



## **Understanding Aggression:**

### **Coping with Aggressive Behavior in the Classroom**

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#### **Introduction**

This course is about violence in America, about the aggression in our schools, classrooms, streets, homes and elsewhere. The course speaks to the hate, the fights, the anger, the crimes committed and the victims in our schools and society. It is a course about students, children, teenagers, adults and neighbors, all of us.

The course will consider the many forms of aggression, both criminal and otherwise; its costs and motivation; its perpetrators and targets; its likely and unlikely locations; its impact on our schools, the children; and, most especially, its several causes and promising solutions.

Topics of interest will include violence and the challenge of raising and working with children; aggression in our classrooms; American youth gangs and their influence; past and future sports violence; "hot spot" locations of frequent violence; and the aggression-promoting role of alcohol, temperature, driving, television and other features of modern life. The course also will answer questions such as: Is aggression always bad? How do aggressive thoughts lead to aggressive actions? Is aggression, at least for some people, an addiction? Does the victim contribute to being attacked? Is dating a dangerous proposition? How are the acts of aggression dealt with in other countries, and are there any lessons for America?

The goal of this course is to help educators and adults in general better understand how aggression affects our lives and the lives of children. Hopefully such greater understanding and more skilled efforts at prevention will substantially reduce the aggression and violence that has become all too common in America's schools.

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: *Understanding Aggression: Coping with Aggressive Behavior in the Classroom*  
Publisher: Virtual Education Software, inc. 2002, Revised 2008, Revised 2010, Revised 2013, Revised 2016, Revised 2019, Revised 2022  
Instructor: Dr. Karen Lea

### **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 work or work-related settings. The intervention strategies are informational and not to be used without proper training and administrative approval.

### **Expected Learning Outcomes**

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

1. To review the history of aggression and how society came to be such an aggressive place
2. To identify the causes of aggressive behavior, both internal and external
3. To explain how aggression is expressed in various social settings such as schoolyards, classrooms, sports, homes, etc.
4. To identify perpetrators and victims of aggression and violence
5. To identify locations of high aggression and violence

6. To provide solutions for reducing aggression and violence in classroom and other school settings
7. To provide information on how educators can help students/children reduce feelings of aggression and violent tendencies

### **Course Description**

The course, *Understanding Aggression*, has been divided into four chapters and five to ten exercises within each chapter. The first chapter reviews the history of aggression in America. It explains how we (the country) got to where we are in terms of aggression and violence. The chapter discusses the cost of aggression. It asks the question: Is America Safe? It discusses whether aggression is always bad. The chapter concludes with odds and ends and aggression in general.

The second chapter deals with how we have learned to be aggressive. It discusses how aggressive thoughts many times become aggressive actions. The course reviews the “us versus them” side of aggression and violence. Chapter 2 also deals with how alcohol, temperature and driving can increase aggression and violence. The chapter reviews the role of television and how TV may be a tutor for violent behavior. Is high aggression often found in people who tend to have low empathy? This chapter will discuss this issue. The chapter will also cover how words and teasing can be expressions and forms of aggression.

The third chapter centers on aggression and violence as crimes. It explores arson, assault and crimes of fear. The chapter also will discuss vigilante justice and/or injustice. Along with criminal aggression the chapter takes a look at guns and gangs in America’s schools; how bullying affects our schools and classrooms; how dress can affect acts of aggression and violence in schools and society. The chapter speaks to sexual harassment and the aggression involved with acts of harassment. There are also several sections on aggression and violence in the home, parental fighting and how this affects children in the home.

Chapter 4 speaks to working with and raising children to resist violence. It gives suggestions to educators and parents on how to deal with and counteract aggressive or violent behavior, but educators should not use these interventions without training and administrative approval. This chapter deals with dating, and how it can be impacted by aggressive behavior and date violence. It speaks to how television affects the aggressive behavior of our children. The chapter reviews child tantrums, and what to do about them. Chapter 4 is summarized with several exercises on win-win scenarios for remediation and effective problem solving techniques.

The chapters and exercises are sequential and, although it is not required, they should be completed in the order in which they are presented in the program. After completing these four chapters you should have a framework for understanding and working with aggressive behavior. This also may help you understand why students with high aggression are a challenge in a regular education setting.

After you complete each chapter of the course, an examination will be used to evaluate your knowledge and ability to apply what you’ve learned. An explanation of the examinations will be given later in this syllabus.

### ***Chapter 1: Introduction & Characteristics***

- Introduction
- How Did We Get Here?
- The Costs of Aggression
- Is Aggression Always Bad?
- America, the Safe

### ***Chapter 2: Behaviors & Techniques***

- Learning to Be Aggressive
- Us Versus Them
- Aggressive Thoughts and Aggressive Actions
- Low Empathy, High Aggression
- Television as a Tutor: Aggression 101
- Alcohol and Aggression: Courage in a Bottle
- Does the Victim Help Cause Violence?
- Words That Hurt
- Hot Days, Hot Tempers
- Auto Aggression
- Jump! Jump! The Suicide-baiting Crowd

### ***Chapter 3: Acts & Forms of Violence***

- The Journey to Crime
- Other Acts of Aggression
- Vigilante Injustice
- Fear of Crime
- The Home & Family
- Sports Violence: Past, Present & Future
- Play Fighting & Real Fighting – Is there a Connection?
- The Ride to & Through School: Safe or Scary?
- Teaching Prosocial Behavior to Antisocial Youth
- A Short Course on Gangs

### ***Chapter 4: Preventing Violence***

- Raising Children to Resist Violence
- Tantrums
- Nonaggressive Children From Aggressive Environments
- Dating as a Dangerous Game
- Let's Both Calm Down, Then We'll Talk
- Take my Wife, Please
- Why Is Aggression so Hard to Change?
- Downsizing Deviance
- Complex Problems Demand Complex Solutions

- A Look to the Future

## 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.

## Examinations

At the end of each course 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 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**

Karen Lea holds a Ph.D. in education. Dr. Lea has fifteen years of experience teaching at the K-12 level and another fourteen years’ experience teaching education courses at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. Those fourteen years in higher education included six years as a dean at a university and seven additional years in charge of assessment and accreditation at a university. Currently, she is a lead program development owner at Western Governors University. Dr. Lea has

been professionally published over fifteen times and has served on over a dozen panels and boards, including serving on the NCATE (CAEP) Board of Examiners.

### **Contacting the Instructor**

You may contact the instructor by emailing [karen\\_lea@virtualeduc.com](mailto:karen_lea@virtualeduc.com) or by calling 509-891-7219 Monday through Friday. Calls made during office hours will be answered within 24 hours. Phone conferences will be limited to 10 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 that involve the operation of the course.

### **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 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.