EDU 679 - EVALUATION & SUPERVISION (1480)

Fall 2009 COURSE SYLLABUS

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COURSE PURPOSES. The main purpose of this course is to acquaint the graduate student of education with principles of supervision and evaluation useful for the refinement of the teaching/learning environment. Therefore, the two major goals of this course are: 1) to familiarize each learner with fundamental concepts relevant to the supervision and evaluation of teachers; and 2) to assist each learner develop and articulate a platform for supervision and evaluation that explicitly relates these concepts to espoused personal practices. Because the platform of this course instructor explicitly values the roles that individual goal setting and self-evaluation play in adult learning situations, a corollary intent of this course is to model an educational structure which both has explicit, rigorous expectations and encourages individual goal setting and self-evaluation. To this end, the articulation and personal assessment of learning goals is expected from each learner taking the course.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION. Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate actively in both discussion and class activities. Excessive absences or lack of participation may result in a grade reduction. Because graduate students often are professionals with multiple demands on their time, no grade reduction will result from missing class to meet other professional obligations providing this proves to be the exception rather than the rule, that the student takes steps to acquire information from the missed class, and that the instructor is notified of such conflicts.

WRITTEN WORK. All written work is expected to be submitted electronically to my email address posted above (as a Word, RTF, or Appleworks file) punctually in a clear font (12-point), double spaced, and conforming to standard American English usage and mechanics. A grade reduction may result from written work that is late, sloppy, or that does not conform to standard usage and mechanics. The title of the file should begin with your last name and include a brief label (e.g., Smith P.P. #2; or Jones Platform). Such work is due at 3:00 p.m. on the specified date. I will do my best to provide written feedback on work submitted on time within one week. Because my time is budgeted according to established due dates, any work submitted late may not receive written feedback.

FEEDBACK. I will comment both on the substance and the form of written work in the Position Papers. Often, I will raise questions. Some of these questions are intended simply to interact with your ideas and do not necessarily imply criticism. Each student is encouraged to respond to the feedback in any way that may lead to constructive dialog.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS: These three books are recommended (not required) for this course:
COURSE REQUIREMENTS. Individual learners are invited to propose their own procedures for documenting course goals. Those who want to include a self-study of supervision practices or recommended policy/procedure changes are strongly encouraged to do so. Unless arranged otherwise at or before the third class meeting, assessment of student accomplishment will be based on six evaluated efforts:

- an examination covering key concepts in the course;
- two position papers addressing questions germane to your platform for supervision and evaluation;
- two critiques or peer evaluations of a position paper written by another student;
- an individual platform for supervision and evaluation addressing beliefs about supervising in an educational setting connected to specific, advocated practices;
- an end-of-semester self-evaluation; and
- attendance and participation.

THE POSITION PAPER (PP): Each student will prepare the espoused platform in structured steps, submitting two position papers according to the guidelines below. Each position paper is limited to four, double-spaced pages and must conclude with explicit implications for personal practice in the supervision and evaluation of teaching.

PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT. The espoused platform for supervision should explicitly convey your purposes for supervision and evaluation, major beliefs that relate to your practices in delivering supervision and evaluation of teaching, and specific strategies you use to accomplish your purposes. To help you consider this broad perspective, four component topics are below. These components are to be part of each platform. As you can see, the first two segments of the platform consist of the revised position papers. By submitting these segments according to the schedule listed on the calendar you will receive feedback on each paper from a peer and from Lee.

Position paper #1. MY PURPOSES FOR EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION OF TEACHING IN MY SETTING. Describe the setting in which you wish to consider the practice of supervision. How many folks will you be supervising? How many hours per week do you believe can and should be devoted to supervising and evaluating teaching? What characterizes the students in this setting, and what you hope they gain from the teaching they receive? How do the teachers with whom you may work differ from one another in their teaching practices and in their professional needs? What do you hope supervision and evaluation will accomplish for these folks? How will they benefit? How do you expect the learners with whom they work will benefit? Do you see accountability as a legitimate purpose for supervision and evaluation of teaching? If so, for what is the supervisor accountable? How do you see your work influenced by content standards and by performance standards for teaching? Consider providing both formal supervision (characterized by official reports of teaching adequacy and improvement) and consultation (characterized by providing confidential feedback to the teacher only). When and why might you provide one without the other? Please conclude this position paper with a specific list of results you would want from your supervision and evaluation (including consultation). [Note: The baseline survey in the documents section of Blackboard may be helpful to your considerations.] [Due: 3:00 p.m. – to reviewer: September 16; to Lee: September 23]

NOTE: Read the section on the syllabus (p. 4 below) that discusses the embedded exam (Option #1). Consider highlighting terms in the position paper so that you will get feedback (formative) before turning in the final exam.
Position paper #2. SUPERVISING TEACHING USING POWER, COLLABORATION, AND COMMON SENSE. Given your purposes as expressed in PP#1, consider how you will interact with classroom teachers to achieve these goals. Describe your views on the proper use of organizational power (legitimate power) for supervising and evaluating teaching in your setting. When should the supervisor's legitimate power be used? When should the use of legitimate power be avoided? How does the overuse or abuse of legitimate power influence the school? How does the under-use or avoidance of legitimate power influence the school? What do you see as the relationship between the supervisor's use of power and her/his evaluation of the teacher's addressing content and performance standards? When not using legitimate power, how do you see yourself influencing a teacher's practice? In what areas do you believe a supervisor (specifically you as supervisor) should exhibit "expert power"?

How do you see honest and tactful feedback contributing to good supervision and to good teaching? Consider collaboration in supervision to suggest a cooperative effort between teacher and supervisor to evaluate present performance and to identify ways to enhance it. What characteristics or efforts does collaborative effort demand of each participant to succeed? What will you do when you see that these requisite factors are not present when working with a teacher?

Who should be accountable for assuring competent teaching performance… or ongoing improvement? More precisely, for what should the supervisor be held accountable … and for what should the teacher be held accountable? Finally, how do you see this balance of power and accountability being extended to the students? How might you supervise a teacher who is very controlling and extends no choice (or power) to his/her students? Conclude this statement with a list of specific guidelines when and how you see yourself using power to achieve your stated purposes. [Due: 3:00 p.m. -- to reviewer: October 21; to Lee: November 2 (Ayeh, that is a Monday!)]

Position paper #3. EVALUATING TEACHING. What steps do you believe should be taken as teaching is evaluated formally? What standards (Please consider both content and performance standards.) should be used, and how should these standards be established and communicated? Please discuss how you believe a system of formal evaluation of teaching should use classroom observation, face-to-face conferences, exhibitions of student learning, and test results to inform judgments about a teacher's performance. Be sure to address how assessments of student learning and accomplishment would inform your evaluation of teaching. You might also include other factors (e.g., teacher portfolios, videotapes, parent reports, plan books).

Would you provide the same form of evaluation for every teacher? If not, why not? ... and what might you do differently for specified categories of teachers? Please directly address what would cause a teacher's performance to be deemed unsatisfactory … and how you, as supervisor, would respond.

Describe the time you believe should be spent evaluating teaching by developing a "time budget" for each activity you plan to use. (In short, please tell me how many hours each week or month you plan to spend in such activities.) If you see people other than direct supervisors contributing to this evaluation, please describe who will be involved, how they will be involved, and how their involvement will contribute to the formal, summative evaluation of the teacher's performance. Please be sure to explain what you will do to determine whether a teacher's performance is adequate or not, and what you would plan to do if not.

Optional: Compare what you would like to see to existing policies, contract requirements, and procedures in your setting. Note: PP#3 is only submitted with the entire platform on December 9.

Who is this man?
THE ESPOUSED PLATFORM [Due: December 9 at 3:00 p.m.] consists of an edited version of the first two position papers above, the complete third position paper, and two additions:

1. a **preamble** that explicitly describes any major assumptions about education, school, learners and learning that you hold that influence your perspective on evaluation and supervision;

2. a **practice summary** (outline form is fine) that **lists specific actions** [not just events such as a planning conference- rather what you would do or say in a planning conference] that you feel are important for you (as supervisor) to take to initiate, maintain, and evaluate such a program. Please address what you will do to assure that content standards and performance standards are adequately met. What data will you collect and consider? **Please conclude this section with a candid statement as to the practicality you see in implementing your own platform in your setting, discussing obstacles and possible strategies to overcome them.**

Specifically addressed (somewhere in the platform) should be the **frequency of observation of teaching practice, purposes for conferences, specific procedures for documenting and reporting teachers' performance as summative evaluation, and how the work of others (mentors, coaches) will inform a teacher's summative evaluation.** How will you assess your success in meeting your goals and modify your own supervisory work accordingly?

**Criteria for assessing the platform** include:

- Congruence to the assignment, including questions and deadlines;
- Clarity of ideas and language;
- Internal consistency;
- Grounding of assertions and espoused actions;
- Sense of personal ownership and conviction for your own platform, and
- Professional presentation, including consistent use of standard English grammar and mechanics. (The **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association** is the style guide for the Educational Leadership program.)

THE FINAL EXAMINATION: The purpose for the final examination is to demonstrate mastery of the supervision and evaluation (S&E) concepts identified in the course handout. You have three options for serving this purpose:

1. **The embedded exam (default):** Highlight the application of at least twenty-four (24) of these concepts in your final platform. These concepts must be **highlighted** in the text. You will receive two points for each term that is **clearly defined in context**, or one point for a term that is correctly and meaningfully used in context even if the definition is not explicit; **[Due: December 9 (as part of platform)]** –or-

2. Taking the **in-class exam** on November 11;–or-

3. Propose your own design for documenting mastery of these concepts to me on or before the 5th class.

Please communicate your preference in class on September 30. If fewer that five students opt for the in-class design, we will use that time for an additional class meeting.

**SELF-EVALUATION:** Each student will submit a brief (3 page maximum; 1 page is sufficient) self-evaluation addressing personal perceptions of the learning gained in this course and its usefulness for future application on the job. All self-evaluations submitted on time, showing thoughtful consideration, and having professional tone and appearance will receive full credit. These self-evaluations will not be returned but will be used in the ongoing evaluation of my own teaching. **If you would prefer that your self-evaluation would **not** be included as part of my own portfolio, please indicate that preference on the cover and your wishes will be honored. **[Due: December 16]**
GRADE SCHEME:

With feedback on position papers (#1-3)
Examination 20%
Final Platform 35%
Position papers 15%
Peer review (critiques) 10%
Self-evaluation 10%
Attendance & participation 10%
TOTAL 100%

A = 93-100%; A- = 92-91%; B+ = 90%; B = 83-89%; B- = 82-81%; C+ = 80%; C = 71-79%

Position papers will be graded according to the following scheme:

- 4 points will be awarded for excellence
- 3 points will be awarded for good quality work (meets all expectations)
- 2 points will be awarded for a good attempt that misses a key element or meets most expectations
- 1 point will be awarded for a good attempt that misses more than one element
- 0 points will be awarded for less than a good attempt.

Each position paper (#1 & #2) may be rewritten and resubmitted within one week of its return. If additions or revisions are highlighted in some distinct manner, and if meaningful improvements are made, the revision may earn an extra point (up to the 4 total). The third position paper will be submitted only as part of the final platform and will not be revised.

Incomplete Grades: Incomplete grades (I's) will be considered when special circumstances warrant, and when an individual student requests such consideration in writing during or before the 14th class session. Incomplete grades are not intended for use for students who simply "fall behind," but for those who encounter unusual mitigating circumstances which justify extending the normal time for completing course work. Requests for consideration of an incomplete grade must include an explanation of the mitigating circumstances and a specific date by which all coursework will be submitted. Should a student discover early in the semester that he or she will be unable to adhere to the prescribed due dates for coursework, he or she should discuss alternative arrangements or timelines with the instructor.

Each student is invited to suggest alternative evaluation procedures more suited to her or his particular learning needs or preferences. Alternatives which in the instructor's judgment conform to the standards of academic excellence sought by the University, the College, and to the particular standards for this course are welcome. However one chooses to assess the learning from this course, three standard purposes must be addressed: 1) the learner’s demonstration of understanding of key concepts in the course, including the ability to discuss relationships among these concepts; 2) the learner’s demonstration of an articulate set of personal beliefs about the aims for evaluation and supervision in educational settings, connected to specific advocated practices for achieving these aims; and 3) the learner’s communication of a self-evaluation of the learning done over the semester that is pertinent to course aims.

A specific invitation: If you are doing work in your setting (e.g., supervising teachers or interns, writing policy or procedure) that applies concepts addressed in this course, PLEASE feel encouraged to suggest ways to incorporate this work into the evaluation design for this course.

Plagiarism on any coursework is sufficient grounds for course failure.
Please feel welcome to call for an appointment at any time you wish to discuss matters related to this course.
Preparation educators and human development professionals for responsible service

Conceptual Framework
This course addresses the conceptual framework of USM’s professional education programs as outlined below.

Using Program Content Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions to Design Educational Programs: The major project of this course, the development of an articulate Platform for supervising and evaluating teaching performance, is a thoughtful examination of one’s educational beliefs vis-à-vis the purposes for, processes of, and skills needed for a meaningful program for supervising and evaluating teaching in a known setting.

Forging Connections and Partnerships Conceptually, this course addresses interpersonal and professional connections and partnerships between supervisors and teachers, and among teachers.

Modeling Reflection and Critical Inquiry The platform is an explicit foundation for reflection and critical inquiry addressing the relationships among supervisory purposes and practices, and to their intended and observed consequences for the educational development of teachers and other learners. The development of supervisory and evaluation practices that foster such inquiry is a major focus of this course. Those students electing a “practice component” earn credit for and feedback on such an effort. Moreover, each class meeting contains a segment in which students (individually, in small groups, or in large group) engage in thoughtful examination of the intended and likely consequences of suggested strategies.

Developing Best Professional Practices: One cannot supervise or evaluate teaching fairly without deliberate and thorough attention to assessing the performance of teachers and their learners. To do this thoughtfully and well one must deeply consider supervisory and evaluation practices and their influence upon teachers and, ultimately, students. This is a major focus for this course.

Diversity: A major emphasis of this course is on the adaptation of supervisory practices to address the varying needs of individual teachers. Although there is no attempt here to suggest stereotypical adaptations for members of identified groups, the instructor believes that the emphasis upon individualized adaptation aimed at maximizing teaching effectiveness for all learners addresses the intent of the College's emphasis upon honoring diversity among learners.

Validating practices: The Platform is an explicit statement of a student’s conception of the relationships among her/his beliefs about education and the aims of schooling, her/his strategies for supervising and evaluating teaching performance, the intended consequences of such actions for teachers and for the students they teach, and methods she/he would use to assess the success of her/his efforts. The optional Practice component is an individually designed experience in a work setting involving the application and reflective assessment of this platform.

The (supervisory) ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult, and left untried.
G. K. Chesterton, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD (1910) (LIBERTIES TAKEN.)