ILAC 5232-220 Understanding Different Cultures

Course Description: There are two main purposes for this course. The first is to help students develop a better understanding of different cultures and the challenges and benefits of cultural diversity. The second is to provide students with the background knowledge, understandings, and techniques to work effectively with children from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Course Professor: Jiening Ruan, Ph. D.

Professor Contact Information:

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Professor Availability: The professor will be available via e-mail for student questions and communication before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, or by appointment.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials:


All readings are to be carefully read and studied BEFORE the first day of class. Each reading will need to be carefully reviewed again before the designated class session in which it is to be addressed.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of ILAC 5232, students will be able to:

1. understand the meanings and significance of “culture”;
2. describe how the lives of people of cultures other than their own are different and same as
3. articulate their own philosophy regarding multicultural education;
4. understand how students’ cultures affect student perceptions in the classroom;
5. identify teaching strategies that will be effective with a variety of students; and
6. design curriculum to honor diversity in the classroom.

Assignments, Grading, and Due Dates:

1. Journal Entries 20%
   · In a reflection notebook (to be turned in during class), jot down three or more concepts that interest you from each reading in your own words. Discuss how these concepts expand your understanding and inform your practice.

2. Lesson Plan Modifications for Cultural Diversity 20%
   · Use Grant and Sleeter’s Five Approaches and Internet resources (some credible websites will be recommended to you in class) to modify 5 existing lesson plans to better address cultural diversity in your teaching.
   · The model (Grant & Sleeter) includes: Before, After, and Why the changes? Since our focus is not on writing lesson plans but on modifying existing ones, you will do the following: write an After Plan with changes clearly indicated/highlighted and address your reasons for the changes. Justifying your changes is extremely important.

3. Lesson Demonstration 10%
   Teach the modified lessons to the class.

4. Cultural Plunge 20%
   The assignment is designed to promote a greater understanding of the feelings of groups and individuals who often experience (personal and/or social) alienation related to their minority status in our diverse society. It is also designed to clarify the importance of exposing oneself to a variety of social and cultural experiences and to reflect critically upon one’s personal reactions to those experiences. This assignment includes a field experience and a typewritten paper. Details will be discussed in class.

5. Class Participation 30%
   The success of this course is dependent upon prepared and spontaneous participation of class members in class discussions and activities. Grading will take into account the regularity of a student’s participation, the relevance of a student’s comments and questions, and the degree to which a student’s participation reflects a developing understanding of the objectives of this course.

Grading: This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D or F.
Companion Directed Reading: ILAC 5231-720

Textbooks and Instructional Materials:

Required:


Each student will select a book of interest from the titles listed below:


Course Goals: The CDR builds on the goals of ILAC 5232 as you further reflect on your cultural understanding of self and diverse student populations and your knowledge of supporting diverse learners.

Assignment: Carefully read the book by Kameenui, et al. and also your book of choice. Write a paper. The paper will contain three major sections. The first section should be your summary and critique of the two books. The second section should discuss your expanded understanding of the student population discussed in your book of choice. The third section should discuss how you plan to address and support the learning needs of this particular student population in classrooms using information obtained from both books.

Grading: This CDR is graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory (S/U). A grade of S is equivalent to B or better.