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
Instructor:        Dr. Pamela Bernards, Ed.D.
Publisher:         Virtual Education Software, inc. 2005, Revised 2010

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, or gender differences.

Course Objectives:
- Demonstrate knowledge of how students’ learning is influenced by individual experiences, language, culture, and gender.
- Use information about students’ families, culture, and communities as a basis for connecting instruction to students’ experiences.
- Use cultural diversity and individual student experiences to enrich instruction.
- Use all available resources to learn cultural norms and differences to promote a culturally safe classroom environment.
- Develop rules and routines that are sensitive to cultural issues.

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 that are 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 following authors.

- James Banks
- Linda Darling-Hammond
- Lisa Delpit
- G. Gay
- Sonia Nieto
- Jennifer E. Obidah and Karen Manheim Teel
- Ruby K. Payne

Student Expectations
As a student you will be expected to:
- Complete all four information chapters covering Teaching Diversity: Influences and Issues in the Classroom, showing a competent understanding of the material presented.
- Complete all chapter examinations, showing a competent understanding of the material presented.
- Complete a review of any chapter on which your examination score was below 70%.
- Retake any examination, after completing an information review, to increase that examination score to a minimum of 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 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 community in which 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 order to teach so that all students succeed in their classrooms.
Chapter 3: Gender Differences & Gang Influence – 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 order 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 in order 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. Your final grade for the course will be determined by calculating an average score of all exams. This score will be printed on your final certificate. 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.

Instructor Description
Pamela Bernards has 30 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 founder of a pre-school program for infants to 4-year-olds. When she was a principal, her school was named a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. More recently, the school in which she serves as curriculum coordinator was named a 2010 Blue Ribbon School. 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 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 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 and also the Help section of your course.

If you need personal assistance then email 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 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.

Bibliography


http://www.virtualeduc.com/html_syllabus/TDY/TDY_UP3_syllabus.htm


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.

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