

AL883 Special Topics: Practicum in Blended and Online Learning

Syllabus V1.0
August 30, 2019

General Information

Scott Schopieray, Ph.D.
309 Linton Hall
schopie1@msu.edu

Class time and classroom: Online with face-to-face small group meetings to be scheduled

Office Hours: By Appointment

This course focuses on exploring and designing blended and online courses through an open, project based approach. The projects will vary by student; depending on your focus and which faculty you are working with. ***The overall goal of this semester is to understand the theory and practice of digital and hybrid pedagogies by way of designing, developing and assessing a blended or fully online course.*** Much of the class will consist of discussion, presentations and working individually and in small groups. We'll spend a lot of time discussing relevant issues in online learning, developing small and large pieces of blended/online courses, and honing technology, research, and teaching skills.

Content for the course will be provided on a course website and supplemented by our face-to-face small group meetings. The course will be divided into thirds, with the first third focused on the elements of course design/development, second third on research and theory, and the last third on assessment and evaluation. During the last third of the semester you will largely be working on your own projects.

About the Class

This class is about developing the skills, both technologically and pedagogically, to create sound online/blended courses. Your participation in all of the individual and group activities is vital to the success of this course. You'll need to be in charge of managing your work on the course(s) you are working on in order to meet development deadlines.

Because technology skills may vary among the group and members will have varying needs in terms of what you need to know, we'll often have time to work in the areas you need to develop skills. Accordingly, the instructor will advise and help guide students towards the learning they are trying to reach rather than assume the whole class needs a lesson on the same piece of technology on the same day. This is not to say we will not have whole class lectures from time-to-time, but that we will operate with the needs of the individual in mind. Your individual projects are largely the context for the learning that needs to happen.

Over the course of the semester we'll cover the following broad areas relating to blended/online learning:

1. Becoming an Online Teacher / Introduction to Blended and Online Learning
2. Current Events and Trends / Learning Theories
3. Basics of Online Course Development
4. Tools for Teaching Online
5. Media and Technology
6. Evaluating Your Courses
7. Researching and Evaluating Educational Technologies

The course is divided into three major sections which contain a total of three core Project Activities (see below).

Section 1 - Educational Theory and Teaching Practice

This section will focus on learning relevant educational theories and reading/evaluating educational research.

Section 2 - Designing and Constructing a Digital Course

This section will lead you through the components of constructing an online course. Our work will focus on discussion about these components and hands-on work to gain experience with them.

Section 3 - Conducting Educational Research and Assessing Digital Courses

This section will help you to learn how to assess your course (or other courses) for quality, accessibility and usability. You will also learn to conduct your own original action research projects.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course students will:

- Develop a basic understanding of learning theories and their application to curriculum development
- Understand the process of designing, developing and assessing an online course
- Build the structure for an online course, incorporating at least 1-2 thematic modules
- Demonstrate their ability to evaluate a blended or online course
- Know how to use a variety of tools and techniques to present course content in an online format
- Create a plan for conducting action research in a course

Readings

For most weeks in the beginning of the course, 1 or 2 longer required readings will be assigned along a few short required readings, and several optional readings for those who are interested. Since this course is about exploring your specific areas in the context of blended and online learning, it will also require reading and research on your own.

Tools

For this course we will use several digital tools to facilitate conversation, reading, writing and review. Tools will be introduced as we make use of them, but generally speaking we will use the following:

Course Website -- The course website is largely open to the public and is available at <http://al883.schopie1.msu.domains/>. It is here that information will be presented about the course and we also will make use of a more traditional discussion forum here from time to time.

[Microsoft Teams](#) -- This tool is useful for live chatting or a more asynchronous model of conversation. All students have been added to an MS Team for the course. You can use Teams in a browser or download the desktop app at <http://teams.microsoft.com/> or via the App Store/Marketplace for your mobile device

Eli Review -- Eli Review will be used in the course to facilitate peer review and feedback of some course projects. The link for Eli Review will be provided prior to using it in the course.

Assignments and grading

Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, may result in a zero grade in the course and removal from your program.

Grades in this course will be based upon several aspects of your work, each contributing to your overall grade. Each of these will be covered more extensively in class, but a brief summary of each follows:

(40%) Course Design Project
(25%) Individual Research Proposal/Project
(20%) Digital Portfolio (Weekly and Project Assignments)
(15%) Class Participation (regular online participation, in-class, and other participation)

Activities

Each week in the syllabus I have outlined the activities which will be required. Some are Weekly activities and others are longer-term Project activities.

Weekly Activities

These activities will be provided on the course website, and are designed to be shorter activities which will be stored in your electronic portfolio. In addition to completing the deliverable for the activity, each weekly activity should also include a 1 paragraph micro-reflection on your experience doing the work.

Project Activities

These are longer-term activities that are more involved and larger in nature. These activities form the core parts of the course. They will be turned in by providing a link to the deliverable on your Digital Portfolio.

There are three major project activities in the course; Course Design Project, Individual Research Proposal, and Digital Portfolio.

Descriptions

(40%) Course Design Project - A major portion of your grade is based upon your performance creating an online or blended course and an assessment of how well you progressed towards the course design project goals. You will, in collaboration with the instructor and your peers, determine these goals and then work toward accomplishing them across the semester.

Deliverables:

- Course project proposal turned in, reviewed, and revised if needed
- Present a draft version of your presentation in Early/Mid November, with peer review and revision
- Turn in a final screencast of your project during finals week

Presentations will vary in terms of content and your own goals. We will discuss content as a group during the semester.

(25%) Action Research Project/Proposal - Knowing how to evaluate the work you are doing in your class is an important part of understanding how and why you use certain pedagogies or technologies, and ensuring you are providing a quality learning experience for students. Conducting a research project is also a part of the certificate in college teaching that most of you are pursuing as a part of your graduate career. This project will help you design a proposal for action research that will assist you with accomplishing this milestone for the graduate teaching certificate.

Deliverable:

- Individually you will write an action research proposal to be used in a future semester

(20%) Digital Portfolio of Weekly and Project Assignments - Mindfully crafting your online presence and maintaining an electronic portfolio of your work are two important parts of being a contemporary scholar. An electronic teaching portfolio is also required as part of the Graduate Certificate in College Teaching. We will discuss this more in class, but through the semester you will collect artifacts and objects you create in the class and use them with your electronic portfolio.

Deliverables:

- Explore your path to intellectual leadership, identifying the elements needed for an online presence and working on some of the technical pieces.
- Collect items through the semester in a digital portfolio
- Create digital portfolio by the end of the semester which contains elements required for the graduate teaching certificate. An assessment rubric will be provided.

(15%) **Class participation** - Your participation online (online, Eli Review and other spaces), and your participation in class both count towards your grade. Because of the nature of this course you may participate more during some weeks than others, it is your overall participation across the semester that is important.

Deliverable: Attendance and active participation in the face-to-face and online components of the course.

Grading Scale

4.0 : 92 - 100%

3.5 : 87 - 91%

3.0 : 80 - 86%

2.5 : 75 - 79%

2.0 : 70 - 74%

1.5 : 65 - 69%

1.0 : 60 - 64%

0.0 : 00 - 59%

(†††) Attendance policy - It is expected that students will attend class regularly (both online work and any small group discussions). However, sometimes, real life interferes. As such, students can miss one course meeting with no grading penalty. Beyond one course absence, however, 5% will be deducted from your class participation grade for each missed class (without a very good excuse, preferably pre-arranged).

Finding Help

Please feel free to contact me if you need any help outside of the class hours. E-mail is often the best way to get in touch with me.

Ethics and Academic Integrity

The work you submit must be produced originally for this class. An additional expectation is that you will follow this basic ethical obligation: You should credit others' contributions to your work. You should not claim, as your own, work (or writing) that is not your own. To do so is considered plagiarism. It is perfectly appropriate for you to borrow graphics, to quote passages, and to use ideas from others. However, whenever you do that, follow appropriate conventions for citing and using your sources. Procedures for responding to cases of academic honesty and possible repercussions are outlined in Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide. They can also be found on the web at:

<http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>

Safe Learning Environment

Our class and our university aim to be safe learning environments. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national

origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

- [Bias Incident Reporting](#)
- [MSU's Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Prevention Program](#)
- [Listening Ear](#)
- [MSU's Sexual Assault Program](#)

Special Needs and Accommodations

To receive accommodation for any disability, students must first register with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (<http://rcpd.msu.edu/>). The RCPD will request appropriate documentation and make a determination regarding the nature of the accommodation to which a student is entitled. The RCPD will then give the student a “visa” that specifies the kind of accommodation that may be provided. It is then the responsibility of the student seeking accommodation to present the visa to his/her instructor.

That said, we all learn in different ways and process information differently. Please talk to me as soon as possible about your individual learning needs and the ways in which we can accommodate you. Even if you do not have a documented disability, remember that there are support services available to you at MSU such as the Writing Center (<http://writing.msu.edu>) and the Learning Resources Center (<http://lrc.msu.edu>).

Course Schedule

Our coursework is largely done online, with face-to-face meetings serving as a vehicle for presentations and discussion. Please note that the online modules for each topic will be due on the day we discuss them in class. This will be noted on the website as well.

Week	Topic	Things to Do
Fri 9/6-Thurs 9/13	<p>Introduction to Class / Digital Portfolio Workshop</p> <p>Introducing Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Assignment: Course Design Proposal (Due 9am September 20 on your portfolio site) ● Project Assignment: Individual Research Proposal - Due End of Finals Week ● Project Assignment: Course Design Project - Due end of Finals Week ● Project Assignment: Digital Portfolio - Due end of Finals Week 	<p>Conversation Getting to know each other and the class materials. Why are you in this course? What do you wish to get out of it?</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Assignment 1: Work on planning your digital portfolio ● Online Intro to Digital Portfolios Workshop ● Get Course Design Portfolio up and running (Due September 20 with weekly assignment #2 in it)
Educational Theory and Teaching Practice		
Fri 9/13-Thurs 9/19	<p>Unit 1 - Educational Theory</p>	<p>Conversation Learning theories, what they are and how they apply to our teaching. Connections with personal pedagogical beliefs/commitments. How do our beliefs about teaching combine with relevant learning theory to create meaningful learning for students?</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Assignment 2 ● Continue to read through

		<p>information on syllabus/website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work on Digital Portfolio
Fri 9/20-Thurs 9/26	<p>Unit 2 - Educational Research: Overview and Methods/Designing a Project</p> <p><i>Weekly Assignment 3: Find a research article relevant to your interests or a problem area and provide an outline and critique</i></p>	<p>Conversation Current trends in teaching with digital technologies in your disciplines. Overview of Educational Research, finding studies that support your work. How can we use existing educational research to support our work, and how do we begin to craft our ideas about how to do educational research ourselves.</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Assignment 3 Course Reading/Viewing Conversation
Designing and Constructing a Digital Course		
Fri 9/27-Thurs 10/3	<p>Unit 3 - Introduction to Building an Online or Hybrid Course</p>	<p>Conversation What models are you thinking of using for your course? How are they supported by your beliefs about learning? How do we construct timelines and organizational models for course development?</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Assignment 4 Course Reading/Viewing Conversation
Fri 10/4-Thurs 10/10	<p>Unit 4 - Learning Environments and Tools for Teaching Online</p> <p><i>Weekly Assignment: Elements of an Engaging Learning Space</i></p>	<p>Conversation What tools and techniques for teaching to you think you will use in your course? Where will you teach your course?</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Assignment 5 Course Reading/Viewing Conversation
Fri 10/11-Thurs 10/17	<p>Unit 5 - Communication/Discussion Online</p>	<p>Conversation How do we design discussion activities, what tools are best and for what kind of discussion?</p>

	<i>Weekly Assignment: Design a Discussion Activity</i>	<p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Assignment 6 • Course Reading/Viewing • Conversation
Fri 10/18-Thurs 10/24	<p>Unit 6 - Educational Media: Video, Audio and Imagery</p> <p><i>Weekly Assignment: Screencasting</i></p>	<p>Conversation</p> <p>What are some of the tools for creating/hosting media? How do we integrate multiple modes of digital media into learning and what do we need to consider when doing so?</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Assignment 7 • Course Reading/Viewing • Conversation
Fri 10/25-Thurs 10/31	<p>Unit 7 - Copyright, eTexts and OER</p> <p><i>Weekly Assignment: Copyright Case Analysis</i></p>	<p>Conversation</p> <p>Copyright as it applies to online learning, using eTexts and considering Open Educational Resources</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Assignment 8 • Course Reading/Viewing • Conversation • Draft of Mentored Research Proposal due 11/1
<p>Conducting Educational Research, Building, and Assessing Digital Courses</p>		
Fri 11/1-Thurs 11/7	<p>Unit 8 - Web Accessibility and Digital Learning</p> <p><i>Weekly Assignment: Conduct an Accessibility Review of your Course</i></p>	<p>Conversation</p> <p>Creating/finding accessible content and working with Universal Design for Learning principles. Current and emerging trends in university accessibility work.</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Assignment 9 • Course Reading/Viewing • Conversation • Peer Review of Mentored Research Proposal

<p>Fri 11/8-Thurs 11/14</p>	<p>Unit 9 - Evaluating Your Online Courses for User Experience</p> <p><i>Weekly Assignment: Conduct a UX assessment of One Component of Your Course</i></p>	<p>Conversation Thinking about how students interact with course content, methods for testing and evaluation of user experience.</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Assignment 10 ● Course Reading/Viewing ● Conversation
<p>Fri 11/15-Thurs 11/21</p>	<p>Draft Presentation Week</p>	<p>No Conversation this week, each student creates a 5 minute screencast of where they are at with their course</p>
<p>Fri 11/22-Thurs 11/28</p>	<p><i>Thanksgiving Week - Continue working on your course projects</i></p>	
<p>Fri 11/29-Thurs 12/5</p>	<p>Unit 10 - Evaluating Your Online Courses for Course Quality</p>	<p>Conversation Discussing course quality tools for evaluation and creation. How can we make use of course quality rubrics to guide our course creation and to improve courses over time?</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Assignment 11 ● Course Reading/Viewing ● Conversation
<p>Fri 12/6-Fri 12/13</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;"> <p>FINALS WEEK</p> </div>	<p>All projects due by Friday 12/13</p>