

LOCK HAVEN UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

SYLLABUS
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION: AN INTRODUCTION
TO THEORY AND PRACTICE
ALTE 615 AND EDTL 615

I. Introductory Information:

- A. Department Name: Graduate Studies
- B. Department Catalogue Number: ALTE 615 and EDTL 615
- C. Course Title: Alternative Education:
An Introduction to
Theory and Practice
- D. Credit/Semester hours: 3 hours
- E. Clock Hours per week: 3 hours
- F. Restrictions upon student registration- Restricted to graduate students; degree or non-degree candidates

II. A. Description of the Course: This course is designed to be an introduction to theories and practices in Alternative Education. An array of topics is explored to bring research, theories and practice together in a meaningful format. The inquiry nature of this course will serve as a building block for issues in other courses and the capstone research project. Emphasis is placed upon the practical application of theories in the classroom, best practices and characteristics effective programs.

B. Comprehensive Description:

This course gives students the opportunity to compare and contrast an array of state legislative initiatives and program approaches in alternative education. Students discuss the history of alternative education and analyze various theoretical approaches. The course will allow students to examine characteristics of best practices in the classroom, and examine characteristics of effective alternative education programs. This course is designed to give students resources needed to identify and evaluate model alternative education programs.

The course addresses the following National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Propositions (NBPTS):

NBPTS Proposition 1

Be committed to students and their learning.

- Be attentive to human variability and knowledgeable about learning disabilities, physical, mental, and emotional challenges. The teacher will adjust instructional practices accordingly and evaluate the effectiveness for student success, willingly changing the practices as needed.
- Provide socially and cognitively stimulating activities that engage all students at their appropriate developmental level of learning.
- Show evidence of concern for the students' self-concept, motivation, and character development, fully recognizing the impact on intellectual development.

NBPTS Proposition 2

Know the subjects and how to teach those subjects to students.

- Know how to reveal content to students so they can build it into their systems of thinking and readily assimilate the new knowledge.
- Help students learn to pose problems and work through alternate solutions, in addition to teaching them about the answers that others have found to similar problems.

NBPTS Proposition 3

Be responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

- Know and effectively employ a variety of instructional strategies.
- Know how to manage groups of students and help them to adopt appropriate roles and responsibilities for themselves and their peers.
- Assess student learning and use this for individual student evaluation classroom evaluation, and to evaluate and reflect on the lesson taught.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding that student learning is influenced by family, community, prior experiences, language, and culture.

NBPTS Proposition 4

Think systematically about classroom practices and learn from experience.

- Exemplify the virtues actively sought to impart to students including curiosity, love of learning, tolerance, open-mindedness, fairness, and justice.
- Model appreciation for culture, intellectual heritage, respect for human diversity, and multiple perspectives.

- Actively seek the advice of others and show evidence of utilizing educational research and pursuing scholarship to improve his/her practice.

NBPTS Proposition 5

Be a member of a learning community.

- Participate in critically analyzing the school curriculum, identifying new priorities, and communicating necessary changes to the school community.
- Communicate regularly with parents and guardians, listening to their concerns, respecting their perspective, enlisting their support, informing them of their child's progress, and educating them about school programs.
- cultivate knowledge of the school's community as a powerful resource for learning and become knowledgeable about the character of the community and its effects on the school and students.

III. Exposition:

A. Objectives

The Graduate Student will be able to:

1. access and navigate course delivery technologies including, but not limited all course tools, emails, audio and video conferencing and PowerPoint software;
2. analyze a variety of alternative education programs;
3. identify and discuss individual, family, school and community at-risk weaknesses in at-risk conditions for children and youth;
4. identify and critically discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the at-risk approach;
5. examine characteristics of effective alternative education schools and programs;
6. review the 5 NBPTS core propositions;
7. examine best practices in the alternative education classroom;
8. explore and discuss Choice Theory and its relevance to alternative education;
9. review and analyze learning theories and their relevance in alternative education practice;
10. describe the process of determining what constitutes a "model alternative education school";
11. discuss and analyze the resources required to implement evaluation planning;

12. compare and contrast alternative education programs to other educational reforms;
13. examine federal and state laws that impact alternative education, and;
14. examine one aspect, topic or theory in alternative education

B. Activities and Requirements:

1. Graduate students will complete readings, web-based research activities, and participate in daily/weekly discussion groups sharing ideas, insights, discoveries and projects.
2. Create a list of alternative education programs analyzing the mission of each.
3. Discuss individual, family, school and community at-risk conditions for children and youth.
4. Create a reaction paper that examines the at-risk approach analyzing the strengths and weaknesses.
5. Develop and present a plan for implementation of two effective characteristics in alternative schools and programs.
6. Generate a reflective paper analyzing personal teaching practices and the 5 NBPTS.
7. Prepare a report critically analyzing best practices in the alternative education classroom.
8. Prepare and present a report critically analyzing Choice Theory at its impact in the classroom.
9. Present learning theories and analyze their relevance in the classroom.
10. Generate and present a description of a “model alternative school”.
11. Create an evaluation plan.
12. Prepare a paper critically examining the process of educational reform and its relationship to alternative education using correct APA format.
13. Discuss the federal and state laws that impact alternative education.
14. Design and present one aspect, topic or theory in alternative education.

C. Major Units and Time Allotted:

Module 1 Introduction to Alternative Education	1 week
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What is alternative education?
 Historical perspective of alternative education
 Why Alternative Education works

Module 2 Who is at-risk?	1 week
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Statistical look at the at-risk population
 Characteristics (Individual, School, Family and

Community)

Module 3	At-risk model problems	1 week
	Problems with the at-risk approach Alternative view- Resilience education Other models and approaches	
Module 4	Best Practices in Alternative Education	1.5 weeks
	Teacher practices Administrative practices Policy and procedure considerations	
Module 5	Characteristics of effective programs and design considerations for alternative education programs	2 weeks
Module 6	Model Programs in Alternative Education	1 week
	A review of programs utilizing various combinations of best practices	
Module 7	Theories and the Alternative Education classroom	3 weeks
	Dr. Wm. Glasser, Choice Theory Learning Theories Other theories of importance to alternative education	
Module 8	Reform and Alternative Education	1 week
	Analysis of the education reform process The status of current educational reform in alternative education	
Module 9	Legal Issues in Alternative Education	1 week
	Act 30 (PA) and comparable legislation from across the nation Special Education and Alternative Education Segregation- separate <u>and</u> equal considerations	
Module 10	Designing an Alternative Education Program	2.5 weeks
	Design aspects and project development	

D. Materials and Bibliography-

1. Required Text:

Selected readings will be provided by the instructor. The required text will be announced by the instructor.

2. Other Resources :

Computer modem with Internet capability.

3. Basic Bibliography :

Bluestein, J. (2001). *Creating emotionally safe schools: A guide for educators and parents*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc.

Brown, J. H., D'Emidio-Caston, M., and Benard, B. (2001). *Resilience education*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Byrnes, J. (2001). *Minds, brains, and learning: Understanding the psychological and educational relevance of neuroscientific research*. New York: Guilford.

Conoley, J. & Goldstein, A. (Eds.). (2004). *School violence intervention (2nd ed.)*. New York: Guilford Press.

Elliot, A. & Dweck, C. (Eds.) (2005). *Handbook of competence and motivation*. New York: Guilford Press.

Ellis, A. (2004). *Research on education innovations (4th ed.)*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory*. New York: Harper-Perrenial.

Kauffman, J. (2002) *Education deform: Bright people sometimes say stupid things about education*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Orfield, G. (Ed.) (2004). *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Rossi, P., Lipsey, M., & Freeman, H. (2004). *Evaluation: A systematic approach (7th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Schargel, F. & Smink, J. (2001). *Strategies to help solve our school dropout problem.*

Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education

Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., & Hyde, A. (2005). *Best practice, today's standards for teaching and learning in America's schools (3rd ed.)*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH.

IV. Standards

The grading criteria for this course will be as follows: The final grade will be based upon participation, completion of assignments and test grades. In addition, each student will be responsible for a research based project. All grades will be assigned in accordance with university policy.

The grades achieved on each activity serve as the assessment for this course. Each activity is aligned with the numerically corresponding objective.

V. Rationale and Impact

This course will be the gateway course into a graduate program sequence in Alternative Education. ALTE 615 will meet certain requirements under the Teaching and Learning degree, upon approval of the student's advisor. As currently planned, the course will be offered one to two times per year. This course is an online offering making it accessible regardless of location. The course may also be offered in other modalities including on-site classroom or other distance education modalities.

Students accepted as Master's degree candidates in Education are permitted to enroll in this course. Other students, including non-degree graduate students, may be admitted at the instructor's discretion.

The course is designed to provide a systematic overview of alternative education. Because of this, the ALTE 615 is viewed as a building block for all other courses in the sequence. Research, study and projects in this course will facilitate student learning throughout the sequence of graduate alternative education course offerings.

Emphasis on best practices, characteristics of effective programs, model programs and related theories will establish a strong foundation for student inquiry. Other course content (legal issues, at-risk discussion, legislation and alternative

education definition and history) is designed to support and provide necessary background for the emphasis areas.

The course is not expected to have impact on other departments or offerings. It expands upon the current university course offerings at the Master's degree level.

VI. Cost and Staff Analysis

This course will utilize existing faculty in Alternative Education Studies and represents 3 to 6 contact hours per year. Due to the demand created by students waiting for the course, the initial offering is scheduled for the spring. However, it is anticipated that the course will be offered in the summer and/or fall once a regular rotation begins.

Syllabus

ALTE 615 – EDTL 615 Alternative Education: Introduction to Theory and Practice

approved

not approved

Dr. Keith T. Miller, President
Lock Haven University of PA

Date