



## Teaching Diversity: Influences & Issues in the Classroom

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### Introduction

Welcome to *Teaching Diversity: Influences & Issues in the Classroom*, an interactive computer-based instruction course designed to give you the knowledge and tools to facilitate a diverse classroom effectively. This course will help you understand and identify differences in approaches to learning and performance, including different learning styles and ways in which students demonstrate learning. This course will emphasize understanding how students' learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, disabilities, gender, language, culture, family, and community values. You will be challenged to apply knowledge of the richness of contributions from our diverse society to your teaching field.

This computer-based instruction course is a self-supporting program that provides instruction, structured practice, and evaluation all on your home or school computer. Technical support information can be found, in the Help section of your course.

### Course Materials (Online)

Title: *Teaching Diversity: Influences & Issues in the Classroom*  
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Instructor: Dr. Pamela Bernards

## **Academic Integrity Statement**

The structure and format of most distance-learning courses presume a high level of personal and academic integrity in completion and submission of coursework. Individuals enrolled in a distance-learning course are expected to adhere to the following standards of academic conduct.

### **Academic Work**

Academic work submitted by the individual (such as papers, assignments, reports, tests) shall be the student's own work or appropriately attributed, in part or in whole, to its correct source. Submission of commercially prepared (or group prepared) materials as if they are one's own work is unacceptable.

### **Aiding Honesty in Others**

The individual will encourage honesty in others by refraining from providing materials or information to another person with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly.

***Violations of these academic standards will result in the assignment of a failing grade and subsequent loss of credit for the course.***

### **Level of Application**

This course is designed to be an informational course with application to educational settings. The strategies were designed to be used to aid in teaching students in a diverse classroom ranging from K-12. The strategies are general in nature, are not intended to be prescriptive, and are not intended to be used as a formula. As is true of all information, the information covered in this course should not be used to stereotype any students based on cultural, ethnic, gender, etc. differences.

### **Learning Outcomes**

As a result of this course, participants will demonstrate their ability to:

- Reflect through online exams how participants can combine and apply their knowledge of learning styles and teaching theories in a multicultural classroom. Participants will be challenged to honestly evaluate their own attitudes and teaching, and to change those if necessary in order to teach so that all students succeed in their classrooms.
- Analyze how poverty issues in our society affect the students in classrooms.
- Gather information from several sources on individual student cultures, knowledge, skills, language proficiencies, and interests.
- Gather information from several sources on individual students' special needs.
- Discuss development patterns of classroom interactions that are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect.
- Apply a system that responds successfully to disrespectful behavior among students.
- Employ behavioral intervention to remediate disruptive, negative, and/or self-destructive behavior.
- Employ positive framing to model and reinforce appropriate student behavior and redirect inappropriate student behavior.
- Initiate regular communication with families to discuss class and individual activities.

## Course Description

This course is designed to help classroom teachers, school counselors, and other educational personnel gain strategies to understand how our diverse society influences student learning in the classroom. Participants will explore issues of culture, gender, and individuals with exceptionalities, and how these affect a student's learning and behavior in the classroom.

The course is divided into four chapters. At the completion of each chapter, there will be an examination covering the material. Students must complete the examination before proceeding to the next chapter. This sequential approach to learning will help all participants to gain a better understanding of what they have learned as they proceed through the course.

Although this course is a presentation of societal issues and how these affect the classroom, there is certainly a wealth of research and topics not covered in the scope of this course. The instructor highly recommends that you augment your readings from this course with further research to gain a fuller understanding of the complexities of this subject. In addition to what is required in this course and your individual research, the instructor recommends that you read research from the authors found in the reference section of this syllabus.

## Student Expectations

As a student you will be expected to:

- Complete all four information sections showing a competent understanding of the material presented in each section.
- Complete all four section examinations, showing a competent understanding of the material presented. **You must obtain an overall score of 70% or higher, with no individual exam score below 50%, and successfully complete ALL writing assignments to pass this course. \*Please note: Minimum exam score requirements may vary by college or university; therefore, you should refer to your course addendum to determine what your minimum exam score requirements are.**
- Complete a review of any section on which your examination score was below 50%.
- Retake any examination, after completing an information review, to increase that examination score to a minimum of 50%, making sure to also be achieving an overall exam score of a minimum 70% (**maximum of three attempts**). **\*Please note: Minimum exam score requirements may vary by college or university; therefore, you should refer to your course addendum to determine what your minimum exam score requirements are.**
- Complete all course journal article and essay writing assignments with the minimum word count shown for each writing assignment.
- Complete a course evaluation form at the end of the course.

## Course Overview

### *Chapter 1: Teaching in a Diverse Classroom*

This chapter explores how our society has changed, the diversity of our society as a whole, and the diversity of the community where the participant lives and works.

## **Chapter 2: Race, Ethnicity & Culture**

This chapter explores research norms about race, ethnicity, and culture while challenging individuals to refrain from using this information to stereotype but instead to use it as a foundation to start understanding people as individuals. Participants are challenged to evaluate their own attitudes and teaching honestly and to change them, if necessary, in efforts to teach so that all students succeed in their classrooms.

## **Chapter 3: Gender Differences, Gang Influences, & LGBTQ+**

This chapter explores research norms about gender differences while challenging individuals to refrain from using this information to stereotype. Participants are challenged to evaluate their own attitudes and teaching honestly and to change them, if necessary, in efforts to teach so that all students succeed in their classrooms. In addition, the influence of gangs is discussed.

## **Chapter 4: Socioeconomic Issues & Social Justice**

This chapter explores socioeconomic issues in our society and how they affect the students in your classroom while challenging individuals to refrain from using this information to stereotype. Participants are challenged to evaluate their own attitudes and teaching honestly and to change them, if necessary, to teach so that all students succeed in their classrooms.

### **Examinations**

At the end of each chapter, you will be expected to complete an examination designed to assess your knowledge. You may take these exams a total of three times. Your last score will save, not the highest score. After your third attempt, each examination will lock and not allow further access. The average from your exam scores will be printed on your certificate. However, this is not your final grade since your required writing assignments have not been reviewed. Exceptionally written or poorly written required writing assignments, or violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in the course syllabus, will affect your grade. As this is a self-paced computerized instruction program, you may review course information as often as necessary. You will not be able to exit any examinations until you have answered all questions. If you try to exit the exam section before you complete all questions, your information will be lost. You are expected to complete the entire exam in one sitting.

### **Writing Assignments**

**All assignments are reviewed and may impact your final grade.** Exceptionally or poorly written assignments, or violation of the Academic Integrity Policy (see course syllabus for policy), will affect your grade. Fifty percent of your grade is determined by your writing assignments, and your overall exam score determines the other fifty percent. ***Refer to the Essay Grading Guidelines, which were sent as an attachment with your original course link. You should also refer to the Course Syllabus Addendum, which was sent as an attachment with your original course link, to determine if you have any writing assignments in addition to the Critical Thinking Questions (CTQ) and Journal Article Summations (JAS). If you do, the Essay Grading Guidelines will also apply.***

Your writing assignments must meet the minimum word count and are not to include the question or your final citations as part of your word count. In other words, the question and citations are not to be used as a means to meet the minimum word count.

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

There are four CTQs that you are required to complete. You will need to write a minimum of 500 words (maximum 1,000) per essay. You should explain how the information that you gained from the course will be applied and clearly convey a strong understanding of the course content as it relates to each CTQ. To view the questions, click on REQUIRED ESSAY and choose the CTQ that you are ready to complete; this will bring up a screen where you may enter your essay. Prior to course submission, you may go back at any point to edit your essay, but you must be certain to click SAVE once you are done with your edits.

**You must click SAVE before you write another essay or move on to another part of the course.**

### **Journal Article Summations**

You are required to write, in your own words, a summary on a total of three peer-reviewed or scholarly journal articles (one article per JAS), written by an author with a Ph.D., Ed.D., or similar, on the topic outlined within each JAS section in the “Required Essays” portion of the course (blogs, abstracts, news articles, or similar are not acceptable). Your article choice must relate specifically to the discussion topic listed in each individual JAS. You will choose a total of three relevant articles (one article per JAS) and write a thorough summary of the information presented in each article (you must write a minimum of 200 words with a 400 word maximum per JAS). Be sure to provide the URL or the journal name, volume, date, and any other critical information to allow the facilitator to access and review each article.

To write your summary, click on REQUIRED ESSAYS and choose the JAS that you would like to complete. A writing program will automatically launch where you can write your summary. When you are ready to stop, click **SAVE**. Prior to course submission, you may go back at any point to edit your summaries, but you must be certain to click SAVE once you are done with your edits. For more information on the features of this assignment, please consult the HELP menu.

**You must click SAVE before you write another summary or move on to another part of the course.**

### **Instructor Description**

Pamela Bernards has 43 years of combined experience in diverse PK–8 and high school settings as a teacher and an administrator. In addition to these responsibilities, she was the founding director of a K–8 after-school care program and the founder of a preschool program for infants to 4-year-olds. When she was a principal in 1992, her school was named a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, as was the school at which she served as curriculum coordinator in 2010. She served as the director of professional development at the National Catholic Educational Association and is currently a teacher at Arlington Public Schools. Areas of interest include curriculum, research-based teaching practices, staff development, assessment,

data-driven instruction, and instructional intervention (remediation and gifted/talented). She received a doctorate in Leadership and Professional Practice from Trevecca Nazarene University.

### **Contacting the Instructor**

You may contact the instructor by emailing [pamela\\_bernards@virtualeduc.com](mailto:pamela_bernards@virtualeduc.com) or by calling 509-891-7219, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. PST. Phone messages will be answered within 24 hours. Phone conferences will be limited to ten minutes per student, per day, given that this is a self-paced instructional program. Please do not contact the instructor about technical problems, course glitches, or other issues involving the course's operation.

### **Technical Questions**

If you have questions or problems related to the operation of this course, please try everything twice. If the problem persists please check our support pages for FAQs and known issues at [www.virtualeduc.com](http://www.virtualeduc.com) and also the Help section of your course.

If you need personal assistance then email [support@virtualeduc.com](mailto:support@virtualeduc.com) or call 509-891-7219. When contacting technical support, please know your course version number (it is located at the bottom left side of the Welcome Screen) and your operating system, and be seated in front of the computer at the time of your call.

### **Minimum Computer Requirements**

Please refer to VESi's website: [www.virtualeduc.com](http://www.virtualeduc.com) or contact VESi if you have further questions about the compatibility of your operating system.

***Refer to the addendum regarding Grading Criteria, Course Completion Information, Items to be Submitted, and how to submit your completed information. The addendum will also note any additional course assignments that you may be required to complete that are not listed in this syllabus.***

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*Course content is updated every three years. Due to this update timeline, some URL links may no longer be active or may have changed. Please type the title of the organization into the command line of any Internet browser search window and you will be able to find whether the URL link is still active or any new link to the corresponding organization's web home page.*

Updated 3/3/25



## **COURSE SYLLABUS ADDENDUM**

**Important - Please Read - Do Not Discard**

It is each student's responsibility to read all course materials, including course syllabus and addendum, and to know and understand the course requirements, exam score minimum requirements, and deadlines. Students enrolled in VESi courses are required to check their email for any communications regarding the course until their final grade is posted with the college or university. Once your course materials are received by VESi and have been reviewed, the GRADE IS FINAL.

### **Grading Criteria:**

**You must obtain an overall score of 70% or higher, with no individual exam score below 50%, and successfully complete ALL writing assignments to pass this course.** This course requires a minimum overall passing grade of "C-" to receive credit. The average from your exam scores will be printed on your certificate. However, this is not your final grade since your required writing assignments have not been reviewed. Exceptionally written or poorly written required writing assignments, or violation of the academic integrity policy in the course syllabus, will affect your grade. Fifty percent of your grade is determined by your writing assignments, and your overall exam score determines the other fifty percent.

**No grade will be submitted for partial completion of course assignments, regardless of partial score. An F will be reported if course is not completed by the end of the term enrolled. Exceptions only apply to those that request an extension (must have extenuating circumstances) prior to course deadline.**

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:	90% to 100%	A
	80% to 89%	B
	70% to 79%	C
	69% - lower	F

### **Course Completion Information:**

Grading will take approximately two weeks from the time your materials are received by the instructor, after which we will submit grades to the college/university weekly. If you have a timeline to meet certain school or state requirements, please keep this time period in mind when planning your course completion dates.

### **Course Completion Instructions**

- Once you have completed all of the course requirements, follow the instructions from the Complete Course toolbar to submit your materials to VESi's office for processing. You can only submit the course ONE TIME. Be sure that you have completed all requirements and exams.**
- Course Evaluation:** Please take a moment to fill out the course evaluation which is also found under the Complete Course toolbar.

- **Print Certificate:** You can print a copy of your course certificate for your records.

### **Accessing your NDSU Transcript:**

After the grade for your course(s) is posted, approximately two weeks after the course submission, you can access your NDSU transcript for documentation of course completion and performance. Instructions are found at this link: [Transcript Instructions | Continued Learning | NDSU](#)

### **Drops & Refunds:**

Once learners have received the course materials, they are no longer eligible for a refund. Appeals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Questions or Concerns:**

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding this class to [ndsudce@ndsudce.edu](mailto:ndsudce@ndsudce.edu). Please include the title of the course in your correspondence.