



Course Syllabus: Amplifying Student-Voice

Number of Credits: 1*

Course Instructors: Miriam Woods, Jordan Mix, and Dana Van Renterghem

Course Description:

Over the past several years, the concept of student voice has been raised more and more in the field of education. Today more than ever, teachers and administrators are seeing an increase in student involvement, both in social change and the desire to have updated and relevant curricula in their school. Student voice is defined as “any expression of any student about anything related to education and learning” (Fletcher, *The Guide to Student Voice, 2nd Edition*, 2014).

This course will cover the subject of student voice, and why including it in the classroom is an important part of the educating process for today’s students. Participants will be guided through the process of amplifying student voice, and be given ideas on how to help students find a voice to express their needs and interests, no matter the subject.

Learning Objectives:

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

- Identify the concept of student voice as it relates to education
- Demonstrate an awareness of the role student voice plays in the life of a student, and their learning process
- Create a plan to encourage more active involvement of student voice in the classroom

- Develop strategies to ensure students have the opportunity to voice needs and ideas related to their education and learning

*** Course Requirements:**

To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

Other Course Information:

Getting Started

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with login instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

Participation

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 3 Weekly Units, however all assignments will not be due until the final day of the course.
- All responses will be posted online. Large documents, files, photographs or PowerPoint presentations may be attached as part of your response by using the “Submit A File” option.
- You may work collaboratively and submit similar responses on all assignments except for quizzes which must be done individually.

Research

GSA's are shown to be a best practice in reducing bullying and ensuring students feel safe and supportive in their schools and communities.

The Guide to Student Voice, 2nd Edition (2014)

Adam F.C. Fletcher

Description: The Guide to Student Voice is packed with the information students, educators, advocates, and others need to promote student engagement in schools. Featuring a professional, easy-to-read layout, this short book is packed with useful tips, powerful activities, and great guidance for anyone interested in student voice today!

ISBN-10: 0692217320

Student Voice: The Instrument of Change, 1st Edition (

Russell J. (Joseph) Quaglia, Michael J. Corso

Description: When you take time to listen, you'll find that students' aspirations can drive your school toward exciting new goals—and when students know they're being heard, they engage meaningfully in their own academic success. Using examples drawn from student surveys, focus groups, observations, and interviews, this groundbreaking book presents a blueprint for a successful partnership between educators and students. You'll discover how to:

- Ask the right questions—and understand how to build from the answers
- Engage students in decision-making and improvement-related processes
- Implement the Aspirations Framework to guide students toward their full potential

ISBN-10: 1483358135

INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- 10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students’ learning and well-being.

Assignment Checklist

Week	Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
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	<p><u>Getting to Know the Class; Additional Readings:</u> Take the time to get to know the class layout, read over the Help section, and review any other materials present in the class to get started. Take your time!</p>		3 hrs
1	<u>Student Voice & the Involved Student</u>		
	<p>Discussion: Introductions – In this activity, participants will have the opportunity to introduce themselves to their cohort, and state why they are interested in learning more about student voice. In addition, they are encouraged to build their user profile, so fellow participants can get to know them better.</p>	1.5 hrs	
	<p>Discussion: What is Student Voice? – In this activity, participants will read 2 articles explaining what student voice is, and why it is an important part of the educating process for today’s student. They will also watch a webinar by the instructor, that overviews the concept of student voice, and write responses to questions about the articles assigned.</p>	1.5 hrs	3hrs
	<p>Discussion: The Value of the Student Perspective– In this activity, participants will watch a webinar by the instructor on the intersectional views that students have, and the value of including those perspectives in the classroom. They will then read an article explaining why the lived experiences of students can enrich the classroom. Additionally,</p>	1.5hrs	2.5hrs

	participants will be asked to respond to critical thinking questions on student views and perspectives, and how they would integrate that in their classroom.		
	Discussion: What does Student Voice Look Like?– In this activity, participants will watch a TedX Talk on student voice, and how to recognize when a student is attempting to integrate it into the classroom. They will also read about different ways to integrate student voice in their classroom. They are then assigned critical thinking questions on why it is important to truly hear students when they are speaking, and not listen from only a surface level.	1.5hrs	3.5hrs
2	<u>Tips & Tricks on Integrating Student Voice</u>		
	Discussion: Encouraging Students to Contribute – In this activity, participants will watch a TedX Talk titled “When Student Voice is Heard”. They will also read an article on different ways to encourage student voice in the classroom. After reviewing course materials, participants are asked to post discussions on ways they may encourage student voice.	1.5hrs	3.5hrs
	Discussion: Transforming the Class – In this activity, participants are given reading and activity assignments on creating a classroom that adapts to different learning styles of students. In addition, they will watch a brief webinar by the instructor, outlining the importance of flexibility in the	1.5hrs	3.5hrs

	classroom to accommodate students. Participants are then assigned discussion questions that require critical thinking of concepts covered in readings and the video.		
	Discussion: Safe Spaces to Express Student Voice – In this activity, participants will read articles about the importance of creating safe spaces in the classroom, so students feel heard. In addition, they will watch a webinar by the instructor on basics that should be covered in classrooms so everyone feels safe and included. After assigned materials are reviewed, participants will discuss why safe space is so important, and what steps they will take to ensure all students feel that they can express themselves.	1.5hrs	2.5hrs
3	<u>Empowering Students to Be a Part of Their Education</u>		
	Discussion: Facilitate Student Voice Every Day – In this activity, participants will read about tips to “ <i>Pump Up Student Voice</i> ” in the classroom. They will also read on how to empower students to take responsibility for their own learning. After reviewing materials, participants are tasked with planning an activity that gets students thinking about how to use their voice to take charge of their education experience.	1.5hrs	2.5hrs

	Discussion: Getting Feedback– In this activity, participants will read on the importance of consistent feedback from their students, and how they can improve the classroom experience. They will also watch a webinar by the instructor on why it is important for teachers to be open to receiving feedback from students. Participants are then assigned the task of discussing why they think feedback is important for their specific subject or area of expertise, and how they plan to adapt to ever-changing student needs.	1.5hrs	3hrs
	Final Assignment: Create a Plan to Include Student Voice – In the final assignment, participants will create a comprehensive plan to integrate student voice into their classrooms, and how they will use student voice to encourage more student involvement.	1.5hrs	3hrs
	Total Class Time	15 hours	30 hours

Coursework

Participants can earn up to 70 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
9 Discussions (5 points each)	45
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	25

Total	70
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Grading Scale – Graduate Credit

100-90% (70-63 points)	A
89-80% (62-56 points)	B
79-70% (55-49 points)	C
69-60% (48-42 points)	D
59%-Below (<41 points)	F

Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit

100-80% (70-56 points)	P
79%-Below (<55 points)	NP

Student Requirements

Students are required to:

- Participate in all discussion forums
- Complete a final implementation plan

Americans with Disabilities Act:

If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities

Discussion Forums (45 points possible)

Discussion Forums are asynchronous ways to engage in class discussions. They require you to submit an answer to a question and respond to the posts of other peers. Because they are an integral part of sharing strategies, analyzing research, and sharing ideas, discussion forums in this course comprise a significant percentage of your final grade. It's highly recommended that you read and respond to more than the required two peer postings because greater participation will facilitate a greater depth of understanding. Additionally, it's important to make posts in a timely manner to benefit from peer responses.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Makes connections to the other content and real-life that are supported by reference(s) and example(s)	1
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	1
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	1
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	1
Participation (Responses to at least 2 peer posts)	Responds to other posts (when available)	1
Total Points Possible		5

Final Assignment (25 points possible)

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a one-page final assignment. The paper is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. The rubric below will be used to grade the final assignment, but additional details will be provided within the course.

Grading Rubric for Implementation Plan		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	5
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	5
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	3
	Discusses Overall Implications	2
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	2
Mechanics	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	2
Implementation	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	2
	States resources to be used	2
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	2
Total Points Possible		25