



MAY
DAY!
PEACE
CONFERENCE

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THE FUTURE OF U.S. EDUCATION:

WHO DECIDES WHAT GETS TAUGHT?

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2023

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE



The annual MAYDAY! Peace Conference was established in 1981 with funding by the late Florence and Raymond Sponberg. It was created to inspire attendees to work for justice and peace throughout the world.

Join us today for the spring carillon bell song, composed by Steve Heitzeg '82, in dedication to Florence and Raymond Sponberg and the MAYDAY! Peace Conference.

Premier of *I Saw Thousands of Birds Carrying Away the Sorrows and Injustices of the World*.

Wednesday, May 3 at 11:45 a.m. outside of Christ Chapel.

This year's conference will be a teach-in and panel discussion that spotlights the expertise of Gustavus faculty and models informed conversation across disciplines.

The goals for the MAYDAY! teach-in are to demonstrate:

- How to engage in dialogue across multiple personal and intellectual perspectives
 - How to engage in a topic as an informed member of society
 - How to listen and ask questions with curiosity
- How the liberal arts can engage in the issues of peace

MAYDAY! PEACE CONFERENCE

Welcome and Introductions

Rebecca M. Bergman
President, Gustavus Adolphus College

Yurie Hong
MAYDAY! Chair and
Professor in Greek, Latin, and Classical Studies

Keynote Remarks and Overview of the Issue

Lisa Dembouski
Professor in Education

Faculty Panel and Audience Discussion

Action Opportunities

Closing

FACULTY PANELISTS

MODERATOR



Greg Kaster, Professor of History and African Studies

Greg Kaster has been a faculty member at Gustavus since 1986. Kaster teaches courses in American history with a particular emphasis on the Civil War, slavery and abolitionism, masculinity, and dissent. He is host of the “Learning for Life @ Gustavus” podcast.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Lisa Dembouski, Associate Professor of Education
Education Division

Lisa Dembouski has been a faculty member at Gustavus since 2014. Dembouski teaches courses on inclusive classrooms, instructs and mentors student teachers, and leads several Global Educators experiences. She has presented on issues related to the intersections of teaching and topics such as peace, justice, feminism, empowerment, and inclusion.



PANELISTS



Sun Hee Lee, Associate Professor of English
Humanities Division

Sun Hee Lee has been a faculty member at Gustavus since 2009. Lee specializes in U.S. ethnic literature, particularly Asian American, Latinx, and Native American literatures. She also teaches courses on drama and film.



Colleen Stockmann, Assistant Professor of
Art and Art History
Fine Arts Division

Colleen Stockmann has been a faculty member at Gustavus since 2020. Stockmann teaches courses with an emphasis on interdisciplinary research and networked histories. Their classes include critical issues in art and U.S. race and visual culture. Photo credit: Max Whittaker, NYT



Katie Leehy, Assistant Professor of Biology
Natural Sciences Division

Katie Leehy has been a faculty member at Gustavus since 2000. Leehy teaches courses on genetics, molecular biology, and cell biology. Her research uses CRISPR/Cas9 to make genome edits to understand how plants cope (or don't cope) with abiotic stresses like heat, drought, and high soil salinity for developing plants that are more tolerant to these stresses.



Jill Locke, Professor of Political Science
Social Sciences Division

Jill Locke has been a faculty member at Gustavus since 2000. Locke teaches a range of courses in the history of political thought, democratic theory, and feminist theory. She has published extensively, including a book about shame and her concept of “unashamed citizenship.”

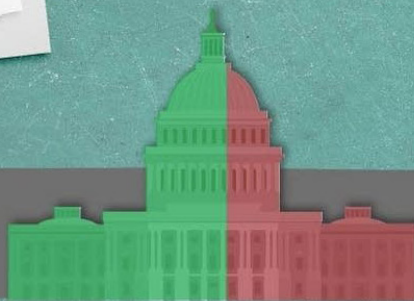


TOPIC OVERVIEW

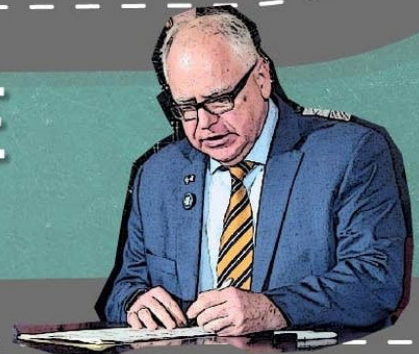
Education is one of the cornerstones of American democracy and has historically been seen as a pathway to personal wellbeing, healthy communities, and a more peaceful world. Every generation has seen debates around educational curricula as a reflection of our values and priorities. Today, we're seeing increased efforts to legislate what gets taught in classrooms from K-12 to colleges and universities—particularly around topics such as history, race, gender, sexuality, and identity. The outcomes of these debates will have a tremendous impact on peace, justice, and our democracy at home and abroad.



COMMITTEES



HOUSE & SENATE



GOVERNOR

HOW DOES A BILL BECOME A LAW AT THE STATE LEVEL?

The vast majority of policy and curriculum decisions regarding education are made at the state or local government level. While local government processes can differ, most states follow the same basic procedure for a proposed bill to become a law.

1. Drafted & Introduced

A bill, or a written proposal of a law, can be drafted by any member of the State Legislature at any time during a legislative session. The bill is then introduced to the State House or State Senate by the bill's sponsor, or the legislator who primarily suggested the bill. Bills can have multiple legislators signed on as co-sponsors.

2. Committee & Subcommittee Review

The bill is referred to a committee under the House or Senate that conducts relevant research and edits the proposed law. Once this review is complete, the committee votes. If the vote is in favor of the bill, it is passed on to the "floor." If the bill is not pushed forward it "dies", or is no longer under consideration to become a law.

3. Full Chamber Vote

On the floor, the full House or Senate considers the bill and conducts a vote. If there is enough support for the bill, it proceeds to another round of discussion, editing, and a vote.

4. The Other Chamber Conference & Floor

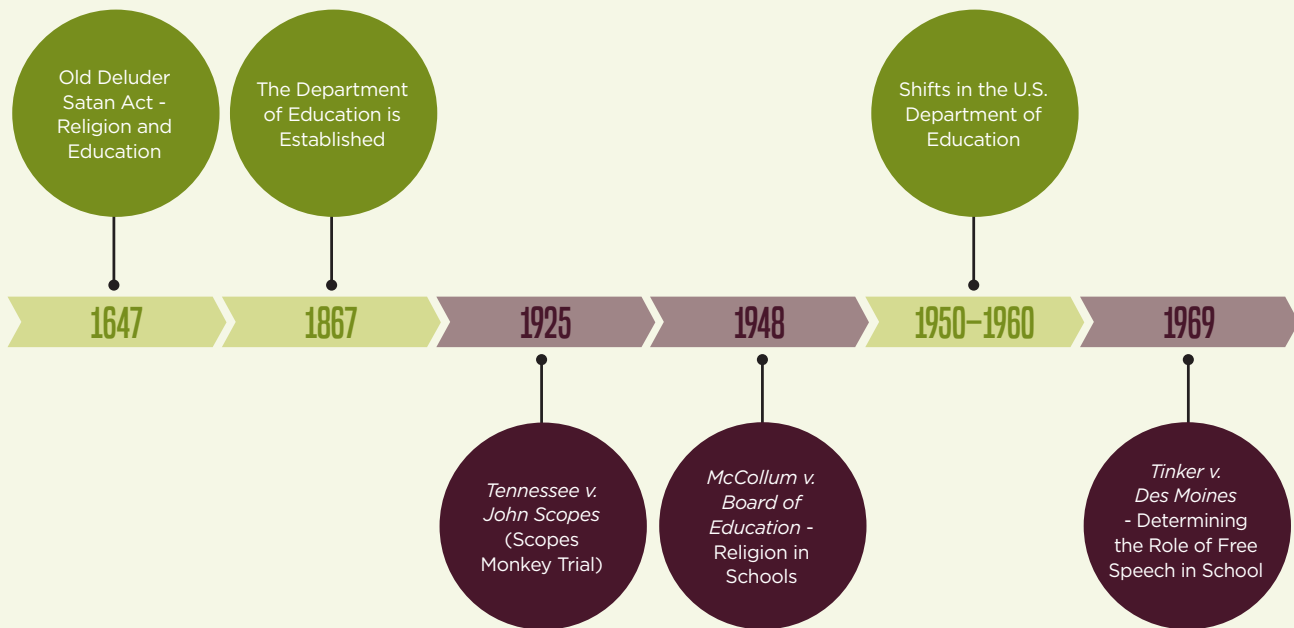
If the bill is passed in one Chamber it must be approved by the other by vote. If the Chambers approve different versions of the bill, a conference committee is held to reach a compromise. A Legislature-wide vote is then held on the final version of the bill.

5. Governor Signature

Once a bill is agreed upon by both Chambers, it is given to the Governor. The Governor has three options: sign the bill into law immediately, take no action at all (meaning the bill becomes law in 10 days, assuming the Legislature is in session), or veto the legislation.

6. Bill is Signed into Law or Vetoed

If the Governor signs the bill it becomes a law. If the Governor vetoes the bill, the Legislature has the power to overrule the veto through a Legislature-wide vote with a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority in favor of the legislation.



1647: Old Deluder Satan Act - Religion and Education

This law, passed in Massachusetts, is the first to establish state-mandated education, requiring communities to hire a reading and writing teacher for their children. The law was passed by the Puritans to ensure that all people could read and interpret the Bible from a young age, keeping them from “Satan’s Scriptures.” (mtsu.edu)

1867: The Department of Education is Established

President Andrew Johnson establishes the U.S. Department of Education to collect statistics on the state of the nation’s schools. To ensure that state and local governments maintained primary control over schools, this department was given no control over the operations of the schools themselves. (www2.ed.gov)

1925: *Tennessee v. John Scopes* (Scopes Monkey Trial)

John Scopes, a high school science teacher, was convicted of breaking a Tennessee law prohibiting the teaching of evolution or any theory that denies Creationism as it stands in the Bible. Scopes is found guilty by the court and fined \$100 for his crime. This ruling is regarded as one of the first national debates about the role of religion in modern public education. (history.com)

1948: *McCullum v. Board of Education* - Religion in Schools

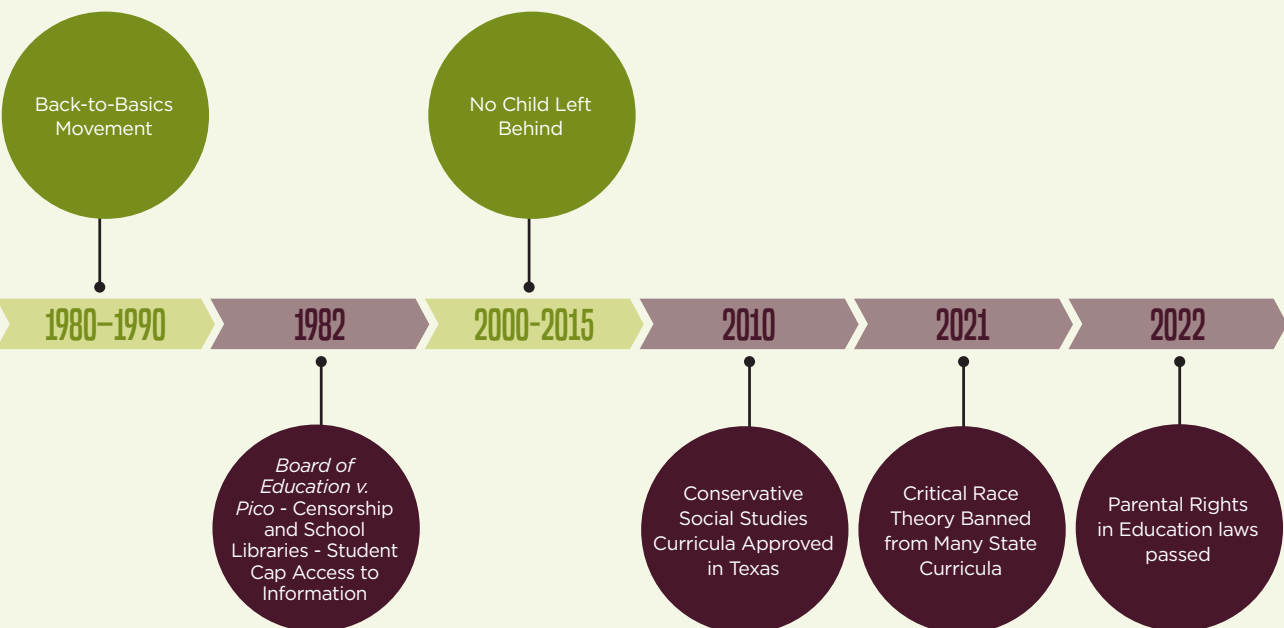
This case ruled that religious education cannot be taught in public schools because they are funded by taxpayers, and the First Amendment establishes a stark separation between church and state. This ruling was made despite the fact that multiple different faiths were being taught. This case set a precedent and was notably upheld in 1962, 1963, 1982, and beyond. (britannica.com)

1950s-1960s: Shifts in the U.S. Department of Education

In the 1950s, federal funding for education increased and the Department of Education took on a larger role in distributing funding for public schools, though education is still managed by states. After the successful launch of the Sputnik satellite was successfully launched in 1957, many of these funds prioritized science education programming. (www2.ed.gov)

1969: *Tinker v. Des Moines* - Determining the Role of Free Speech in School - Student Free Speech

Two students sued their high school after getting suspended for wearing black armbands in protest of the Vietnam War. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the students, determining that the First Amendment is still applicable in school and the students did not “substantially interfere” with school operations. This case set a precedent for future cases regarding student expression in public school. (oyez.org)



1980s - 1990s: Back-to-Basics Movement

After a decline in standardized test scores, certain education advocates became concerned that the quality of U.S. education was declining and blamed “non-academic” elective options. Back-to-basics supporters demanded stronger emphasis in public schools on concrete subjects like reading, writing, math, science, and history and wanted to deemphasize classes like music and art. Some of the goals of the movement have come to pass in school systems around the country, although changes were never widespread. (college.cengage.com)

1982: Board of Education v. Pico - Censorship and School Libraries - Student Cap Access to Information

When the Island Trees Union Free School District’s Board of Education made the decision to remove a set of books from the school library on the basis of being “anti-American, anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, and just plain filthy,” student Steven Pico sued out of concerns about censorship. The Supreme Court eventually ruled 5-to-4 in favor of Pico, claiming the Board’s decision violated free speech. (oyez.org)

2000-2015: No Child Left Behind

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was the primary law governing education from the federal sphere, setting standards for schools in attempts to provide more educational opportunities for traditionally disadvantaged students. NCLB was enforced using standardized testing and annual reporting, and

penalizing schools that didn’t show improvement. State curricula were influenced by these federal requirements, which made the law controversial. (understood.org)

2010: Conservative Social Studies Curriculum Approved in Texas

The Texas Board of Education approved a state curriculum that prioritizes capitalism and criticizes the separation of church and state, among many other politically conservative themes. Opponents of this decision expressed concern about what might happen when the textbooks for this curriculum circulated elsewhere in the U.S. (nytimes.com)

2021: Critical Race Theory Banned from Many State Curricula

In late-2021, nine states successfully passed legislation that banned the teaching of any material falling under the “Critical Race Theory” umbrella in public schools. As of today, 16 states have banned CRT from public school curricula. (wisevoter.com)

2022: Parental Rights in Education (Don’t Say Gay) Laws Pass

A law was passed first in Florida, then in Alabama, prohibiting gender identity and sexual orientation from being discussed in public school curricula. Multiple states have proposed bills similar to Florida’s while opponents grow concerned about how these rulings might impact sexual health and LGBTQIA+ rights. (npr.org)

TAKE ACTION

The MAYDAY! Peace Conference was created to inspire attendees to work for justice and peace throughout the world. Below are ways you can take action related to this topic.

- Talk to friends, family, or colleagues about the issue - share what you each know and what you believe
- Signup for a email newsletter or follow an organization working on the topic on social media
- Send a thank you note to a teacher
- Donate supplies to a teacher
- Write your elected officials - national and state legislators or your local school board
- Petition state or national representatives with ideas concerning education
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper
- Find out who's on (running for) your school board
- Attend an open school board meeting
- Attend an open forum at your state capitol
- Work on an election
- Run for school board
- VOTE in local/state elections!

LEARN MORE

Glossary of Education Reform Edglossary.org

This is a comprehensive online resource that describes widely used school-improvement terms and concepts to better inform journalists, parents, and community members. The glossary is designed to create entries that are factual, objective, and impartial.

Education Week edweek.org

For more than 40 years, Education Week has been a resource for K-12 education news and information, with 1.6+ million readers.

K-12 Dive K12dive.com

K-12 Dive provides in-depth journalism and insight into news and trends shaping K-12 education. The newsletter and website cover topics such as leadership, school models, technology, curriculum, and professional development.

Sites referenced during Lisa Dembouski's keynote remarks:

Federal Department of Education: ed.gov

Minnesota Department of Education: education.mn.gov

National School Board Association: nsba.org

Minnesota School Board Association: mnmsba.org

St. Peter Public Schools: stpeterschools.org

Mankato Area Public Schools: isd77.org

MAYDAY! PEACE CONFERENCE

HISTORY



- 1981 Arms Control—MAYDAY! MAYDAY!
- 1982 The Response of Faith to the Nuclear Dilemma
- 1983 Seeing Through and Beyond the Mushroom Cloud
- 1984 Making Peace in a War-Keeping World
- 1985 To Negotiate a Peace
- 1986 Schooling for Peace
- 1987 Wages of War, Profits of Peace
- 1988 Building on Hope: Working for Peace
- 1989 Other Voices – Global Perspectives on the Arms Race
- 1990 Making Peace with the Earth
- 1991 U.S. Policy in the Middle East: What Roads to Peace?
- 1992 Food for a Peaceable World
- 1993 Overcoming Violence in Our Lives
- 1994 Building Community from the Inside Out
- 1995 The Challenge of Building a Non-Violent Global Community
- 1996 Land Rights, Land Use, and Social Justice
- 1997 The Family and Public Policy
- 1998 Immigration and Social Justice
- 1999 Toward a Worldwide Ban on Landmines
- 2000 Vietnam: 25 Years On
- 2001 Revisiting the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux after 150 Years
- 2002 Sanctions and Beyond: What is the Human Price?
- 2003 World Religions: Waging War or Promoting Peace?
- 2004 The United Nations at the Crossroads
- 2005 Energy for Peace
- 2006 AIDS + AFRICA: The Unfolding Crisis
- 2007 Community Food Security
- 2008 Troubled Water
- 2009 Tiananmen + 20 Years
- 2010 Imagining Peace
- 2011 Executing Justice: Debating Capital Punishment
- 2012 Multicultural Sweden
- 2013 Decision: Roe v. Wade
- 2014 Tibet: Finding Hope in Exile
- 2015 The War Within: Can the Soldier Be at Peace
- 2016 Divestment & Reinvestment: Making Money Count
- 2017 What Would You Do? Mass Surveillance and the Citizen
- 2018 Mighty Be Our Powers: Gender, Justice, and Peacebuilding
- 2019 War on the Press
- 2021 Voices of Change: Our Generation of Student Activism
- 2022 Growing Peacebuilders

