

## COURSE SYLLABUS

FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS  
SECNDED-707 SECTION 01 (2961) SPRING 2009  
PREREQUISITE: GRADUATE STANDING  
**CREDITS - VARIABLE 1-3 (SEE BELOW)**

INSTRUCTOR: WILLIAM L. CHANDLER  
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OFFICE HOURS: before Saturday class and as posted for Tuesdays and Thursdays.

### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of a variety of venues within which learning occurs. The classroom will be considered as both context and content for learning and the construction of meaning. Through an analysis of classroom environments participants will synthesize potentials for change in their concepts of teaching and learning..

### II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. Students will intellectually investigate the role of the environment has on teaching and learning;
- B. Students will consider how the environment acts as 'text' within the learning process;
- C. Students will experience a variety of formal and informal learning contexts;
- D. Students will analyze a variety of environments for qualities that impact learning;
- E. Students will have the opportunity to development learning environments that impact curriculum and student learning;
- F. To engage students in the primary literature concerning curriculum development;
- G. Students will become aware of the range of issues regarding how place, both formal and informal, impacts practices of teaching and learning.

### H. VARIABLE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS/DIFFERENTIATION:

**As this course is taught online, students will need to contract with the instructor to complete the credit modules as they have enrolled and listed below:**

**1 credit - being about the history of the learning environment. How schools are physically/visually conceived. How and where power resides in the classroom. This section would be heavy on readings;**

**2 credits – all of the above AND then the nature of the informal learning environment. How museums and grocery stores “teach” through their coded**

**messages and spaces. This section would involve students making trips to local museums and then considering how they present exhibits;**

**3 credits – all of the above AND an analysis of the participant’s own classroom and school. Included would be a proposal for change to incorporate characteristics of both formal and informal learning environments.**

III. TEXT/S

Davis, B. D. Summara & R. Luce-Kapler. (2000). Engaging minds: Learning and teaching in a complex world. Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Liestayana, et al. (1999). Breaking free. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

#### IV. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

This course will provide students with the opportunity to review and respond to issues within the field of education. Students will be expected to maintain the course readings, as well as participate in presentations and discussion. Students will be encouraged to reflect upon their own teaching situations and in response investigate the appropriate aspects of the literature. Students will be engaged in activities that further understanding and investigation with regard to curriculum development.

NOTE: Engaging in plagiarism, cheating or any other form of academic misconduct will result in an appropriate penalty, as identified in UWS Chapter 14. Committing an act of academic misconduct may also hinder an individual's chances of getting a job or succeeding in a career. If you are not certain as to what plagiarism is, or have any questions about academic misconduct, please feel free to discuss these matters with your instructor.

NOTE: Class work and assignments not turned in on time for reason of a student's religious practices may be made up, without penalty. Please inform the instructor of this potential, in writing, at the time of the second class period.

#### V. ATTENDANCE: Mandatory

#### VI. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY:

- 1) Readings and cyber discussion;
- 2) Analyze a peer's classroom;
- 3) Analysis of a "non-learning" environment;
- 4) Design and effect in your own classroom a model environment;
- 5) Develop an assessment tool for learning environment design;
- 6) Participate in field trips.

Grades will be determined by contract.

Grade of C: All reading assignments, group discussion and regular class participation (items 1 and 6 above).

Grade of B: Grade C requirements and items 2 and 3 above.

Grade of A: Grade B requirements and items 4 and 5 above.

#### VII. COURSE CHRONOLOGY:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>READING/S</b>
Sept. 06	Introductions	To Be Assigned
Oct. 04	Visit Madison Museums	
Nov. 01	Characteristics and qualities of the learning environment	TBA
Dec. 06	Visit Milwaukee Museums	
13	Final session	

VIII. NOTE:

The University of Wisconsin – Whitewater is dedicated to a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding Special Accommodations, Misconduct, Religious Beliefs Accommodation, Discrimination and Absence for University Sponsored Events. (For details please refer to the Undergraduate and Graduate Timetable: the “Rights and Responsibilities” section of the Undergraduate Bulletin; the Academic Requirements and Policies and the Facilities and Services sections of the Graduate Bulletin; and the “Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures” [UWS Chapter 14]; and the “Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures” [UWS Chapter17]).