

**FYS 100 - EDUCATION AND SOCIETY
FALL 2026 - COURSE SYLLABUS CRN# 10974 and CRN# 10983**

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Office hours: Monday/Wednesday, 3:00-4:30 pm
Tuesday/Thursday, 8:30 am-9:30 am
By appointment by email

Section 31 Tuesday, Thursday 12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Humanities 207
Section 34 Tuesday, Thursday 3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Jepson 102

INTRODUCTION

This course explores K-12 education and its impact on a democratic society and citizenship.

COURSE LEARNING PLAN

Course Learning Objectives - The essential, overarching learning objectives of this course are the following

1. The student will learn about the history of schooling and education in America.
2. The student will be able to analyze the interaction of citizenship and democracy.
3. The student should have an enhanced understanding of the concepts and practices of education in a pluralistic and diverse society.
4. The student will understand the relationship between school reform and education policy.
5. The student should be familiar with the kinds of questions asked by education scholars.
6. The student will examine the importance of schooling in the global marketplace.
7. The student should have enhanced powers of critical thinking and increased capabilities of oral and written communication.
8. The student will develop the fundamentals of oral communication and critical thinking as outlined in the First Year Seminar Common Expectations.

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR - COMMON EXPECTATIONS

First-year seminars offer a hands-on introduction to academic inquiry with small classes, a diverse array of topics, and close contact with faculty. First year seminars serve as an introduction to academic inquiry and the modes of expression that lie at the heart of a liberal arts education. They foster habits of mind fundamental to students' intellectual and academic development, including critical reading and thinking; sharing ideas and research through discussion; and the ability to write and think clearly and effectively. Integrating explorations of specific questions and topics with the development of skills, seminars aim to foster intellectual curiosity and students' ability to act on it.

FYS Learning Outcomes:

1. Written Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through a variety of written work that utilizes a process to help them develop the basics of

academic writing, an initial understanding of disciplinary conventions, and an analysis of appropriate evidence.

2. Oral Communication: Students will demonstrate effective formal and informal oral communication skills within the classroom setting.
3. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through the ability to evaluate, interpret, and analyze a variety of sources and other forms of expression.
4. Information Literacy: Students will be able to effectively access, evaluate, and make ethical use of appropriate sources of information for different scholarly purposes.

Library Lab Overview

An important aspect of this First Year Seminar is the work you will do to enhance information literacy/library research skills. These skills will be developed through a “Library Lab” with our liaison librarian, Ms. Carrie Ludovico.

The purpose of this requirement is outlined below:

The overall goals of the FYS Library Labs are to introduce you to basic library resources and services and develop your critical inquiry in the context of library research. Fundamental research competencies acquired during your first year will help you identify information resources for course assignments. This approach provides you with a foundation for meeting faculty expectations and enables you to conduct more developed and complex research throughout your General Education and Upper Level courses.

There are phases you’ll need to complete this term as part of your introduction to library research and information literacy strategies:

- Take the [Library Pre- and Post-Tests](#), which are 10-question multiple choice assessments used to assess first-year students' incoming familiarity and experience with academic research concepts, as well as the development of those concepts through their first semester. The pre-test is distributed in the first weeks of Fall semester, and the post-test is distributed in the final weeks of Fall.
- Complete the [Exploring the Web](#) online tutorial that introduces students to library services and the physical library spaces.
- Attend a Library Lab during class on Tuesday, October 20. This lab will be led by our FYS liaison librarian Ms. Carrie Ludovico.
- Complete response essays and a final assignment that will require you to apply these skills in researching and evaluating resources.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If you experience difficulties in this course, do not hesitate to consult with me. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

Academic Skills Center (asc.richmond.edu): Academic coaches assist students in assessing and developing their academic and life-skills (e.g., critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, test preparation, time management, stress management, etc.). Peer tutors offer assistance in specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.) and will be

available for appointments in-person and virtually. Peer tutors are listed on the ASC website. **Email [Roger Mancastroppa](mailto:rmancast@richmond.edu) (rmancast@richmond.edu) and [Hope Walton](mailto:hwalt@richmond.edu) (hwalt@richmond.edu) for coaching appointments in academic and life skills.**

Boatwright Library Research Librarians: (library.richmond.edu/help/ask/ or 289-8876): Research librarians help students with all steps of their research, from identifying or narrowing a topic, to locating, accessing, evaluating, and citing information resources. Librarians support students in their classes across the curriculum and provide individual appointments, class library instruction, tutorials, and [research guides](http://libguides.richmond.edu) (libguides.richmond.edu). Students can contact individual librarian (library.richmond.edu/help/liaison-librarians.html) or ASK a librarian for help via email (library@richmond.edu), text (804-277-9ASK), or [chat](http://library.richmond.edu/chat.html) (library.richmond.edu/chat.html).

Career Services: (careerservices.richmond.edu or 289-8547): Can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major or course of study, connecting with internships and jobs, and investigating graduate and professional school options. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor early in your time at UR.

Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.richmond.edu or 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include brief consultations, short-term counseling and psychotherapy, skills-building classes, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

Speech Center (speech.richmond.edu or 287-6409): Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations. Remote practice sessions can be arranged; we look forward to meeting your public speaking needs.

Writing Center (writing.richmond.edu or 289-8263): Assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work.

Disability Services (disability.richmond.edu or disability@richmond.edu or 804-662-5001): The University of Richmond's office of Disability Services strives to ensure that students with disabilities and/or temporary conditions (i.e., concussions & injuries) are provided opportunity for full participation and equal access. Students who are experiencing a barrier to access due to a disability and/or temporary condition are encouraged to apply for accommodations. by visiting: Once accommodations have been approved, students must 1) Submit their Disability Accommodation Notice (DAN) to each of their professors via the Disability Services Student Portal available at this link: sl.richmond.edu/be. and 2) Request a meeting with each professor to create an accommodation implementation plan. It is important to complete these steps as soon as possible because accommodations are never retroactive, and professors are permitted a reasonable amount of time for implementation.

COURSE POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Class and Event Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation in class and group activities/meetings are very serious components of the class. Class attendance **is required**. More than three unexcused absences will result in a half grade reduction for each session missed. Student absences due to illness will not be penalized. Students who are sick should not attend. In the event of excused absences, the instructor will support students to maintain progress toward the course learning goals. Please communicate with me about any extended absence. In addition, unless there are good reasons, lateness will not be tolerated. Chronic lateness will be penalized.

Technology

I am a strong believer in the role of technology in pedagogy and in schooling. However, it can also be distracting to the classroom environment. I will allow laptops and tablets in the classroom, but only for note taking purposes. **I will encourage you each class to put away your smartphones and not check them until after class.** Laptops and tablets will be put away during group presentations and when we have guest speakers.

Use of AI

The rise of AI technology raises fundamental questions about what it means to be a human being as well as the future of global society. It is also raising fundamental questions about the learning process and the nature of higher education. Whatever the ultimate answers to those questions, this course takes it as given that it is a good thing for human beings to be able to think, and think deeply, for themselves. Being able to think deeply means developing the cognitive tools that allow one to critically assess arguments, to question ideologies, to form your own conclusions.

You will not fully develop either your understanding of the material in this class or your capacity to think and act upon the injustices and inequities we will discuss if you do not do the reading or engage in the assignments fully. AI generated supplemental reading guides are not substitutes for wrestling with the text itself. Using AI-generated summaries of the assigned materials is not an acceptable way to prepare for class or to engage this material. This class isn't about providing you information to regurgitate - it's about getting you thinking critically about challenging questions that often do not have easy answers and questions that are (or ought to be) central both to how we conduct our shared lives in a community.

In this course, students are asked and expected to follow the guidelines regarding AI tools:

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software, websites, devices and so forth is strictly prohibited in (a) undertaking any assignments for this class (b) doing the assigned reading for the course and (c) using AI-generated summaries of assigned readings for assignments and other requirements.

Using any AI tools without explicit permission of the instructor, particularly in the completion of the assignments, is a form of academic dishonesty and a violation of the UR Honor Code.

Absence During In-Class Graded Assignments

Unexcused absences from in-class graded assignments may not be made up. Any difficulties or problems should be brought to the instructor's attention as soon as possible (well before the assignment or exam is scheduled.) Requests for extensions will be granted only under dire circumstances.

Honor Code

Every piece of written work presented by individual students must have the honor pledge and the student's signature on it. The pledge is, ***"I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."*** If the code is not on the assignment, there will be a half grade deduction.

Religious Observance Policy

Students needing to miss class because of religious observance should contact me within the first two weeks of the semester to discuss the absence. The University's full religious observance policy may be found here (<http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/religiousobsv.html>).

COURSE REQUIRED READINGS

The classroom work in this FYS course will center on the reading assignments. Since the course involves as much discussion as possible, and with minimum lecturing, it is **IMPERATIVE** that you complete the assigned readings prior to each class. *To be successful in this course you should devote 10 – 14 hours in class, reading and studying the material, and preparing assignments.*

Texts:

Green, K. (2015). *Something must be done about Prince Edward County: A family, a Virginia town, a Civil Rights battle*. Harper Collins Publishers.

Tough, P. (2012). *How children succeed: Grit, curiosity, and the hidden power of character*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Articles:

In addition to these books, there will be documentaries, articles, reports, websites, data sets, and other materials that you will be required to examine. You can access these other materials, labeled *Canvas* in the syllabus under the Modules section of our Canvas website.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments are designed to create a framework in which students are treated fairly and equally. Please remember that critical analysis of the assigned readings is necessary. The readings, articles, and ideas from the course will need to be incorporated into each assignment. Please utilize the *American Psychological Association (APA)* style in referencing material or other referencing sources such as the MLA or Chicago Style. **Every quote and non-original thought that is written by a student should have a reference citation. If there is no reference page at the end of each assignment, there will be a half grade deduction.** Please check the library's citing page for guidance: <http://libguides.richmond.edu/citingsources>.

The assignments for this class are:

Exam (15%)

Exam on history of early American education will be given in the early part of the semester.

Short Response Essays (2 at 15% = 30%)

Responses essays are reflection pieces on the books, discussions from class, and documentaries related to the topic. The response essay should *briefly* state the main point, or main points, made by the author, describe the evidence to support the main point(s), and offer an insight, or a response. The response part of the paper requires analysis or creative thinking, and can take one or more of a variety of forms: (1) you may indicate how you personally responded to the readings; (2) you may consider whether the evidence to support the main point is convincing; (3) you might compare the reading with something else you have read or experienced; or, (4) you might raise a question about the reading. Most importantly, the summary of the reading should be a small part of the paper (I have read the material); most of the paper should be devoted to your response: what do you think about the idea in the prompt and why?

Group Presentation (20%)

At the end of the semester, students will be placed into groups to create a presentation on constructing a new school. This will be a creative endeavor that will require you to think about all that we have studied in the semester on “education and society.” The school will be located in a neighborhood in Richmond that has inequities and lack of opportunity. Your school will want to focus on how best to serve and educate these students and create a “neighborhood institution.”

Final Reflective Response (15%)

Each student will write a final reflective response essay on the need for K-12 education in creating opportunity and equity.

Leadership (20%)

Class preparation, attendance and participation are expected and will help determine both your experience and success in the course. This we will call leadership because it will require you to act as leaders and followers in our course community.

Grading Scale

A+	98-100	A	94-97	A-	90-93
B+	87-89	B	84-86	B-	80-83
C+	77-79	C	74-76	C-	70-73
D+	67-69	D	64-66	D-	60-63
F	0-59				

COURSE SCHEDULE

Introduction and Why Public Schools

Week 1

Tues., Aug. 25

Introduction to Syllabus

Reading:

There are no readings for the first day. Please review the syllabus.

Thur., Aug. 27

Introduction: What Americans Want from Schools

Reading:

Canvas, readings on the importance of schools and education to American democracy; the role of inequity in today's schooling

History of Schooling in America, 1770-1954

Week 2

Tues., Sep. 1

Education and the Building of a New Nation

Reading:

Canvas, Urban and Wagoner, "Education and the Building of a New Nation: 1776-1830"

Thur., Sep. 3

Jefferson's Vision of Education

Reading:

Canvas, Wagoner, excerpt from *Jefferson and Education*

Week 3

Tues., Sep. 8

The Educated Citizenry

Reading:

Canvas, Urban and Wagoner, "The Common Man and the Common School"

Thur., Sep. 10

Class, Caste, and Education in the South

Reading:

Canvas, Urban and Wagoner, "Class, Caste, and Education in the South: 1800-1900"

Week 4

Tues., Sep. 15

Immigrants and Progressivism

Reading:

Canvas, Urban and Wagoner, "Organizing the Modern School System"

Thur., Sep. 17

Catch up and hand out exam

Segregation of Schools: Looking Back, Moving Forward

Week 5

Tues., Sep. 22

***Brown v. Board* and Reaction in Virginia**

Reading: *Canvas*, reading on the reaction of the *Brown* decision in Virginia

Thur., Sep. 24 *Separate, But Not Equal*

Reading: Green, Part I

Week 6

Tues., Sep. 29 *The Lost Generation*

Reading: Green, Part II

Thur., Oct. 1 *Integration or Desegregation*

Reading: Green, Part III

Week 7

Tues., Oct. 6 *Desegregation Federal Court Cases post-Brown*

Reading: *Canvas*, articles on federal court cases and responses to desegregation

Thur., Oct. 8 *Segregated and Separated Schools Today*

Reading: *Canvas*, articles on the changing demographics in K-12 schools in Richmond

Week 8

Tues., Oct. 13 *NO CLASS – FALL BREAK*

Wed., Oct. 14 *Can We Learn & Live Together: Triple School Segregation*

Reading: *Canvas*, *Learn and Live 2.0 report*

Thur., Oct. 15 *DUE: First Response Essay*

Impact of Community, Socio-economic Status and Poverty on Learning

Week 9

Tues., Oct. 20 *Library Visit*

Thur., Oct. 22 *Poverty and Educational Opportunity / Mobility in U.S.*

Reading: *Canvas*, various readings on poverty and education opportunity/mobility

Week 10

Tues., Oct. 27 *Importance of Housing*

Reading: *Canvas*, various readings on the education-housing nexus

Thur., Oct. 29 *Trauma and Toxic Stress Due to Poverty*

Reading: Tough, Chap. 1

Canvas, various readings on trauma and toxic stress

Week 11

Tues., Nov. 3

Grit, Resilience and Failure

Reading:

Tough, Chap. 2

Canvas, various readings on grit, resiliency and failure

Thur., Nov. 5

Non-Cognitive Development and Extra-Curricular Activities

Reading:

Tough, Chap. 3

Canvas, various readings on non-cognitive development

Week 12

Tues., Nov. 10

Wrap Around Services in Schools

Reading:

Canvas, various readings on wrap around services for schools

Thur., Nov. 12

Pushout: Criminalization of schools

Reading:

Canvas, various readings on criminalizing students in schools

Fri., Nov. 13

DUE: Second Response Essay

Creating a School as a “Neighborhood Institution” for an Impoverished Community

Week 13

Tues., Nov. 17

Creating a School: Example of Anna Julia Cooper Episcopal School (AJCES) in Richmond

Reading:

Canvas, various readings on AJCES and website

Guest Speaker:

Mike Maruca, Founding Head of AJCES

Thur., Nov. 19

Explanation of Creating a School Group Project

Reading:

Canvas, project guidelines on Assignment section

Week 14

Tues., Nov. 24

NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving

Thurs., Nov. 26

NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving

Week 15

Tues., Dec. 1

Workday for Group Project

Thur., Dec. 3

Group Presentations

Week 16

Tues., Dec. 8 Group Presentations

Final Reflective Essay DUE: Friday, Dec. 11, 11:59 pm

GRADING RUBRIC	Strong	Acceptable	Weak
Thesis (very important)	Essay has a clean non-obvious, interesting thesis that neither restates the question nor asks one without answering it	Essay has a clear thesis but it may be obvious or a simple restatement of the question	Essay has no clear thesis
Scope	Topic is clearly defined and limited	Topic is defined but limits aren't clear	Topic is either undefined or tries to do too much
Topic sentences	Each paragraph has a topic sentence that clearly links back to the thesis	Paragraphs have topic sentences but relationship to thesis is not always clear	No or few topic sentences; paragraphs not logically ordered
EVIDENCE			
Choice of evidence (very important)	Thesis is supported with evidence drawn from the text that is analyzed creatively and thoughtfully	Thesis is supported with textual evidence but analysis is minimal or evidence is obvious	Thesis is either unsupported or evidence is irrelevant
Integration	Quotations are smoothly integrated into the text	Not all quotations fully integrated; some awkward moments	Quotations not integrated into sentences, introducing grammatical or logical errors
Analysis	Each quotation is preceded or followed by analysis—at least 2 lines per quotation	Quotations are analyzed but some logical breaks or missing steps	Limited to no analysis of quotations; analysis never moves beyond paraphrase
Academic Integrity (pass/fail)	Sources are properly referenced		Essay lacks attribution for sources, whether course materials, online sources, or others
FORMAT			
Grammar	Essay has been copy-edited and has no grammatical or spelling errors	Essay is largely error-free but some errors remain	Essay has not been copy-edited
Style	Essay is clear and graceful	Essay is usually clear and readable	Essay is awkward, repetitive, or hard to read.
Concision (very important)	Essay is concise and diction is well-chosen; style shows attention to revision	Essay is generally concise, though some wordiness may remain	Essay is wordy and vague