Exploring Education Careers I and II

This is a two semester course sequence which serves as a general introduction to careers in education in Alaska and the nation. Topics covered include motivations, survey of educational careers and professional organizations, certification requirements, social expectations, diversity, policies governing education at the local, state and federal levels, issues relating to rural and urban schooling, and an introduction to school curricula. Students engage in discussions on views of teachers and learning via readings/resources, instructor prompts and field observations, think critically, and make presentations about specific educational issues.

Each student completes 12 observation hours across a range of age and grade levels and field observation reports. The culmination of this two semester course sequence is a career portfolio of student work samples.

Exploring Education Careers I (one semester)

INTRODUCTION AND PERSONAL LEARNING STYLES

GOAL #1: Students understand their own learning styles and how these may affect the teaching and learning process

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Reflect on their own history as learners
1.2: Complete an inventory of learning styles and relate it to their future teaching performance

ASSESSMENT: Learning Style inventory, written reflections on inventory, and additional discretionary assessments

STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES AS POTENTIAL EDUCATORS

GOAL #2: Students develop an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in relation to careers in education.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Identify personal motivation for pursuing a career in education
2.2 Critically examine personal values and beliefs regarding the professional mandate to ensure the learning of all students
2.3 Analyze the Alaska Teacher Code of Ethics in relation to personal beliefs
2.4 Evaluate personal academic skills in relation to teaching career (complete Accuplacer, practice Praxis test; discuss results with instructor)

ASSESSMENT: Oral presentation/Written personal reflection, scored with common rubric, and additional discretionary assessments

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

GOAL #3: Students examine developmental issues relating to teaching and learning.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Identify major trends and milestones in human development
3.2 Research the age related characteristics of students (Preschool – Grade 12) at four different levels of schooling
3.3 Discuss developmentally appropriate teaching practices

ASSESSMENT: Written test, and additional discretionary assessments

EDUCATIONAL CAREER RESEARCH

GOAL #4: Students develop an understanding of career options in education
OBJECTIVE  4.1  Discuss advantages and disadvantages of educational careers  
4.2  Identify various employment opportunities and trends in education  
4.3  Evaluate personal motivation for further exploring careers in education

ASSESSMENT: Presentation/display of career options, and additional discretionary assessments

Exploring Education Careers II (one semester)

TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

GOAL #5:  Students understand some of the historical perspectives and basic legislative/judicial decisions affecting education

OBJECTIVE  5.1  Discuss historical trends and perspectives in education  
5.2  Examine historical and traditional ways of educating, current policies and anticipated future trends; research and discuss the history of education in Alaska; learn about local education from Elders, through interviews  
5.3  Examine government structures and roles in education (local, regional, state, federal)  
5.4  Compare and contrast types of schooling in Alaska – rural, urban, charter, private, boarding, magnet, home; research benefits/limits of distance and e-learning

ASSESSMENT: Research paper and presentation, and additional discretionary assessments

GOAL #6:  Students develop an awareness of contemporary issues in education

OBJECTIVE  6.1  Examine issues impacting equity and access in education, including multiculturalism, racism, gender bias, student mobility, drugs and alcohol, violence and poverty  
6.2  Discuss issues in accountability and funding for education  
6.3  Investigate inclusive education and the needs of diverse learners

ASSESSMENT: Editorial or PSA for local/regional paper or radio on educational topic, and additional discretionary assessments

EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

GOAL #7:  Students gain insights about effective teaching

OBJECTIVE  7.1  Identify and discuss qualities of an effective teacher  
7.2  Research effective strategies to teach all learners; discuss the art and science of the teaching and learning process  
7.3  Study and discuss classroom management techniques  
7.4  Develop an understanding of the need to plan, organize, implement and assess classroom lessons  
7.5  Explore the need for and use of varied instruction and assessment tools

ASSESSMENT: Research notes used in debate on historical or legislative issue, including references to timeline, and additional discretionary assessments

GOAL #8:  Students explore educational resources available to teachers

OBJECTIVE  8.1  Examine opportunities and advantages to participate in professional Organizations  
8.2  Develop an awareness of professional certifications and requirements
8.3 Explore the creative uses of technology in teaching and learning

ASSESSMENT: Annotated bibliography of educational resources, and additional discretionary assessments

FIELD VISITS and FINAL REFLECTIONS

GOAL #9: Students gain first hand familiarity through field observations of teaching roles, goals, methods and curricula in public schools

OBJECTIVE 9.1 Complete 12 hours of focused field observations

9.2 Prepare and present an overview of a school system after observing at early childhood, elementary, middle and high school levels, and reflecting on developmental stages of learning (See Goal #3)

9.3 Write focused reflective journal entries after each observation visit

ASSESSMENT: Collection of focused field visit observations, which reflect developmental stages of growth, and additional discretionary assessments

CULMINATING OUTCOME/PRODUCT = Career Portfolio of work samples and assessments