

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Education

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

Fall 2017: September 6 – December 17
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.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- 1: Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of current reform 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.

STUDENT CONDUCT

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, 2017-2018](#). Please see pp. 41-46 for specific information.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

As graduate students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge, please note that you are subject to the [Standards of Professional Conduct specific to the M.Ed \(Leadership\) program](#). Members of the Alberta Teachers Association are also expected to abide by the [Code of Professional Conduct](#).

EVALUATION

Responding to *Creating Thinking Classrooms* 60%

- Write four responses to the readings (15 % 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 course requires a careful reading of Gini-Newman and Case’s framework and a critical consideration of what it would mean to implement, and to lead implementation of this framework in our schools. Other resources (provincial curriculum policy documents, professional readings, scholarly articles) are provided to assist the reading and our critical analysis of current reform initiatives. Questions to guide your reading, and to prompt discussion in your small groups will be provided.

Procedure:

1. Your introductory post (not for marks, but to introduce yourself and set up your reading) should tell me a bit about yourself, your teaching context, and respond to the Preface and Chapter One in *Creating Thinking Classrooms*). This should be posted on the forum labeled “Introductory Post” (under Course Introduction) no later than **11:59 pm Sunday, September 10, 2017**.
2. Four times throughout the course, you are required to respond to sections of *Creating Thinking Classrooms*. Specific directions for each response will be provided.

DUE: Please post responses by 11:59 pm on September 24, October 15, and November 12, and December 3.

Group Discussion10%

- You will be assigned to a small group (discussion forum) for three of the required responses. After you have posted your response, read your colleagues’ responses and share your thoughts. A collaborative approach to our reading and thinking can only help us grow! Please refer to the Rubric for Online Discussions (under the heading Course Information on our Moodle site) for detailed expectations and assessment criteria.

Procedure:

1. After you have posted your required response to the reading, read your colleagues’ responses.
2. You will have a week for your group discussion. Note that the discussion should reflect a careful reading of the responses and of the resources provided by the instructor.

DUE: Small group discussions should be completed by 11:59 pm on October 1, October 22, and November 19.

Creating Thinking Classrooms, Culminating Project 30%

- Please see assignment sheet (under Course Information on our Moodle site) 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, craft a curriculum project that embodies quality teaching for thinking classrooms, or complete a review of research related to principles detailed in *Creating 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 project.

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, November 5, 2017.
3. Participate in the appropriate discussion group as you work on your assignment.

DUE: Post the final version of your assignment by 11:59 pm, Sunday, December 17.

Your writing should meet the expectations of a graduate level program, including abiding by the APA Publication Manual 6th edition. Writing must demonstrate appropriate standards of written communication; grammatical errors, lack of clarity, poor structure or organization are not acceptable. Please note that posts to the discussion forums do not require that you provide citations or references in APA format. It is, however, expected that all communication meets professional standards.

Please note assignment deadlines. 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 6 to December 17, 2017

Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Sept. 6 - 10	Introduction	Preface and Chapter 1 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Supporting materials as posted on Moodle	Introduce yourself, read course outline, respond to reading (Post response by 11:59 pm, Sept. 10)
Sept. 11 - 24	Module 1: Reorient foundations	Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Supporting materials as posted on Moodle	Response to reading (Post response by 11:59 pm, Sept. 24)
Sept. 25 – Oct. 1		Group discussion	Read and discuss your colleagues' responses on your assigned Discussion Forum. This may require that you post several times throughout the week. (Discussion will be closed at 11:59 pm, Oct. 1)
Oct. 2 - 15	Module 2: Refocus the goals	Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Supporting materials as posted on Moodle	Response to reading (Post response by 11:59 pm, Oct. 15)
Oct. 16 - 22		Group discussion	Read and discuss your colleagues' responses on your assigned Discussion Forum. This may require that you post several times throughout the week. (Discussion will be closed at 11:59 pm, Oct. 22)
Oct. 23 – Nov. 12	Module 3: Align with guiding principles	Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Supporting materials as posted on Moodle	Response to reading (Post response by 11:59 pm, Nov. 12) Consider options for <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Culminating Assignment. Consult with instructor

Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments
			as required. Email the instructor with your choice by Sunday, Nov. 5
Throughout remainder of the course, ie. Nov. 6 – Dec. 17	Creating Thinking Classrooms, Culminating Project	<i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> , additional resources as required (note suggestions on assignment sheet, and/or consult with instructor for assistance)	Make use of the discussion forums to share ideas and drafts with colleagues.
Nov. 13 - 19		Group discussion	Read and discuss your colleagues' responses on your assigned Discussion Forum. This may require that you post several times throughout the week. (Discussion will be closed at 11:59 pm, Nov. 19)
Nov. 20 – Dec. 3	Module 4: Support teacher growth	Chapter 13 of <i>Creating Thinking Classrooms</i> Supporting materials as posted on Moodle	Response to reading (Post response by 11:59 pm, Nov. 12)
Dec. 4 - 17	Creating Thinking Classrooms, Culminating Project		Participate in discussion forum discussions as you work on your project. Feel free to share useful resources you've found or drafts for feedback Submit final project on the appropriate forum on Moodle site (by 11:59 pm, Dec. 17)