Distance Learning 201

Number of Credits: 1

Course Instructors: Miriam Woods & Jordan Mix

Course Description: Online, distance, and hybrid learning has become the "norm" for thousands of students and educators across the country. As we face what looks to be at least one more semester, and perhaps a long-term shift of families opting-in to virtual learning programs, educators are looking for additional resources to combat emerging obstacles and barriers to student success, and sustain student engagement in an online environment.

It's clear, now that the COVID-19 Pandemic has permanently altered education's landscape. From dips in participation, attendance, and college enrollment to increased reports of cyberbullying and online harassment, to rebuilding lessons and curriculum plans, educators have been tasked with leading their students into this new terrain, when they are first-time visitors themselves.

This course offers advocates and district leaders guidance and industry best-practices for sustaining student engagement, combating cyberbullying, and virtual classroom management.

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

- Identify new barriers to education in an online learning environment
- Gain knowledge about sustaining student engagement in virtual learning scenarios
- Consider how to effectively intervene in instances of cyberbullying and harassment
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to engage in virtual classroom management best-practices
- Demonstrate a knowledge of maximizing student interest and engagement in online learning environments

Resources: No texts are required to purchase in order to complete this course

- The mission of Iowa Safe Schools is to provide safe, supportive and nurturing learning environments for all students. Staff of the Iowa Safe Schools are experts in the fields of bullying prevention and intervention, developing positive school climate, and advocating for underrepresented populations. GSAs are shown to be a best practice for increasing awareness of discriminatory school policies, reducing bullying, reducing deaths by suicide, and ensuring students feel safe and support in their schools and communities.

- Dowd, Heather and Patrick Green. *Classroom Management in the Digital Age: Effective Practices for Technology-Rich Learning Spaces*. Dowd Green EDU LLC, 2019.
    This book outlines practical strategies to setting a strong classroom management plan. It includes current best practices around educational technologies, strategies to build community and collaboration, and changes you can make in your online teaching practice that result in significant learning gains. Classroom Management in the Digital Age helps

educators to build the confidence they need to seamlessly conduct course instruction online.

- Glaser, Pam T., and Judy Monroe Peterson. *Shutting Down Cyberbullying*. Rosen, 2020.

    This book offers helpful resources on reporting bullying behavior, blocking potential threats, and knowing where to go to find safe spaces online and in social situations. It will help educators learn how to intervene in instances of cyberbullying while also providing essential information for their students to help protect themselves, and know how to document and report any instances of cyberbullying that occur.

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, and all assignments will be due by midnight on 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.

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.

Check the Iowa Teaching Standards that are addressed in this course:

X	1. Enhance Student Achievement		5. Monitoring Student Learning
	2. Content Knowledge	X	6. Classroom Management
X	3. Planning and Preparation	X	7. Professional Growth
X	4. Instructional Strategies	X	8. Professional Responsibilities

Assignment Checklist

Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
<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!		3 hrs
<u>Week 1 - Getting Started</u>		
Discussion: Introductions– Participants will introduce themselves to the class and discuss what they hope to get out of it.	1 hrs	1 hrs
Discussion: Understanding Types of Virtual Learning – Participants will learn the differences between online learning, distance learning, and hybrid learning. Participants will also study potential barriers and advantages to online learning.	1 hrs	2 hrs
Discussion: Classroom challenges of Virtual Learning– Participants will get acquainted with many prominent challenges of virtual learning including sustaining student interest and engagement, enforcing classroom guidelines, and creating innovative lesson plans for a virtual setting.	1hrs	2.5 hrs
Discussion: Community Challenges of Virtual Learning – Participants will explore some of the various ways that virtual learning is impacting different communities, including home and familial communities, neighborhood communities, and school/district communities.	1.5 hrs	2.5 hrs
<u>Week 2</u>		
Discussion: Classroom Rules, Policies, and Guidelines – Participants will consider various ways to set and enforce classroom policies. As opposed to a brick and mortar classroom where teachers can see all of their students, many of these strategies will focus on empowering students to learn to become self-manageable and foster community accountability.	1.5hrs	2 hrs
Discussion: Cyberbullying and harassment – Even the most well-managed classrooms will see some instances of cyberbullying and harassment. Important organizations that respond to students experiencing cyberbullying have reported skyrocketing numbers since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This lesson will help familiarize educators with best-practices for identifying, intervening, and preventing cyberbullying in their virtual classrooms.	1.5hrs	2.5 hrs

Discussion: Student Privacy – The very conditions of virtual learning require that many students bring their classrooms into their homes and other living situations. While this might be "no big deal" for some, others might feel self-conscious or nervous about allowing their teachers and peers to see inside their current residence. This lesson will help familiarize educators with best-practices regarding protecting student privacy during virtual learning, and how to build a positive classroom environment.	1.5 hrs	2.5 hrs
Discussion: Supporting Families and Communities– Students staying home to participate in virtual learning does not come without a strain on teachers, parents, and students alike. This lesson explores various ways educators can help support student families such as improving school-to-family communication.	1hrs	1.5 hrs
Week 3		
Discussion: Sustaining Student Engagement – While many students are engaged and ready to learn early in the day, many educators are reporting that sustaining student engagement is difficult throughout the day, particularly in subjects that require more direct instruction. This lesson provides educators with strategies to help increase student engagement and participation.	1 hrs	1.5 hrs
Discussion: Innovative Lesson Plans – While certain subjects lend themselves nicely to engaging, hands-on learning (even from home), other subjects provide more of a challenge. This lesson gives participants many choices as they design an innovative lesson plan to theoretically implement into their own classroom.	1 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: Preparing for Post-Secondary Life – As we see college enrollments drop across the board, many secondary educators are having to re-frame a lot of their post-secondary preparation that they've been providing students for decades. This lesson helps to provide framework(s) for student success beyond high school, that focuses on sharpening critical thinking and problem-solving skills to best help prepare students for whatever they decide to do next.	1hrs	2.5hrs
Final Assignment: Participants will create an implementation plan that will help them facilitate online instruction in the future. Their implementation plans are expected to be at least 1,000 words, and meet all guidelines provided in the prompt. Students should proofread and format their assignments appropriately.	2 hrs	3.5 hrs
Total Class Time	15 hours	30 hours

Coursework: Participants can earn up to 75 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
11 Discussion Posts (5 Points Each)	55
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	25
Total	80

Grading Scale – Graduate Credit

100-90% (80 - 72 points)	A
89-80% (71 – 64 points)	B

79-70% (63 - 56 points)	C
69-60% (55 - 48 points)	D
59%-Below (<47 points)	F

Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit

100-80% (80 - 64 points)	P
79%-Below (<64 points)	NP

Student Requirements Students are required to:
- Participate in **ALL** discussion forums and quizzes
- 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.

Statement of Plagiarism: Academic dishonesty results in failure of this course. Give credit where credit is due. Use the APA Publication Manual to cite references when needed. Not crediting ideas or words of others is unacceptable scholarship as is submitting work that was done for a previous course or that is not your own origin in design or completion. Submit original assignments. Do not submit work for this course that you have done for other courses.

<u>Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities</u>

11 Discussions (55 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

<u>Final Assignment</u> (25 points possible)

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a two-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