

McMaster University
EDUCATN 600/640: Self-Directed Teaching Experience
Course Syllabus: Fall 2023

Instructor:

Bre-Anna Owusu (kingb10@mcmaster.ca)

Course Format

Virtual and Online Classroom

- **Class Meeting 1:** Tuesday, September 12, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
- **Class Meeting 2:** Tuesday, October 24, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
- **Class Meeting 3:** Tuesday, December 5, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Course Description

This zero-unit graduate level course involves both virtual and online components. Educators select and complete six asynchronous workshops and produce a series of reflections based on their learning. The workshops are focused on foundational knowledge in teaching and learning in higher education.

Completion of EDUCATN 640 and one of EDUCATN 740, 750/751, 760, or 770 will result in students earning the Teaching and Learning Theory & Inquiry Certificate of Completion.

Prerequisite: N/A

Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Critically reflect on key foundational topics of relevance to your teaching philosophy, experience, and practice within your discipline and post-secondary education.
- Write reflection pieces for academic or professional contexts.

Required Course Materials

All required materials will be posted to Avenue to Learn.

Format of the Course

The class will meet three times as a full group. Between these meetings, you will complete six of the workshops offered as part of the course. All workshops will be offered in an online format.

Communication

Avenue to Learn will be used as the main communication platform for this course.

1. [Set notifications](#) to forward to email if you do not check Avenue often.
2. Feedback will be provided in Assignments.

3. Your progress can be tracked in Grades.
4. General questions can be posted to Discussions.
5. For messages not pertaining to the course context, please email the instructor.

Assessments

This course will be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis, based on the following areas. To pass, you must satisfactorily do the following:

1. Complete six workshops of your choice from workshops being offered as part of the course (found under Content > Online Workshops)
2. Complete a Post-workshop Reflection for each workshop you finish.
 - Go to Content > Reflections Resources. Here you will find a document titled “Post-Workshop Reflection Template.” Use this template to complete your reflections by responding to the provided prompts. You should complete a post-workshop reflection (350-500 words) within one week of completing a workshop and submit the reflection to the corresponding submission folder on Avenue to Learn (e.g., submit your first reflection to the “Post-Workshop Reflection 1” folder).
3. Write an end-of-course reflective analysis about your overall learning in this course.
 - Go to Content > Reflections Resources. Here you will find a document titled “End of Course Reflective Analysis Guidelines”. You can use this template to complete your final reflective analysis (3-4 double-spaced pages), which should be submitted within one week of the final synchronous class. This analysis should be informed by personal reflection and a critical review of all six of your Post-Workshop Reflections.

Activity Schedule

The provided due dates are intended to give you a guideline as to when certain activities should be completed (e.g., you should submit your first three reflections **before** the second class). There is flexibility should you need to submit your reflection on a different day of the week or use one of the “catch-up” weeks. Please refer to the course policy on “Reflection Submission” for further information about when your assignments should be submitted.

Date	Activity
September 12	Class Meeting 1
September 19	Due: Post-Workshop Reflection 1
September 26	
October 3	Due: Post-Workshop Reflection 2

October 10	Fall Break
October 17	Due: Post-Workshop Reflection 3
October 24	Class Meeting 2
October 31	Due: Post-Workshop Reflection 4
November 7	
November 14	Due: Post-Workshop Reflection 5
November 21	
November 28	Due: Post-Workshop Reflection 6
December 5	Class Meeting 3
December 12	Due: End-of-course reflective analysis

Workshop Descriptions

You must complete **SIX** of the following workshops that are available in Avenue. We strongly recommend completing “Crafting a Teaching Philosophy Statement” as your first workshop.

Topic	Description	Category
Crafting a Teaching Philosophy Statement	This online workshop will describe the four key components of a teaching philosophy statement: 1) teaching beliefs - what you think about teaching and learning; 2) teaching strategies - what you do when you teach; 3) teaching impact - impact on yourself, your learners, and your colleagues; and 4) future teaching goals - thinking about how you will improve your teaching.	Professional Development
Accessible Teaching Techniques	This workshop introduces teaching techniques that make learning more accessible for all students, including those with disabilities. You will discuss the distinctions between accessibility and accommodation, identify common instructional and environmental barriers to learning, and develop strategies that enhance accessibility within your own teaching and learning contexts.	Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA)

Adult Learning Theories	This workshop will provide an overview of key learning perspectives, as well as common assumptions about adult learners. You will reflect upon and discuss these perspectives and assumptions and explore how you can bridge theory and practice.	Instructional Skills
Blended Learning: Determining the Right Mix	In this workshop you will use the Course Delivery Decision Model Revised (CDDM-R) to plan the various components of your course such as communication and participation modalities to help navigate the choices involved with teaching in a blended learning context.	Instructional Skills
Creating Interactive Content Using H5P	This workshop covers the basics of using H5P to create interactive online content. You will review the different types of content available, and how to evaluate which types of content are most applicable to your learning context.	Educational Technologies
Effective Teaching Strategies for Blended Learning	This workshop is a primer on blended learning, offering an overview of different blended learning formats and how to effectively and efficiently adapt an existing or design a new course to leverage elements of blended course design.	Instructional Skills
Engaging Students in Active Learning	This workshop will shed light on several key questions related to active learning. What is it? Why is it important? What are some active learning strategies that one may use in the classroom? What things should one consider when selecting a strategy? These questions will be answered, as will many more.	Instructional Skills
Finding, Creating, and Using Open Educational Resources	This workshop introduces how you might consider leveraging the power of Open Educational Resources (OER) in your teaching, from simply using what others have created and released with an open license, to adapting to create a more customized version for your teaching purpose or creating something new and contributing it to the commons.	Educational Technologies
Introduction to Avenue to Learn	In this workshop you will learn about the basic functionality of Avenue to Learn, McMaster's primary learning management system, including how to add	Educational Technologies

	Announcements, Content, Discussion areas, and Assignment Submission folders.	
Marking Efficiently and Effectively	In this workshop, you will learn tips to mark efficiently, objectively, consistently, and constructively. We will consider many different types of assessments, including lab reports, problem sets, and essays.	Instructional Skills
Media Creation Skills: Video Made Easy	This workshop starts with a series of considerations that are important to consider before you start filming, and then guides you through how to set up for, record and edit good quality video.	Educational Technologies
PowerPoint Design for Learning	This workshop explores how poor slide design can affect students' learning experience and how you can use the elements of good slide design to your advantage as an instructor.	Instructional Skills
Research in Teaching and Learning I	This workshop introduces the 'basics' of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) with a strong emphasis on framing teaching problems as research questions. Through the discussion of examples, you will discover how to narrow questions into researchable problems.	Instructional Skills
Supervising and Mentoring Students as a Graduate Student	This workshop introduces the characteristics of a mentoring relationship and identifies benefits of mentorship for mentors and mentees. You will learn different opportunities to act as a mentor, identify the different phases of a mentorship relationship, and explain how to cultivate an effective mentoring relationship.	Professional Development
Teaching Contentious Topics	This workshop offers strategies for teaching topics that may elicit strong responses or contentious opinions from students. You will consider instructional techniques for encouraging students to explore unexamined assumptions, for using the tools of our disciplines to engage with each other as intellectual peers, and for creating classroom spaces that balance inquiry and the pursuit of knowledge with the institutional and pedagogical responsibility to provide a secure learning environment.	Instructional Skills

Course Policy Statements

Reflection Submission

One of the primary goals of this course is to develop your skills of reflection, which is facilitated by instructor feedback. To achieve this, it's important that reflections are submitted throughout the course, with time between reflection submissions to receive and learn from instructor feedback. If you have not submitted any reflections two months into the term, you may be advised to drop the course and take it at a later date to ensure you get the most out of your learning experience. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your course instructor to discuss other possible options.

Institutional Policy Statements

We will be abiding by McMaster's policy statements in matters of online course decorum, academic integrity, accommodations, use of online elements, and extreme circumstances.

Online Course Decorum

McMaster is committed to an inclusive and respectful community. These principles and expectations extend to online activities including electronic chat groups, video calls and other learning platforms. If you are concerned about your virtual classroom experiences, the [Equity and Inclusion Office \(EIO\)](#) is available to advise and assist students who may be experiencing any equity, accessibility, inclusion, harassment, discrimination or sexual violence concerns. You can reach the EIO at equity@mcmaster.ca. Thank you for joining us in ensuring that our McMaster online communities are spaces where no one feels excluded and everyone is able to enjoy learning together.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

[Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#)

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. [Student Accessibility Services](#) can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140, ext. 2865 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

[Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances](#)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

[Use of Online Elements \(i.e., Avenue to Learn\)](#)

In this course, Avenue to Learn will be used. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If students have any questions or concerns about such disclosure they should discuss them with the course instructor (by the end of Week 2).

[Extreme Circumstances](#)

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn, and/or McMaster email.