Ottawa University

OTTAWA ONLINE
EDF 8503 – Masters Research Project

Course Description
Prepare major culminating scholarly project directly relevant to the program of study. Approved project proposal required. (This is a fully online, eight-week course. We will not meet face-to-face at any time.)

Course role in the program/major:
This course is a foundation course for each of the Master of Education programs.

Course Prerequisites
EDF 7163 Research Assessment and Evaluation

Course Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Goal/Objective	Teaching Standard
1. **Describe** insights and perspectives on research methodology	**APTS:** 7,8. **INTASC:** 1,2,3,4,5,6, 9 **NCATE**: 1,3,4,5
2. **Analyze** current issues in education	**APTS:** 7,8 **INTASC:** 1,2,3,4,5,6, 9, **NCATE**:1, 5, 6
3. **Articulate** beliefs about teaching and learning	**APTS: 7,** 8. **INTASC:** 9, 10 **NCATE**: 3; 6
4. **Apply** research findings to current practice in public education.	**APTS:** 7, 8 **INTASC: 5, 9** **NCATE**: 1, 3; 4, 5, 6
5. **Identify** goals for professional growth as an educator	**APTS:** 7; 8; 9 **INTASC:** 3, 9 **NCATE**: 1; 2; 4; 6
6. **Demonstrate** ability to access computer-based information and use technology to develop presentation of knowledge**.**	**APTS:** 3.11 **INTASC:** 6 **NCATE**: 2

Master of Arts in Education Learning Outcomes

This course addresses the following program outcomes:

1. Analyze, integrate and apply theories, research, and techniques to plan and serve effectively within one's professional field of study.

        b. Interpret best practices research in order to effectively plan and serve
        diverse student populations

3. Communicate effectively as professionals.

Course Materials

American Psychological Association. (2009). Publication manual of the American
      Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington, D.C. ISBN: 1-4338-0561-8

Course Assignment Descriptions

You will have several opportunities to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the principles taught in this course. The primary means of evaluating your work will be through practical application of the material. In the event that you have difficulty completing any of the assignments for this course, please contact your instructor immediately. Please refer to the **Course Materials** section of the cyberclassroom for complete details regarding the activities and assignments for this course. The following is merely a summary.

Discussion contributions (240 points)

    Initial Substantive Posts: Submit an initial response to each of the prompts provided each week by your instructor. Your initial post should be substantive (approximately ½ of a page in length) and must be posted by midnight, Central Time by Wednesday of each week. In your substantive post you are encouraged to use references (you may use your textbook); show evidence of critical thinking as it applies to the concepts or prompt and/or use examples of the application of the concepts to work and life. Proper punctuation, grammar and correct spelling are expected. Please use the **spell-check** function.

    Required Replies: You must reply to at least two different peers per prompt. Your replies should build on the concept discussed, offer a question to consider, or add a differing perspective, etc. Rather than responding with, "Good post," explain why the post is "good" (why it is important, useful, insightful, etc.). Or, if you disagree, respectfully share your alternative perspective. Just saying "I agree" or "Good idea" is not sufficient for the posts you would like graded.

    Posting Guidelines: Overall, postings must be submitted on at least two separate days of the week. It is strongly recommended you visit the discussion forum throughout the week to read and respond to your peers' postings. You are encouraged to post more than the required number of replies.

    (Please review the **Policies** section of Blackboard for further details.)

Readings, Activities, and Assignments

The Master's Research Project is the preparation and submission of a comprehensive portfolio representing the student's professional, personal, and academic growth. The portfolio is an assessment of the student's ability to integrate the content and concepts of foundation, core, and elective courses with the student's stated goals for the degree.

Assignments:

Introduction (50 points)

Write an autobiographical essay or narrative (3-5 pages) that discusses your reasons for pursuing this degree and describes your related career experiences (employment/volunteer).

Statement of your Philosophy of Education (100 points)

What is your philosophy of education? What is the purpose of school? What should be the role of an educator? Discuss your responses to these questions in an essay (3-5 pages).

Evaluation of Personal Learning   (100 points)

List the classes you have taken at Ottawa University. Write at least 4-5 sentences each to reflect learning you gained through your Ottawa graduate program. When possible, tie the learning statement to a specific course. For example, in EDF 7203, Diverse Community of Learners, I learned ____. Tell why the learning is important or how you apply what you learned in your teaching or counseling. Do not identify instructors by name.

Critical Analysis Research Paper (300 points total)

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is currently being debated by Congress. Evaluate the first seven years of NCLB. What are the benefits? What are the shortcomings? What are some of the changes that are being proposed? Present your findings in a critical analysis paper with a minimum of 10 full pages of text and using at least 10 current (2006 or newer) scholarly articles as references. NOTE: Your assignment is NOT to discuss the history of NCLB, but rather the benefits and problems.

Creative Dialogue (200 points)

Public education in the United States faces many challenges. Imagine that you are the moderator of a television program where education experts debate current education issues. Choose a current education issue and identify two EDUCATION experts who would be qualified to discuss the issue. (Do not use politicians. For example, President Obama does NOT qualify as an education expert for purposes of this assignment.) The education experts you choose may be living or dead. They should be individuals whose contributions to the field of education would be known. For example, if your Ottawa concentration is Early Childhood Education, you might choose to have Maria Montessori and Lev Vygotsky debate a developmentally appropriate kindergarten curriculum. If your Ottawa concentration is School Guidance Counseling, you might choose to have Frank Parsons and William Glasser debate Choice Theory. Write the script for your program. This is a creative assignment as you will be writing

the dialogue. However, you need to use factual information from scholarly sources and provide citations as needed. DO NOT WRITE ON NCLB. Your paper needs to be at least 10-15 full pages of text with at least 8 scholarly sources. No Wikipedia or unreferenced Web sites.

Plan of Professional Development (50 points)

Describe your plans for continuing professional development to increase your knowledge and skills as an educator. Include resume, short-term career goals (2-5 years), and long-term career goals (5+ years).

Program Completion Survey – Zero points

This graduate capstone course/experience provides you the opportunity to complete the Program Completion Survey to evaluate your entire Ottawa University experience – the academic program, advisement, student services, and learning environment. While your participation is voluntary, you are encouraged to take a few minutes to complete the survey. Your responses provide the university invaluable information which guide the university in making changes to improve the student experience.

At the beginning of the sixth week of this course, you will receive an email from the Ottawa University Office of Institutional Effectiveness (ou.assessment@ottawa.edu) via your Ottawa University student email address. This email will include a link for you to complete the Program Completion Survey online.

Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Your responses to the survey will remain confidential and your individual responses will not be tracked in any way.

You are requested to complete the survey before the end of week 6 of the course. If you do not respond within the allotted time frame, you will receive a reminder prior to the closure of the course. The grade book in Blackboard will be updated with a green checkmark for this item once your completed survey has been received by the survey software. Thank you for helping us validate and strengthen the student experience at Ottawa University.

*Course Schedule At-A-Glance**

Please refer to the Term Calendar in our cyberclassroom for specifics regarding dates.

Week	Assignments Due	Date/Time Due**
Week 1	• Discussion forum postings	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun.
Week 2	• Discussion forum postings • Introduction	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun. • Sunday at midnight.
Week 3	• Discussion forum postings • Belief Statement/Philosophy of Education	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun. • Sunday at midnight.

Week 4	• Discussion forum postings • Evaluation of Personal Learning	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun. • Sunday at midnight.
Week 5	• Discussion forum postings	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun.
Week 6	• Discussion forum postings • Creative Dialogue • Program Completion Survey (sent to you via email from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness)	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun. • Sunday at midnight. • By Saturday of Week 8, 11:59 pm CT
Week 7	• Discussion forum postings • Critical Analysis Paper	• Midnight CT on Weds/Sun. • Sunday at midnight.
Week 8	• Discussion forum postings • Professional Development Plan	• Midnight CT on Weds/**Sat**. • **Saturday** at midnight.

* All online weeks run from Monday to Sunday, except the last week, which ends on Saturday.
** All assignments are due at midnight Central Time. (All submissions to the Blackboard system are date/time stamped in Central Time).

Assignments At-A-Glance

Assignment/Activity	Qty.	Points	Total Points
Discussion Forums	-	30	240
Week 2: Introduction	1	50	50
Week 3: Belief and Philosophy Statement	1	100	100
Week 4:Evaluation of Personal Learning	1	100	100
Week 6: Creative Dialogue	1	200	200
Week 7: Critical Analysis Research Paper	1	300	300
Week 8: Plan of Professional Dev.	1	50	50
Program Completion Survey	1	0	0
TOTAL POINTS			**1040**

 *Please refer to the **Policies** menu for more information about our Course Discussions.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage	Points
A	90 to 100%	936 - 1040
B	80 to 89%	832 -935
C	70 to 79%	728 - 831
D	60 to 69%	624 -727
F	< 60%	<623

To access your scores, click on My Grades in the My Tools area in Blackboard.

Important Policies

All <u>course-specific policies</u> for this course are spelled out here in this syllabus. However, additional <u>university policies</u> are located in the Policies section of Blackboard. You are responsible for reading and understanding all of these policies. <u>All of them are important</u>. Failure to understand or abide by them could have negative consequences for your experience in this course.

Editorial Format for Written Papers

All written assignments are to follow the APA writing style guidelines for grammar, spelling, and punctuation. This online course includes information regarding the APA style under "Writing and Research Resources" in the **Resource Room** on the course menu in Blackboard.

Ottawa Online Late Policy

With instructor approval, assignments may be accepted for up to one week after the due date, but a minimum automatic deduction of 10% of the points will be assessed. The instructor also has the option of increasing this deduction percentage up to a maximum of 20%. Extenuating circumstances may be determined on rare occasions and an extension allowed without a deduction, but only at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Discussion board postings will not be accepted for credit when posted after the close of the discussion week. There are no exceptions to this rule; however, solely at the discretion of the instructor, the student may be allowed to submit an alternative assignment to make up for the points under extenuating circumstances. If granted, this should be an exception to the rule.

No assignments will be accepted after the last day of the course (end of term) unless arrangements have been made and "approved" by the instructor at least one week in advance.

Saving Work

It is recommended that you save all of your work from this course on your own computer or flash drive. The capstone course you take at the end of your program may require you to have access to this work for culminating assignments and/or reflections.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated at any level on any assignment. The reality of cyberspace has made academic dishonesty even more tempting for some, but be advised that technology can and will be used to help uncover those engaging in deception. If you ever have a question about the legitimacy of a source or a procedure you are considering using, ask your instructor. As the University Academic Council approved on May 29, 2003, *"The penalty for plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty will be failure in the course in which the academic dishonesty occurred. Students who commit academic dishonesty can be dismissed from the university by the provost/director."*
Please refer to **Academic Honesty** in the **Policies** section of the online course menu for important information about Ottawa University's policies regarding plagiarism and cheating, including examples and explanations of these issues.

Student Handbook
Please refer to your student handbook for all university regulations. The **Resource Room** on the course menu in Blackboard contains information about where to find the student handbook online for your campus.

Please see **Policies** in Blackboard for additional university policies.

Blackboard Technical Support

The Resource Room in Blackboard contains links to student tutorials for learning to use Blackboard as well as information about whom to contact for technical support. Ottawa University offers technical support from 8 a.m. to midnight Central Time for all students, staff, and faculty at no cost. See www.ottawa.edu/ouhelp for contact information.

Ottawa University Mission Statement

The mission of Ottawa University is to provide the highest quality liberal arts and professional education in a caring, Christ-centered community of grace which integrates faith, learning and life. The University serves students of traditional age, adult learners and organizations through undergraduate and graduate programs.