Teacher Self-Care: The Science of Gratitude

EDUO 9052 2 Graduate-Level Credits/Units

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Course Syllabus

Course Overview

Explore the science of gratitude and the benefits gratitude has on our personal well-being. Learn how to implement gratitude into your daily life and your classroom. In this course, you will be exposed to background in the psychology of gratitude, you will begin using the simple (and research-based) strategies, and you will bring this knowledge to your school and your students to contribute to a positive learning space.

Course Objectives:

In this course, participants will have opportunity:

- Explore the psychological science of gratitude
- Incorporate gratitude strategies into their lives
- Create a lesson plan that adopts a gratitude strategy to the classroom

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Course Relation to CCS or other Professional Standards:

NBPTS – National Board for Professional Standards – 5 Core Propositions • http://www.nbpts.org/five-corepropositions - National Teaching Standards, Five 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.

How to Submit Coursework

Each completed assignment in this course is submitted to the instructor for review. Follow directions at the end of each assignment on how to prepare and in which Moodle Dropbox to place completed work. Name each file submitted with your last name and assignment number (i.e. BrownAssignment3. Make sure you

place your full name, course number and assignment number at the top of each document page. You will receive feedback from your instructor within 5 days indicating successful completion of the assignment or the need for revision. Assignment grades will be averaged for the final course grade.

Grading assessment rubrics for written projects and for presentation projects are found in this document.

Course Assignments

There are 5 modules that make up this course. In Module 1 you will discover the science of gratitude—including the empirical findings that link gratitude to positive outcomes. In Modules 2 and 3 you will dive into strategies that are used in gratitude interventions. In Modules 4 and 5 you will incorporate lessons of gratitude into your school and classroom. Participants are expected to read the assigned material for each module, and complete the required assignments according to criteria.

Introduction

Overview:

Welcome to this class! The purpose of this short first assignment is for me to get to know who you are and where you are coming from (both geographically and mentally). Thank you in advance for taking the time to introduce yourself.

Assignment:

For your first assignment, please write a short autobiographical paragraph (200-500 words) to introduce yourself to the course instructor. In this introduction, include the following:

- Your current position
- Why you chose to take this course
- What brought you to the field of education
- What are some of your future goals
- Anything else that you would like the instructor to know

Submit to Dropbox Under: Assignment 1: Introduction

Module 1

Overview:

The science of gratitude has been in the interest of psychologists for decades, and more recently the benefits of gratitude have made gratitude a topic of interest for many professionals across various industries. In this module, participants will read about gratitude and watch a lecture on gratitude to become familiar with some of the findings of gratitude. By the end of this module, participants will understand important psychological findings of gratitude and will synthesize their learning on the science of gratitude in a reflection response.

Assignments:

1. Create a note taking tool to hold your questions and reflections as you read through the material for this Module including the blog posts and videos. You will use these notes to write a reflection at the end of this module. These notes with not be uploaded for feedback, but is for your use in formulating thoughts for a reflection. Look at this site for note taking tools and suggestions: https://medium.goodnotes.com/the-best-note-taking-methods-for-college-students-451f412e264e

2. Read the following three articles on the science of gratitude and use the following questions to guide your thinking.
    a. Articles
        i. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hide-and-seek/201409/the-psychologygratitude
        ii. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_changes_you_and_your_br ain
        iii. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dontdo/201504/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-gratitude
    b. Guiding Questions
        i. What are the **scientific** findings of gratitude?
        ii. What are the health benefits of gratitude? iii. Gratitude has been discussed frequently in our culture recently—what information from these articles is new? What information did you already know?

3. Robert Emmons is a leader in the field of the psychology of gratitude. Watch his lecture 'Gratitude Works!' and take notes. Additionally, watch David Steindl-Rast's (a monk and interfaith scholar) Ted Talk on gratitude. Both provide different perspectives on gratitude.
    a. Links to talks
        i. Robert Emmons Lecture: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BF7xS_nPbZ0
        ii. David Steindl-Rast Ted Talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/david_steindl_rast_want_to_be_happy_be_grateful?language=en
    b. Guiding questions
        i. Consider the different messages the two give on gratitude: what are the concluding messages for the audience? ii. If these two were in the same room, what do you think they would agree on? What would they disagree on?

4. **Synthesize your learning** by writing a reflection that shows your informed opinions about the science of gratitude presented in the readings and videos from this module. Your reflection should include, but is not limited to, the following:
    a. Your understanding of the science of gratitude that was presented in the readings
    b. A reflection on information that was new to you and the information that was not new to you
    c. Your thoughts on the two talks that were assigned: which messages stuck with you?

d. Your reflection will be 400-600 words (roughly one-page, single spaced, size 12 font)

Submit to Dropbox Under: Module 1

Module 2

Overview:

The gratitude journal is one practice included in the science of gratitude. This practice involves displaying daily forms of gratitude, and is also a psychological intervention that shows many positive health outcomes. In this module, participants will read about gratitude journaling and set up your own gratitude journal. By the end of this module, participants will have set up their own gratitude journal and have logged in that journal over a period of two weeks.

Assignments:

1. Read about the benefits of practicing gratitude or 'counting blessings'
    a. Gratitude Journaling: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/gratitude-journal_b_7745854
    b. Empirical Paper of the Science behind Gratitude: https://positivepsychology.com/neuroscience-of-gratitude/
2. Watch this talk on the '365 grateful project'
    a. Hailey Bartholomew Ted Talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaufonUBjoQ

3. Set up your own gratitude journal to practice over the next two weeks. Use the follow article's guidelines to help you set up your journal.
    a. Article Guidelines: https://www.shutterfly.com/ideas/how-to-start-a-gratitude-journal/
        i. First, choose a journal that you would like to write in
            1. Will this be a physical journal? A digital journal?
            2. Where can you leave this journal so you are most likely to remember to write in it
        ii. Next, focus on the gratitude journal benefits
            1. Take time to reflect back on Module 1 and the beginning of this module to give purpose to your journal
        iii. Set aside time for writing
            1. The best way to make sure this works is to make it a habit
            2. Think about the best time of day to write
            3. Consider where and when you want to reflect
            4. Consider setting a timer for yourself so you do not forget iv. Start with Gratitude Journal Prompts
            1. Use prompts to guide your writing
            2. Focus on 'what went well' during your day and most importantly, why it went well

v. The rest of the steps in this article are best for considering gratitude journaling long term – come back to these when you are ready

b. Make sure you practice the gratitude journal for 14 consecutive days. I suggest writing about three things you are grateful for (and why) each day. This should take no longer than 15 minutes.

4. Submit a final reflection after the two weeks of gratitude journaling
    a. First, reflect on your overall feelings of the gratitude journal (200-300 words):
        i. How did this exercise make you feel?
        ii. When and where did you decide to reflect? iii. What themes did you tend to write about?
        iv. Do you think you will continue doing this? Why or why not?
    b. Next, choose one entry to share:
        i. Type out your entry for one of the 14 days on the same document as the first part of this assignment
        ii. Then, reflect on the reasons why you are grateful for these items even more. Share what you wrote and why you wrote it (100-200 words)
        iii. Consider the following questions to guide you:
            1. Are you grateful for these things every day?
            2. Was there something about this day in particular that made you reflect on your gratitude for what you chose to write about?
            3. What are some other ways that you can display gratitude towards what you wrote about? Be creative!

Submit to Dropbox Under: Module 2

Module 3

Overview:

The gratitude letter is another practice included in the science of gratitude. This practice involves displaying gratitude for specific people in our lives. Like the gratitude journal, the gratitude letter also has empirical evidence to support the psychological benefits for the receiver and the giver. By the end of this module, participants will learn about the gratitude letter—including the benefits and how to write their own. By the end of this module, participants will have written their own gratitude letter and sent it out to the person the letter is addressed to.

Assignments:

1. Read about the benefits of practicing the gratitude letter:
    a. Study on the gratitude letter: https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/08/180828172046.htm
    b. Handwritten Thank-You Notes Have Surprising Consequences: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-athletes-way/201808/handwritten-thank-younotes-have-surprising-consequences

2. Watch this soul pancake video on the gratitude letter:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHv6vTKD6lg

3. Now that you are familiar with the benefits of the gratitude letter, write your own to someone you are currently grateful for. For the purpose of this course, you may think about a teacher or mentor that supported you on your journey to becoming a teacher (but you can certainly write to anyone that you are grateful for). Use the following instructions to write you letter:
    a. Spend some time reflecting on all of the amazing people who have helped you along your journey and identify one that you would like to write the letter to
    b. Start with a summary: write down specific instances and reasons for why you are grateful for this person
    c. Write a one page, single-spaced (if on the computer) letter to this person
    d. The best way to deliver the letter is through the mail. However, if this doesn't work for your situation it is also appropriate to e-mail this person
    e. Consider setting a reminder in your calendar every three months to repeat this exercise with another person

4. Submit proof of sending the letter:
    a. Your letter is private and you do not need to submit your gratitude letter to Moodle
    b. Submit a screenshot of your email or a picture of the envelope to the assignment listed below

Submit to Dropbox Under: Module 3

Module 4

Overview:

In this module, participants will learn about displaying gratitude at work and brainstorm ways in which they can use gratitude practices in their school. They will come up with ideas based on readings, and complete these ideas. By the end of this module, participants will reflect on the ideas that they implemented in their school and submit the list of their ideas.

Assignments:

1. Read about displaying gratitude in the workplace
    a. How Gratitude Can Transform Your Workplace: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_can_transform_your_workplace
    b. How to Create a Culture of Gratitude in the Workplace: https://www.forbes.com/sites/karlsun/2017/12/18/how-to-create-a-culture-of-gratitude-in-theworkplace/#f81544b7a185

c. The Psychological Effects of Workplace Appreciation & Gratitude: https://www.emergenetics.com/blog/workplace-appreciation-gratitude/
d. How to Foster Gratitude in Schools: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_foster_gratitude_in_schools

2. Come up with a list of ideas of how to display/incorporate gratitude at school for other adults in the building. In the next module, we will focus on gratitude in the classroom. Now, we will focus on gratitude at the school level.
    a. Create a document with two columns
    b. The first column will be a title for the idea and the second column will be a description of your idea (be specific)
    c. Using the readings in task #1 and any search of your own, brainstorm 5-6 ideas that you could use at school
    d. Save this document for future submission

3. Complete one of the ideas you came up with in task #2
    a. Think about an idea that is going to be most useful and easiest to enact right away at your school
    b. For the sake of this assignment, you might consider choosing an idea that can be implemented simply and in the least amount of time

4. Reflect on the ideas you used and submit assignments
    a. Continue the document created in task #2
    b. For the idea that you used at school, write a short reflection on how it went
    c. Consider the following questions:
        i. In general, how did it go?
        ii. How receptive were others to what you did?
        iii. What was the highlight of this activity?
        iv. Could you continue this activity in the future?
    d. Submit this information in a single document (the idea table and reflection)

Submit to Dropbox Under: Module 4

Module 5

Overview: This module will focus on how to incorporate gratitude practices at the classroom level. Participants will implement a lesson to either practice the gratitude journal or the gratitude lesson with their students. By the end of this module, participants will have created a lesson plan to use in the future with their class.

Assignments:

1. In this module, you will create a lesson plan to either use the gratitude letter or gratitude journaling with your students. First, research some ways that these activities can be implemented:
    a. Gratitude letter for students: https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/gratitude_letter_for_students b. Gratitude activities for the classroom: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/gratitude_activities_for_the_classroom
    c. Gratitude a powerful tool for your classroom: https://www.edutopia.org/blog/gratitudepowerful-tool-for-classroom-owen-griffith
    d. Gratitude wheel art project: https://www.mindfulschools.org/inspiration/gratitude-wheel/

2. Create a lesson plan on how to adapt any of the above activities to your own classroom
    a. If possible, use the structure of lesson planning that your school expects of you
    b. Whether you choose to use your school's template, or choose a different template of your own, make sure your lesson plan includes all of the following:
        i. Title
        ii. Objective
        iii. Detailed teacher and student actions
        iv. Timestamps for each part of the lesson (lesson should be 30-60 minutes)
        v. The materials you will need
        vi. Special accommodations
        vii. A homework activity that goes along with the lesson (do not need to provide the activity, rather a summary of what you will ask students to do)
    c. Submit your lesson plan

Submit to Dropbox Under: Module 5

Conclusion

Overview:

You have now completed the all 5 Modules of this course, and this last assignment will serve as a reflection of the entire course.

Assignment:

Write 1-2 paragraphs about what you have learned in this course and how you plan to implement the gratitude strategies into your classroom and life as a teacher. Which practice do you think you are most likely to continue and why? How can you use the science of gratitude with your students?

Submit to Dropbox Under: Conclusion

Course Assessment Rubric

EXCELLENT Meets or Exceeds Course Objectives: A to A-	ACCEPTABLE Majority of Work Meets Course Objectives; B+ to B-	NOT ACCEPTABLE Needs Considerable Improvement: Resubmit Work Suggested: C or below
All work is very organized.	Most work is generally well organized.	Work shows little or no organization.
Answers are well thought out and demonstrate reflection on the material.	Answers are complete and demonstrate some reflection on the material.	Answers are brief and do not demonstrate any reflection on the material.
Assignment use specific examples and provide a detailed description of how the assignment can be incorporated into a learning environment.	Assignment use specific examples or somewhat describes how the assignment can be incorporated into a learning environment.	Assignment do not use specific examples or describe classroom incorporation.
All assignments are completed and meet or exceed the page or paragraph requirement. Templates or assignment documents are fully filled out, with thorough elaboration and thoughtful detail put into each component.	The majority of the assignments are completed and meet the page or paragraph requirement. Templates or assignment documents are mostly filled out, indicating some thought put into each component.	Assignments are not completed and do not meet the page or paragraph requirement Templates or assignment documents are not filled out.
Work is free of spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has few spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.

- You are allowed 9 months to complete the course. Course questions? Contact your instructor by email.
- For questions involving your registration please contact us at support@dominicanCAonline.com or call (800) 626-5080. To change your address, link to your Dominican Store account at https://www.dominicancaonlinestore.com/store/index.php?main_page=login
- For Dominican Self-Guided course information, link to http://dominicancaonline.com/Dominican-CA-Online-FAQ

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