INSTITUTION AND SCHOOL:

University of Massachusetts Lowell, Graduate School of Education

The mission of the University of Massachusetts Lowell is to promote and sustain this mission by developing professionals who help transform the region through leadership roles in education. The GSE’s commitment to Education for Transformation produces graduates who:

* Demonstrate excellent knowledge, judgment and skills in their professional fields;
* Promote equity of educational opportunity for all learners;
* Collaborate with other educators, parents and community representatives to support education excellence;
* Use inquiry and research to address educational challenges.

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* Use inquiry and research to address educational challenges.
INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Joseph Walsh, EdD
Phone: (617) 543-1557
Joseph_Walsh@uml.edu (For use when Blackboard is down. Otherwise please use Blackboard internal Mail from within this course).

Office hours conducted through weekly chats and may be arranged by appointment.

COURSE OVERVIEW / RATIONALE:

All teachers and administrators should have a sound knowledge base in curriculum design. Whether used in the development of a specific unit, an interdisciplinary theme, a course, or a program of study; the elements of curriculum design lead to more effective curriculum planning and produce a more coherent curriculum. In an era of standards-based curriculum and assessment, the demand for effective curriculum design is essential. The common core curriculum is becoming a reality, accepted by over two-thirds of the states at this point, with the prospect of establishing a nationwide standard of high expectations for all students. At the same time, curriculum leaders are asked to make important decisions about the content of the curriculum, the selection of instructional material, and the modifications of teaching strategies based upon performance assessment, which are often related to the frameworks. A thorough understanding of curriculum design will aid educators in making these decisions.

This course is intended to provide the student with the basic elements of curriculum design. The knowledge and theory of curriculum development, instruction, and assessment will serve as a scaffold for the design of a coherent curriculum. Students will acquire skills that will provide the basis for sound decisions about curriculum design. Students will utilize their understanding of curriculum design to analyze the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, the common core curriculum (or other relevant state curriculum frameworks), as well as other curriculum and instructional material available in print or via the Internet. In addition, students will apply their theoretical knowledge and practical skills to the design of a course or curriculum unit. The course is designed to provide a balance of theory, practice, and individual and group work.

REQUIRED READING:
Wiggins, Grant and Jay McTighe (2005), *Understanding by Design* (Second Edition), Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Alexandria, VA

Wiggins, Grant and Jay McTighe (2004), *Understanding by Design Professional Development Workbook*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Alexandria, VA

**Recommended Reading:**


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**COURSE GOALS:**

Students are expected:

1. To understand and apply the basic elements of curriculum design to the construction of a course or unit design

2. To practice the critical thinking skills necessary for making key decisions in the design of curriculum

3. To learn the procedural and technical skills that are useful for curriculum design

4. To understand how knowledge of the foundations of curriculum (historical, philosophical, psychological, and social/political) provide a useful analytic lens for understanding curriculum design decisions and selecting design tools

5. To understand how to apply the principles of curriculum design as a useful lens for the critique of existing curriculum

6. To understand how to use state curriculum frameworks to design standards-based curriculum and assessment

7. To learn the skills of curriculum design with respect to subject-based curriculum and interdisciplinary curriculum
8. To understand how current technological resources are used to research, apply and communicate key curriculum information

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ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

Students will understand transferable ‘big ideas’ that drive a unit.

Students will understand student centered essential questions that motivate students.

Students will understand authentic performance tasks that assess unit understandings.

Students will understand application of Universal Design for Learning principles.

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ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

1. Do/Will the strengths of an online course (compared to a face-to-face class) outweigh the drawbacks? Explain.

2. Who should have veto power (or review jurisdiction) over (parts of) a curriculum? Explain.

3. In what subject are students most likely to learn lessons that last a lifetime? Why?

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COURSE PRODUCTS:

Response Journals – 10%

Each student will complete three reflective response journals, online, in response to curriculum design issues. Students are encouraged to draw on reading material, independent research and experience to respond to the posed issues. (See “Course Reference” section for more details and rubric.)

Case Study – 10%

Throughout the course, we will consider several case studies which deal with issues related to the application of curriculum in true to life scenarios. Students will be asked to read and respond to the issues raised through the discussion board. Responses will be graded in accordance with the policy below – on weekly postings / Participation. In
addition, students will be required to create a case study of their own, based on a curriculum related issue from their experience. Guidelines will be provided in addition to the examples mentioned above. (See “Course Reference” section for more details and rubric.)

**Weekly Postings / Participation – 10%**

In addition to the three response journals, students are to post on the discussion board at least one **weekly on-line memo** (usually one-two pages*) in response to course material, articles, and topics. Posting deadline will be midnight on the Thursday following the release of materials. Guidelines for these topics will be presented each week in the introductory materials released each Monday. The essential purpose of the posts is to facilitate individual and collective reflection, analytic insight, understanding, and conversation. Its ultimate value depends on the ability to engage in serious critique, and self-critique, rather than just mechanically recording events and thoughts. In addition, students are to “respond” to the collective ideas that emerge through the discussion board. All discussions except week 1 and week 9 are developed in a group format; your responses to all group members due each week. Your responses are due by midnight Saturday. Weekly postings will not be graded, although there will be a 10% participation grade, based partly on quality and loyalty of discussion board participation. I will read and digest each post as it appears on the discussion board, and will participate in the online dialogue as appropriate, but rarely. One part of your weekly participation grade will consist of one short quote from your discussion group that you feel is significant.

*Two pages” means two double-spaced (8 ½ x 11) pages in length (about 570 words).

**Performance Product #1 - Understandings – 20%**

As curriculum designers you will need to be able to evaluate curriculum designs and to provide appropriate feedback to the authors or the proponents. The purpose of the first performance product is to reflect on your understanding of stage I (Identifying Desired Results) of the curriculum design process.

**Performance Product #2 - Assessment – 20%**

As curriculum designers you will need to be able to evaluate curriculum designs and to provide appropriate feedback to the authors or the proponents. The purpose of the second performance product is to reflect on your understanding of stage II (Assessing Student Understanding) of the curriculum design process.

**Performance Product #3 - Original Curriculum Unit – 30%**

Each student will design and submit an original curriculum unit, which will include an analytic component. Students will be required to share components of the unit at different stages throughout the course.
Late Policy – for Performance Products #1, #2, #3

2% points off final grade for every day late.

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MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS:

State authorities throughout the United States have been charged to establish sets of curriculum standards to be used to direct curriculum and to provide a basis for assessment of educational progress. The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 mandated the creation of seven (7) curriculum frameworks - mathematics, English language arts, history/social studies, science, foreign (world) languages, health, and fine arts.

Although there are interesting differences and definite levels of priority, the seven frameworks are united in the goal of determining what students should know and be able to do at important stages, or benchmarks, in their education career. Before 1993, each community was responsible for determining its own graduation requirements, with the result that the meaning of a high school diploma varied tremendously from town to town and even from school to school. Now the frameworks are the reference point for the creation of the controversial MCAS, which is now being used (selectively) to determine whether high school seniors will be eligible to receive a high school diploma.

It is important to note that the frameworks do NOT determine a statewide curriculum. The standards that are identified in each framework vary in terms of clarity and specificity, but it is up to the school district to interpret the standards and specify the curriculum direction for the staff. Thus when we write a curriculum, we reference the particular standard or standards that are being addressed.

Because of the centrality of the curriculum frameworks in any discussion of curriculum theory, we will spend devote some precious time each week to one of the frameworks. Copies are available online at the Mass DOE website, listed below.
http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/

Note - Alternate arrangements and assignments may be provided for students residing in other states or countries.

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CORE CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS:

The common core curriculum initiative is in the process of reshaping the approach to curriculum development throughout the country. As we start this course, 42 of the 51 states have adopted the common core standards in principle, and common core curriculum documents are appearing on the
national scene. To date, we can find common core curriculum documents in English Language Arts and math. To follow along with this introduction, you can begin to explore the common core states Initiative website: http://www.corestandards.org/

and we will explore these documents in an introductory manner at selected points through the course.

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MAKEUP POLICY:

Any graded assignment with a grade below a 'Mastery,' except weekly participation grades, may be made up for revised full credit. Intent to make up an assignment should be emailed to the instructor as soon as possible, and revised assignments should be received within a week of the return date. Because of grading pressures at the end of the course, all makeups must be submitted by Friday, November 2.

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GRADING:

The University of Massachusetts Lowell, Graduate School of Education has determined the following general guidelines with respect to evaluation of academic work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Point structure</th>
<th>General Explanatory Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>99 - 100</td>
<td>Work of the highest professional standard demonstrating independent and exemplary performance - <strong>MASTERY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>96 - 98</td>
<td>Excellent work demonstrating independent and high quality performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>Very good work, indicating consistent and</td>
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<td>Performance Standard / Product</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16 - &lt;19</td>
<td>12 - &lt;16</td>
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<td>12 - &lt;16</td>
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<td>RESPONSE JOURNALS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9 - &lt;10</td>
<td>8 - &lt;9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY</td>
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<td>9 - &lt;10</td>
<td>8 - &lt;9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPATION</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9 - &lt;10</td>
<td>8 - &lt;9</td>
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### COURSE FINAL GRADE:

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<th>Standard</th>
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<th>Total Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>A Plus</td>
<td>99-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>A Minus</td>
<td>91-95</td>
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<td></td>
<td>B Plus</td>
<td>86-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below Standard</td>
<td>B Minus</td>
<td>76-79</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Plus</td>
<td>71-75</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>66-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 66</td>
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### COURSE OUTLINE:

**Fall, 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong> (Sept 5)</td>
<td>Explore PD Workbook: pages 275, 3-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Response Journal #1 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview video</td>
<td>(Beane: <em>Coherent Curriculum</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STAGE ONE</strong></td>
<td>Read Text: Intro, Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong> (Sept 10)</td>
<td>Explore PD Workbook: pages: 60-80.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Week</td>
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<td>T. 2</td>
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</table>
### WEEKLY CHATS:

*Each week a one-hour chat will be held for the class at 7:00 p.m. (eastern standard time). Chats are important, unique opportunities for students to interact with one another and with the instructor about various aspects of the course. Usually the first few minutes or so are devoted to informal interactions, sharing of information about one*
another, and general questions about the course that may arise. For the remainder of the hour, the instructor will establish a general topic, one that relates to the content studied that week. It is a time, however, to bring up questions about assignments, comments about course content, and other issues that relate to your experiences with the course. This is an important dimension to the course, and we urge everyone to attend and participate. If you have been a course with a chat option before, you will realize that this is a special type of communication - one where you need to join right in, not always in complete synchronization with the "flow" of the chat. You are urged to jump in, participate, express your opinions and make comments. This should enrich the course as well as your experience with the course.

Chat participation is not required and is not included in calculating the participation grade. In preparation for the chat, we will on occasion have a preparatory activity, which will be required, to introduce the week's topic. This will be introduced by email during the preceding week.

Chats for this course will typically be held on Thursday of each week, as mentioned, at 7:00 p.m. eastern time, but there may be changes to accommodate schedules or holidays. Please check the course calendar for the dates of these weekly chat opportunities.

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PARTICIPATION:

Your participation in class will be assessed weekly, based on your discussion posts, responses to other posts, timeliness, and any other elements of participation expected for the week. The assessment will be holistic, spanning all of your contributions during the week. Unlike major projects, there will not be regular feedback on your participation assessment. Also unlike other assessed work in this course, participation grades may NOT be revised.

For the first week of the course, your participation will be assessed by the instructor, but that assessment will not count. This is done to give you a sense of the participation expectations with no risk. Also, at the end of the course, your lowest weekly participation assessment will be dropped from the gradebook.

Each week (excluding week 1) you will be randomly assigned to a small discussion group. While you are encouraged to read over and reply to multiple discussion posts, your weekly discussion participation grade will be based on 1) your on time original post(s) in response to assignment(s) and 2) your responses to each of the other members in your weekly discussion group. Groups will typically have three members, thus you will need to make your own post and then read and respond to the other two posts from the members of your weekly group assignment.

Starting in week 2, you will calculate each weekly participation grade yourself.
Note that chat sessions are not assessed as part of participation for a given week. You are encouraged/urged to attend each chat session, and if you are not able to make a chat, you can check the chat recording. To prepare us for the chat session, there will usually be a preliminary assignment (which is required) roughly related to the topic of the chat.

**Rubric for participation:**
Late discussion posts, responses, or chat participation will receive half credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>4.0</th>
<th>3.7</th>
<th>3.3</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>2.7</th>
<th>2.3</th>
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<th>0</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The length or frequency of your participation is exemplary for graduate level work.</td>
<td>The length or frequency of your participation is adequate for graduate level work.</td>
<td>The length or frequency of your participation is not up to a graduate level standard.</td>
<td>You do not participate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>The quality of your participation is exemplary for graduate level work</td>
<td>The quality of your participation is adequate for graduate level work</td>
<td>The quality of your participation is not up to a graduate level standard</td>
<td>You do not participate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>Your postings &amp; participation are consistently on time.</td>
<td>Your postings &amp; participation are mostly on time.</td>
<td>Your postings &amp; participation are sometimes on time.</td>
<td>You do not participate.</td>
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**ONLINE ETIQUETTE (NETIQUETTE):**

**Good Practices for communicating and participating online**
For many of us, participation in an online course is a fairly new experience. One distinguishing feature of an online course is that communication occurs solely via the written word, except for possible audio / visual chats. The body language, voice, tone, and instantaneous listener feedback of the traditional classroom are all absent. These facts
need to be taken into consideration both when contributing and reading messages to a chat room, to discussion posts and responses. Keep in mind the following points:

1. **Respect others and their opinions.** One of the strengths of online learning is that fellow students may be participating from various backgrounds come together to learn. It is important to respect their feelings and opinions and to learn from them, even though they may differ from your own.

2. **Tone Down Your Language.** Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

3. **Pick the right tone.** Since we depend on the written word in online learning, it is especially important to choose the right words to get your meaning across. For example, sarcasm is harder to detect when you read the words rather than hearing them.

4. **Keep a Straight Face.** In general, avoid humor and sarcasm. These frequently depend either on facial or tone of voice cues absent in text communication or on familiarity with the reader. Thus, your attempts at jokes may be misinterpreted, unless the context is made clear. (Use "jk," or "just kidding")

5. **Consider others' privacy.** Ask for permission if you want to forward someone's email messages to third parties. Keep in mind that all private email mail is considered copyrighted by the original author.

6. **Avoid inappropriate material.**

7. **Be forgiving.** If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion might be new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

8. **Think before you hit the send button.** Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group there is no taking it back. Grammar and spelling errors reflect on you and your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. Note that spelling and grammar errors are not as important in the give and take of an online chat.

9. **Test for Clarity.** Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.
10. **Brevity is best.** Be as concise as possible when contributing to a discussion. Your points might be missed if hidden in a flood of text.

11. **Stick to the point.** Contributions to a discussion should stick to the subject. Don't waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents.

12. **Read First, Write Later.** Don't add your comments to a discussion before reading the comments of other students unless the assignment specifically asks you to. Doing so is tantamount to ignoring your fellow students and is rude. Comments related to the content of previous messages should be posted under them to keep related topics organized, and you should specify the person and the particular point you are following up on.

13. **Netspeak.** Although electronic communication is still young, many conventions have already been established. **DO NOT TYPE IN ALL CAPS.** One exception may be found in the chat room, where the instructor may want to highlight responses with the use of all caps. Acronyms and emoticons (arrangements of symbols to express emotions) are popular, but excessive use of them can make your message difficult to read. Some common ones include:
   **Acronyms Emoticons**
   - **FYI** = for your information
   - **:-) = smiley face:** happiness, pleasure
   - **B/C = because:**
   - **:-) = winking face:** displeasure
   - **W/ = with:**
   - **F2F = face to face:**
   - **::-0 = shock, surprise:**
   - **BTW = by the way:**
   - **FAQ = frequently asked questions**

Adapted from: [https://madisoncollege.edu/online-etiquette](https://madisoncollege.edu/online-etiquette)

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**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:**

*The integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in all aspects of its endeavor. Maintaining academic integrity is therefore the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students at the University of Massachusetts Lowell.*

*Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty.*

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**


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