Building a Professional Network

Course Description

This course will equip students with knowledge and skills to build a professional network. Topics will include pedagogy resources, professional responsibilities, 21st century networking tools, and ongoing professional growth to support classroom learning and achievement.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this class, the learner will be able to:

1. Explore resources for improving knowledge of your content area/discipline and investigate methods for improving and enhancing pedagogy in your content area.
2. Examine and investigate roles, standards, and guidelines for professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals beyond the classroom that make a difference in the field of teaching and learning in your content area.
3. Identify cognitive, social, and emotional stages that are common amongst students and explore methods for gathering and maintaining information about students' needs, backgrounds, and interests as well as their skills, knowledge, and language proficiency.
4. Reflect and examine strategies on how individual student needs may differ from general patterns and analyze the implications for instructional planning and modifying appropriate lessons.
5. Investigate methods for maintaining accurate records of student assignments and explore effective systems for tracking student progress toward intended learning outcomes.
6. Analyze needs and identify strategies for structuring student participation in maintaining records of their own assignments, interests, progress, and noninstructional activities.
7. Examine and explore how teachers search for, use, and evaluate resources for instructional and noninstructional classroom use and extend pedagogical and content knowledge.
8. Discover teacher behaviors and attitudes associated with high or low expectations for student learning and achievement and examine the concepts of bias.
9. Examine needed skills and training opportunities for teachers and the paraprofessionals they supervise and support.

10. Identify and discuss the benefits of professional learning and teaching communities to your practice.
11. Define and develop the benefits of a Professional Growth Plan (PGP).
12. Analyze strategies for maintaining professionalism between novice and veteran teachers and consider their relationship to fostering a classroom culture of respect and rapport.
13. Describe, initiate, and reflect on collegial collaboration strategies that increase personal and professional teaching development.
14. Arrange collegial reciprocal observations that include structures for sharing feedback, best practices, and support and reflect on previously developed professional growth plans (PGP) and redesign a long-term plan.
15. Develop a professional learning community at your school to enhance member's practice and leadership within the organization and/or community.

Topical Outline

List of Concepts

Effective Recordkeeping	Accurate records of instructional and noninstructional events; completion of assignments; student progress in learning; school records outside of the classroom; student responsibility
Working with Volunteers and Paraprofessionals	Substantive contributions to the classroom environment; skills to support volunteers and paraprofessionals; developing guidelines; explaining duties; providing training; discussing standards
Enhancing Knowledge of Resources	Evaluate resources; advance professional knowledge and skill; provide noninstructional assistance to students
Enhancing Knowledge of Students	Explore student cognitive, social, and emotional developmental stages; address gaps; avoid misconceptions about student development; evaluate strategies to engage students
Demonstrating Professionalism: Basic	Share strategies; develop relationships; explore benefits of volunteer services; stay informed about content and pedagogy; welcome feedback from colleagues; create a professional growth plan

Demonstrating Professionalism: Intermediate	Promote a culture of professional inquiry; assume a leadership role among faculty; participate in school projects; facilitate opportunities for professional development; observe and provide feedback to colleagues; assist peers with professional growth plans	
Demonstrating Professionalism: Advanced	Support novice teachers; facilitate professional learning communities; take lead on school projects; facilitate a peer feedback program; oversee professional growth plans	

Course Assessments and Links to Institutional Outcomes and Course Outcomes

Throughout the course, the learner will be assessed and evaluated on the completion of the following assessments. Participants will complete a course project designed to strengthen professional practice and extend knowledge related to the specific content of the course. This project is divided into multiple graded activities to be completed throughout the term.

Modules	Topics of Modules	Points
Module 1:	Effective Recordkeeping	28
Module 2:	Working with Volunteers and Paraprofessionals	25
Module 3:	Enhancing Knowledge of Resources	39
Module 4:	Enhancing Knowledge of Students	33
Module 5:	Demonstrating Professionalism: Basic	42
Module 6:	Demonstrating Professionalism: Intermediate	42
Module 7:	Demonstrating Professionalism: Advanced	42
CP	Course Project	106
	Total	**357**

Instructional Methodology

The instructional methodology of this course focuses on developing, enhancing, and improving the instructional expertise and pedagogical knowledge base of practicing educators. Strategies include presentation of new content through online readings, active construction of knowledge through practice and problem solving, collaborative group work, personal reflection, structured small-group or whole-class discussion, analysis of assigned reading, and the application of course content and skills to participant's individual grade level, subject area(s), and classroom.

Grading Scale

The course facilitator will post the college-specific grading scale.

PLS 3rd Learning's Late Policy

There will be a 10% deduction of points per day for all posts and submitted assignments that are late. Replies posted after the due date will earn no points. In

rare cases, partially or poorly completed assignments may be resubmitted for partial credit at the discretion of the instructor. The following exceptions apply:

- If a participant is sick/hospitalized or has a death in the family, the timing of makeup work may be arranged with the course facilitator. No points will be deducted if the work is completed according to the agreement.
- If a participant is on vacation/traveling/etc., the participant must contact the course facilitator ahead of time to avoid a penalty. This type of absence may occur only once during a course. All posts should be submitted for the missed module before leaving.
- If a participant has difficulty completing everything in a week, an extension can be granted if the participant contacts the facilitator during the week (not at the last minute).

PLS 3rd Learning's Participant Drop Policy

- Participants are eligible to receive a refund if they attend class for one week or less. This means participants must withdraw by the end of Module 1 to receive a refund.
- Refunds of the balance of tuition paid will be given, minus the $50 deposit.

PLS 3rd Learning's Academic Integrity Policy

PLS 3rd Learning expects absolute academic honesty and integrity from every course participant. The specific Academic Integrity and Honor Code Policies of our partner colleges and universities are embraced and enforced by PLS 3rd Learning instructors. The following are considered to be serious violations:

- Plagiarism: the use of another's ideas, data, or words without proper acknowledgement.
- Fabrication: the use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.
- Collusion: improper collaboration with another in preparing assignments or projects.
- Cheating: an act of deception by which a student misrepresents that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered.
- Academic Misconduct: tampering with grades, or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of student work that is not his or her own.

Violation or suspected violation will be investigated and pursued according to specific college/university procedures.

Identity Authentication

The college/university, PLS 3rd Learning, and students share a joint responsibility to ensure that each student's contribution in an online course activity comes from that student alone. For the student, this responsibility has two parts:

1. Students are responsible for positively ensuring that every contribution to an online course created with the student's computer account is made by the student alone. Contributions covered under this policy include: written assignments; quiz and exam submissions; discussion forum postings; live

participation in text-based chat sessions, phone conferences, and videoconferences. If a student allows another person to write or make any kind of submission to an online activity in the student's name, then this constitutes cheating and will be treated as a violation of academic honesty.

2. Students are responsible for ensuring the integrity of their computer account security by following the actions required of them by the PLS 3rd Learning Acceptable Use Policy. These actions include keeping passcodes private, updating passcodes when required by PLS 3rd Learning, and reporting breaches of the security policy to the IT Helpdesk.

Course Evaluation

The evaluation of learner work will be based on the defined criteria for learner assessments. The criteria for learner assessments will be outlined for students prior to instructional activities and engagement with student learning targets (outcomes). Grading is based solely on the evaluation of student learning targets and defined criteria for learner assessments.

Formative assessment of learning outcomes is conducted throughout the course, using a variety of means that include the following: completion of assessments; constructive contributions to class discussions (whole-class as well as small-group); sharing of valuable, pertinent, and/or applicable ideas and experiences; and active participation in online interactions. It is expected that each participant will contribute to the academic quality of the course.

Summative assessment includes the completion of weekly learning activities and assignments for which the participant will need to synthesize class content, apply it to his or her own practice, and complete a plan for implementing the major components of content and skill acquired during the course.

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