EDU 570 – Capstone Seminar (3 credits)
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Education Department ECSU
Office: Webb Hall 149
Office Hours: Wec. 1-3, TH 10-12, Fri. 11-12.
Please contact Dr. Tannahill at (860) 465-5098 or through WebVISTA or her email address – tannahillc@easternct.edu

Eastern Connecticut State University
Education Department
Capstone Seminar (EDU 570)
Spring 2009

Meet at ECSU, Webb 113 on Saturdays: January 31, February 21 and March 7, 2009 from 9:00-3:00 with the balance of the course conducted through on-line discussions

Any suggestions that would lead to enhancing this course's learning experiences are welcome. Please feel free to talk with me before or after class, or during my office hours.

Purpose of the course
As the culminating graduate course in the Department of Education, the Capstone Seminar is designed to provide a forum for analysis and exploration of current issues and topics in the field. Additionally, the seminar provides opportunities for ongoing reflection and integration of theoretical and experiential knowledge in order to gain an informed, personalized perspective on the practice of education.

Capstone Seminar students will utilize online threaded discussions to synthesize readings from class and coursework at the university. Also, in-class time will be provided for these discussions.

Course objectives
By the end of the course the student will:

• demonstrate graduate level competence in reading, writing, public presentations, and both independent and collaborative learning;

• demonstrate graduate level knowledge of and the ability to think critically about current issues and topics in education;

• demonstrate a professional understanding of the impact of current trends and theoretical perspectives on classroom practice and teaching/learning outcomes; and

• demonstrate competence in the professional skills of analysis and reflection, collaborative problem-solving, self-evaluation, and planning for ongoing growth in the field of education.

All of these course objectives are interconnected with the ECSU Education Unit Conceptual Framework (See the attachment at the end of this outline). The core theme of the conceptual framework is constructivist learner-centered epistemology with emphasis on inquiry, reflection, and collaboration. Surrounding this core are six critical strands—content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, integration of knowledge, infusion of educational technology, diversity, and professionalism. Students in Capstone Seminar are expected to demonstrate competencies related to the unit conceptual framework through their portfolio and class participation.

Writing Standards: It is expected that all written work will reflect professional standards of communication. Complete sentences, proper punctuation, capitalization and spelling, and generally
accepted rules of grammar are the hallmark of educational professionals. Excessive errors will be reflected in reduced assigned points or a failing grade for the course.

Student Evaluation

Student evaluation will be based on the Capstone Portfolio (60%), Critical Incident presentation (10%), participation in threaded Discussions (21%), and Attendance, Participation, and Dispositions (9%) as addressed through the Final Reflection.

Capstone Portfolio [60%]

See attached description, guiding questions, and rubric.

Critical Incidents [10%]

The purpose of critical incidents is to share real classroom/student interaction situations with the intent of identifying underlying causes, instructional consequences and effective/efficient management techniques based on theory, experience and readings. Each student will be asked to relate an incident (e.g. student interaction or instructional challenge) that occurred within their schools and or classrooms to the seminar group for analysis, reflection, and discussion. It is important that each student carefully selects a topic that relates to class readings or presents a moral/ethical dilemma so that lively discussion can occur. Each student is required to prepare one page (or less) summary of the facts of the situation with one or two discussion questions. The length of presentation should be between 10 to 15 minutes.

Online Threaded Discussion [21%]

Each student must participate in a total of three online threaded discussions. For each thread, there are two requirements:

1. Students are required to choose one research article from their own program of study (Ed. Tech., Early Childhood, Reading/Language Arts, Secondary, or Elementary Education), summarize it, and then relate it to one of the articles posted by the instructor. Students must provide a full reference of the selected article using the APA format and provide a summary of the article. If the article is available online, a link to the website or a PDF file must be provided. A posting should not be more than one page long. This will be posted under the discussion titled: Research Articles.

2. In addition each student must post and original posting and a response to each of the three On-line Threaded Discussions topics.

The research article you select must be related to the three questions of the capstone portfolio, which are:

1. Learning theory (e.g. constructivism)
2. Curriculum development, assessment, and technology
3. Cultural/gender diversity, students with special needs, and differentiated instruction

These articles must have been published within the last 3 years, unless the article has a historical significance in the topic chosen.

Attendance, Participation, and Dispositions [9%]

Following a seminar format, the course requires students to complete assigned readings in advance of each class and to join actively in debate, discussion, analysis, and reflection. Each member of the class is essential to the development of a learning community and, as such, regular attendance is expected of all students.

At the end of this course, you must submit a 1-2 page reflection describing your strengths and challenges with respect to target or acceptable dispositions as explained in the attached rubric. Grades will be determined by carefully comparing your reflection with my notes. Although you will write your
disposition reflection at the end of the course, you will have opportunities to demonstrate required dispositions throughout this course. If needed, meetings will be conducted with individual student(s) to discuss how dispositions can be improved.

**Grading**

Final grades in this course will be determined on total points earned out of 100 in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95–100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90–94</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87–89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84–86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80–83</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77–79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>74–76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70–73</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>65–69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
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Please pick up your final portfolio in the Education office, Webb 124, within two weeks of its submission. The paper not picked up will be discarded by the third week. *If you cannot pick up your paper within the time frame, please include a self addressed stamped envelope for mailing.*

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the Office of AccessAbility Services at (860) 465-5573. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, you should contact the Office of AccessAbility Services as soon as possible. Please understand that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from the Office of AccessAbility Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

**Course Texts**


**Articles to read**


**Weekly Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Course readings/Assignments</th>
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| **Week 1**  
January 31  
On-campus | Portfolio assessment  
Course introduction and expectations, capstone portfolio requirements  
Review of previous Eastern’s courses and learning theories  
Costantino, et al. text (2006)  
**Critical Incidents/Case Presentations**  
**Paper on Question #1 Due (for feedback)** |
| **Week 2**  
February 2 | Learning theories  
Constructivist view of learning  
Bailey & Pransky (2005); Richardson (2003); Winn (2004) |
| **Week 3**  
February 9 | Curriculum development, assessment, and educational technology in curriculum  
Boethel & Dimock (1999); Herman & Dietel (2005); Kulik (2003) |
| **Week 4**  
February 12 | Characteristics of good schools  
Cuban text (2003)  
Differentiated instruction  
Anderson (2007); Tomlinson (2002) |
| **Week 5**  
February 16 | Diversity: Socio-economic status, multiculturalism, and gender  
Anyon, (1980); Killins et al. (2007); Nieto, (2003)  
Students with special needs  
Dover (2005) |
| **February 21**  
On-campus | Citations and Captioning Artifacts  
**Critical Incidents/Case Presentations**  
**Paper on Question #2 Due (for feedback)** |
| **Week 6**  
March 2 | Parent/Community involvement in education  
Brandes (2005); Epstein & Salinas (2004) |
| **March 7**  
On-campus | Concluding session, course reflection  
**Course evaluation**  
**Final Critical Incidents/Case Presentations**  
**Capstone Portfolio Due**  
**Disposition Reflection Due** |

Note: Regular participation in online threaded discussions is required. Also note that all of the articles to read are posted in WebCT. However, you need to buy the two textbooks by Costantino et al. (2006) and Cuban (2003). If you wish papers returned to you prior to the next class meeting and do not plan to come to campus to collect them, be sure to include a stamped self-addressed envelop for their return.
## Attendance, Participation, and Disposition Rubric (9 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Target (3)</th>
<th>Acceptable (2)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class participation</strong></td>
<td>Attended every class, always came on time, submitted all assignments by their due dates, was not distracted, and was actively engaged in online as well as on-campus group and whole class activities.</td>
<td>Missed one or two classes or discussions, almost always came on time or only partially participated in online discussions, submitted all assignments by their due dates, was not distracted, and was actively engaged in online and on-campus activities.</td>
<td>Missed more than two classes, often came late, and/or was inactive or distracted in group/whole class activities. Did not actively participate in online discussions</td>
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<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td>Read professional and research journal(s) in their discipline(s) to improve their own personal and professional growth, sought membership of professional organization(s) to become involved in the professional community of educators, and demonstrated passion and enthusiasm for their discipline(s) and methods of teaching.</td>
<td>Read professional and research journal(s) in their discipline(s) and demonstrated some passion and enthusiasm for their discipline(s) and methods of teaching.</td>
<td>Did not read professional and research journal(s) in their discipline(s) and/or did not demonstrate passion and enthusiasm for their discipline(s) and methods of teaching.</td>
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<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
<td>Displayed professional and ethical behavior in all class activities, always paid attention and listened to peers and the instructor of the class with respect, and often responded thoughtfully and appropriately to the ideas of peers and the instructor.</td>
<td>Displayed professional and ethical behavior in all class activities, and always paid attention and listened to peers and the instructor of the class with respect.</td>
<td>Did not display professional and ethical behavior in all class activities and/or did not pay attention to the ideas of peers and the instructor of the class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>