 | Thanksgiving Break (11/22-11/24) |
| Week 13 | Mid-Term Observation Presentations |
| 11/26/12 | -Peer Facilitator Session  
-Presentation peer review |
| 12/3/12 | Methods of becoming and growing as an educator: How can an educator be best prepared for a classroom setting? |
| | -Peer Facilitator Session  
-Student Led Discussions on Methods of becoming an educator  
-Discussion: What is the value to these various methods of teacher education?  
-Final Paper Peer Editing Time |
| 12/10/12 | Final Paper Submission |
| | -Roundtable discussion: Who are we as future educators? |

**Grading Policy**

Grades will be calculated based on the successful completion of the following assignments/criteria:

- Class Participation- 20%
- Summer Reading Essay- 10%
- School Interview/Observation Presentation-20%
- Education Program Research Presentation- 10%
- Teaching Philosophy Final Paper - 20%
- Weekly Reflection Journal- 20%
Grade Distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt;93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-87</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-60</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
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An incomplete grade will be granted in exceptional circumstances and when requested by a student who has satisfactorily completed at least two-thirds of course requirements prior to the end of a term, for reasons of illness or other emergency. No make-up final exams will be given in this course.

Attendance Policy
Regular class attendance is expected. 3 absences will result in a final average deduction of one full grade (e.g., from A to A-). More than 4 absences will result in a failing grade. College policy states that students must notify faculty within the first three weeks of the semester if they anticipate missing any classes due to religious observance.

Cell Phones - Cell phones are strictly prohibited in the classroom. All cell phones must be on silent when in class. If a cell phone is answered during class, you will be asked to leave the class and will be marked with an unexcused absence. Do not text while in class. Texting in class is a distraction not only to you and your fellow students, but to your instructor as well.

Electronic Forms of Communication
In accordance with College policy, I will use your Ramapo College email address (@ramapo.edu) to communicate with you about all course-related matters. We will be using My Ramapo/Luminis and/or Moodle in this course.

Students with Disabilities
If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a disability that has been documented with the Office of Specialized Services, please make an appointment with me. Please note: Students must be registered with the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) to receive accommodations. For additional information, contact the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) at x7514 or email at oss@ramapo.edu. Please do not place a time limit on when students may request accommodation, as they may not be aware of their need until later in the semester.

Policy on Academic Integrity
Students are expected to read and understand Ramapo College’s academic integrity policy, which can be found in the Ramapo College Catalog. Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who violate this policy will be required to meet with the faculty member and/or will be referred to the Office of the Provost. An abbreviated version of this policy is described below.

Policy
All members of the Ramapo community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Since violations of academic integrity erode community confidence and undermine the pursuit of truth and knowledge at the College, academic dishonesty must be avoided.

Procedures
The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs has the responsibility for the oversight and enforcement of the academic integrity policy and for making the policy an institutional priority. The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is also responsible for publishing the policy and for educating both faculty and students about the policy.
Faculty members play a crucial role in the academic integrity policy. They are responsible for educating their students about the importance of academic integrity and for communicating to students their expectations with respect to academic integrity in course work. Students have the responsibility to understand the College academic integrity policy and to comply with the policy in all their academic work.

Criteria
There are four broad forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating
Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents his or her mastery of material on a test or other academic exercise. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:
   - copying from another student's work;
   - allowing another student to copy his/her work;
   - using unauthorized materials such as a textbook, notebook or electronic devices during an examination;
   - using specifically prepared materials such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an examination;
   - collaborating with another person during an examination by giving or receiving information without authority;
   - taking a test for another person or asking or allowing another to take the student’s own test.

2. Plagiarism
Plagiarism occurs when a person represents someone else's words, ideas, phrases, sentences, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work that includes such material, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific footnote references; additionally, verbatim statements must be acknowledged through quotation marks. To avoid a charge of plagiarism, a student should be sure to include an acknowledgment of indebtedness:
   - whenever he or she quotes another person's words directly;
   - whenever he or she uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they have been completely paraphrased in one's own words;
   - whenever he or she allows another individual to contribute to the work in some significant fashion (for instance, through editing, or sharing of ideas);
   - whenever he or she uses facts, statistics, or other illustrative material taken from a source, unless the information is common knowledge.

Examples of standard citation formats can be found on the Library Website: Citation Manuals and Style Guides.

3. Academic Misconduct
Academic Misconduct includes the alteration of grades, involvement in the acquisition or distribution of unadministered tests, and the unauthorized submission of student work in more than one class. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:
   - changing, altering, falsifying, or being the accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form or other academic record, or entering any computer system, College office or building for that purpose;
• stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or entering any computer system, College office or building, for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test;
• submitting written work (in whole or in significant part) to fulfill the requirements of more than one course without the explicit permission of both instructors;
• disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research;
• sabotaging another student’s work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment;
• knowingly facilitating a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy by another person.

4. Fabrication
Fabrication refers to the deliberate use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to: citation of information not taken from the source indicated;
• listing of sources in a “works cited” that were not used in that project;
• altering, stealing and/or falsifying research data used in research reports, theses, or dissertations;
• submission as one's own of any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another’s identity;
• falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records.

More on academic integrity can be found here:
http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_11_12/academic-policies.html?col10=open#CollapsiblePanel10