Educ 556 Instructional Strategies in Character Education (3 Graduate Credits)

Fall 2013

Course Description

This course examines several instructional strategies that have been found effective for teaching for character development. Among the strategies to be studied are those that relate to literature-based programs, the importance of language, cooperative learning, teaching for thinking, conflict resolution, and parental involvement, The course also offers candidates the opportunity to examine the research on each of these strategies, and to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies for meeting their school's character development expectations.

What character-based instructional strategies will you be able to implement in your classroom after completing this online course?

        + Cooperative learning and class meeting
        + New ways to plan your lessons
        + Using literature to teach character traits/virtues
        + Creating a classroom atmosphere of caring, responsibility, and respect   + News ways to handle conflict and toxic language

        + Implementing the power of positive words and positive thinking

        + Using the 4 A's teaching framework

        + Helping students develop social skills

        + Strengthening students thinking skills

        + The power of visuals, quotations, and stories

        + It's about motivation and attitudes

        + Goal setting and managing time

        + Service learning

        + Forming partnerships with parents

        + And MUCH MORE

Course Objectives/Candidate Outcomes

Outcome I. Academic Excellence, Critical Inquiry and Reflection

1. Develop an understanding of the concepts and principles that create a positive school and classroom climate.
2. Learn and practiced teaching strategies including critical thinking, conflict resolution, cooperative learning, and community service learning.
3. Examine the instructional benefits of using literature and the media to teach character and specific core values.

4. Demonstrate basic technological literacy via web use and e-mail.

5. Learn how to "promote student effort and engagement and create a positive   climate for learning; how to write and implement a student discipline plan; how to   help students learn to work responsibly with others and independently."

6. Examine strategies and resources that develop and maintain clear teacher and student expectations for academic and social behavior and understand "how well the social environment maximizes academic achievement for all students."

Outcome II. Community and Service
7. Explore effective approaches for creating character-building instructional strategies in culturally relevant classrooms.

8. Examine the many creative instructional strategies teachers use to teach the school's core values and help parents ands community care-givers foster positive behavior and good character.

9. Learn "how to establish rapport with all students and their families for supporting academic and personal success through caring, respect, and fairness."

10. Explore how community resources adds to effective character-building teaching-learning methods and practices in each classroom and in school-wide activities.

Outcome III. Ethics, Values and Diversity

11. Develop a personal educational philosophy statement based upon a reflective view of oneself as a character educator.

12. Learn about the value and historical roots of character-developing instructional strategies in education in this country.

13. Explore ways to evaluate school and classroom climate and to assess lessons/units/methods designed to foster the school's core values.14.

14. Investigate social-emotional programs and strategies that support effective ways for helping students solve problems peacefully (conflict resolution), to make ethical decisions, and manage emotions.

Textbooks/Readings

Three FREE Books
Hal Urban's "Lessons From The Classroom: 20 Things Good Teachers Do"

Hal Urban's " 20 Gifts"

DeRoche, "Evaluating Character Development: 51 Tools for Measuring Success"

Additional Course Readings available on *Blackboard*

Course Schedule

TWO in- class meetings.
    September 6th --- Friday ----4:00 – 6:00pm
    December 13th ---Friday ----4:00 --6:00pm (last day of classes)

ONLINE SESSIONS
Session 1   Wednesday, September 11 to Friday, the 20th

Session 2   Wednesday, September 25th to Friday, October 4th
Session 3   Wednesday, October 16th to Friday, October 25th
Session 4   Wednesday, October 30th to Friday, November, 8th
Session 5   Wednesday, November 20th to Monday, December 2nd
                FINAL PROJECT DUE: December 13th

Course Requirements

1) Students must attend and participate in the two in-class sessions.
2) Students must participate in each of the five online assignments and discussions on the web site in the time allotted for each session.
Each online session includes readings from the text, web sites on the session topic, blogs that address the session content, and a prompt to which students post their responses.
(2) Students will POST a review of a classroom management book, manual, or program that meets their needs and will be of interest to their classmates.
(3) Students will complete a FINAL PROJECT (usually a research paper, a classroom/school project, or an action research project) that is related to the course objectives, is of interest to the student, and has the instructor's approval.

Assessment Plan/Grading Criteria/Rubric

ONLINE guidelines to help you succeed with online work:
Be prepared for each session. Do your readings. Investigate recommended web sites and blogs for each online session. It is best for you to outline your thoughts before responding to the questions, ideas, information, or prompts from the instructor and classmates. Together, we will read about and discuss matters relating to character-building instructional strategies and recommendations gleaned from the readings, the handouts, and web site references. You will be challenged to think critically and thoughtfully about the content under discussion. "Participation" does not mean "say/write anything, anytime, and get credit." It's as much an issue of quality as it is a matter of quantity.
HOW IS YOUR WORK IN THIS COURSE GRADED?

I/we have been grading this summer course for years and have been grading online work for the past decade. Our view is that most students should earn, at the least, a "B-" grade (good work in the course).

Should a student earn less that a "B-," we offer him/her two options—take a "W" –that is, withdraw from the course; or take an "I" grade—an "incomplete" (an extra 10 weeks to do things better) and work with us until the grade is at least a "B-minus. "

I/we once used "rubrics" but discovered that comparing students' work on each assignment is a better way to assess the quality of that work. So, that's what we do. For every assignment, we take notes and "rank/compare" what you produce with your classmates. For example, in this course we will compare your work with those of your classmates, make a judgment of the work, and place your work in one of 4 categories –best – good – fair- not acceptable. But, there are also other factors: was the posting late? did the student respond to his classmates and instructors' postings? To prepare the final grades, I/we go back over our notes about your responses online, check our comparisons, add in the final project, include any factors that are pertinent to assigning a final grade (i.e. late assignments, class absence, missed an online assignment, etc.), and then file the grade.

Grade	Skills
A-B+	Your contributions are relevant, critiques the work of others, self-initiated; frequent; you used quotes from the readings to supplement your comments and those of your classmates.
B-C+	You generally keep up with the discussion although you may need an occasional prompting to contribute; might participate in some discussions more than others; uses a few (not many) quotes from the readings to supplement comments and those of your classmates.
C-C-	Your participation is fair but spotty; you seem to pick and choose topics/questions to respond to; you offer short, perfunctory comments when prompted: you seem to take limited initiative; offer few quotes from the references.

Professional, Legal and Ethical Obligations

Character educators "take responsibility for student academic and social learning outcomes. They are aware of their own personal values and biases and recognize ways in which these values and biases affect the teaching and learning of students. They resist racism and acts of intolerance."

Character educators "understand important elements of California and federal laws and procedures pertaining to the education of English learners, gifted students and individuals with disabilities, including implications for their placement in classrooms. Candidates can identify suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or sexual harassment. They maintain a non-hostile classroom environment. "

Academic Integrity

Obviously, you are responsible for doing your own work, and academic, dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated.   In accordance with the rules and regulations of the University of San Diego, "Violations of academic integrity include, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism or misrepresentation of information in oral or written form." Such violations will be dealt with severely by the instructor and the dean. Plagiarism means presenting someone else's idea or writing as if it were your own. If you use someone else's or writing, insure that the source is clearly documented.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

Any personal learning accommodations that may be needed by you, covered under the ADA, must be made known to the instructor as soon as possible. This is your responsibility. If you have a diagnosed disability or suspect that you may have one, please contact USD's Disability Services in Serra Hall room 300 or call 619-260-4655 or visit the website at www.sandiego.edu/disability BEFORE midterm.