

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL I, 2005

EDUC5220.01: Contemporary Educational Issues. 3 credit hours. Site: WEBG

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Description This foundation course is an overview of important educational topics. It is designed to identify and analyze current educational issues through reading, writing, discussing and presenting ideas. Individuals explore historical perspectives, philosophical theories, and sociologic influences that are related to contemporary educational concerns. Furthermore, this course will enable participants to: (a) develop a familiarity with important thinkers who have influenced education philosophies and practices; (b) examine historical issues and relate them to current ones; (c) read and synthesize written and electronic materials on current issues; (d) conduct an in-depth investigation on an educational issue and present their findings in written and oral form; and (e) THINK!

Goals: Writing, discussing, analyzing, synthesizing, exploring, and presentation skills will be developed and honed through the investigation of a variety of contemporary education issues within an historical perspective.

Learning Outcomes (MOSTEP Standards and School of Education Goals and Dispositions are listed were applicable)

Class participants are expected to:

- 1) become familiar with, and demonstrate knowledge of, important thinkers who have influenced education philosophies and practices, MoStep 1.2.1.3, 1.2.2.2; SOE G 1.1 and 2.3
- 2) examine historical issues and relate them to current ones, MoStep 1.2.1.4, 1.2.4.1, 1.2.5.2, 1.2.7.1, 1.2.7.2; SOE G 2.1,2.2,2.3
- 3) read, analyze, and synthesize written electronic materials on current issues, MoStep 1.2.1.2, 1.2.1.3, 1.2.1.4, 1.2.2.2, 1.2.5.2; SOE G 1.1, 1.2,1.4
- 4) conduct an in-depth investigation of an educational issue and present findings and recommendations in written and oral form, MoStep 1.2.2.2, 1.2.5.2, 1.2.7.1; SOE G 3.1, 4.2, 4.4
- 5) participate individually in class discussions and activities, collaborate with classmates on assigned tasks, MoStep 1.2.1.2, 1.2.2.3, 1.2.7.1, 1.2.7.2, 1.2.9.1, 1.2.10.1 and SOE D1.1,1.2,1.3,1.4; 2.1, 2.4; 3.1, 3.3

Procedures for achieving the outcomes: The above outcomes will be met through class discussions, lectures, films, readings from handouts, newspapers, and web sites and one oral presentation, 2-3 short written projects and one in-depth term project.

Topical Overview, Activities, and Readings (Sessions 1-8 also correspond to Special Editions Readings and additional topics which can be found later in this syllabus. Subject to Change.)

1. Introduction and overview of course; perspectives on a current issue; resource exploration methods. (August 24, 2005)
2. Discussion of news articles, individual reports, responding to selected readings. ITEMS DUE: first draft of term project topic. (August 31, 2005)
3. Education in Colonial America and Revolutionary Era and “Data and Resources”. ITEMS DUE: term project topic; News Analysis #1 (September 7, 2005)
4. “Alternative Educational Delivery Systems” and The Common School. ITEMS DUE: News Analysis #2 (September 14, 2005)
5. American Higher Education, teacher education and “Performance, Achievement, Learning, Legal Issues and Special Education”. ITEMS DUE: Patterns/Trends in Newspapers and/or list of web sites or report of BOE meeting, (September 21, 2005)
6. The Progressive Movement and “Character, Morals, Multiculturalism and Desegregation”. ITEMS DUE: any unfinished projects. (September 28, 2005)
7. Education 1945-2000 and “Safety and Discipline, Crime and Punishment and Alternatives”. ITEMS DUE: **MAJOR TERM PROJECT** (October 5, 2005)
8. Discussion of term projects, course summary, evaluations and “Sexual Harassment, Purpose and Profession of Teaching.” (October 12, 2005)

Resources

Text Annual Editions: Education 05/06; Dushkin, McGraw-Hill

Readings will be assigned from daily newspapers, handouts, web sites and additional relevant materials throughout course.

Parts of four videos will be shown.

Assessment

Class participants will be evaluated on (a) attendance, participation in class discussions, group activities and other in-class assignments; (b) class presentation on a historical figure in education; (c) written activities regarding newspaper and/or web sites and/or a report from a BOE meeting; (d) SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF MAJOR TERM PROJECT

Specific assessment items include but are not limited to:

- 1) Reading and “discussion” of all materials and recommended readings.
Exploring a variety of web sites and an intensive use of the world wide web and e-mail.
- 2) Attendance at 7 out of 8 sessions in order to be eligible for a grade. If a second class must be missed, student would have the option of making up that session when the course is offered next or withdrawing.
- 3) Detailed oral presentation of an historical figure pertaining to educational issues.
- 4) Collection of news articles for a three-four week period and completion of 3 out 4 of the following projects:
 - a) one page single newspaper article issues paper
 - b) second one page single newspaper article issues paper
 - c) two page trend paper on collection of newspaper articles
 - d) surfing and listing twenty educational web sites that you find helpful.

or
- 4a) a) one page single newspaper article issue paper

and

- b) attend and report (one page) on Board of Education meeting of your choosing
- 5) Major course project that involves the development of an issue, review of literature, discussion and analysis, and recommendation for future study of that issue.
- 6) Class activities include:
- a) Large and small group discussions
 - b) Ongoing newspaper activity
 - c) Lecture/presentation on a variety of topics and issues
 - d) Reacting and responding to classmates' oral presentations
 - e) Viewing of portions of several videos
- 7) *Evaluation*: (basis of evaluation with explanation regarding the nature of the assignment And the percentage of the grade assigned to each category below)
- a) Class preparation, including assigned readings, participation in large and small group discussions and activities as both leader and active participant.
(30-40% of final grade)
 - b) Short Assignments that include written news analysis assignments, attendance at Board of Education meeting, and oral historical figure presentation.
(30-40% of final grade)
 - c) Major Project that researches and defends a position on an Educational Issue of the student's choosing.
(30-40% of final grade)
 - d) The range of percentages for each category is designed to credit a student's strength area and reduce penalties for areas that are not yet strengths. This allows for individual learning styles to be acknowledged.
 - e) There are no deductions for late assignments. Students are encouraged to take and "I", Incomplete, and turn in quality work at a later date rather than submit rushed and inferior work on time. This acknowledges that individuals learn at different rates whether as children or as adults.
- 8) *Grading Scale*: Grades in the M.A.T. program are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, I, and W; or NC, I, and W. Grades are determined by the following standards:
- | | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| A, A-: | superior graduate work |
| B+, B, B-: | satisfactory graduate work |
| C: | marginal graduate work |
| NC: | unsatisfactory graduate work |
| I: | incomplete |
| W: | withdrawn from course |

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Students at Webster University are expected to practice academic honesty and avoid plagiarism

Plagiarism is intentionally claiming that another person's work is his/her own or implying that another person's work is his/her own (through inadequate or inaccurate citations of reference material.)

Students:

- Should not copy whole portions of text from another source as a major component of papers or projects.
- Should identify the title, author, page number/webpage address, and publication date of works when directly quoting small portions of texts, articles, interviews, or websites.
- Should appropriately identify the source of information when paraphrasing (restating) ideas from texts, interviews, articles, or websites.
- Should follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association Style Guide when referencing all research sources.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty:

Depending on the nature and scope of any violation of the above, the student may have consequences ranging from redoing and resubmitting offending assignment to loss of grade and all credit and reporting such to University authorities. Instructor will make such determination.

For further information about the consequences of academic dishonesty please consult the Webster University Student Handbook.

ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMODATIONS POLICY:

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations contact the Director of the Academic Resource Center, Dr. Pat McLeese, at (314) 968-7495.

The following are specific reading assignments and the details of fulfilling the written and oral assignments for the course. They will be discussed in detailed and modified as needed during the eight weeks of the course.

ANNUAL EDITIONS, EDUCATION 05/06; MCGRAW HILL/DUSHKIN

Week 2 8/31/05

Overview

Pages: iv, 1, 29, 59, 101, 113, 143, 175, 199 and 213

#1 Public Schools: Public Will p3-5

#5 When I Was Young p11-12

#44 Mission and Vision in Education p219-221

- Week 3 9/7/05 Data and Resources
 #7 The 36th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools p17-27
 #8 No Child Left Behind: The Mathematics of Guaranteed Failure p31-35
 #21 Studying Education: Classroom Research and Cargo Cults p91-99
 #40 The Search for Highly Qualified Teachers p201-205
 #41 The Other Side of Highly Qualified Teachers p206-208
- Week 4 9/14/05 Alternative Educational Delivery Systems
 #10 Leadership That Sparks Learning p44-46
 #13 Reinventing America's Schools p55-57
 #18 The Power of Testing p78-80
 #19 Why Students think they Understand—When They Don't p81-85
 #20 The Homework Wars p86-90
- Week 5 9/21/05 Performance, Achievement, Learning and Special Needs
 #9 Test Today, Privatize Tomorrow: Using Accountability to 'Reform' Public Schools to Death p36-43
 #14 A Balanced School Accountability Model: An Alternative to High-Stakes Testing p61-66
 #15 Turning Accountability on Its head: Supporting Inspired Teaching In Today's Classrooms p67-68
 #16 Accountability with a Kicker: Observations on the Florida A+ Accountability Plan p69-75
- Week 6 9/28/05 Character, Morals, Multicultural, Desegregation
 #11 Meeting Challenges in Urban Schools p47-50
 #23 Values: The Implicit Curriculum p107-109
 #24 The Missing Virtue: Lessons from Dodge Ball & Aristotle p110-111
 #30 An Unfinished Journey: The Legacy of *Brown* and the Narrowing Of the Achievement Gap p145-155
 #31 Against the Tide: Desegregated High Schools and Their 1980 Graduates p156-163
 #32 Minding the Gap p184-166
- Week 7 10/5/05 Safety and Discipline, Crime and Punishment, and Alternatives
 #25 Heading Off Disruptive Behavior p115-125
 #26 How Disruptive Students Escalate Hostility and Disorder—and How Teachers Can Avoid It p136-131
 #27 Good Behavior Needs To Be Taught: How a Social Skills Curriculum Works p132-133
 #28 True Blue p134-135
 #29 A Profile of Bullying p136-141
- Week 8 10/12/05 Wrap-Up; Purpose and Profession of Teaching

#43 Building a Community of Hope p215-218

#45 Education in America: The Next 25 Years p222-227

NEWS ANALYSIS

The purpose of the News Analysis assignments is to increase awareness of current events and issues relevant to education.

I. On-Going Newspaper Assignment: Read and clip articles from one daily newspaper about issues pertaining to education. Record the name of paper, date and page number of article. Clip articles through week 4. Bring previous weeks' collection to class prepared to discuss.

II. Article Analysis: Select one or two (see below) major articles from your newspaper clippings to analyze in depth. Submit a one-page analysis on each article which addresses each point below. Due: week 2-4

- a. Identify the article by newspaper name, date, title, and page number.
- b. Describe the article's content.
- c. Describe how schools currently address the topic, especially schools not mentioned in the article (you may consult other sources).
- d. Speculate on how schools might need to change in order to fully respond to the issues raised by the article.
- e. Evaluate the national priority of this topic.
- f. What are the editor's or writer's biases in the article? Support your observations by citing word choices in the headline or article, style of reporting, placement of the article, etc.

III. Patterns of Current Issues: After three weeks of clipping articles, review the material you have collected and submit an analytical summary (two pages) addressing the points below. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO TURN IN ARTICLES**

- a. Name at least 2 but no more than 3 "major" issues relevant to education covered in the material you collected. Explain how you decided these issues were "major" by citing the frequency of coverage, length of articles, or by describing the depth and balance of the reporting.
- b. Describe what kind of image of education the newspaper is projecting by the coverage of these major issues.
- c. What recommendations for action can you suggest for an individual to create a greater impact on information the public receives about these issues? What recommendation can you suggest for a school or school district?

IV. List of Web Sites: Produce a list of 20 "education" web sites that you have explored and find valuable. Beside their www. address, give a very brief description of the content. Do not include more than 5 sites mentioned in class!

V. Attend And Report on Board of Education Meeting: Attend a meeting in a district of your choice and write a one page analysis of two issues discussed and your impressions of professionalism/understanding/communication/interaction among board members, staff and audience

DO THREE OUT OF FOUR FROM #'S II/III/IV **OR** DO ONE #II AND #V

GUIDELINES: HISTORICAL FIGURES PRESENTATIONS

The purpose of this assignment is to explore the biography and issues faced by historical figures in education. The assignment involves an oral presentation and a one page outline based on library and web research. The steps below will help in preparing the reports.

1. Select one historical figure from the list provided by the instructor during the first session of class.
2. Find and review material about your historical figure. Use any reference materials including biographies, original writings of the historical figure and histories of education.
3. Review the individual's life for information pertinent to educational issues dealt with by that person in his/her time period. Use the following questions as guidelines:
 - a. What are the important factors in this person's life?
 - b. What was the nature of the national debate on educational and other important issues of that time and what was the historical figures involvement?
 - c. Why was this person's work on the issues significant then and now?
4. Speculate on the following questions. (Note that these questions are inferential, and you may not find answers to them in your materials.)
 - a. What evidence of this historical figure's work do you see in today's education?
 - b. Identify one or more contemporary educational issue similar to issues faced by this historical figure. Speculate on how your historical figure would respond to these current issues.
 - c. In what ways are the characteristics of contemporary American education (or culture) similar to and different from the educational (or societal) context during the period of this historical figure?
5. Prepare the presentation. Be imaginative about the presentation format, but also be sure (a) the format effectively communicates your material, (b) it is interesting to the class, (c) you have a one

page outline with copies for each class member, and (d) that you keep within a 15-minute time limit.

Name of Historical Figure you selected: _____

Date of Presentation: _____

GUIDELINES FOR TERM PROJECT

The term project gives you the opportunity to explore an issue in education which interests you. The term project should take the form of a research paper, i.e., an in-depth analysis of a specific question or issue, using books, journal articles, web sites and other materials. Use the guidelines below for selecting a topic and organizing your report.

1. Select a topic Write it as a thesis statement that shows your position on the topic. Be specific in your topic selection so that the issue is not too vague, and yet, find a way to state your topic so it may apply to various situations. In other words, the topic must be broad enough to cover a variety of situations and be generalized, but narrow enough to be “do-able” in an eight week course. By the same token, if it is too broad, the data overload will doom you and if too narrow, there may not be sufficient data from which to draw your research. The topic may be a current, historical, or philosophical issue relevant to the field of education.
2. Develop a reading list on the topic. Include books, journal articles, and information from the world wide web. Various bibliographies and ERIC CD-ROM from the library will assist you in finding relevant materials. Use the content from the original articles not just the summaries or abstracts.
3. Follow the outline below. The paper should be a maximum of 13-15 pages. It should be typed (word-processed!), double spaced with a minimum of 12 point type face.

OUTLINE OF TERM PROJECT

- A. Semantic web (visual network) of the ideas/contents of project (1 page)
- B. Introduction (up to 1 page)
 1. Describe your topic/question.
 2. Rationale: Why is this topic personally compelling to you? Why is the topic important to the field of education?
 3. Nature of the controversy: Describe the debate regarding your topic and state the pros and cons.
- C. The Literature Review (about 5 pages)

Describe the viewpoints on your question from the literature you reviewed. Limit the review to points relevant to your topic. You should organize your literature review in some consistent fashion , e.g., themes, sources, authors, historical time periods, pro versus con, etc. The purpose is to have some logical structure to reporting the different sources you use. The sources in

your bibliography should be those that are cited or quoted during the literature review or are included in other sections of your paper.

D. Critique and discussion (4-7 pages, total)

1. Personal analysis and synthesis: Describe your personal view or position on the issue after doing this study. What aspects of the literature review helped to change or strengthen your views.

2. Link the historical issues and historical figures discussed in class with your topic where they “naturally” fit. This should be two to four references and only about one page of the discussion. “Don’t force it; if it is not clear, don’t do it!”

E. Recommendations and Conclusions (1-2 pages)

Based on your study, what do you see as the future of this topic and what “specific” recommendations do you make for yourself, other educators, educational systems, and other persons of influence?

F. Bibliography: List of sources and materials used. (1-2 pages)

G. Optional: Any appendices if necessary or appropriate that would include diagrams, charts, etc.

Note: The total paper should probably be between 10-15 pages without the web, bibliography or any appendices or indices. Much shorter and discussion and research may not be complete. Much longer and it may be too rambling and “shotgunish”.

Note II: Grammar, sentence structure, spelling, and accurate reference citations are very important. Be sure to proofread and seek help in editing.

FINAL PROJECTS

If the final major project is turned in by week 7 (October 5, 2005), the graded, annotated paper with grading rubric will be returned on week 8. If the paper is turned in on week 8 (October 12, 2005), it must be accompanied by a SASE.

Papers will not be available from the School of Education Office and will only be kept by the instructor for one calendar year from end of course.

OTHER NOTES

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
Regular attendance and participation are required

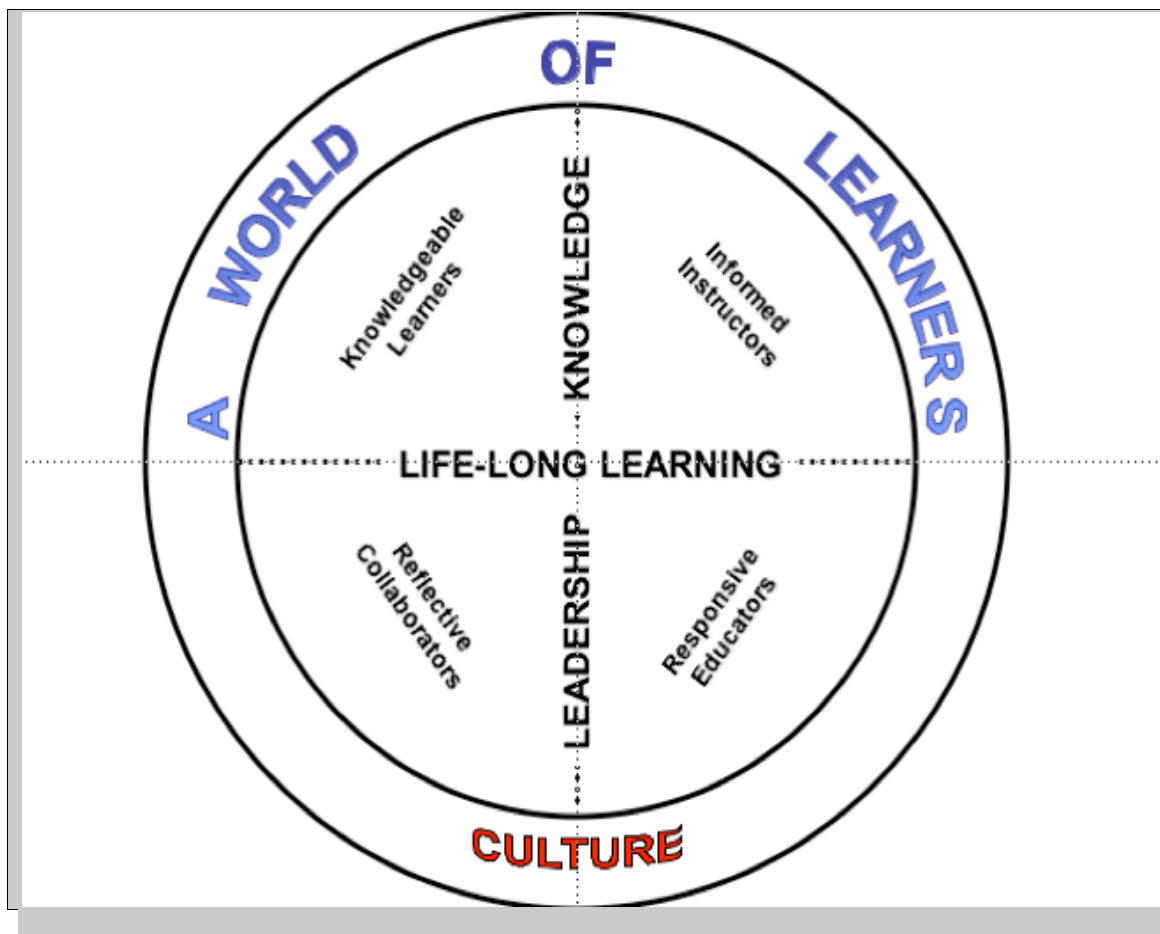
In the event of hazardous weather conditions, the following radio stations will announce school closing information for Webster University: WIL 92.3 FM, Y98 98.1 FM, KMOX 1120 AM, WRTH 1430 AM, KTRS 550 AM, AND TV Channels 2, 4, 5, and 30

**WEBSTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

Vision: " . . . We all must work to make this world worthy of its children." (Casals, 1970)

Mission: The School of Education at Webster University provides its students with the knowledge, experiences, and practical tools that help them guide both themselves and others toward lifelong learning. The School of Education is a community of educator-scholars who apply critical reflections and creative energies to enhance learning in schools and other educational settings. The faculty strives to support this community by modeling effective teaching practices based on sound theory and research. Personalized approaches create a challenging, yet supportive environment that permits the risk-taking necessary for learning and growth. The School of Education encourages its faculty and students to work actively toward this end, keeping in mind that action must be rooted in visionary, yet realistic, thinking. This thought and action process underscores the development of an inner-directed self-understanding, an outer-directed global perspective, and an appreciation of human diversity that arises from both.

Theme: Developing a world of learners through knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning.



The universal mandala (a circle with intersecting vertical and horizontal lines) graphically represents the conceptual framework of the School of Education. The outer circle provides the framework for a "world of learners" in cultural settings. The two axes represent the theme components of knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning. These lines are broken to emphasize the fluid relationship of the goals and integrated concepts. Each quadrant represents one of the school's four goals for its candidates: to develop knowledgeable learners, informed instructors, reflective collaborators, and responsive educators.

Goals

1. Education candidates will demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the learner, and knowledge of pedagogy based on inquiry and scholarship.

The knowledgeable learner:

- 1.1 knows content that supports conceptual understanding;
 - 1.2 applies tools of inquiry to construct meaningful learning experiences;
 - 1.3 identifies developmental factors in student learning; and
 - 1.4 understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.
2. Education candidates will incorporate multiple assessment and instructional strategies to support effective educational practices based on research and theory.

The informed instructor:

- 2.1 designs curriculum based on students' prior knowledge, learning styles, strengths, and needs;
 - 2.2 understands and uses a range of instructional strategies;
 - 2.3 uses a variety of communication modes, media, and technology to support student learning; and
 - 2.4 employs a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor learning and modify instruction.
3. Education candidates will reflect on the roles educators take as leaders of change through collaboration with colleagues, students, and families in schools and communities.

The reflective collaborator:

- 3.1 values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional;
 - 3.2 promotes communication and collaboration with colleagues, families, and community leaders;
 - 3.3 seeks relationships with families and students to support student learning; and
 - 3.4 initiates change that benefits students and their families.
4. Education candidates will demonstrate respect for diversity through responsive teaching and learning that values individual differences.

The responsive educator:

- 4.1 understands and responds appropriately to issues of diversity

- 4.2 acknowledges social and cultural contexts to create effective teaching and learning environments;
- 4.3 adapts instruction to the learner's knowledge, ability, and background experience; and
- 4.4 identifies resources for specialized services when needed.

Dispositions:

NCATE defines dispositions as "the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. " (Professional Standards, p. 53) There is significant value in focusing attention on qualities that make an effective teacher.

- 1. Understands and Respects Self
 - 1.1 Understands and respects that s (he) may be different from others
 - 1.2 Embraces an openness to change (adaptability, flexibility)
 - 1.3 Exhibits curiosity
 - 1.4 Engages in reflection
- 2. Understands and Respects Others
 - 2.1 Understands, respects, and responds appropriately to diversity in a variety of settings
 - 2.2 Exhibits empathy
 - 2.3 Commits to fairness and honesty
 - 2.4 Listens respectfully to other points of view
- 3. Understands and Respects Professional Communities
 - 3.1 Commits to professional behavior in university and school cultures
 - 3.2 Practices informed decision-making in university and school cultures
 - 3.3 Communicates and collaborates in university and school cultures
 - 3.4 Accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/ high expectations)
 - 3.5 Affects change with courage and confidence

