EPS 8710 – Directed readings in the principles underlying administration in education, government, business and social agencies and other major areas.

**Purposes**
EPS 8710 is designed to be the first course in the educational leadership and policy studies doctoral program. It can also be taken as an elective for master’s, education specialist, or doctoral students throughout the College of Education. The Readings course will introduce you to an array of questions about education, immerse you in seminal works in the educational literature, and induct you into ways of framing and pursuing issues that you will draw on throughout your scholarly career.

**Outcomes and Objectives**
The specific objectives of EPS 8710 are to develop the knowledge and capabilities needed to:
- Understand and clearly communicate the connections between theories, policies, research, and practice in education.
- Develop original ideas that expand and challenge previous work in educational theory and research.

**Course Overview**
EPS 8710 is structured around three key questions:
1. What are the historical origins of the American education system?
2. How does the American education system simultaneously support and undermine the American dream?
3. How does history and theory help us understand current debates in education policy?

The Readings course will encourage you to draw on your own experience as an educator, student, and citizen to address the ideas raised by the literature in these three areas. At the same
time, this course is meant to be the next step in your intellectual journey as a scholar of education, which will require you to examine familiar education concepts in a new, analytical way. You will need to supplement the application of your own experiences with the application of scholarly analysis that depends on evidence, theory, and cross-boundary exchange of ideas. This course will not leave you with a single theory or conceptual framework for your future work; rather, it will offer you a range of different perspectives from which you can draw on in your development as a researcher and scholar in the coming years. The nature of scholarly work involves taking intellectual risks, and I encourage you to work together to establish a culture in which taking risks is valued, encouraged, and supported.

The Work of the Class: Reading, Discussion, and Writing
(adapted from syllabi by Michael Sedlak, Deborah Ball, and David Cohen)

Reading
This is a reading-heavy course, meant to acclimate you to the volume and depth of the scholarly work you will be doing as an advanced graduate student. A good rule of thumb is to budget one to two hours a week for each course credit hour to prepare for each class. For our class, that means you should plan on 4-8 hours of outside of class work each week. When I took a version of this course in my first semester of my doctoral program at Michigan State University, my advisor and instructor, Dr. Michael Sedlak, shared the following framework for reading generously and critically. I share it with you in the hope that it is helpful in supporting your reading and engagement with texts in this course.

What is the author trying to say?
What are the principal and subsidiary arguments or theses? What are the important conceptual terms? What does the author seem to assume? What sorts of evidence and methods are used? Can you identify specific passages that support your interpretation? Are there other passages that either contradict or appear less consistent with your understanding? Can you make sense of, or account for, these differences? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author's argument?

How has the author constructed the text?
What is the logic of the text’s structure? What clues can you get from the text's structure? Does the organization give you insights into the argument? Are there patterns in the author's presentation that help you to locate and understand the most valuable material? What can you do to concentrate your attention to and interrogation of the text? How does the author treat the words and concepts central to the work?

What is the author's purpose?
Why was this work written? To whom was the author speaking and why? What can you know or infer about the author's motivation?

What is the relationship between the author's assumptions and ideas and your own understanding?
How might your response to the work be affected by your values, beliefs, and commitments? Can you read and make sense of the work on its own terms? How does the author’s treatment of a particular concept or word interact with yours?
How do the author's arguments fit within various communities of discourse?

How is a piece of work connected to the efforts of others dedicated to similar purposes? In what community or communities does the author locate him or herself?

It is essential that you read all of the required texts for each class meeting. Much of the reading we will do this term will consist of pieces you will return to repeatedly in your studies. You’ll see them referenced in other readings, and you’ll revisit some of them in your comprehensive exams. Because they are constantly called on to remember what they have read in the past, most scholars develop systems for keeping track of their literature. There are numerous bibliographic management systems that can help. I use Zotero, which is a free application that can extract bibliographic information from web sources with the click of a button. I encourage you to begin using a system like this. Staff in the Wayne State graduate library can help you set this up. Please let me know if you have questions.

Discussion

Because the course will be run as a seminar, your participation in discussions is important not only for your own learning but also for others. What you learn in this course will be influenced by the nature of everyone's engagement in and contribution to the discussions. Preparing the readings and coming to class with questions, insights, and issues is crucial to making the course work; we rely on everyone's contributions and participation. Building the culture of the class so that genuine inquiry is possible will take all of our efforts to make the seminar a context in which people communicate and are listened to, in which evidence matters, in which thoughtful questioning of one another's claims is desirable, and in which alternative perspectives and interpretations are valued. Because we will investigate a complex topic, we will need to try out ideas that are only partially developed. Doing so is an important part of developing the capacity to think in a disciplined way. How we listen to one another, assist with the formulation of an interpretation, question, and challenge will affect the quality of what we can do together. How we listen to others' reactions to our ideas, accommodate critique and questions, change our minds and revise at some times, and reinforce our analyses at others—all of these things will affect the intellectual culture of the class.

We therefore will need to work attentively on norms for the class. Listening carefully, treating ideas with respect and interest, raising and responding to questions, sharing the floor—all these will matter in constructing an environment where satisfying and challenging intellectual work can take place. One part of exploring an idea or an argument is to attend closely to it to understand its logic, intention, and meaning. Listening generously, assuming that ideas and claims are made for good reasons, is crucial to thinking well. Another part is to be skeptical, to consider what is missing or logically flawed. Using both—generosity and skepticism—contributes to careful unpacking of ideas and to good thinking.

Writing

Writing is another important vehicle for exploring and clarifying ideas, for trying out interpretations and arguments, and for representing ideas and communicating with others. Along with reading and discussing, it is a core practice that we want to help you develop. Writing plays a central role in graduate work, and in educational scholarship and practice. It is an important
part of learning to participate in a community of educational scholars and practitioners who have a specialized discourse. The course will provide occasions to focus on and develop these new aspects of your writing, and the writing assignments, both the major ones as well as smaller explorations, are structured to provide guidance and resources, as well as the opportunity for comments and suggestions.

Course Assignments and Grading
This is a brief description of the assignments and grading policies in EPS 8710. Detailed information about each assignment and rubric will be shared and discussed in class and posted on the EPS 8710 Blackboard site.

- **Short Analysis Paper**: You are required to write a short analysis paper that connects a theme raised in the course readings to a current educational issue. It is due by 5pm on Monday, February 13, 2017. It should be approximately **three (3) pages** in length, typed and double-spaced. Please use Times New Roman 12pt font, with one-inch margins on all sides. Please use APA format for the citations. I will grade the papers through a Blackboard assignment link. Please do not include your name on your paper or file name, as I will grade anonymously. The short analysis paper will comprise 20% of your course grade.

- **Educational Artifact Project**: You are required to create a visual and textual analysis of an educational artifact. You must present your analysis to the class on Monday, March 6, 2017. The presentation can take the form of a blog entry on Blackboard, a PowerPoint presentation, a poster, or another format. You must find an artifact from K-12 schooling or the professional education or experiences of K-12 teachers or administrators. The artifact might be a policy statement, a piece of curriculum, a student test, or another remnant of schooling. Many course readings highlight complexities about assumptions we collectively or individually hold about the nature of teaching and learning, the respective roles of teachers and students, and the nature of school knowledge. Your presentation should therefore raise questions and pose arguments related to those assumptions. There are **three options**: you might choose an **historical artifact**; or a **contemporary artifact**; or you could **compare and contrast** an historical artifact with its analogous contemporary equivalent. The artifact project and presentation will comprise 20% of your course grade.

- **Annotated Bibliography**: You are required to write an annotated bibliography that focuses on an educational research topic of your choosing. You may work with one other partner for this assignment, if you choose. Your bibliography should include at least eight sources, with at least five from class and at least three from your own research. Each entry should include the source in APA format, with a brief summary, an analysis of the reliability of the source, and a reflection on how this source informs your research topic. Try to select a topic that may be related to your dissertation, so this assignment can be a useful tool to you as you continue your studies. It is due by 5pm on Monday, April 3, 2017. It should be between 4 and 6 pages long, typed and double-spaced. Please use Times New Roman 12pt font, with one-inch margins on all sides. Please use APA format. I will grade the annotated bibliographies through a Blackboard assignment link. The annotated bibliography will comprise 20% of your course grade.
• **Synthesis Paper:** For the final paper, I will give you a choice of questions, each of which asks you to analyze a major issue related to EPS 8710 and support it with a synthesis of relevant course readings. This paper will be due at 5pm on Monday, April 24, 2017. The paper should be between **7 and 10 double-spaced pages.** Please use **Times New Roman 12pt font,** with one-inch margins on all sides. I will grade the papers through a Blackboard assignment link. Please do not include your name on your paper or file name, as I will grade anonymously. I will distribute this assignment near the end of the semester. You should follow formal APA citation guidelines. This synthesis paper will comprise 30% of the course grade.

• **Class participation:** You are entering a trade where you often need to live by your wits and on the fly. Learning in EPS 8710 is assumed to be more than skimming documents accurately. Participation in discussions as an active listener and speaker is a skill to take seriously. What happens in class should be as valuable as what occurs when you sit down alone to do your reading or writing. So, realize I take the development of our classroom culture as worth your attention. You are expected to be present and prepared to participate in class each week, whether that is in person or online. If an extenuating circumstance prevents you from attending class, you should notify me by phone or e-mail **before the start of class that week** and communicate with me and another student about what happened in the class you missed. Attendance and class participation will count as 10% of your course grade. Note! The 10% is not automatic. If you come to class and do not participate on a regular basis, do not expect to receive the full 10%. More than one absence will also negatively impact your participation grade.

Rubrics will be used to assess assignments according to the following criteria: consistency with assignment, thoughtfulness of response, effectiveness of argument, and clarity of communication. You will receive the rubrics in class well before the assignments are due.

Class participation will be evaluated on the following criteria: thoughtfulness of contributions (including questions), respectful consideration of and response to others’ comments/questions, and demonstrated mastery of the reading.

*Summary of course requirements and evaluation:*

Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis paper 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational artifact project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated bibliography</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, please note the following grading-related issues:

• Unless arrangements are made in advance, late work will receive no credit.
• Last day to drop and recoup your tuition: Monday, January 23, 2017
• Last day to drop with no grade reported (no refund): Sunday, February 5, 2017
• Last day to withdraw: Sunday, March 26, 2017
Grades for assignments and final grades will be determined by converting percentage of points earned into letter grades, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage of Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-93</td>
<td>Outstanding work nearly free of critique, demonstrating independent high quality performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90</td>
<td>Very good work indicating consistent and careful thought and attention to the challenges of the assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>Good quality work absent systematic inadequacies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-80</td>
<td>Work of graduate standard but omissions exist or careful analysis is not consistently evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77</td>
<td>Marginal quality work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-70</td>
<td>Sub-standard work marked by systematic inadequacies in content, structure, and/or writing mechanics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>Unacceptable quality of work with significant, systematic inadequacies in content, structure, and writing mechanics.</td>
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**Required Texts and Resources**

All required readings can be found on OneDrive, via this [link](#), which can also be found on our Blackboard website. You must sign in to OneDrive with your Wayne State account. The readings are numbered in the syllabus and correspond to the numbers in the downloadable file names. Please let me know immediately if you have problems accessing the readings.

**Correspondence, Office Hours, and Feedback**

Course communications will be sent through Blackboard or through your Wayne State email address. You are responsible for everything posted on our class Blackboard page. I expect that you will check Blackboard daily.

Office hours will be scheduled through appointments. I am available to meet either face-to-face, via phone, or via Skype/FaceTime. Please contact me ahead of time to find the best time for both of us.

On-going feedback is very important to me. Throughout the course, I am eager to hear your thoughts on what is working what is challenging, what is confusing, and what you are learning. I am also open to suggestions for adapting the course. Please feel free to raise these issues during the welcome period of each class, or schedule a time to discuss with me.

**A Note on Online Sessions**

Most online sessions for this course will be “synchronous,” meaning you will be required to participate in class online during our specified class time – 5pm on Mondays. Attendance is expected in these sessions, just as it will be in person. The format of each online session and the method of signing on will be announced via Blackboard and in class at least a week before. As this is my first opportunity to teach a hybrid course, I welcome any suggestions or feedback.
Course Schedule Overview

The weekly schedule for the course is as follows. Bold dates are online sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 01</td>
<td>01/09/2017</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 02</td>
<td>01/23/2017</td>
<td>Competing Purposes of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 03</td>
<td>01/30/2017</td>
<td>Seeking Equality in American Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 04</td>
<td>02/06/2017</td>
<td>Critical Theories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 05</td>
<td>02/13/2017</td>
<td>Social Reproduction Theories; Paper 1 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 06</td>
<td>02/20/2017</td>
<td>Progressivism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 07</td>
<td>02/27/2017</td>
<td>Theories of Institutionalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 08</td>
<td>03/06/2017</td>
<td>Artifact Projects Due; Presentations in Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 09</td>
<td>03/20/2017</td>
<td>Politics of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 10</td>
<td>03/27/2017</td>
<td>Situating Research Interests in Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 11</td>
<td>04/03/2017</td>
<td>Economic Theories in Education; Bibliographies Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 12</td>
<td>04/10/2017</td>
<td>The Problem with Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 13</td>
<td>04/17/2017</td>
<td>Getting Better at Getting Better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 14</td>
<td>04/24/2017</td>
<td>Wrap Up; Synthesis Paper Due</td>
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Detailed Course Schedule and Readings

Session 01: Introduction 01/09/2017 – In Person
Our first session will situate the course in the context of the doctoral program in educational leadership and policy studies and begin to frame our time together. We will go over the syllabus in detail, and we will begin discussions about how the concept of the American dream helps us understand both the achievements and the failures of our public school system. As you read, ask yourself:

- What is your initial, gut reaction to the course as framed in the syllabus? Given your experiences in K-12 public education, does the course design resonate… or not…?
- What is the American dream to you? Have you been able to achieve it?
- What responsibility do educators have to ensure that all students can fulfill the American dream?

Readings:
1. EPS 8710 Syllabus

01/16/2017 – NO CLASS – MLK Day

Session 02: Competing Purposes of Education 01/23/2017 – In Person
Our second session will examine the historical foundations of our public school systems and the struggle over what schools are for, who should have power over them, and what we owe our students. As you read, consider the following:
• What are the implicit and explicit goals of public schools today? How do you see those goals manifest in your schools?
• Are there fundamental flaws in the way our initial public schools were designed – and then reformed – that get in the way of the American dream being realized?
• Are there ways in which the concept of the American dream led to those flaws?

Readings:

Session 03: Seeking Equality in American Schools 01/30/2017 – Online
Our public schools have inequality built into their foundation. The third session will focus on competing visions for how to dismantle those inequalities and persistent social problems that thwart our goal for equality. As you read, consider:
• Do we see the competing visions from Washington and DuBois differently in hindsight? What do you think now, that you might not have thought during their time?
• What aspects of the Brown decisions were historic, and what aspects may have perpetuated the problem?

Readings:

Session 04: Critical Theories 02/06/2017 – Online
As a researcher and scholar, your work will not stand alone. It will be situated in the history of prior scholarship and will contribute to our understanding of future work. In research, theory helps us frame our questions, guide our methods, and understand our findings. It also helps us to connect new knowledge to old. In today’s session, we will begin to delve deeply into theories that have guided analyses of education and schooling. In particular, we will consider “critical” theories and how they help us understand inequality and injustice in schools.

Readings:

Session 05: Social Reproduction Theories 02/13/2017 – In Person

**DUE TODAY on Blackboard by 5pm: Short Analysis Paper**

We will continue our exploration of critical educational theories by considering social reproduction theories. As you read, consider:

- In what ways might schools and educators be unconsciously perpetuating societal inequities?
- As you reflect on your own practice, can you see how you might have done this?
- How does seeing the world from this theoretical lens help you understand ways you might undermine the inequities it identifies?

Readings:


**Recommended:**


Session 06: Progressivism 02/20/2017 – Online

In this session, we will consider the lessons schools teach students, explicitly or implicitly, and what those lessons tell us about what we value. We will continue the conversation about social reproduction, while also considering how it intersects with concerns about the goals of public education. As you read, consider:

- What is the responsibility of schools and what is not? How do these readings push your thinking about what schools should be doing?
• Does Dewey’s description of schools provide another possible “goal” to add to Labaree’s? Or does it fit within the three he described?

Readings:

Session 07: Theories of Institutionalism 02/27/2017 – In Person
So far, we have mostly focused on the ways in which our social inequities and dynamics influence the function and purpose of schools. This week, we will consider how the institutional structures of schools can support or undermine progress and change. As you read, consider:

• Have you seen good policies fail in implementation? What seemed to go wrong?
• Have you seen bad policies turn into positive outcomes for kids? How so?
• How much do you know and understand about the policies and practices you are charged with implementing?

Readings:

Session 08: Artifact Presentations 03/06/2017 – In Person
DUE TODAY: Educational Artifact Presentations in Class

03/13/2017 – NO CLASS – Spring Break

Session 09: Politics of Education 03/20/2017 – In Person
As Labaree described, the conflicts in American education and, in turn, the American dream, are political. This week, we will explore differing perspectives on education politics and their influence on schools. As you read, consider:

• What are your assumptions about who has power and influence in school systems? Do these readings confirm or undermine those assumptions?
• What are the biases you detect from the authors? Are they reliable sources? What do you know about them?

Readings:

Session 10: Situating Research Interests in Context 03/27/2017 – Online
We will hold online check-ins to discuss your research in context of the course and your progress on the annotated bibliography, allowing time for online collaboration.

Session 11: Economic Theories in Education 04/03/2017 – Online
DUE TODAY on Blackboard by 5pm: Annotated Bibliography
Many of the policy reforms we have seen in education over the last two decades have emerged out of economic theories about competition, choice, and market behavior. For today’s session, we will consider the foundational research and theory that led to these reforms, as well as the financial context of one state – Michigan – and how it interacts with these policies. As you read, consider:
• What assumptions are the authors making about the way people behave?
• What have been some of the unintended consequences of market-based reforms?

Readings:

Session 12: The Problem with Policy 04/10/2017 – In Person
Whatever your politics, most citizens want to see our public schools improve. But improving the technical core of schools – teaching, in particular – has proved difficult. Today’s readings look back at prior attempts to improve schools and identify potential reasons for failure. As you read, consider:
• What have we learned so far in this course that would suggest that reforming the technical core of schools through public policy would be very difficult?
• What sorts of policies may have better staying power than others?

Readings:
   http://doi.org/10.1086/685847 Read the first two pages.

Recommended:

Session 13: Getting Better at Getting Better 04/17/2017 – In Person
While last week’s session had us looking to the past to understand policy’s failure at improving schools, this week’s session has us looking to the future – at the most recent research and scholarship on school improvement and its hope for positive outcomes for kids. As you read, consider:

- What about improvement science as a reform mechanism makes you think it could work? What makes you skeptical?
- If you were to form a networked improvement community in your school or district to tackle a specific problem of practice, what would it be? Why?

Readings:

Recommended:

Session 14: Wrap Up 04/24/2017 – Online
DUE TODAY at 5 PM: Synthesis Paper
We will spend today’s class time on the following activities:

- Students will explain lessons learned from their annotated bibliographies and synthesis papers, and what they’re currently thinking about for their own research.
- We will review the themes from the course and discuss feedback on the format, readings, assignments, etc.
University Policies

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism
The College of Education has a “zero tolerance” approach to plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. (See Student Code of Conduct [http://doso.wayne.edu/assets/student-code-of-conduct-brochure.pdf](http://doso.wayne.edu/assets/student-code-of-conduct-brochure.pdf)). Plagiarism includes copying material (any more than 5 consecutive words) from outside texts or presenting outside information as if it were your own by not crediting authors through citations. It can be deliberate or unintended. Specific examples of academic dishonesty, including what constitutes plagiarism, can be found in the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin ([http://bulletins.wayne.edu/ubk-output/index.html](http://bulletins.wayne.edu/ubk-output/index.html)) and Graduate Catalog ([http://www.bulletins.wayne.edu/gbk-output/index.html](http://www.bulletins.wayne.edu/gbk-output/index.html)) under the heading “Student Ethics.” These university policies are also included as a link on Blackboard within each course in which students are enrolled. It is every student’s responsibility to read these documents to be aware which actions are defined as plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Sanctions could include failure in the course involved, probation and expulsion, so students are advised to think carefully and thoroughly, ask for help from instructors if it is needed, and make smart decisions about their academic work.

Enrollment/ Withdrawal Policy
Beginning in Fall 2011, students must add classes no later than the end of the first week of classes. This includes online classes. Students may continue to drop classes (with full tuition cancellation) through the first two weeks of the term.

Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the 4th week of class will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN.
- WP will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested.
- WF will be awarded if the student is failing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested.
- WN will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade.

Students must submit their withdrawal request on-line. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal request before it becomes final, and students should continue to attend class until they receive notification via email that the withdrawal has been approved. Beginning in Fall 2011, the last day to withdraw will be at the end of the 10th full week of classes. The withdrawal date for courses longer or shorter than the full 15-week terms will be adjusted proportionately.

Attention Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-202-4216 (video phone). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where
students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for the current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

Religious Observance Policy
Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provision for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternative arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.