

Course Syllabus

Course:	EDZU 9814 Violence in American Schools and Society
Credit Hours:	3.0 credits / 45 hours
Instructor:	Richard Acritelli

Course Description

Violence in our schools and society has become a serious problem facing all educators. Violence has added to the teacher's already demanding role as educator and mentor to students. Violence has invaded our daily lives; constantly seen on the news, in schools, sports and dramatized on television shows and movies. Today teachers in all socio-economic areas must deal with violence's influence on both schools and society regularly. We will look at all types of violence (school, social, domestic, cinema, etc.) that impacts the safety of our students and their ability to have a safe and productive learning environment. Through this course, teachers will gain a greater understanding of how to detect these issues within their students, how to speak to them, and their parents. They will also be able to determine which support staff of the school (psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors, administration) would be most appropriate to approach regarding various issues. Violence in American Schools and Society will use government and think tank studies, scholarly readings, news stories, film clips and movies. This is a vital class for all teachers and support staff. We all need to be better acquainted with the strategies and resources available to best protect our most valuable assets – our students.

Course Goals

Know

1. The students will be able to know the important statistics on the different types of violent crimes within American society.
2. How the economy plays a role within violent crimes
3. The impact and rise of date rape amongst teenagers
4. What the huge impact of video games, movies and media are on the violent actions of the youth
5. The team importance of well informed teachers, support staff and administration to proactively handle violent concerns

Understand

1. The importance of local and state agencies that are in place to help you deal with violent situations within your school and society
2. What the importance of a safety crisis plan if an attack or violent situation is occurring to protect the staff and students of your school

3. The true importance of having a strong school climate to prevent violence from occurring through intervention and trust for all students
4. The differences, statistics and extent of hate crimes within the United States
5. The most serious indicators and solutions to help troubled schools
6. How the economic and social environment could increase the amount of violence in our American schools, homes and streets

And Be Able To

1. Determine the most serious problems that are facing our students today and those that could arise in the future
2. Explain the most serious causes and rationale of shooting rampages like that at Virginia Tech and Columbine
3. Understand the new forms of cyber bullying and its impact on our students
4. Describe how violence has impacted the negative actions of sports role models and icons that are continually in the public eye
5. Better informed on the documentation and information of Child Protective Services

Course Outline

I. Introduction and the first block assignments

A. Description of the teachers working environment

1. Diversity/Ethnic Break-down/Future Students
2. Historic district issues of violence
3. Teacher background, handling of violence, past and present issues, and how the school, community, and police work together
4. Violence against the elderly
5. Making a CPS report as a teacher
6. Cyber bullying and the death of Megan Meir
7. Bullying in our schools and society
8. Family and social violence think tank readings

II. Violence within Schools

A. All participants will examine the following problems within American schools:

1. Types of gangs, initiation, and strength of school and community programs
2. Resources that are used to detect gang activity
3. Most serious areas in the United States with gang activity
4. Statistics of gang development, age, power and violence
5. Statistics of gang member incarceration, use of weapons, local, state, and federal laws against curbing these violent crimes

B. The students will analyze scholarly readings, news video coverage and films that will best demonstrated these issues on gangs

C. All students will draft a plan during a school shooting that will encompass research that has been conducted on how their administration handles this type of violent crisis

D. Statistical evidence will also be used to determine the prevalent form of violence within schools today. All students will analyze those statistics that also impact their own schools that they live and work in.

E. The planned student attacks aspect of violence in schools will be a case study of how the problem of planned violence started like that of Columbine. We will look at similar

instances of goals, implementation of attack, warning signs, teacher/support staff prior involvement and the impact on the school and society.

- F. We will also analyze how violence in the schools deters the potential teachers that are well trained from working in high risk districts.
- G. The students will have videos that will be accessed on the numerous shootings, the testimony of the survivors, and family members
- H. Some assignments will be based on:
 - 1. The Sandy Hook and Virginia Tech shootings, the response of law and educational officials, and the lessons that have been learned
 - 2. Characteristics of school shooters
 - 3. Students and drug abuse, robberies, arson, selling of weapons, etc.
 - 4. Films that are based on violence and youthful offenders – the character Tommy from *Shawshank Redemption*
 - 5. The debate over gun control and the power of the Second Amendment – film clips from *Bowling for Columbine*
 - 6. The most recent racial issues that we have seen in Baltimore, New York City, and Ferguson, Missouri.

III. Domestic Violence

- A. All participants will analyze the impact of domestic violence and determine
 - 1. The impact of child abuse for the present and future time (Katy Beers)
 - 2. Why some women do not leave abusive relationship when children are involved
 - 3. The role of family court on handling violent situations
 - 4. Private and legal rights of abused family members
- B. Resources will be provided to all participants on how to detect this abuse, provide different types of scenarios and materials of the key words and expressions of students that have been impacted by domestic violence
- C. The students will look at other areas of domestic violence and have assignments that are based on:
 - 1. Hate crimes, ethnic hatred, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation
 - 2. The Rutgers hate crime
 - 3. Boys in the Hood film assignment on gangs, violence, family values, education, pregnancy, community reorganization, and single parent families
 - 4. Violence and the decline of the economy
 - 5. Statistics on weapons, types of guns that are prevalent in our streets, homicides, and use of weapons in schools
 - 6. American History X and Hollywood's views on hate crimes, the American Nazi party, race relations, education, the legal system, and hatred that is taught from one generation to the next.

IV. Rape

- A. All participants will analyze the different types of feelings that rape will cause.
- B. We will analyze the different ways of combating this serious crime and will discuss how victims could defend themselves, fight back and prosecute.
- C. All students will analyze rape prevention, its impact on the psychological and physical development of young adults and sentencing of perpetrators
- D. Government/Think Tank studies will provide information on the most likely occurrence, areas of highest concentration, age groups and the best way to discuss this topic.
- E. We will look at the stereotypes of rapists, determine their motives, impulses, history of committing this crime and reasons for violating and hurting women/men
- F. The students will have the choice of watching the film *Sleepers* on the impact of rape, abuse, juvenile crimes, and incarceration.

- G. The class will look at the growing impact of teen dating violence and the likelihood that some students could have been raped at a very early age
- H. Intervention from schools, parents, students, law enforcement on the need to prevent the growth of these crimes

V. **Sports and Violence**

- A. All participants will analyze the negative actions of athletes through their professional and personal actions
- B. Video clips will be provided to show athletes that viciously attack others during a contest in front of the youngest fans
- C. Positive examples will be used to show how some athletes left difficult personal and social surroundings that could have made them a statistic
- D. Several examples will be provided to determine the extent of athletes violence and how they have impacted their sport and the youngest fans that follow them

Methods of Instruction

The students will have assignments that are based on readings, forums, statistics, movies, current events news stories, and think tank studies on the impact of violence within our schools and society. They are expected to connect these resources and materials into their own daily teaching schedule, experiences, and concerns that deal with this pressing issue. Each participant is expected to fully analyze these resources and establish their own thoughts on these serious issues that have hurt the safety and security of our schools and daily lives. During the length of the class, additional current events articles that are tied to this course will be sent to this site for the students to read and follow.

Students will connect with each other throughout the course within forums and various other types of online feedback options built into each class.

Methods of Assessment

All participants will complete assignments on a daily basis that will be graded on a nightly basis. They are expected fully complete questions, essays/papers, forums, and films that are based on this subject. If a student is taking this course for graduate credit, they will have to complete all of the required assignments, additional work that is marked graduate, and either a paper for the grade of an A, or a lesson plan with materials, for a grad of an B.

Instructors are online each day of the course and correspond with students through the course itself, feedback on assignments, e-mail, and by phone.

Time Validation

*Notes About Assignments** All students are expected to complete 45 hours of course work. In order to meet the needs of educational professionals working in different tenure areas, grade levels, and settings, this course offers students the opportunity to select from a number of resources and assignments within each unit of study. These are in addition to those that are identified as mandatory by the instructor. In addition, in order to remain relevant, the instructor regularly updates content with contemporary issues as they arise.

Assignment	Time (in hours)
Description of the teachers working environment – a questionnaire on the working conditions, acts of violence, safety procedures, and concerns of teachers. They will share their own thoughts on the issues of violence in our schools and society and how times may have changed.	1.50
Diversity/Ethnic Break-down/Future Students – The teachers will answer questions from an on-line resource on diversity and ethnic issues within our schools. Participants will analyze the break-up of different groups of students within their schools and communities and the concerns that they experience on a daily basis.	1.50
Historic district issues of violence – Teachers will research the impact of violence within their own town and school districts. They will write a strongly written response that addresses the history of violence in their working conditions and the steps that are being addressed to curb these issues. If there are no forms of major violence, the teachers will write about the ways that their schools and society have prevented these threats to stability.	1.50
School and police handling of violent issues and how these districts work together. The teachers will research and write a response on the role of their school and law enforcement to handle the growth of violence. They will identify the steps that are taken to ensure that the security of the students and teachers are guarded on a daily basis.	1.50
Making a CPS report as a teacher – The teachers will answer questions and research the protocols of making a CPS report within their own district. They will identify the factors that are involved in taking possible actions against parents and guardians that are not properly caring for their own children or are living within a dangerous/harmful environment.	2.50
Cyber bullying and the death of Megan Meir – The teachers will watch a video and answer questions on rise of cyber bullying, parenting, deception, and suicide. They will answer questions that are based upon this serious crime that involved the death of a young lady from the terrible cyber actions of her next door neighbor.	1.50
Bullying in our schools and society – The participants will analyze a government website on bullying in our schools. They will answer questions, and they will have to provide a resource about a similar incident in their own community	2.00
Family and social violence think tank readings – The students will read through the National Criminal Justice Reference Service spotlight on family violence and answer questions that are based on the rise of this tension.	1.50
All participants will examine a 60 Minutes segment on violence from a soldier that returned home from serious fighting during the War on Terror. They will watch this link and answer questions about this veteran who has suffered from a serious case of PTSD, who is now in jail. The students will write about the issues that this soldier faced when they came home from the fighting and the lack of government support that was in place to help these veterans.	1.50

The students will research, summarize, and present a story on the growth of gangs in our schools and communities. This information will be presented from a government website on the strength, types of gangs, and what schools and authorities are doing to curb this national problem.	1.50
All students will draft a security plan will be utilized if a school shooting takes place. They are to ask their administration and support staff the key aspects of the necessary steps that take place if a shooting occurs in their school.	2.00
Statistical evidence will also be used to determine the prevalent form of violence within schools today. All students will analyze those statistics that also impact the violent trends that they see within their own schools and communities. The teachers will also learn about the views of our new President Donald Trump on how his administration is going to handle the growth of violence that has been widely seen in every part of our nation. They will read and watch news and Internet stories to better learn about the stance of Trump on the rise of violence.	2.50
Teachers will learn about the reasoning behind some school attacks as seen through the planned actions by the students at Columbine. They will look at the reasoning, goals, implementation of attack, warning sign that were demonstrated by these estranged students. The teachers will watch video links, answer questions, and strongly summarize this assignment and the role of student directed attacks. All teachers will compare and contrast the attacks from today and determine if there has been enough security changes to ensure that these acts of violence are harder to carry out.	2.00
The students will watch different videos that will be accessed on the numerous shootings, the testimony of the survivors, and family members. One of these videos focuses on a young lady that survived both the Columbine and Virginia Tech shootings. They will answer questions based on these Youtube links and the harrowing experiences of this citizen.	1.50
Students will watch links, analyze readings, and answer questions that focus on the Sandy Hook and Virginia Tech shootings, the response of law and educational officials, and the lessons that have been learned from these serious incidents.	1.00
Characteristics of school shooters – The students will read through links and answer questions on information that focuses on the make-up of school shooters. They will analyze profiles of students that carry out these devastating attacks.	1.50
Films that are based on violence and youthful offenders – the character Tommy from Shawshank Redemption – The students will answer questions based on this film and an included reading on juvenile delinquents and the criminal system.	4.00
The debate over gun control and the power of the Second Amendment – The teachers will watch film clips from Bowling for Columbine on the rationale of preserving guns against oppressive the notions that our government will take away all of the rights that our citizens currently hold. This is a scary look at the belief of a citizen, who had a brother arrested for taking part in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.	1.50
The students will read stories and answer questions on racial incidents and tensions that occurred in Baltimore, New York City, and Ferguson, Missouri. They will make connections towards the severity of this attack, the reasons for this dissent, and the reaction of the government. All teachers will analyze the national and local connection between race and violence.	2.00
The teachers will read information and answer questions on the private and legal rights of abused family members. They will analyze the legalities of abuse that occur within households and the steps that are taken to ensure that children are protected.	2.00

The teachers will analyze information on how to best detect violence and how it might impact our students. They will examine the signs and issues that could arise if a student is physically harmed at home.	1.50
The students will answer questions and read a government website on the growth of gangs, the powers of how law enforcement and schools are handling this serious problem. They will respond to the strength of gangs within their own communities and steps that have been taken to curb this threat to our children and society.	1.50
The students will analyze and answer questions on hate crimes, ethnic hatred from information that has been comprised by the Federal Bureau of Investigation on the growth of these incidents in our nation. This site will be tied into the prior assignments that deal with gangs, American History X, and the rise of violence.	2.00
The teachers will watch a link, read a story and answer questions on the Rutgers hate crime and the terrible impact of this incident. This college student was a young gay man that had his privacy completely violated by a video that was taken and released of him and his partner. The participants will learn about the tragic ways that this incident impacted this young man.	2.00
The teachers are able to watch Boys in the Hood film assignment on gangs, violence, family values, education, pregnancy, community reorganization, drugs, and single parent families. They will answer questions that are based on this film and explain the serious subjects that were expressed within this movie.	3.50
The teachers will read information and answer questions on the state of the declining economy within our nation and the rise of violence that is tied to this national issue. This information will show a connection between the strength of the economy, violence, and instability that is related to the demise of jobs and funding.	2.00
The students will analyze the statistics on weapons, types of guns that are prevalent in our streets, homicides, and the use of weapons in schools. The teachers will answer questions and they will research the type of weapons that have been found amongst their own students. We will look at the issues of the Second Amendment and safety within our schools and communities.	2.00
Final Paper and/or Lesson Plan - The teachers will research a major issue that we was addressed in class over a major issue of violence and how it is related to schools and education. They are to write 3-5 page paper, MLA/Chicago Style Footnotes, 12 font, double spaced, and cover page. The teachers could also choose to write a lesson plan on a topic that we covered that has a rationale, resources, and key objectives that could be tied to their teachers and staff.	4.00
Total Time	53.00