

Course Syllabus

Course:	EDZU 9823	Chasing the American Dream: Our Students and the Future Direction of this Country
Credit Hours:	3.0 credits / 45 hours	
Instructor:	Rich Acritelli	

Course Description

Since the end of World War II, the United States has been the strongest economic, military, social and educational power in the world. For years, this country has been the home to the finest universities that have been the center of multiple types of innovation. But, since the start of this new century, America has fallen behind other nations within many of these attributes that made America succeed at every type of endeavor. On a daily basis, our people are reminded of debt, warfare, a lack of productivity, and the educational emergence of foreign students. As we teach the students of today, how do we educationally compete with nations like that of Germany, Japan, Sweden, and the emerging powers of Russia, Vietnam, and China? What are the concerns that we see in this nation over the ability of our students to compete with others who are a thousand miles away within this global economy? Has our people become too complacent with being the mightiest nation on this earth and if so, what strides do our citizens have to make to ensure that our future generations are properly taught and motivated to regain our national prowess that has been continually challenged? What are the best ways to continually motivate our students to excel and to push them to do their very best within the educational setting of today? Are our schools, local and national government doing enough to ensure that our students have the very best tools at every grade and content level to prepare our citizens at every level for the future challenges that surely awaits them? All students will have insightful readings, videos, movies, statistics and findings to bring this vital course that will shed light on the demands of our teachers and students. These assignments will continually foster the importance of this class to shed light on the direction of our students and nation at home and abroad within this new century and beyond.

Course Goals

To Know

1. The concerns of students, parents, and guardians over the costs of college and how this could impact the future of our youngest adults in attaining a higher level education
2. Immigration issues that have created division within the political parties and our citizens
3. The terrible impact of our federal deficit and how this debt could hurt the future growth of this nation and how it could impact present and future generations
4. The direction of the American educational system as we are competing with a global economy
5. The current and historic problems that our government leaders have tried to solve at home and abroad and those that are expected down the road

6. The most common college majors and how they relate towards the changing economic, social, financial, political and military needs of our nation

To Understand

1. How the economic and social programs such as education, social security and Medicare are always under the constant threats of government spending reductions
2. The strength of parent and educational organizations that work collaboratively towards the common goal of educating our students for the challenges that they will certainly face in the future
3. The impact of changing demographics within this country and the impact that it will hold for our future generations
4. The changing job market and how the global economy impacts current and future students
5. Foreign strength, discipline, and differences within education for K-12 and college students
6. The local, state, and federal programs that are in place to help students pay for college and locate jobs

and To Be Able To

1. Determine if our American way of life is being economically threatened (China, Russia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc.)
2. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of our government to determine the current and future needs of our citizens at home and abroad
3. Identify the positive and negative changes that we have seen within students to continually demonstrate a strong work ethic and determination to succeed with their goals
4. Examine strategies to continually harness the skills and abilities of our students who will surely be the backbone of our society and nation through their expected employment in teaching, the military, business, law enforcement, healthcare, fire departments, etc.
5. Strengthen their own abilities to decipher the global economy and how the United States is tied to trade, warfare, charitable efforts/the Peace Corps, and positive relations
6. Analyze the importance of current events and how it relates to the strength, prosperity, changes, concerns, and drive of this nation to maintain and surpass the Super Power status of this country since the end of World War II

Course Outline

- I. Introduction to the Class
 - a. The students will identify their own concerns that focus on:
 - i. The present state of the nation
 - ii. The opportunities that our own students and children will have in the future
 - iii. Education and innovation within American schools and universities
 - iv. Successes and goals that are achievable for the students of today and tomorrow
 - v. Negative aspects of society that impacts the development of our students and the ability of our country to prosper
 - b. Future Predictions of American Strength

- i. The students will look at studies that focus on the strength of our nation, resources, education, prosperity, and changes towards our education and economy within this new century
 - ii. We will look at the challenges, strengths, and weaknesses within our nation and how our students are taught and expected to be our future leaders to someday hold the most important jobs in our society and country
 - iii. Students will learn about the beliefs of the most capable leaders within the United States and how they view the future of this country to compete with foreign powers at home and abroad
 - iv. Work will be based on the current direction of our leadership, their goals, drawbacks, and rationale to lead this country during this new century
 - v. Statistics and information will be provided on the superior economic powers in the world and how the United States matches their Gross National Product
 - vi. We will look at the economic, social, political, and educational formulas that these countries have utilized to be regional and global powers (China, Japan, Germany, England, Russia, India, etc.). The students will be provided with information on outsourcing to Vietnam, China, the Philippines, Mexico, etc., and how our nation is expected to compete with these poorer nations.
 - vii. Information will be provided on the foreign leadership abilities of America to constantly help other nations with economic, social, educational and military assistance (Somalia, the Peace Corps, Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia, etc). We will analyze the strength of American intervention and how our ideals have positively impacted the rest of the world.
 - viii. The students will look at the impact of President Trump's foreign policy of non-intervention, less aid to foreign countries, fewer budgetary dollars towards the State Department, tariffs, and an "American First," approach towards other countries.
 - ix. This course will identify the strengths and weaknesses of these foreign policy ideals towards the United States, our economy, trade, and through the deployment of American forces around the world.
- c. Education at home and abroad
- i. Information will be presented on the most important college courses and majors that lead to the strongest jobs within our society. The students will learn about the most prominent colleges, reputations, and changes within our educational system to meet the challenges within this national and global economy.
 - ii. Research will be provided on the strongest and weakest educational states and the advents within the new lines of thinking to best prepare our students
 - iii. This course will focus on statistics on job growth, productivity, changing markets, and the strength and weaknesses of the American student compared to other powers and countries around the world
 - iv. The students will examine the strength of education, society, and football within the American territory of Samoa. A documentary depicts the poor living conditions, the struggles over minimum wage, lack of money towards education and sports, and how football is seen as a way of improving the lives of young men and their families
 - v. The class will read information and watch a news special on the impact of cheating within Indian schools. For many years, this Asian country has been seen as a major economic competitor of the United States.
 - vi. Information will be provided to the students on the reasoning behind why many Chinese students are leaving their nation to study in the United States. While this nation is our main economic, political, social, and military competitor, these people are still very motivated to gain an American education.

- vii. The students will learn about the impact of education within the Chinese college system. While China has out produced the United States, its educational institutions are facing a multitude of problems within the relations of the government and college professors and This assignment will focus on the challenges that are plaguing Chinese students as they are gaining an education within this communist nation.
 - viii. The class will look at the impact of education within Sweden. Although this country has been an educational leader, this nation has faced some set-backs. Through the lack of pay for teachers, educational reforms that have not worked, and competition with other countries that has closed down the gap of academic prominence with this European country. Information will be provided to compare the United States educational system to that of Sweden.
- d. Challenges for Current and Future American Students and Citizens
- i. Information will be presented on the impact of social programs and taxation such as:
 1. Social Security
 2. Medicare
 3. The debt and our future
 4. Education
 5. Job training
 6. The most recent tax cuts by President Trump and the positive and negatives expectations of these financial actions by our government
 - ii. We will determine if the skills and strengths of our current generations will be able to keep pace with the older citizens that have led this great nation. The students will gain information on jobs, training, and likelihood finding employment.
 - iii. The students will learn about the differences between the classes within American society and the issues that our people are struggling to deal with today
 - iv. This course will focus on the strength of the middle class, taxes, ability to spend money, and pay towards the college education of their children
 - v. Information will be provided to show how our students match up with their major courses of study compared to the strongest nations in the world.
 - vi. We will look at the economic, social, educational, political concerns within the United States and determine if:
 1. Our national domination as a lone Super Power since the end of the Cold War is widely being challenged
 2. Or, if there are other examples of American history that show that from time to time that our nation has rebounded from serious setbacks that have limited the strength of the United States (Great Depression, 1970's, 2008, etc.)

Methods of Instruction

Students will complete different types of assignments during the course of this class (reading, video, news, forums, films, editorials, think-tank, etc.). All participants will also interact through discussion forums to share their opinions, experiences, and insights with their class members as well as the instructor. All assignments, directions and resources are available online at the course Moodle site and they will be read and graded on a daily basis. On a daily basis, all of these assignments will be checked with feedback.

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 students will complete mandatory written assignments, read research papers, stories from specialists, watch news coverage on the information that is going to be presented in this class, complete forum's, watch films, and fully express their own thoughts within this course. All graduate assignments will either have to complete a paper or lesson plan (with resources), with their regular course work for an "A" or "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

Assignment	Time (in hours)
You, America, and Future – All students will answer questions about the concerns, issues, problems, and successes that we see in American society. These questions are broad based and they present thoughts on the direction of this nation through the eyes of these educators.	2.50
Future Predictions of American Strength and Growth – The students will read through an economic and social story on the projected ability of the United States to compete in the global economy. It presents projections of the growth of our economy, innovation, agriculture, and productivity. This story focuses on future strength of jobs and the fields that are going to evolve as the most important and abundant within the United States. Each student will answer questions and present their own thoughts on the future strength of this country.	3.00
Educational Challenges within Oklahoma and Kentucky– The teachers will examine the educational concerns that are prevalent within many states across this nation. This information will present the issues of funding, lack of resources, minimal teacher pay and threats against the pension system. Currently, teachers in these states are threatening massive protests to show the glaring problems of education, conditions, pay, and respect towards teachers. They will analyze news stories and video coverage and answer questions that are based on this information.	3.25
Best and Worst College Degrees in America – The teachers will examine the most promising and least productive degrees in the United States. This study will focus on those degrees that are the most and least promising to earn. Students will examine the connection of education and economics by reading through these academic programs.	2.00
Chinese Educational Degree and Leadership Concerns – This assignment focuses on the direction of college education within China and the divisions that are	2.50

noticeable between this communist government and academia. In this country, there is a strong divide on how the colleges should be organized and run through the conflicting viewpoints of government officials and professors. Some of the information provided addresses why some Chinese students leave their homes to attend American schools through the understanding that our nation is still a major leader within education and innovation.

American Samoa Football Reading and Video – The students will answer questions and watch a video on the lives of the people from America Samoa. This South Pacific island has been an American territory since 1898 and while this territory is thousands of miles away, it is still tied to this nation. All of the information that is provided will show the poor socio-economic conditions of this island and the impact of football to educate young men and give them and their families better lives in the United States with the opportunity to play in the NFL. The students will watch this Sixty Minutes video and answer the questions. **2.50**

Cheating within Indian Schools this story shows the great lengths that teachers and parents have taken to cheat on national exams that are given in India. It examines the corruption, competition, and the reasoning why cheating is so common within these schools and the problems that government and school officials face with this extremely common and growing problem. Each participant will watch a video and analyze a reading. **2.50**

The successes and challenges within the Swedish Educational System – For many years, Sweden has always been a global leader within education. This story will focus on the educational strength and challenges that this nation has endured over the last decade to maintain their academic achievement. **2.00**

Scandinavia and the United States – This assignment focuses on the economic and educational strength of our nation compared to that of Sweden and the other Scandinavian nations that are educationally successful. This assignment analyzes the direction and changes of the American economy (capitalism/concerns over the shrinking middle class vs. a combination of capitalism, socialism, and a welfare state in these north western European nations), and the projections of how these two global regions will continue to economically and educationally interact with each other within this new century. The students will read information and answer questions that are presented on the challenges that this well known educational leader faces. **2.50**

The United States Job Training and the Value of Education – The students will analyze a story on the impact of how education is tied to being hired for a job. It focuses on the strength of attaining a bachelor's degree as a stepping stone towards the jobs that require this type of education in order to be hired. This research focuses on the statistics of people earning these degrees and the reasoning behind why some people are hesitant to go to school for job placement. All information presents glaring facts on how expanded education will be greatly needed for the most common jobs in our nation. All teachers will answer questions and present a lengthy response towards the value and impact of job training in our country. **2.00**

The class will learn about the impact of the most recent educational doctrine through testing and accountability for teachers. We will look at both political parties and look at their views towards education as we are moving further into this new century. There will be readings and videos to best present this information and the students will answer questions. **2.50**

<p>Forum - Education in the World by the Numbers – Information will be provided on the current standing of the United States compared to other countries around the world. Teachers will be able to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of our students compared to other smaller and larger nations. This study addresses the content areas that Americans are falling behind in and some of the steps that our nation needs to address in order to compete and maintain our global strength. The students will read this information and present their own thoughts and they will respond to at least two other participants.</p>	2.50
<p>Role of Parents and Educators – The teachers will analyze information on the importance of parental support towards the growth and success of our students. This assignment focuses on the vital role that parents play in order to prepare their own children for their current and future studies.</p>	2.50
<p>Social Security, Education, and Medicaid – The class will have the most recent information on the importance of Social Security, Education and Medicaid. Over the last several years, these government and social initiatives have been greatly weakened. All students will learn about the strength of these vital programs and how they will endure for future generations through government think-tank information, news stories, and clips.</p>	2.50
<p>The Citizenship Process and Our Students - All Teachers will learn about the current process for immigrants to become citizens within the United States. This information presents the legal, social, and economic steps that are taken to become citizens. One of the main goals of this assignment is to show the process that many of these people endure to become naturalized and to clear up any possible misconceptions about our immigrant students. All students will read this information and present their own views on the role of immigration in our schools.</p>	2.00
<p>Harvard University and Educating Immigrants in the United States – This assignment was written from a noted professor and educator from Harvard University. It presents the views of a major Ivy League College towards the process of educating immigrant students and its impact on American society. It high lights steps that are suggested in preparing these students who have faced many difficult challenges to enter and assimilated into this country. The students will answer questions that are based on this assignment.</p>	2.25
<p>The State of Education and Training within the United States – The teachers will examine the importance of education and training for current and future jobs within our nation. This information determines the need for our students to accept the strength of training, education, and continued source knowledge in order to maintain the innovation of this nation and succeed in the global economy.</p>	2.00
<p>Stand and Deliver Film Assignment - The students will watch this film and answer questions that are based on a school that struggled to gain academic success. There are many different factors presented within this movie that will demonstrate how difficult it is to gain an education within different parts of this country. Each student will watch this movie and answer a series of questions.</p>	4.00
<p>Total Time</p>	45.00