SYLLABUS

Course Title  
EDCI 404 -- Curricular Trends and Issues in Education

Text  


Conceptual Framework Statement

The professional education program at Western Carolina University fulfills its mission by creating and nourishing a community of learners guided by knowledge, values, and experiences. We believe the best educational decisions are made after adequate reflection and after careful consideration of the interests, experiences, and welfare of the persons affected by the decisions. We also appreciate and respect the diversity of our participants, and we promote the responsible use of technology by professional educators.

Diversity Statement

Participants in this class teach in Jamaican schools. Theirs is a diverse nation (their motto is, "Out of many, one people."). This course will be a cross-cultural experience for all of us.

General Description
This course explores the newest curricular methods, topics, and issues; and relates these to the work of Jamaican teachers.

Specific Competencies

At the end of this class, participants will be able to:

➢ Explain the history of various curriculum and instructional initiatives in Jamaica.
➢ Discuss the impact of political and organizational dynamics on curriculum and instruction.
➢ Understand modern trends and issues in curriculum development and instruction.
➢ Define and describe the relationship between the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum.
➢ Understand the issues surrounding curriculum development and instruction in Jamaica.
➢ Understand the curriculum evolution process in Jamaica.
➢ Discuss contemporary issues related to Jamaican educational policy and reform.
Tentative Schedule of Class Topics and Activities

July 7  Introduction and Overview
       ▶ A model for curriculum analysis
       ▶ Developing critical stances

July 8  Exploring the needs of learners
       Reading assignment and notes due:
       *Integrating*, chapters 1 and 2

July 9  Examining the nature of content
       Reading assignment and notes due:
       *Integrating*, chapter 3

July 10 Analyzing community contexts and societal needs
       Reading assignment and notes due: *Integrating*, chapter 4

July 11 Issues related to the needs of learners
       Reading assignment due: *Taking Sides*, Issues 12, 6, 10

July 14 Issues related to the nature of content
       Reading assignment due: *Taking Sides*, Issues 8, 11, 15

July 15 Issues related to the needs of society
       Reading assignment due: *Taking Sides*, Issues 3, 5, 7

July 16 Understanding by Design and Differentiating Instruction
       Reading assignment and notes due: *Integrating*, chapters 5-8

July 17 Understanding by Design and Differentiating Instruction, continued
       Reading assignment and notes due: *Integrating*, chapters 9 & 10

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE

Class Attendance, Participation, Preparation, and Attitude (APPA)

For us to develop as a community of learners who will learn from each other and enjoy our time together, it is important that everyone:

- attend each class, arriving on time
- read and think about the assigned materials prior to class (We will check to see that you have brought notes on your reading assignments on each day of class that notes are due.)
- be an active and informed participant in class discussions
- prepare and hand in assignments on the date due
- arrive with a mind open to the ideas of others

Participants with unexcused absences will be penalized for turning in late papers.

**APPA is worth 45 points (5 points per day x 9 days)**
Teaching Autobiography (10 points) During the first few days of the course, each participant will write a teaching autobiography that will address the following questions:

1. How did you learn to “read, write, and reason” in school and how does that compare to the way you teach?
2. As an adult, what types of learning experiences are most engaging for you outside of school?
3. What are some of the most engaging experiences your students have had in your classroom?
4. What is your perspective on teaching (how do you define “good teaching?” how do you view the relationships among transmission, transaction, and transformation?)

We will work on some portions of this assignment in class and some portions will be written at home. Participants will participate in writing workshops to revise and improve their final paper. This assignment is worth 10 points. DUE July 10

Presentation on Educational Issues (20 points) Participants will work in teams to analyze and present one of the issues debated in Taking Sides. Each team will

1. present a summary of the “message” each author is trying to communicate. (What is the case the author is making?) WITH A HANDOUT FOR CLASS MEMBERS WITH BRIEF NOTES
2. describe the “methods” the author uses to communicate the message. (On what bases does the author make a case?) WITH A HANDOUT FOR CLASS MEMBERS WITH BRIEF NOTES
3. gather and present information about the current educational context in Jamaica related to this issue
4. engage the class in a discussion of these issues
5. present critiques of the authors’ positions on the issues that
   a) judge how well the author communicates the message. (How well does the author make the case?) and
   b) describe the presenters’ stances on this issue. (What do you think and why?) You may well disagree on your stances – in which case we may have a lively debate!

DUE on the day of the presentation (July 11, 14, or 15)

Teaching Perspectives Paper. (25 points) Each participant will write a paper that describes how he or she has integrated ideas from this course. This will serve as our “final exam” and will be due ______. Key questions to address include:

1. What are the essential issues related to the “nature of content” in one of your subject areas?
2. What are the essential issues related to the “needs of learners” in your teaching?
3. What are the needs of your community in relationship to this content and your students?
4. What are your priorities for addressing all of these needs?
5. With references to your reading in this course, why are these the priorities that matter and how will you integrate “differentiating instruction” and “understanding by design” in addressing these priorities?

This paper will be due July 29 by email or by ______.

Rubric for Grading Papers and Presentations
1) Clarity of presentation:
The author presents information very clearly in a way that is useful to other teachers. = A
The author presents information fairly clearly in a way that might be useful to other teachers. = B
The author presents limited information. = C

2) Integration and documentation of readings.
The author integrates research in a powerful way and offers thorough documentation. = A
The author draws from useful research and offers adequate documentation. = B
The author makes limited use of research and offers minimal documentation. = C

3) Applications of theory and research to practice.
The author has thought critically and creatively about ways to use this information. = A
The author offers insightful suggestions for professional applications. = B
The author offers a few useful ways to put information from this course into practice. = C

**GRADING SCALE**  TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE FOR COURSE = 100

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**Summer 2008 Course Calendar**

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<td>Course begins</td>
<td>8 Integrating, chapters 1 &amp; 2 due</td>
<td>9 Integrating, chapter 3 due</td>
<td>10 Integrating, chapter 4 and Taking Sides, Issue 9 due; Teaching autobiography due</td>
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<td>15 Presentations on educational issues, round three</td>
<td>16 Integrating, chapters 5-8 due</td>
<td>17 Integrating, chapters 9 &amp; 10 due</td>
<td>&gt; Teaching Perspectives Paper due July 29</td>
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