

Carlos Vasquez, Ph.D.
Texas Wesleyan University
817 531-4945 office DWH 202
Office hours: TBA
email: cvasquez@txwes.edu

Summer 2009
Edu 6399.70 Emerging Educational Issues in Brasil

I. Date, Time, Location: July 2- 12, 2009, UNIMEP, Piracicaba, Brasil, also two orientation meetings, June 10, June 17, 4:00 at the historic campus. A final class will be held July 21.

II. Prerequisite: 3.0 good standing, admittance to Graduate Studies in Education.

III. Objectives and purpose:

To gain understanding of global issues in education, by visiting schools, school programs, educational institutions, and dialogue with educators in a country other than the United States.

IV. Instructional methods:

Study abroad, dialogue, readings, listening, presence, study groups, large group discussions, writing, presentations will be utilized. We will move somewhat slowly, quietly at times, loudly at others.

V. Course description: Topics such as the role of technology in contemporary education; school law and political influences in education; trends in school management; professional codes of ethics in education; and other timely and relevant topics are addressed with emphasis on current professional literature, professionalism, and the role of the classroom teacher.

Wesleyan students will read political articles from journals and world reports regarding educational structures and practice in Brazil. Each student will write a preparatory report on findings regarding educational design, issues, curriculum, practice. Preparatory meetings will be held to discuss interview techniques and questions. Once on site, Wesleyan students will participate in the teaching processes, and will also interview, read, seek answers to questions regarding educational practice. A final paper will be written, comparing what was thought before the travel and what information and understandings were further learned

as a result from the travel experience. The paper will take on the format of knowledge before and after.

VI. Format: Discussion, out-of-class reading, reflection, projects. You will be involved with your peers in discussing readings; writing reflections; conducting research and writing or presenting a scholarly paper; and developing learning lessons for learners.

VII. Texas Wesleyan Policies

Students should read the current Texas Wesleyan University Catalog and Student Handbook to become familiar with University policies. These policies include but are not limited to academic integrity, grade appeal, sexual harassment, student access to records, and others; policies specified in the current catalog are applicable unless otherwise stated in this syllabus.

Texas Wesleyan University adheres to a disability policy which is in keeping with relevant federal law. The University will provide appropriate accommodation as determined by the Director of the Counseling Center, Dr. Michael Ellison. Students must notify instructors of any permanent or temporary disabilities and must provide documentation regarding those disabilities prior to the granting of an accommodation. For assistance, students should consult with Dr. Ellison.

Note: Course syllabi are intended to provide students with basic information concerning the course. The syllabus can be viewed as a 'blueprint' for the course; changes in the syllabus can be made and students will be informed of any substantive changes concerning examinations, the grading or attendance policies and changes in project assignments.

Absence Policy: We will follow Wesleyan absence policy as outlined in the catalog. Three absences and you will be dropped from the course. Also, **tardiness will lower your grade one letter grade.** In general, any absence may greatly affect your grade due to the volume of work involved in class, and your necessary attention for that work. **No late assignments will be accepted. An incomplete is only allowed in extreme circumstances.**

VIII. Assignments:

1. Read and provide evidence of 3 group (4-5 person groups) discussions of the following texts. Choose leaders for the discussion, provide notes of the discussion:

1. Articles and readings from journals and internet that further understanding of history, present politics, education issues. Read 5 articles that describe political, economic, and educational issues in Brazil. Write a brief summary of each article, and formulate 2-3 questions that will guide your interviews in the country

Two preparatory class meetings will be held in June:

Suggested meeting dates are: June 10 and June 17, 4:00- 5:30. On site travel and teaching experience: July 2 – July 12, 2009.

Final papers and reflections due: after return, July 21.

2. Develop English language lessons based on best practice design. Write daily reflections of the work that you do with your learners. Type these lessons and daily reflections and turn in July 21.

3. Interview 3 teachers and students in the schools and universities. Design questions that give you answers about the kinds of school experiences that are common in Brazil, the kinds of expectations that parents and society have about Brazilian schools, any national or state mandated testing that may occur, the kinds of required courses that are found in high schools and universities. Other questions may also be appropriated. Type your interview questions and responses. **Due July 21.** We will have in-country discussions each evening regarding our readings and findings.

4. Comparison/contrast paper: write a (5-6 page) comparison essay of the kinds of education issues and practice that you see in Brazil, compared to education practice that occurs in your present school. You may choose to include interview responses of Brazilian teachers and students that give further information for your observations. What similarities/differences and advantages/disadvantages do you see? **Due July 21.**

5. Plan to bring small Texas gifts to your learners

IX. Grading: 90 – 100 A, 80 – 89 B, 70 – 79 C