



Course Syllabus: From Tinker to Today: Student Rights in Schools

Number of Credits: 1*

Course Instructors: Cindy Swanson, Becky Smith & Joshua Merritt

Course Description:

The issues of civil liberties are present in our daily lives both inside and outside the school environment. However the liberties of free speech and privacy get tricky when applied to the school setting. Does one student have the right to free expression when it is causing another student to feel offended? What do the courts say about student rights? How do we balance this with public safety? What makes a good teacher advocate for students? These are all questions that are magnified by the presence of social media and technology. So that we may be better advocates for our students it is imperative that we understand the law and how to apply it to keep our students protected.

This course will explore and interpret the wide-ranging span of rights for Iowa students and apply them to a contemporary context. Resources targeted for students and educators alike will be used to increase a deeper understanding of student rights and how they influence the outcome of a situation. Professionals from the field will share their knowledge of navigating through policies and become effective advocates for students. Finally, the course will give educators the tools they need to evaluate the policies within their own district to determine what can be done to increase safety while protecting rights.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate deeper knowledge and understanding of student rights and court decisions associated with these protections
- Apply knowledge of rights and responsibilities to advocate on behalf of students who need protection
- Evaluate district and school policies to judge their effectiveness in protecting student rights while still considering school safety

*** Course Requirements:**

To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

Other Course Information:

Getting Started

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with log in instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.

Participation

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 3 Weekly Units, however all assignments will not be due until the final day of the course.
- You may work collaboratively and submit similar responses on all assignments except final projects, which must be individually authored.

INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

Day	Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
Day 1	On Liberty: The Rights of Students		
8:00-8:45am	Discussion: Introductions – Participants will introduce themselves to the class, and talk about what they hope to gain from the course.	45 minutes	
8:45-10:00am	Discussion: What is Tinker? – Participants will review materials and submit a short paper on the Tinker v Des Moines case. They will outline the significance, details of the case, and what their thoughts are on student rights in schools.	1 hour 15 minutes	
10:00-11:30am	Discussion: Student Rights in Iowa – A Look at the Tinker Test – Participants will discuss with the instructor student rights in Iowa, and create a discussion post on their thoughts and what they learned.	1 hour 30 minutes	
11:30-12:15pm	Lunch		
12:15-1:45pm	Discussion: School newspapers – Participants will be tasked with researching a current event situation involving school newspapers or other publications. They will summarize the situation and resolution, then give their thoughts on if the school did the “right thing.”	1 hour 30 minutes	
1:45-2:45pm	Discussion: Religious Freedom in School – Participants will review articles and materials, and summarize the information. They will also need to research information on student rights on their own. They will then discuss what rights students have when it comes to religious	1 hour	

	expression, and what rights schools have on the same front.		
	Reflection 1: Religious Freedom in School – Participants will research a faith practice of their choice, and answer critical thinking questions about accommodations that a student may need in school. They will then examine their own school policies, and determine if changes should be made. They will report their findings in a two-page reflection.		6 hours
2:45-4:00pm	Discussion: Dress Codes – Participants will read articles surrounding a well know dress code case. They will summarize key points of the case, and whether they think the right decision was made at the end of the case.	1 hour 15 minutes	
	Reflection 2: Dress Codes – Participants will read more on laws concerning dress codes in schools, and look at the policies and practices of their own educational setting. They will write a one-page reflection on the findings in their school, and if the policies align with state law.		4 hours
Day 2	Activities/Discussions	In Class	Out of Class
8:00-9:00am	Discussion: Review and Reflect - Participants will break into small groups and discuss assigned readings. They will also discuss what they have learned so far from the course, and how they can apply concepts to their classroom	1 hour	
9:00-10:00am	Discussion: Punishment – Participants will read ACLU materials on student rights, specifically surrounding punishment. They will then discuss where limitations are when it comes to punishing students, and what rights students have if school policy violates the law.	1 hour	
10:00-11:15am	Discussion: Student Groups – Participants will read posted materials as well as use their own research skills,	1 hour 15 minutes	

	and answer questions regarding laws that protect student groups in schools.		
	Reading 3: Student Groups – Participants will research the policies of their own school on student groups, and write a one page reflection on their findings, and if their school’s policy aligns with state law.		4 hours
11:15-12:15pm	Discussion: Sex-Segregated Schools – Participants will read articles as well as research on their own, and submit a short paper on sex-segregation in schools. Themes like activities, classrooms, and legal issues surrounding sex-segregation should be covered in submissions.	1 hour	
12:15-12:45pm	Lunch		
12:45-1:30pm	Discussion: Confederate Flags – Participants will review an article on a case regarding Confederate flags and schools. They will discuss what the legal ramifications would be in Iowa were the case to happen in the state.	1 hour	
1:30-2:15pm	Discussion: Trans* Student Rights – Participants will review course materials and research on their own the topic of transgender students using school restrooms. Submissions should cover any laws or school district policies, and the participant’s view.	45 minutes	
	Reflection 4: Trans* Student Rights - Participants will read articles and current events on issues related to the rights of transgender students in schools. Participants will share their findings and perspectives at the next class with a one-page reflection.		4 hours
2:15-3:15pm	Discussion: Cyberbullying – Participants will review course materials and research further about cyberbullying. They will then post discussions on what rights students have, and legal obligations of schools to address cyberbullying, if any.	1 hour	

	Reflection 5: Cyberbullying – Participants will research and read laws and cases on cyberbullying. They will also read articles on how to support students who experience cyberbullying, and how to address cases of cyberbullying as an educator, and respond with a one-page reflection.		4 hours
3:15-4:00pm	Discussion: Protesting – Participants will review materials and laws regarding student rights relating to the act of protesting, and answer critical thinking questions related to their own experiences and opinions as they relate to the laws.	45 minutes	
	Reflection 6: Protesting – Participants will choose a story in the media on student protests, and determine if the school responded in a way that respected the student’s rights. They will also offer possible alternative ways the school could have intervened in a one-page reflection.		2 hours
	Implementation Plan: How to Work with Students, Parents, Administrators, and Fellow Educators – Participants will submit a two-page final assignment on what they will take away from the course and apply in their educational setting.		6 hours
	Total Time	15 hours	30 hours

Coursework

Participants can earn up to 700 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
Reflections (6 total)	600
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	100

Total	700
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Grading Scale – Graduate Credit

100-90% (700-630 points)	A
89-80% (629-560 points)	B
79-70% (559-490 points)	C
69-60% (489-420points)	D
59%-Below (<419 points)	F

Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit

100-80% (700-560 points)	P
79%-Below (<559 points)	NP

Student Requirements

Students are required to:

- Attend and participate in all in-class time
- Complete all readings/reflections
- Complete a final assignment

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities

Reflections and Final Assignment (100 points each)

The reflections and final assignment are critical parts of this course. Any sources should be cited in either MLA or APA format, and plagiarism will result in a failing grade. The paper is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. Participants should cover themes covered both in class as well as in outside readings. The rubric below will be used to grade the assignments, but additional details will be provided within the course.

Grading Rubric for Assignments		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	20
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	20
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	12
	Discusses Overall Implications	8
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	8
Mechanics	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	8
Implementation	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	8
	States resources to be used	8
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	8
Total Points Possible		100

