

MOUNT SAINT VINCENT UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Education

Course Title: Graduate Project Seminar (2010 Summer II, July 5-Aug. 20)
GEDU 6140, sections 82 & 83

Instructor: Mr. Robert S. Wright, RSW

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Communicating with me:

Email is the preferred method of communication with me during the term. If necessary we can arrange mutually agreeable times to meet via phone, video conference or in person. When corresponding by email “GEDU6140” must be on the subject line of the email to ensure that the email is found and dealt with in a timely fashion.

Course Description:

This is a required course for all students in the 5.0 unit Studies in Lifelong Learning M.Ed. program at Mount St. Vincent University. Students are advised to take this course either at the end or near the end of their program of study. The project entails a sustained exploration of theory, research and practice. Students are expected to link theoretical and research ideas to existing or proposed practical contexts. This work is to be approached from a critical, Afrocentric perspective in which the impact and relevance of the work to the history, experience and aspirations of African peoples is considered. Each student in consultation with the instructor will design their own project.

The objective of the course is for the student to focus on an area of interest in which the student will discuss the significance, importance, and relevance of this topic for the field of adult education. Students must outline a clearly defined argument and support this in their writing. For the project, students may choose to critique existing practices (eg. Challenge HR practices from an Afrocentric perspective), open up a new topic for consideration (eg. Assess the need for an Afrocentric model of adult education and workforce development and identify the theoretical framework and community resources needed to build and sustain it), or apply theory to a particular situation (eg. Draw upon elements of Afrocentric principles such as Kismet, Maat, Kwanzaa, to explore opportunities for promoting life-long learning among under employed

African Nova Scotian adults). Work in the project must fall into the realm of professional practice or be reflective/theoretical in orientation so that it does not require a formal ethics approval.

Description of Project:

Students will be expected to produce an original and independent piece of work and to submit a final academic paper that will be no less than 30 and no more than 40 pages in length (approx. 8750 words), inclusive of references (12 pt. Times New Roman, using A.P.A. formatting and referencing style). Students will be expected to include a minimum of one scholarly reference per page, and papers must be grammatically and stylistically accurate. Evaluation for the project is either pass or fail. Papers that do not meet acceptable graduate level standards of writing will be returned and students will be expected to rewrite and resubmit their work. The submission of a paper proposal and outline, and interim drafts is required and designed to ensure that final papers meet expectations and are submitted in a timely fashion. **Students who do not meet deadlines and are not taking opportunities to receive feedback on their developing paper should not expect to have their final paper evaluated in a timely fashion. This may impact students' ability to graduate in the fall convocation.**

Project Orientation:

The course will commence with an orientation to the project on June 26, 2010 (Seton Academic Centre Room 430). The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the nature, purpose and expectations of the Graduate Project in Studies in Lifelong Learning. Students unable to attend the meeting should contact the professor who is overseeing the section in which the student is registered.

Project Proposal:

By July 9, 2010 students must submit a project proposal to their professor via email attachment in PDF. This proposal must consist of a proper APA formatted cover page, a statement of the main topic of the project, a rationale for the relevance or importance of this topic, and an outline of the main elements or sections of the planned project. Students may also offer a description of any strategies they intend to use to research and write their project. A preliminary reference list of at least 10 sources that will inform the project must also be provided. Students will receive written feedback on their proposal from the professor and may elect to arrange a telephone or face to face meeting.

Status Reports:

On July 23, 2010 and August 6, 2010 students will provide progressive drafts of their paper under the cover of a 1 page status report to their professor via email in PDF. The status report will outline progress with the project and outline those activities yet to be undertaken that will bring the project to its conclusion (for example, if the student is planning to conduct formal interviews of professionals to further inform their work or visit a local archive or other institution). In addition to receiving back written feedback from the professor, if elected, the status reports can form the basis of a telephone or face to face meeting.

Submission of Final Paper:

On August 20, 2010 students will submit a final draft of their project to the professor via email

attachment in PDF. This is the final day of the semester. Papers will be evaluated and passing marks will be submitted to the Registrar's Office by August 31. Those papers that are not sufficient to receive a passing grade will be returned for revisions. Papers that are not sufficient and were not preceded by a proposal and earlier drafts will be dealt with on a lower priority basis than others.

Evaluation:

I will draw upon the normative criteria of academic success that circulate widely throughout academia and that are broadly (if oftentimes rather unquestioningly) used as a basis for credentialing students in the academic milieu. I will apply the standards typical for assessing work at a graduate level. Clarity and integration of an Afrocentric framework into the project will also be considered. As is the case when evaluating all emerging theoretical frameworks, the ability of students to critique old theories and practices from new theoretical perspectives will be a critical component of evaluation. I will grade all projects on a Pass/Fail basis. Please understand that these standards include good writing, thorough research and accurate and complete referencing, with no plagiarizing (plagiarizing is an academic offence). Please note the importance of meeting deadlines in order to ensure final work is of sufficient quality.

Please note:

University regulations on Plagiarism and Cheating will be strictly enforced. These regulations are posted on boards and are found in the University Calendar and on the website at www.msvu.ca on the "Current Student" page under "Academic Offences".

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words or ideas obtained from any source, including the Internet, as though they were one's own. Specific offences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using copied material without enclosing that material in quotation marks and/or without appropriately acknowledging its source;
- Paraphrasing or summarizing the original wording too closely;
- Omitting acknowledgment of the source of paraphrases and summaries;
- Submitting work that has been written in full or in part by someone else;
- Submitting work you have submitted for credit in another course without acknowledging its source.
- When working in the context of new and emerging theories, often references are drawn from non-published and non-written sources such as public lectures and personal communications. Students must be diligent to appropriately credit these sources as well.

If students have questions about the correct citation format for any aspect of their academic assessments (written or oral), they should consult their faculty and the library's resource collection on academic integrity.

*The librarians can help you with APA formatting and referencing and there are several helpful resources available in the library and on line to help you if you are unfamiliar with APA. For example: APA. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and Hacker, D. (2004). *A Canadian Writers' Reference*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

Students who conduct research involving human participants must have their research reviewed in accordance with the MSVU Policies and Procedures for Ethics Review of Research before starting the research. Check with me or the Chair of the Department about proper procedure.

Class Timeline:

- Project Orientation Meeting: June 26, 2010
(Seton Academic Centre Room 430 9am -12pm)
- Project Proposal: July 9, 2010
- Status Report/draft 1: July 23, 2010
- Status Report/draft 2: August 6, 2008
- Final Project: August 20, 2010
- Grades Submitted: August 31, 2010