Independent Study Online Course Syllabus

Course Number: EDUC 911
Course Title: The Homework Debate (Rethinking It – Again?!)  
X Online □ Distance Learning

Instructor: Bonnie E. Walker, MSEd
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Units: 3
Grade Level: K-12 Educators and Administrators

Course Description
Let’s be pragmatic, you either love homework or hate homework. However, it is inevitable that homework is and always will be a part of our educational landscape. Whether you align yourself closer to the no-homework camp or to the pro-homework camp, the debate will continue to rage on for decades. It is the cause of more friction between administrators, teachers, and families than any other aspect of education. Research shows that homework controversies follow a cyclic process with outcries for more homework or less homework. This course will examine the role homework has played in the American culture of schooling and offer tools to end the battle and turn homework into an opportunity for cooperation in learning. Participants will analyze and discuss current research findings, best practices that support diverse needs, and contemporary policy guidelines. Participants will also learn variations in homework that can influence academic achievement and how the influences of parents affect the homework process. In addition, participants will learn to allot appropriate assignments for different grade levels, improve homework completion, implement homework strategies and support programs, and deemphasize the grading of homework. Finally, participants will draw conclusions from their research and develop a comprehensive district/school homework policy thus becoming an agent of change in their own respective educational realm.

The format, materials, and activities in this course relate to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) core propositions (http://www.nbpts.org/) as well as the Common Core Standards (http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards). These national standards will undergird the format of the course which will rely heavily on online discussions, reflective journal responses, and the culminating project. The activities will require the participant to make connections between the course work and these standards and the standards of your state/district.

Course Dates
Self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to one year to complete assignments.

You have up to one year from the date of registration, and no less than three weeks (one week per credit), to complete the course.

To register for courses go to http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd and log in
Moodle:
This course will be delivered totally online. Moodle is a learning management system that provides students access to online resources, documents, graded assignments, quizzes, discussion forums, etc. with an easy to learn and use interface. To learn more about Moodle go to: (http://docs.moodle.org/en/Student_tutorials). There are some student tutorials on the Center for Online Learning website at Fresno Pacific University – http://col.fresno.edu/student.

Moodle Site Login and passwords – (or other online course access information)
Students will need to have internet access to log onto http://ce-connect.fresno.edu. The username and password numbers for Moodle access will be sent to you by the university using the email address you submitted at the time of registration. The instructor will then contact you with a welcome letter and login instructions. If you need help with the username and password recovery please contact the Center for Professional Development at (800)372-5505, or (559)453-2000 during regular office hours - Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Getting Help with Moodle:
If you need help with Moodle, please contact the Center for Online Learning (COL), by telephone 1-559-453-3460. Help by phone is available Mon-Thurs 8:00 am to 8:00pm and on Fridays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, or by filling out a “Request Services” form at http://col.fresno.edu/contact/request-services. Please identify that you are with the Continuing Education/Independent Studies department.

Please remember that the instructor is not able to offer technical support. In the event that you need technical support, please contact your Internet Service Provider.

Course Materials (Not included in course fees)

Course Requirements
In this course, you will explore current educational research on homework and the role of a teacher as an action researcher and agent of school change. The phases of an action research process loosely form the basis of the assignments. Thus, you will be collecting research and artifacts as you progress through each module and then combine everything to produce the main course project = The Action Research and PowerPoint Presentation. This will give you a brief introduction to the powerful professional development tool that may whet your appetite and hopefully urge you to study the process more thoroughly. Assignments include:

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Date of Revision 1/7/16

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- Reading assigned chapters
- Colleague and/or Online discussions
- Reflective journals and/or summaries related to the topics of discussion
- Make-A-Plan and Create-A-Lesson Plan
- Final Project: An Action Research Project complete with a Power Point Presentation

**National Standards**
This course addresses the NBPTS core propositions.
- Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning
- Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students.
- Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning.
- Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.
- Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.

**Learning Objectives / Outcomes**
Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

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<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>NBPTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Measure your past knowledge and experiences of homework and discover its impact on your definition and beliefs that form your philosophy of homework today.</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
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<td>b. Identify the role homework has played in the culture of schooling over the years and effects of homework on student learning.</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
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<td>c. Clarify the connection between teacher-student relationships and parent-teacher relationships in correlation with homework and its process.</td>
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<td>d. Identify which teacher behaviors and attitudes reinforce good homework practices.</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>e. Analyze learning styles and teaching styles and how they affect homework management, and identify areas for change to improve homework completion.</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Explain the interconnectedness of curriculum, instruction, assessment, student achievement, and homework management</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
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<td>g. Use the reflective journals to clearly and concisely describe behaviors, demonstrated skills, and instructional practices used to introduce or reinforce learning.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Understand the interrelationship between different components of the inquiry project, specifically, topic/concern/problem, literature review, method, data collection, analysis, implementation, results, implications, and significance.</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
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<td>i. Explore both qualitative and quantitative research methods and be able to select the appropriate method to resolve a research problem.</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
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<td>j. Integrate facets of newly acquired knowledge in teaching and learning, and clearly align these with professional standards/core propositions.</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>k. Be an agent of change in his/her school, district, and state.</td>
<td>5</td>
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Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Further explanations of assignments and expectations are given in the course section of the course manual. Students have one full year to finish the course, but should not complete work in less than three weeks from registration. The course project will be an accumulation of research and artifacts collected from assignments completed throughout each module. Artifacts will then be combined to produce an Action Research Project with a corresponding PowerPoint Presentation.

Module 1 • Action Research
2. Action Research Project: Thinking about a specific concern you have about homework.

Module 2 • Foundations: Attitudes

Module 3 • Foundations: Your Attitudes
5. Discussion Forum: The pros and cons of homework.

Module 4 • The History of Homework
7. Discussion Forum: Tenets about learning that directly affects the practices of homework.

Module 5 • The Homework Assignment
9. Discussion Forum: Responses of teachers when homework assignments are brought back to school.

Module 6 • Homework in Context
10. Reflective Journal Entry: Scenarios of the learning disabled/socio-economic disadvantaged students
11. Discussion Forum: How the family and/or community fit into the homework process.

Module 7 • Effective Homework Practices
12. Lesson Plan: An effective homework assignment.
13. Discussion Forum: Homework completion strategies and support programs.

Module 8 • The Comprehensive Homework Policy

Module 9 • The Reflective Practitioner
16. Reflective Journal Entry: Other districts/school policies.
17. Discussion Forum: The evolving professional and what it means to be a reflective practitioner.
Module 10 • Homework Tips for Parents, Teachers, and Students
20. Technology Component: An online Homework Resource

Module 11 • Synthesizing the Modules
21. The Final Project -- Action Research: Assembling all artifacts, research, and findings into a PowerPoint Presentation for colleague critique/sharing.

Special Circumstances:
• If you are currently student teaching or observing in a classroom, ask the teacher with whom you are working, and, if possible, other teachers in the building, to share the methods they have found most effective.

Evidence of Learning
• Course instructor observed evidence of understanding of course objectives as demonstrated through students’ online discussion posts. (Assignments #2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21).
• Course instructor observed evidence of understanding of course objectives as demonstrated through students’ reflective writing assignments. (Assignments #1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 16, 18, 21).
• Course instructor observed evidence of understanding of course objectives as demonstrated through students’ presentation of creating plans/survey (may include inquiry project artifacts). (Assignments #12, 15)
• Student developed a project consistent with the scholarship normally expected of a graduate level student. The action research project was written in a format consistent with the accepted APA writing format and style. (Assignment #21).
• Student exhibited technological integration via the internet web search and the Action Research Project’s power point presentation. (Assignments #20, 21).
• Student included the use of critical thinking, qualitative and quantitative research, and reflective skills and made connections to their state content and/or professional teaching standards as evident through their lesson plans and Action Research Project. (Assignments #12, 15, 20, 21).

Grading Policies and Rubrics
Students who take the course for credit/no credit must earn an 80% or above to earn credit.
Students who enroll in the course for a letter grade must achieve a grade of “A” or “B”.
Coursework that earns below a “B” or below an 80% will not receive credit.

Instructor/Student Contact
Instructor-student contact is at the very heart of all successful college experiences. Just as in the traditional class, where the instructor is present at each class meeting and interacts via lectures, activities and discussions; the online student will receive the benefit of the instructor’s ‘presence’ in the distance learning environment as well. However, the faculty role in the discussion forum will be that of an observer and facilitator because ultimately the purpose of the discussion forum
is for course learners to engage with each other and glean additional insights apart and beyond that of the instructor’s.

**Final Course Grade and Transcripts**
When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to logon to the Center for Professional Development website (http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd) to “Submit Grade Form”. Once the instructor fills out the grade form online, students may log back in to request their Grade Report as well as order transcripts online. Please allow at least two weeks for the final grade to be posted. For more information see the Independent Studies Policies and Procedures that were sent to you when you received your course materials, or in your online course. They are available, also at http://ce.fresno.edu/cpd - under General Information > CPD Policies.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**
All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled according to the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue. URL http://www.fresno.edu.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

| CE 1 | Demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others, and present information applicable to targeted use. |
| CE 2 | Demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts. |
| CE 3 | Reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and professional improvement. |
| CE 4 | Apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to the professional setting. |
| CE 5 | Reflect on values that inspire high standards of professional and ethical behavior as they pursue excellence in applying new learning to their chosen field. |
| CE 6 | Identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, organize that information, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information. |

**FRESNO PACIFIC UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

| Student Learning Outcomes Oral Communication: | Students will exhibit clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically evaluate content and delivery components. |
| Written Communication: | Students will demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others. |
| Content Knowledge: | Students will demonstrate comprehension of content-specific |
knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.

| Reflection: Students will reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement. |
| Critical Thinking: Students will apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to new situations. |
| Moral Reasoning: Students will identify and apply moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and articulate the norms and principles underlying a Christian world-view. |
| Service: Students will demonstrate service and reconciliation as a way of leadership. |
| Cultural and Global Perspective: Students will identify personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to evaluate complex systems. |
| Quantitative Reasoning: Students will accurately compute calculations and symbolic operations and explain their use in a field of study. |
| Information Literacy: Students will identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, explain how that information is organized, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information. |