

## *Developing Personal Meaning to Motivate Learners Institute & Course 2010-2011*

### **Plymouth State University of the University System of NH**

Graduate Credit is earned through Plymouth State University in Plymouth, NH. It is an accredited institution offering both a Masters Degree and Advanced Degrees in Education.

**Title:** Developing Personal Meaning to Motivate Learners

**Graduate Credits:** 2.0 or 3.0

**Semester:** Summer 2010, Winter 2011

**Professor:** Dr. Robert C. Spear

#### **Course Description:**

This course is designed for participating middle level educators who want to develop tools to more effectively teach young adolescents. Participants will have certain latitude to investigate topics and strategies that will have the greatest individual meaning. Practical, meaningful and appropriate learning practices are the foundations of the courses.

#### **Evaluation:**

##### **Two Credits - Course requirements (total of 36 points)**

- ◆ Attend all three days of the Conference (**18 points**)
- ◆ Keep a personal journal of the conference (**9 points**)
- ◆ Develop an annotated bibliography of required readings (**9 points**)

**JOURNAL:** Write a journal to Dr. Spear in which you share your thoughts, observations, questions, and reflections that emerge before and from the Summer Institute experience. Reflect on each activity and include the presenter, the topic and the central message of the presentation (**3 points**). Also, include the conversations and professional relations that you develop during the three days (**3 points**). Please reflect on the total Summer Institute experiences as a whole and make commitments to yourself regarding your practice in the upcoming months (**3 points**). These thoughts, questions, and reflections are part of the formal evaluation. They should reflect a ‘churning and learning’ thoughtfulness.

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Complete an *annotated* bibliography of required readings. (**9 points**)

##### **Three Credits - Course Requirements (total of 54 points)**

- ◆ Attend all three days of the Conference (**18 points**)
- ◆ Keep a personal journal of the conference (**9 points**)
- ◆ Design, carry out, and create a “**professional paper**” of a substantive school-based project that applies knowledge gained by carrying out the project.
- ◆ Include an annotated bibliography of required and additional chosen readings. (**27 points**)

#### **Requirements Include:**

**Abstract (4 points):** Submit a brief but complete abstract of the project for approval before the Summer Institute. Please discuss, via phone or email, your project with Dr. Spear prior to the beginning of Summer Institute. The abstract is a one-page abstract that describes the

substance of your project (1 pt). Describe its setting and its relationship to current programs and practices (1 pt). Explain how you, as an educational practitioner, fit into the setting (1 pt). Describe your role with respect to the project itself (1 pt).

**Professional Paper Includes:**

- ◆ **Challenge and Opportunity (12 points):** Describe the specific focus/goals of your project (2 points) and what problem or opportunity you are addressing (2 points). Explain why you chose to respond to this opportunity both in terms of your school's needs and your individual needs (2 points). Please describe the project as it unfolds, the results of the project, and the criteria used to judge the project (6 points).
- ◆ **NELMS Link (2 points):** Explain the connection between your project and the content of your Institute experiences.
- ◆ **Readings (2 points):** It must be clear from the content of the paper that you understand and have completed all of your required readings.
- ◆ **Annotated Bibliography (7 points):** Complete an *annotated* bibliography of required and a minimum of five additional readings. The additional readings must be related to your project.
- ◆ **Journal (8 points):** Write a journal in which you share your thoughts, observations, questions, and reflections that emerge before and from the Institute experience. Reflect on each activity and include the topic and the central messages of the presentation (2 points). Include the professional conversations and relations that you develop during the three days (2 points). Reflect on your Institute experiences and indicate how you will put what you have learned into practice in your own educational work in the month to come (4 points). Your thoughts, questions, and reflections are part of the formal evaluation.
- ◆ **Writing** should be consistent with and will be assessed using Plymouth State University Graduate Studies Writing Assessment Rubric

**Course Objectives: Personalization of Learning – In the Classroom and in Advisory Institute**

*Designed to Encourage Personal Connection for Increased Learning*

A meaningful relationship among faculty and students enhances academic achievement. Creating personalization of student learning, developing student ownership and responsibility in a school through an advisory, supports student's affective and academic needs. It also has relevance to the existing academic curriculum. Personal connections are necessary for successful middle level learning.

*Objectives include:*

- Know the Goals of Effective Advisories
- Learn the Structure and Evaluation of Advisory
- Develop Peer Support for Advisory
- Know Many Effective Advisory Activities
- Learn How to Help Students Set Goals and Refine Study Habits
- Learn How to Offer Appropriate Student Choice
- Establish an Appropriate and Effective School Climate

**Required Texts:**

- ◆ *Taking the Lead in Implementing and Improving Advisory*, Spear, NMSA 2005
- ◆ *Reaching and Teaching Middle Level Learners*, Bishop, Corwin, 2005
- ◆ *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*, NMSA reissue 2010
- ◆ *Academic Success Through Empowering Students*, Vatterott, NMSA

**Grading Scale:**

94 – 100	A	80 – 82.9	B-
90 – 93.9	A-	77 – 79.9	C+
87 – 89.9	B+	73 – 76.9	F
83 – 86.9	B		

**DEADLINES:** All course requirements must be fulfilled by December 1, 2010 for a January 2011 posting, or by April 28, 2011 for a May 2011 posting.

**Cost Information:** Graduate credits are offered at a rate of **\$155 per credit** plus a **\$25** administrative fee. Graduate credits are available only to NELMS professional development event attendees.

**Registration:** Please return the PSU registration form with your full tuition payment along with a copy of your conference receipt from NELMS for enrollment for graduate credits.  
Mail graduate registration, payment and receipt to:

**Plymouth State University  
College of Graduate Studies – MSC 11  
ATTN: NELMS Registrations  
17 High Street  
Plymouth, NH 03264-1595**

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Gallagher our liaison at (978) 887-6263 X 17  
e-mail at [sgallagher@nelms.org](mailto:sgallagher@nelms.org)