

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Education

EDUCATION 5200OL **CURRICULUM STUDIES AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE**

Fall 2015: September 9 – December 20
Online Delivery

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Office Hours: Please feel free to call, email, or text me if you have any questions, or would like to make an appointment to meet in person or via Skype.

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

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course is an examination of the relationship between curriculum studies and practices in a variety of educational settings.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course acknowledges the foundational statement in Alberta Education's Principal Quality Practice document: "The principal is an accomplished teacher who practices quality leadership in the provision of opportunities for optimum learning and development of all students in the school" (2009, p. 4). It focuses on leadership dimension #4: Providing Instructional Leadership (2009, p. 5). To that end, it explores current initiatives related to curriculum revision and their impact on our understanding of quality teaching and learning. It provides students with opportunities to explore theoretical and professional frameworks of instructional leadership that nurture and support quality teaching.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- 1: Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of current initiatives related to curriculum and pedagogy.

- 2: Articulate deep understanding of quality teaching consistent with provincial goals for student learning.
- 3: Demonstrate an applied understanding of curriculum initiatives and quality teaching within their professional contexts.
- 4: Articulate a vision for instructional leadership that fosters quality teaching aligned with guiding principles of 21st century learning.
- 5: Demonstrate effective communication through proficient academic and professional writing, in a variety of traditional and on-line formats.

REQUIRED READING

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

- Gini-Newman, G., & Case, R. (2015). *Creating thinking classrooms: Leading educational change for a 21st century world*. Vancouver, BC: The Critical Thinking Consortium.

Other readings/resources will be posted on Moodle.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

I am obliged to remind you that all participants in this course are subject to the Student Discipline policies for academic and nonacademic offences in accordance with the [Graduate Calendar, 2015-16, outlined on pp. 47-52](#). Please see [pp. 98 to 99](#) for Standards of Professional Conduct specific to the M.Ed (Educational Leadership) program. As members of the Alberta Teachers Association you are also expected to abide by the Code of Professional Conduct.

EVALUATION

A. Responding to *Creating Thinking Classrooms* 30%

- Write three responses to the readings (10 % each). Specific directions for each response will be provided.

Background and Purpose: The goal of this book is “to help educational leaders understand and respond thoughtfully to the diverse and sometimes overwhelming calls for reform that currently dominate public and professional education” (p. ix). Gini-Newman and Case advocate an approach to curriculum and pedagogy that attends to the fundamental shifts reflected in calls for 21st century learning: toward thinking classrooms; toward nurturing deep understanding, real-life competencies and genuine commitments; and, toward classrooms that engage students, sustain inquiry, foster self-regulated learners, assess in rich and meaningful ways, and enhance learning through digital technologies.

The first part of the course will involve a careful reading of Gini-Newman and Case's framework and a critical consideration of what it would mean to implement this framework in our schools. Questions to guide your reading, and to prompt discussion in your small groups will be provided.

Procedure:

1. I will create four discussion groups on Moodle. Please sign up for one group (maximum of four participants in each group). Your first entry (not for marks, but to introduce yourself and set up your reading) will be an introductory piece in which you tell me a bit about yourself, your teaching context, and respond to Chapter One in *Creating Thinking Classrooms*). This should be posted no later than **Sunday, September 13, 2015 at noon**.
2. Write and post three times (in addition to the first entry) in response to reading sections of *Creating Thinking Classrooms*. I strongly encourage you to share your thoughts about the readings and engage with your group members as you read. A collaborative approach to our reading and thinking can only help us grow! Specific directions for each response will be provided.

DUE: Please post responses by noon on September 20, October 4, and October 18, 2015

- B. *Creating Thinking Classrooms, Culminating Assignment* 30%**
- Please see assignment sheet for detailed assignment information

Background and Purpose: The careful reading of *Creating Thinking Classrooms* will culminate in a project that will allow course participants to demonstrate an applied understanding of the complex and multi-faceted notion of “thinking classrooms” Gini-Newman and Case describe.

This assignment gives participants the opportunity to articulate a comprehensive vision of quality teaching informed by their reading, develop a plan for a professional inquiry into the creation of thinking classrooms, or craft a curriculum project that embodies quality teaching for thinking classrooms. Discussion groups will be created for each assignment choice to provide you with the opportunity to share your insights, post resources your colleagues might find helpful, and get peer feedback as you work on your assignment.

Procedure:

1. Review the options available to you as detailed on the assignment sheet.
2. Consult with the instructor and confirm your assignment choice by Sunday, October 18, 2015.
3. Participate in the appropriate discussion group as you work on your assignment.

DUE: Post the final version of your assignment by or at noon, Sunday, November 8, 2015.

C. Final Paper 40%

- An independent, but instructor-facilitated, paper that allows participants to explore key concepts related to instructional leadership and/or leading for quality teaching
- Please see assignment sheet for detailed assignment information

Background and Purpose: Instructional leaders must be able to engage in research-informed discussions about what constitutes excellent pedagogy. This requires that they read professional and scholarly literature carefully and critically. This paper gives participants the opportunity to further hone these critical reading skills while analyzing and assessing the quality of professional and research literature related to instructional leadership and/or pedagogical innovation.

Discussion groups will be available on-line so that participants can share thoughts on their readings or progress on their papers with others who chose the same option.

Procedure:

1. Review the options available to you as detailed on the assignment sheet.
2. Consult with the instructor and submit your paper proposal by Sunday, November 1, 2015.
3. Participate in group discussions from November 8 to December 20 as you work on your papers.
4. If you would like formative feedback on your paper, please submit your draft and the self-assessment to the instructor via email by Sunday, December 6, 2015.

DUE: Post the final version of your paper by or at noon, Sunday, December 20, 2015.

Note that all written assignments (not including on-line discussions) must follow APA guidelines (6th ed, second printing, October 2009) for formatting and referencing.

Late assignments will not be accepted. If you anticipate having difficulty meeting established assignment deadlines, please contact the instructor well in advance in order to discuss if reasonable accommodations can be made.

GRADES

The Faculty of Education has a standardized grading schedule for graduate courses if numeric grades are assigned. This is shown below. In this course, assignments will be assessed using letter grades that reflect the level of achievement. The final letter grade will be determined by weighting assignment grades as indicated in this outline.

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

TENATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE: September 9 to December 20, 2015

Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Sept. 9 - 13	Introduction	Preface and Chapter 1 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i>	Introduce yourself, read course outline, respond to reading (Post response by noon, Sept. 13)
Sept. 13 - 20	Reorient foundations	Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i>	Response to reading (Post response by noon, Sept. 20)
Sept. 13 – Oct. 4	Refocus the goals	Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i>	Response to reading (Post response by noon, Oct. 4) Consider options for <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Culminating Assignment. Consult with instructor as required
Oct. 4 - 18	Align with guiding principles	Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i>	Response to reading (Post response by noon, Oct. 18) Confirm your <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Assignment choice with the instructor (by Oct. 18)
Oct. 18 – Nov. 8	Work on <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Culminating Assignment	Chapter 13 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Additional support or reference materials as required	Looking ahead: review options on course Final Paper assignment sheet. Consult with the instructor as required. Submit your choice of paper to the instructor (by Nov. 1) Submit <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Culminating Project (post assignment by noon, Nov. 8)
Nov. 8 – Dec. 6	Final Paper	As outlined in paper proposal	Participate in discussion forum discussions regarding readings and progress on papers Submit draft of final paper and self-assessment for formative feedback via email (by noon, Dec. 6)

Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Dec. 6 - 20	Revise Final Paper		Submit final paper on appropriate forum on Moodle site (due by noon, Dec. 20)