

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**EDUC 790: Capstone Seminar**  
**Course Syllabus – Spring 2013**  
*3 Credit Hours*

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**Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to assist doctoral students with transition from the formal classroom learning environment to the role of independent researchers and scholars. Students will develop a reflective account of their academic preparation and accomplishments, explore the processes for the preliminary and final exams, and examine more closely what it means to be a steward of the profession.

**Prerequisite(s)**

Students enrolled in the Capstone seminar are expected to be in their last semester of coursework, with at most one additional course taken concurrently.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate the transformation of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that occurred during their doctoral journey;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the process and advisor expectations concerning the preliminary (qualifying/comprehensive) exam;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the process for conducting independent research, particularly in the form of the doctoral dissertation; and
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of scholarship and stewardship in the educational profession.

**Course Readings**

Primary Readings: Each student will select two texts to read during the semester that supplement their own learning interests and needs as described in *Course Learning Opportunities*. The first text is expected to focus upon the dissertation process, whether generally or related to specific skills within the dissertation. The second text is expected to focus more broadly on scholarship and stewardship of the profession. Texts will be selected in consultation with the instructor and fellow classmates and must be texts that the student has not read previously. A partial list of texts is provided on Blackboard.

Supplemental Readings: The above texts are only intended to provide an introduction to the topics covered in the course. Additional readings may be assigned and we will continue to construct a suggested reading list, including recent research.

## Style of Teaching

Conducted as a seminar course, most of the class sessions will be an in-depth discussion of the readings and assigned topics, supplemented with individual and group activities, both in and out of class. These discussions will be based on student-generated concerns and responses to focus questions developed by the instructor on the content of the course.

This course is structured so that you have the freedom to learn as deeply and as broadly as you choose. You will have an opportunity to continue to improve any professional product you are developing for this class. Negotiation for group work is welcomed, but must be pre-planned with the instructor and will entail additional requirements to ensure equal effort is required.

## Course Format

The course will be taught primarily face-to-face and may be supplemented with online work using Blackboard and other related technologies. Additionally, course readings will be posted on Blackboard, and all assignments are expected to be submitted using the Blackboard digital drop box as described below.

## IVN Broadcast and Video Streaming

This course serves students across North Dakota, Minnesota, and beyond. Therefore, videoconference connections (IVN) may be provided to students in remote locations or when traveling for professional purposes. By attending this course, students imply consent for their image and voice to be recorded for later playback. Class recordings will be maintained for at least one week. When available, recordings can be accessed online through the course Blackboard website. Use of class recordings are for the sole use of participants in this course and recordings should not be distributed in any format beyond course participants without consent of the instructor in accordance with the NDSU Student Handbook, guidelines for the use of intellectual property, and copyright law.

## Course Website

A course website has been created on the Blackboard learning system. You can log in to Blackboard at: <http://bb.ndsu.nodak.edu>. The most current version of the course schedule will be maintained on this site, so it is important that you check the site regularly. You will also be responsible for announcements and assignments made available via Blackboard and will be required to submit assignments to this website for instructor feedback and grading. ***The instructor is only responsible for grading assignments that are submitted properly through the Blackboard digital drop box by the deadline listed in the syllabus.*** You will also be able to access a number of other potentially useful resources such as internet links and copies of course documents and other resources.

## Course Learning Opportunities

### **I. Attendance and Participation**

***Expectation:*** As attendance in doctoral level courses is necessary for collaborative learning to occur, you are expected to prepare for and attend all class sessions and to actively participate in class discussions. Much of the course learning will occur through in-class discussions, which cannot be reproduced (or even approximated) outside of the regular class meetings. Should you find an extreme circumstance that prevents you from attending class, arrangements must be made before class begins. Appropriate make-up work, as determined by the instructor, is mandatory or any absence will result in one letter grade lower than the grade you normally earned. ***Missing more than one class session, even with completion of required make-up work, may result in a 10% deduction of the final grade you otherwise earned.***

*Invitation:* As you consider the wide range of possibilities for understanding the scholarly experience in various integrated ways, you are invited to bring in relevant topics, cognitive connections, or articles of new knowledge and understanding to present to the class members. This is not graded but is a necessity for collegiality, collaboration and other professional skills of researchers and practitioners in education.

### **III. Demonstration of Integrative and Creative Thought (Depth of Content)**

*Expectation:* You are expected to read a text concerning the dissertation process to be used to contribute to our class discussion. Texts will be selected individually by students, in consultation with the instructor. You may choose a text that provides a general overview and advice concerning the process or a text that focuses upon specific aspects of the dissertation, such as writing literature reviews or developing conceptual frameworks. A sample, non-exhaustive list of texts/topics is provided on Blackboard. Upon completing the book, you are expected to write a scholarly review of the book suitable for publishing in an academic journal according to criteria posted on Blackboard and discussed in class. The completed book review is due on February 9<sup>th</sup> and will comprise 15% of your total course grade.

*Expectation:* You are expected to review and critique three dissertations completed since 2005 related to your articulated area of study that were earned by students pursuing the same degree as you. (For example, if you are pursuing a Ph.D., the dissertation must have been similarly completed by a Ph.D. student.) Using the Dissertation Critique Form provided, review each of the three studies and provide your analysis of the strengths and limitations. Of the three dissertations, you are expected to obtain at least one dissertation that received an award for exceptional quality given by the institution or by a professional organization. (Suggestions for locating such dissertations will be discussed in class.) Your product includes a memo summarizing the three dissertations (including title, author, institution, degree, program, year, brief overview, strengths, and limitations). The completed Dissertation Critique Forms for each dissertation should be included as an attachment. The dissertation critique memo is due on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and will comprise 10% of your total course grade.

*Expectation:* You are expected to read a second text of your choice concerning scholarship and/or stewardship of the profession. Texts will be selected individually by students, in consultation with the instructor. You may choose a text that provides a general overview and advice concerning scholarship and stewardship or a text that focuses upon specific aspects of the stewardship, such as or disseminating or critiquing research, teaching and the faculty role, or grant-writing. A sample, non-exhaustive list of texts/topics is provided on Blackboard. Upon completing the book, you are expected to prepare a 30-40 minute presentation on the topic that references the text as well as other scholarly resources. The presentation will occur on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and will comprise 15% of your total course grade.

*Invitation:* You are *strongly* encouraged to select texts that are that is both personally and professionally meaningful, including topics that can be used as the basis for future research or other productive, scholarly endeavors. Should you wish to pursue the resulting projects after the conclusion of the course, such as presenting or publishing your work, the instructor will provide additional guidance and feedback upon request.

### **III. Demonstration of Competencies Learned (Breadth of Content)**

*Expectation:* You are expected to meet with your advisor to discuss the preliminary exam (the qualifying/comprehensive exams) and the final exam (the dissertation defense). In your meeting, you should specifically address the purpose for both exams, the processes utilized, and your advisor's expectations. In the case of the dissertation, you are strongly encouraged to discuss the expected relationship during the process, such as the relationship, frequency of meetings, and level of directedness. Your final product

should consist of a 3-5 page APA-formatted paper summarizing the conversation and provide a reflection of the information learned from the meeting. The paper should also provide any questions that were not addressed during the interview, including those that arose after further consideration. The interview paper is due January 26<sup>th</sup> and will comprise 10% of your total course grade.

Expectation: You are expected to develop a capstone paper that comprises the first of your written exams. It must conform to NDSU's format requirements for the doctoral dissertation and follow current APA guidelines (including title page and table of contents). Major sections of the capstone paper include:

- Chapter 1 should contain an introductory statement that provides the context your necessary to understand and interpret what follows, including your purpose for pursuing doctoral studies, why you chose your particular program of study, and your goals concerning what you hope to accomplish after completion of the program.
- Chapter 2 should contain a reflective synthesis of all courses taken to satisfy the Disciplined Inquiry requirements of the Education Doctoral Programs. You should identify all courses taken as well as substantive design elements of those courses (goals/objectives, textbooks used, assignments and evaluation procedures, etc.). However, your discussion should be centered on reflective consideration of how your experiences (whether planned/required or otherwise) in each course, as well as your disciplined inquiry experiences outside of formal courses, have contributed to your development as a scholar.
- Chapter 3 should contain a reflective synthesis of all courses taken to satisfy the Content Expertise requirements of the Education Doctoral Programs. You should identify all courses taken as well as substantive design elements of those courses (goals/objectives, textbooks used, assignments and evaluation procedures, etc.). However, your discussion should be centered on reflective consideration of how your experiences (whether planned/required or otherwise) in each course, as well as you content expertise experiences outside of formal courses, have contributed to your development as a scholar.
- Chapter 4 should identify and discuss the authors and researchers who have made substantial contributions to the articulated field of study cultivated during your doctoral program. This chapter should address the contributions of the authors/researchers and how the contributions have shaped the field. To ensure adequate coverage, you will likely need to include information learned within your doctoral courses as well as supplemental information.
- Chapter 5 should contain a synopsis of your current research interests and your current thoughts on what you might want to research for your dissertation. Please use the Guidelines for writing a Thesis or Dissertation to structure your "proposal". While the proposal that you include in this section of the Capstone Paper many not necessarily be the one your Supervisory Committee approves, it will serve as a beginning discussion point for focusing on a specific problems and research questions.
- Chapter 6 should contain a reflection on experiences, both in and out of the classroom, that have helped to shape your scholarly disposition. You should include a current Curriculum Vita.
- Appendices: The appendices should include critiques of 3 dissertations relevant to your planned dissertation study and any products of independent study and practicum coursework, but may also include any other substantive scholarly work you have produced (as part of your doctoral program) that you feel represents your growth as a scholar.

A substantial draft of each section is due on the date listed on the course schedule, and the final product is due on April 13<sup>th</sup> and will comprise 50% of your final course grade. You are expected to bring two copies of each draft section to class to be reviewed by fellow classmates. Failure to bring a substantial draft will result in an automatic 5% deduction of the total course grade per section that is late.

Expectation: You are expected to complete a reflective essay at the completion of the course, which should address each of the following:

- The course description and objectives;
- The overall content of the course;
- The significant authors or resources you examined, including citations and references;
- The assignments you completed;
- The significance of the course to your degree program, work experience, and/or professional goals;
- How your views of scholarship and your doctoral experience evolved during the course or why they didn't evolve;
- The strengths and limitations of the submitted work, including how you might change them later;
- How/why you changed your products as a result of instructor or peer feedback and/or self-reflection; and
- What this reflection as a whole reveals about you as a learner.

This reflective essay will be ungraded, but failure to submit it will result in a 5% deduction of the total course points, thus resulting in a final grade that is a half-letter grade lower than you otherwise earned.

Invitation: You are strongly encouraged to solicit professional input and feedback from others when completing all products for this class. In other words, fully utilize your colleagues (including fellow students and the instructor).

### Grading and Other Important Details

- **Course grades can be calculated as follows:** An A is 93% or above of all possible points with no absences, high quality work and thinking, and consistent contributions to each session, a B is 85 to 92%, a C is 77 to 84%, a D is 68 to 76%, and an F is less than 69% of all possible points and typically indicates a semester in which you didn't have the time or energy to devote yourself to learning the depth and breadth of the course topics. The specific contribution of each requirement to the grade is as follows:

<i><b>Product</b></i>	<i><b>Due Date</b></i>	<i><b>Value</b></i>
Advisor Interview	1/26/13	10
Book Review: Navigating the Dissertation	2/9/13	15
Dissertation Critiques	2/23/13	10
Presentation: Scholarship / Stewardship	3/23/13	15
Culminating Project: Capstone Paper	4/13/13	50
Course Reflection *	5/4/13	0
Grade Expectation Sheet*	5/4/13	0

\* While not graded, your final course grade will be lowered by 5% each if the course reflection and/or grade expectation sheet are not submitted.

- All of the assignments in this course are designed to assess the mastery of the course objectives. If you have questions how any assignment relates to the course purpose or objectives, please ask the instructor.
- ***Out of respect to the instructor and other students in the class, assignments are due at times specified on the syllabus or as extended by the instructor.*** (Note: The instructor will not modify assignment deadlines to be earlier than stated on the original syllabus without unanimous consent of all participants in the course.) Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by the start of class (9:00 a.m.) and any assignment time-stamped after that time, even by a minute, is considered late. All assignments should be submitted through Blackboard's "submit assignment" link. ***Except in the case of a verifiable emergency or as otherwise describe above, assignments will lose 20% of their***

***point value per calendar day late.*** In the case that an assignment is submitted in multiple parts, it will be counted as if the entire assignment is submitted at the time of the latest time-stamp.

- Because all education professionals are expected to communicate well in writing, ***written assignments will be graded on their technical quality as well as content.*** All written assignments should be proofread carefully for spelling, grammar, and syntax. First drafts of assignments are rarely appropriate in graduate-level courses.
- Although self-evaluation and peer evaluation are a significant portion of your growth and development in this course, the instructor does final grading of the assignments. Upon the receipt of your Grade Expectation form, which will be after all other work for this class is fully complete, any inconsistencies between your expectation for a grade and the grade assigned will be discussed with the instructor. ***Interviews about grades and course assignments will be conducted during finals week as needed.***
- Use a realistic estimate when predicting the time you will need to complete the course activities and requirements. Although the option of taking an incomplete (“I”) is available to you at the end of the semester should you encounter an emergency or other unexpected events, it may mean that you will receive one letter grade decrease in your course grade.

If you find that you are falling behind or are experiencing difficulty in completing course assignments, please discuss the situation with the instructor as soon as possible so that mutually-negotiated accommodations can be made that will enable you to fulfill the requirements of the course and to avoid having to take an incomplete. University policy dictates that incomplete grades can only be given if at least two-thirds of the course requirements have been completed by the end of the grading period.

- In an effort to create a psychologically secure environment, students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and a scholarly disposition. Discussions and questions take place in an atmosphere of collegial exchanges. Teamwork and collegiality is a part of shared learning and is therefore expected in throughout the course.
- As all work in this class is expected to utilize APA (*6<sup>th</sup> edition*) style, learn and practice it early.

### **Drop and Add Policy**

The standard drop/add policy for classes will be followed as determined by the Office of Registration and Records (<http://www.ndsu.edu/bisonconnection/registration/policies/registration/>).

### **Intellectual Property Policy**

Words and ideas are the intellectual property of the individuals who originated them. Thus, whenever you quote more than three words in sequence from any single source, you must enclose those words in quotation marks. Cite in parentheses the author of the book or article, the year of publication, and the number of the page on which the words were written (e.g., Fowler, 2009, p. 25). Include the complete citation of the source in your references at the end of your paper. Failure to follow these procedures will result in loss of points on any paper in which such failure occurs. Furthermore, failure to follow these procedures may be viewed as plagiarism and, thus, a violation of university policies that pertain to academic integrity.

## Academic Integrity

All work in this course must be completed in a manner consistent with standards suitable to members of an academic community. The following specific policies apply:

- “Right and Responsibilities of Community: A Code of Student Behavior (2008, August) available from the dean of Student Life (MU 250) or on the NDSU Student Life website ([http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/studentlife/PDF\\_Files/CodeofStudentBehavior.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/studentlife/PDF_Files/CodeofStudentBehavior.pdf));
- The College of Human Development and Education’s Professional and Academic Honor Codes ([http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/hde/undergraduate/HDE\\_Honor\\_Code.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/hde/undergraduate/HDE_Honor_Code.pdf)); and
- NDSU University Senate Policy, Section 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct (<http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf>).

**Notice:** The instructor reserves the right to report academic integrity violations and assign a grade of “F” for the assignment or for the entire course as appropriate.

## Students with Disabilities

Any student with disabilities or other special needs who needs special accommodations in this course is invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor as soon as possible.

## Students Serving in the Military

Veterans and student soldiers with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor in advance.

## Religious Observances

Students have a right to expect that religious observances, practices, and beliefs will be respected and reasonably accommodated. Upon prior notification to the course instructor, students in this course will be excused from class or other scheduled academic activities to observe verifiable religious holy days. Students will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence and will not be penalized because of religious observances.

## Sexual Harassment

Please see the following link to review university policy and procedures regarding sexual harassment: (<http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/162.pdf>).

## EDUC 790: CAPSTONE SEMINAR

### TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE – SPRING 2013

Date	Discussion Topics	Project Due
<b>1. Friday, January 11<sup>th</sup></b> 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. <i>Introduction and Overview</i>	Discuss Purpose of Course; Reflect upon EDP MVV; Capstone Introduction; Writing Book Reviews	
<b>2. Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup></b> 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. <i>Reflective Scholarship</i>	The Capstone Paper: 1. Introduction; 2. Disciplined Inquiry; 3. Content Expertise; 4. Scholarly Disposition; 5. Significant Studies/ Authorities; 6. Research Interests; Scholarly Review	Capstone Chapter 1 Draft Due
<b>3. Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup></b> 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. <i>Demonstrating Your Learning</i>	Preliminary Exam Process; Analyzing Exam Questions; Mock Exams	Capstone Chapters 2-3 Draft Due; Advisor Interview Due
<b>4. Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup></b> 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. <i>Conducting Independent Research</i>	The Dissertation Process; Literature Reviews; Conceptual Frameworks; Choosing Research Design/Method; Reporting Research Results	Capstone Chapter 4 Draft Due; Book Review Due
<b>5. Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup></b> 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. <i>Beyond the Dissertation</i>	Academic and Non-Academic Careers; The Academic Job Search & Job Talks; Drafting Philosophy Statements; Resumes vs. Curriculum Vitae; etc.	Capstone Chapter 5 Draft Due; Dissertation Critiques Due
<b>6. Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup></b> 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. <i>Stewardship of the Profession</i>	General Stewardship; Dissemination of Research; Critiquing Research; Scholarly Review Process; Teaching and the Faculty Role; Consultation and Grant-Writing;	Capstone Chapter 6 Draft Due; Scholarship/Stewardship Presentations
<b>7. Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup></b> 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. <i>Course Wrap Up</i>	Course Wrap Up; Meet with Faculty (9:00-12:00); Questions & Answers; EDP Student Handbook Content Reflect upon EDP MVV (Part 2)	Final Capstone Paper Due; Course Reflection Due



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### COURSE OUTCOMES MAP – SPRING 2013

Outcome	Course Topic	Assessment
1. Evaluate the transformation of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that occurred during their doctoral journey.	1. Introduction and Overview; 2. Reflective Scholarship	Capstone Paper Due: 4/13/13 ( <i>Drafts Due Weekly</i> )
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the process and advisor expectations concerning the preliminary (qualifying/comprehensive) exam.	3. Demonstrating Your Learning	Advisor Interview Due: 1/26/13
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the process for conducting independent research, particularly in the form of the doctoral dissertation.	4. Conducting Independent Research	Dissertation Book Review Due: 2/9/13  Dissertation Critique Due: 2/23/13
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of scholarship and stewardship in the educational profession.	5. Beyond the Dissertation 6. Stewardship of the Profession	Presentation Due: 3/23/13

### Possible Changes to the Syllabus

This syllabus is your contract for production in the course. If changes are made to it they will be announced in class and posted on the course website as soon as possible. No changes increasing requirements will be made without unanimous consent of the entire class as these might adversely affect your grade.