



EDUCATION 5850
CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

Spring 2015: January 7 – April 18
Online Delivery

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Office Hours: Please feel free to call, email, or post a message on Moodle for me if you have any questions or would like to make an appointment to meet (we can do this with Skype, too)!

The course will be administered through Moodle. All relevant resources will be provided there:
<https://moodle.uleth.ca>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This online course focuses on the 21st century student in a context of curriculum, instruction and assessment. Educational issues will be examined through students' perceptions and habits, learning theories, and technology's role in teaching and learning.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, it is expected that participants will be able to:

- 1: Increase their knowledge of students' lives to inform 21st century thinking about curriculum instruction, and assessment.
- 2: Articulate developing views about 21st century learning and technology in the classroom and rethinking curriculum and assessment.
- 3: Explicate a new metaphor to think about our work with today's students (does Prensky's metaphor of digital natives and digital natives and digital immigrants still resonate?)
- 4: Apply students' perceptions to decisions about teaching, learning, and assessment in individual contexts.
- 5: Demonstrate effective communication through proficient writing, online platforms (ie Moodle, Zoom and others as appropriate).

RESOURCES AND SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

The following resource is available from the University of Lethbridge Bookstore:

- Prensky, M. (2012). *From digital natives to digital wisdom: Hopeful essays for 21st century learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Readings/resources will be posted on Moodle:

- Steeves, V. (2001, 2005, 2013). *Young Canadians in a Wired World, Phase I, II, and III* (YCWW). Ottawa: Media Smarts. <http://mediasmarts.ca/research-policy>
- Konni Koua, M. (2013). *Why Grad Schools should require students to blog*. Scientific American.

These documents provide a comprehensive and detailed national study of children's and teens' Internet use in Canada and provide a context for understanding issues of curriculum and assessment from the perspective of 21st century learners.

See also the reference list accompanying this outline.

COURSE PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The purpose of this course is to develop an understanding of learners in the 21st century. It will address:

- Students own perceptions and habits about learning, classrooms, and the role of technology in their lives.
- How students learn inside and outside classrooms through traditional and emerging learning theories.
- Technology's role in education.
- Educational reform and how we teach and assess student learning.

Changing contexts and students' lives in the 21st century challenge educators to rethink what students need to know and do. Educational reform must address the change and variability of students' realities. "Adapting to this new context of change, variability, and uncertainty is the biggest challenge we are now facing – as educators and as people" (Prensky, 2012, p. 1). The work in this course will engage participants in reading, writing, and discussing the role of the student in curriculum, instruction and assessment.

EVALUATION

- A. Educator Virtual Seminar – blogging designed to promote reflection, self-awareness, and critical reading, and engagement in public and academic discourse. 50%**
- Write five 250-500 word entries (10 marks each) (For example, synthesizing the main ideas from three chapters, clarifying pros and cons of a topic in conjunction with one's own professional context, experiences, and readings.)

Background and Purpose: Blogging is a worthwhile tool for educators to become involved in educational discussions and inquiry. By providing a platform that promotes involvement, educators can move from introductory thinking to higher level thinking engaging in public and academic discourse. Researchers identify factors that inform effective use of blogging in graduate work as: providing writing practice, receiving timely feedback through comments and replies,

providing opportunities to read and write across disciplines, and developing incentive for considering a variety of viewpoints. See <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/literally-psyched/2013/04/12/why-grad-schools-should-require-students-to-blog/>

Procedure:

1. I will create a forum for each of you on Moodle. Your first entry (not for marks-but for participation) will be an introductory piece in which you tell us a bit about yourself, your teaching context, your hopes regarding this course-after reading the course outline and viewing my short video). This should be posted no later than **Saturday, January 10 at midnight**.
2. Write and post five times (in addition to the first entry) in response to readings listed on the course schedule but also feel free to discuss ideas, experiences, and thoughts in response to others' blogs.
3. Your last blog entry will ask you to reflect on the process of engaging in this type of public discourse throughout the course as a way to explore course content.

DUE: Please post blog entries on January 17, January 31, February 14, March 7, April 11, 2015

B. Professional Development through Student Voices 25%

- Interview or survey one or more students using an age-appropriate data-gathering tool, transcribe the interview, and analyze the results in order to discuss how student perceptions can be used to inform an aspect of curriculum, instruction, and/or assessment in your professional context

Background and Purpose: A necessary part of curriculum decision-making and assessment is the knowledge teachers develop as a result of collecting and analyzing data as an aspect of their professional development. When teachers meet with parents to discuss the child's progress or administrators confer about decision-making regarding curriculum and assessment, they refer to the data they have collected in a number of ways from a variety of contexts. One such source of data comes from students themselves.

Informal interviews/conferences and surveys used with students provide the opportunity for students to reflect on their learning and leads students to gain increasing control over their learning. Interviews have the potential to capture on-going reflection about learning as a natural part of curriculum. For instance, questions such as: *What did I learn? What do I do when I don't understand what I am reading? How did our group work today? How did I solve a problem?* can encourage this type of reflection in a variety of contexts as a way for teachers and administrators to gather data from students to inform curriculum and assessment decision making.

This assignment asks participants to think about an area of curriculum and assessment that involves gathering students' perceptions through: observational data (formal and informal), conferences and/or interviews, surveys/questionnaires or anecdotal records in order to analyze and discuss those perceptions and apply them to teaching, learning, and assessment.

Procedure:

1. Identify an area of curriculum and/or assessment in which gathering student perceptions will help to inform your work.
2. Engage in a literature search to find out if students' perceptions have already been researched in regards to your area.

- For instance, when I was studying middle school students' engagement with and motivation for reading, I discovered John Guthrie's research which lead me to use an instrument to gather students' habits and perceptions called the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) which I modified for my use in schools.
 - If you are unable to locate a particular questionnaire or set of questions used in research, you may develop your own for the area you want to focus on.
3. Next, decide on student participants to be interviewed or to take a survey/questionnaire in order to hear student voices about your area of study. Share your survey/questionnaire with a colleague and the instructor for feedback.
 4. Gather your data.
 5. Analyze your data.
 6. Present your findings in a 5-6 page paper to be shared with the instructor and your peers.

DUE: Share draft paper with at least one other student by March 2, 2015 for peer feedback. Guidelines will be provided. Hand in final paper on March 16 (please append peer feedback).

- 5% - for providing peer feedback
- 20% - for paper (rubric will be provided)

C. Metaphor for Today's Student 20%

- Designed to stimulate a new narrative/image for the 21st century learner
- Create a new metaphor to think about our work with today's students (to replace and/or update Prensky's metaphor of digital natives and digital immigrants).

Background and Purpose: In education, we use metaphors to explain, describe, or express. Metaphors assume a central position in educational theory and practice and are used as research tools to gain new insights (Jensen, 2006, p. 14). This suggests that metaphors "enable us to analyze a greater consciousness of the implications of educational theory and practice employed in education." (p. 14).

The definition of a metaphor we will use for this assignment is: a figure of speech in which an expression/image/comic is used to refer to something that it does not literally denote in order to suggest a similarity. It should demonstrate your knowledge regarding a future path for curriculum and assessment.

Procedure:

1. Students will consider a metaphor for today's students.
2. Using images, maps or stories and using any preferred medium, participants will construct a comparison that exemplifies, explains, or contrasts the nature of the metaphor. It should be noted that a pictorial or visual metaphor causes the viewer to have to think critically in order to interpret the metaphor.
3. Participants will build on the metaphor by adding specific elements that help establish a dual purpose or second meaning.
4. Next, participants will provide a one-page description to accompany the metaphor, while keeping to the theme and the meaning of the metaphor.
5. Lastly, the metaphors will be uploaded to Moodle and shared with others.

DUE: Upload metaphor to Moodle on or before April 4, 2015

D. Synchronous Student Lounge Conversations..... 5%

- Designed to allow the instructor and participants to communicate informally in an online learning environment.
- Participate in one or both synchronous conversations regarding the course content, procedures, expectations, and anything you want to discuss in an electronic face-to-face forum.

Background and Purpose: When using an entirely online delivery, it is important to provide opportunities for students and the instructor to engage in informal methods of communication in order to connect with each other, ask questions, clarify expectations, and help to maintain a sense of community in the learning process.

Procedure:

1. I will send you an attachment called Zoom, which will guide you through a set of instructions to follow that will let you download this application and join our synchronous student lounge conversations. This is a free application that you can use on your laptop, iPad, or iPhone.
2. The 10-digit number is the Meeting ID number you need.
3. Click on the URL. Type in your *first name* to “join a meeting”. Click on “join on computer” and “join on audio”.
4. We will have two of these conversations throughout the semester.

DUE: The first conversation will be on January 29, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.
The second conversation will be on February 28, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.

GRADES

The Faculty of Education has a standardized grading schedule for graduate courses. This schedule will be used for determining final grades for graduate students in this course.

Numeric Value	Letter Grade	Grade Point
97 – 100	A+	4.00
93 – 96	A	4.00
90 – 92	A-	3.70
87 – 89	B+	3.30
83 – 86	B	3.00
80 – 82	B-	2.70
Note: Any course with a grade of less than B- cannot be considered for credit in the M.Ed. program.		
77 – 79	C+	2.30
73 – 76	C	2.00
70 – 72	C-	1.70
67 – 69	D+	1.30
63 – 66	D	1.00
<63	F	0.00

COURSE SCHEDULE: January 7-April 18, 2015

Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Jan. 5-9	Introduction	Why Grad Schools Should Require Students to Blog (on Moodle)	Introduce yourself, read course outline, access readings Virtual Seminar-introduction (Jan.10)
Jan. 12-16	Student Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reformers are Leaving Our Schools • On Learning 	Work on Student Voices assignments (1) Virtual Seminar (Jan. 17)
Jan. 19-23	Boredom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education as Rocket Science • Turning on the Lights 	
Jan. 26-30	Seeing Learners Differently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants 	(2) Virtual Seminar (Jan. 31)
Feb. 2-6	Student Lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Emerging Online Life of the Digital Native • Young Canadians in a Wired World (mediasmarts website) 	
Feb. 9-13	Curriculum Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Minds, Fast Times • To Educate We Must Listen 	(3) Virtual Seminar (Feb. 14)
Feb. 16-20	Curriculum Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing the Future to School 	
Feb. 23-27	Student Voices		Work on Student Voices Assignments
Mar. 2-6	Educational Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of Technology in Teaching • The Longer View: Why You Tube Matters 	Share a draft of your Student Voices paper with another colleague from the course for feedback- (March 2) (4) Virtual Seminar (March 7)
Mar. 16-20	Making Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond the Lemonade Stand • On Being Disrespected 	Hand in final Student Voices paper together with the peer feedback you received (March 16)
Mar. 23-27	Educational Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search Versus Research • What Can You Learn from a Cell Phone? 	
Mar. 30-Apr. 3	Additional Technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The True 21st Century Literacy is Programming 	Hand in metaphor for today's students and share with others (April 4)
Apr 6-10	The Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epilogue: From Digital Natives to Digital Wisdom 	(5) Virtual Seminar (April 11)

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