

**University of Arkansas - Fort Smith**  
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## **Graduate Studies General Syllabus**

### **MECI 6103 Capstone/Thesis Project in Curriculum and Instruction**

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory hours: 0

Prerequisites: 18 hours of graduate work completed, MED 5003 Action Research in Education, and consent of Department Head.

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

#### **I. Graduate Course Information**

##### **A. Catalog Description**

Completion of a major Capstone project or Master's thesis that merits academic scholarship. An oral defense of the thesis or capstone project is required.

##### **B. Additional Information**

This course seeks to facilitate reflective inquiry by using the development and implementation of action research while using methods of research in the field of education. The candidate will demonstrate mastery of a particular topic related to education. The final project should demonstrate the candidate's ability to analyze and interpret data and present results to an audience.

- Thesis: a substantial scholarly research project submitted as a final project for the Master of Education degree.
- Capstone Project: a culminating, multifaceted assignment that is an experiential project requiring candidates to apply their learning and then present the results to an audience.

A member of the graduate education faculty will guide students through the thesis or capstone project.

##### **A. Subject Matter**

Upon completion of this graduate course, the student will be able to:

1. Apply knowledge from the courses taken in the program to complete a research project relevant to the chosen area of emphasis.
2. Prepare the University of Arkansas Fort Smith IRB application as needed.
3. Develop a proposal of the research project, including purpose of the study.
4. Analyze existing research and prepare a literature review for inclusion in the final project.

5. Apply ethical procedures in the conduct of the chosen research.
6. Interpret data collected and draw conclusions.
7. Compose a formal written report of research to include an introduction section, purpose of study, literature review, methodology, findings and interpretations, conclusions and implications.
8. Defend a formal presentation of the research project with committee and peers, engaging in professional dialogue.

#### **B. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)**

The M.Ed. program bases Program Learning Outcomes on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The NBPTS establishes and upholds rigorous expectations for what expert teachers should know and do. This graduate course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

**Commitment:** Teachers believe that all students can learn and meet high expectations. Teachers are committed to all learners and are passionate about teaching. They develop relationships with students in a variety of educational settings. Teachers create learning experiences that differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students. They understand their subjects and how to teach those subjects to students.

**Responsibility:** Teachers facilitate and supervise student learning. Teachers embrace a variety of methods to increase student success. They establish social norms within a variety of dynamic grouping options. They motivate and engage students while assessing student performance.

**Systematic Thinking:** Teachers critique their practices and learn from experience. Teachers evaluate their practices and expand their learning based on best practices, current research, evolving technologies, and student data.

**Leadership:** Teachers demonstrate leadership that fosters excellence, effectiveness, and collaboration with colleagues, families, and the community. Teachers approach their work with a team mentality. They collaborate with all stakeholders sharing vital information and planning a course of action that will improve the effectiveness of the school.

### **III. Major Graduate Course Topics**

- A. Graduate Studies Master in Education's Capstone project/thesis guidelines
- B. Effective professional writing
- C. Effective presentation skills
- D. Evaluation, synthesis, and analysis of research data

- E. Development of research proposal or capstone project
- F. Implementation of research process