ICAB Course Portfolio

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Course EDUC-H205 – Introduction to Educational Thought
16 Students enrolled in Spring Semester 2012

International Learning Outcomes:

- Understand and be able to explain what a cosmopolitan education is
- Analyze and discuss several perspectives on cosmopolitanism (Nussbaum, Appiah)
- Formulate ideas of what it means to be a cosmopolitan citizen
- Compare and contrast childhood education in China, Japan and the US
- Compare two different educational systems and analyze their strengths and problems regarding equal access and educational opportunity
II. Statement regarding the Internationalization of H205

1. Participation in ICAB encouraged me to give H205 a new overarching theme of Cosmopolitan Education. In the past, H205 used to be primarily a liberal studies course in the philosophy of education that was mandatory for elementary and early childhood preservice teachers. With the successful endorsement of H205 as a General Education requirement as well as the listing of H205 as an Honors course, I assumed that H205 can potentially attract a more general student population that might be interested in a general education course not geared toward teacher preparation. The ICAB participation gave me the opportunity to include several components with an international focus into the course. One was the overarching theme of cosmopolitan education as the appropriate conception of an education for the 21st century. The second was a comparative perspective of childhood education in several countries (Japan, China) to make students aware of the values and practices, conceptions of the child and teacher roles in other cultures. Thirdly, we discussed several education systems (India, UK, Germany) and compared those to the US in terms of equality, access and opportunity to educational institutions (schools, universities).

2. These International Learning Outcomes (ILO) fostered an expanded perspective on the following course objectives:
   - It expanded perspectives on the goals and purposes of education through international comparisons.
   - Students developed a vision of the educated person as a cosmopolitan citizen
   - Students analyzed the values and practices of childhood education in two other countries
   - Students compared and contrasted the US system of K-12 and higher education with that of three other countries to reflect on issues of access and educational opportunity and to become aware of the unique features of the US system of public education
   - Students were challenged to use critical thinking, analysis and different types of writing with regard to the ILOs.

3. Regarding assessment, I incorporated the following assignments and assessments
   a) Students had to imagine being a TV host and interviewing a well educated cosmopolitan citizen. They had to develop the questions and the answers. I used iRubric to evaluate this assignment – see Appendix 2 and 3.
   b) Students had a choice of making an in-class presentation on international education. Two students made a PowerPoint presentation on India and the UK and I added Germany as a third country to compare the educational systems. In addition, these two students wrote a research paper on international education – See Appendix 4 for one such essay.
   c) Six Honors students read and presented on Martha Nussbaum’s new book, Not for Profit, in which she argues for a liberal cosmopolitan education as a necessity to safeguard democracy in many parts of the world. See their Powerpoint presentation – Appendix 5. Furthermore, each of the students had to summarize their chapter and address cosmopolitan issues – see assignment and a sample essay – Appendix 6.
   d) In their final examination students were given the choice of a question on comparing the Japanese and the US childrearing practices. Students had read an article on Japanese childhood education by C. Lewis – see syllabus for reference – and they watched a video by Tobin called “Three Cultures” in which Chinese, Japanese and US childhood education was being compared. Also in the final they were asked about the value of a multicultural versus a cosmopolitan education for a global society. See the text for the final and a sample final response – Appendix 7 and 8..
4. Regarding a specific ILO, I believe that a focus on cosmopolitan education was a new perspective to most of these students (7 out of 16 students were freshman). I introduced cosmopolitan education early in the semester (in previous semesters I had used Nussbaum only and in the last part of the semester) by showing a Youtube clip on Kwami A. Appiah talking about being a cosmopolitan, and by giving a brief lecture with Powerpoint. Students then read three articles by Hansen, Nussbaum and Appiah in preparation for their second writing assignment (the interview of a cosmopolitan educated person). In the following weeks we covered the traditional Western philosophers on education in which I frequently made reference to international perspectives until week 12 where we covered Chinese and Japanese childhood education. In the last four weeks, students made the presentations and wrote on cosmopolitan education which was again addressed in the final examination.

5. To improve on ICOs, I need to include more specific practical exercises on what it means to have a global perspective. I used a reflective exercise on attitudes about multiculturalism and multiple identities for a pluralistic society. I would like to expand this for cosmopolitanism to get at the attitudinal aspect and not just assess knowledge about being a cosmopolitan citizen. I did not get into many aspects of cosmopolitan education

Appendix

1a) Course syllabus with
1b) addendum that lists student presentation topics
2a) Instructions on writing assignment on being a well educated cosmopolitan person
2b) Two student responses
2c) iRubric assessment of one acceptable work
3) Instructions on student research paper
4) Sample of student essay
5a) Instruction on Honors student project
5b) Honors students presentation
5c) Honors student essay
6a) Final exam
6b) Two student finals

Please note: Where possible I left off student name. Please erase student names on any of the assignments if you make public use of them.