Master of Education, Curriculum and Instruction

General Program Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name:</th>
<th>Master of Education, Curriculum and Instruction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Director:</td>
<td>Barb Perlewitz, MEd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Phone:</td>
<td>262-285-3513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell Phone:</td>
<td>262-339-7987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Barbara.Perlewitz@cune.edu">Barbara.Perlewitz@cune.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program hours:</td>
<td>36 for Master’s degree, 39 for C&amp;I Supervisor endorsement</td>
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<td>Program offering:</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Credits allowed to transfer:</td>
<td>Up to 25% of total hours</td>
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<td>Pre-reqs:</td>
<td>Valid teaching certificate, 2 years FT teaching</td>
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Brief Program Description:

The Curriculum and Instruction Master's program is an innovative, inquiry-based program with a focus on professional development and the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards. The goal of the Curriculum and Instruction Master’s program is to provide an opportunity for practicing teachers and other educational professionals to enhance their understanding and expertise in the following areas to improve students' performance, while also providing the training and credentials to become engaged, forward-thinking administrators, educational leaders, advocates, and life-long learners.

Note: this program also offers an optional administrative Curriculum Supervisor endorsement, which requires an additional 3 credit-hour practicum (EDUC 590) in addition to the 36 program credits. The Curriculum Supervisor endorsement is not a requirement of the M.Ed. program.

Candidates seeking certification in states other than Nebraska should check with the Department of Education in the state in which they plan to obtain certification in order to determine specific certification requirements of that state.

OBJECTIVES

Graduate students who complete an emphasis Curriculum and Instruction will be able to demonstrate:

- Integrate theory with reflective practice.
- Evaluate and improve processes of curriculum development
- Assist teachers in remaining current with regard to educational issues, individualized instruction, assessment and the elements of best practice.
• Engage teachers in collaborative learning with colleagues who offer similar, as well as diverse, backgrounds, experiences, and views.

• Facilitate the development of teachers as life-long learners, who are capable of informing their instructional practices through appropriate application of research results.

• Enhance leadership skills, dispositions and practices

(See Attached Course list with Descriptions)

### Required Core Courses

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 501</td>
<td>Contemporary Thought in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 511</td>
<td>Psychological Foundations to Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 565</td>
<td>Serving and Leading in the Church and World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 594</td>
<td>Research Evaluation and Design</td>
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### Required Professional Development Courses

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 506</td>
<td>Integrating Technology into the Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 514</td>
<td>Analyzing and Applying Assessment Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 531</td>
<td>Differentiating Instruction to Increase Student Achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 532</td>
<td>Enhancing Learning Through Linguistic and Cultural Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 534</td>
<td>Empowering Teachers as Leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 551</td>
<td>Curriculum Design and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 552</td>
<td>Processes in Elementary and Secondary School Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 537</td>
<td>Portfolio Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 540</td>
<td>Curriculum and Instruction Program Capstone</td>
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<td>EDUC 590</td>
<td>Curriculum and Instruction Practicum **</td>
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**Course Descriptions**

**EDUC 501 Contemporary Thought in Education [3]**
An examination of the theoretical and philosophical bases for contemporary educational patterns; current educational issues are researched. Interests of the participants will determine the areas of application to private and public education.

**PSY 511 Psychological Foundations of Teaching and Learning [3]**
A study of selected theories of learning and their implications for the classroom setting. Applications of psychological principles and research to instructional situations with an emphasis on those that involve a Christian setting.

**SOC/THEO 565 Serving and Leading in Community and World [3]**
An in-depth examination of profession, vocation, and service (ministry) and the ways in which individuals, building on their personal belief systems might with integrity enact authentic leadership in a variety of contexts. Using the Lutheran movement within the tradition of orthodox Christianity as a point of departure, students will analyze and apply their ultimate values to specific societal problems.

**EDUC 594 Educational Research Evaluation & Design [3]**
The evaluation of various forms of existing information, with emphasis on the ability to relate this information to personal professional growth. Development of skills in qualitative and quantitative research methods.

**EDUC 506 Integrating Technology into the Classroom (3 Credits)**
This course is designed to provide students with a practical understanding of educational technology, computer use and applications, integration of technology in classroom curriculum, and use of the World Wide Web as an information repository and learning tool. This hands-on course will provide teachers with opportunities to use and explore existing hardware, software and Internet resources in order to incorporate them into the design process. Each teacher will be expected to use course information to design an instructional unit that effectively integrates technology as a tool for enhancing the learning environment.

**EDUC 514 Analyzing and Applying Assessment Data (3 Credits)**
Gain an in-depth understanding of formal and informal student assessment including assessment design and analysis. Emphasis on analyzing assessment data to improve instruction, and incorporating effective student assessment into the planning and delivery of instruction.

**EDUC 531 Differentiating Instruction to Increase Student Achievement (3 Credits)**
This course will review theory-based differentiated models of instruction that will provide practitioners with a strong background in a variety of instructional modalities. In this course students will discover what is old and what is new. They will learn how to determine important differences in their students’ points of entry to their classroom and uncover implications for class management; for working with
students and parents; and for creating fair and appropriate assessments. This course balances information with practical applications and includes material for teachers across grade levels, personal styles and philosophies of teaching.

EDUC 532 Enhancing Learning Through Linguistic and Cultural Diversity (3 Credits)
This course explores teachers’ views on the value of linguistic and cultural diversity and the powerful learning opportunities it affords today’s classrooms and schools. Teachers examine their attitudes, beliefs, and biases regarding linguistically and culturally diverse students, families, and communities and learn approaches for working together to ensure high levels of learning for all students. Strategies for ensuring equitable access to high-quality learning experiences are presented. Effective practices such as cultural responsiveness, anti-bias curriculum, differentiated instruction, and developing academic vocabulary are explored.

EDUC 534 Empowering Teachers as Leaders (3 Credits)
This course introduces the concept of teacher leadership and its value in the field of education today. This course will explore what it means to be a teacher leader in various environments, to be advocates for students, to participate meaningfully in school reform and/or renewal processes, and to articulate knowledge of content, pedagogy, and other teaching and learning.

EDUC 551 Curriculum Design and Evaluation [3]
This course will begin with a review of major educational philosophies and their respective approaches to curriculum development. The focus of the course will include basic principles and practices in the curriculum planning and development cycle; aligning standards to curriculum; issues surrounding curriculum design and implementation, and the link between curriculum, instruction, and evaluation for an elementary, middle or secondary school. Theory will be linked to real-life problems utilizing a variety of active learning exercises.

EDUC 552 Processes in Elementary & Secondary School Administration [3]
This course deals with processes in educational administration with emphasis on administrative organization and the role of the principal in leadership and management responsibilities in the elementary, middle or secondary school.

EDUC 540 Curriculum and Instruction Program Capstone (3 Credits)
The capstone course is an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have achieved the goals for learning established in their professional development plan. This project should take into consideration all of the courses leading to this degree and focus on a student’s personal interest area(s) as they relate to improvement in two of the INTASC teaching standards.

EDUC 590 Curriculum and Instruction Practicum (3 Credits)
This is a semester-long course consisting of 100 documented hours of field experience under the guidance of an administrator, Curriculum and Instruction Supervisor mentor, or Nebraska Department of Education personnel qualified in the discipline. No more than 30 hours of the field experience
requirement can be satisfied in a student’s own classroom. The practicum must be completed for the Curriculum Supervisor endorsement.

EDUC 537 Portfolio Review (0 Credits)
This is a formal review/evaluation of a student’s e-portfolio to ensure benchmarks in the program are being met, and as a gauge for a student’s growth and professional development.

COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS/TRANSFERS
Official transcripts from all previously attended institutions will be reviewed to determine if a student has completed courses that could be substituted for required core courses.

The following guidelines will be used to determine if an equivalent course could transfer and substitute for a required course in the Curriculum and Instruction program.

- If the course content is equivalent to the Concordia course and is 0-4 years old, it will be accepted as a transfer course that substitutes for a required course.

- If the course content is equivalent to the Concordia course, and is 5-7 years old, it will be accepted as a transfer course that substitutes for a required course AFTER the student has established knowledge of current course content. In most cases, the student will be required to audit the Concordia course for which the transfer course will substitute.

- Courses over seven years old are not eligible for transfer.

Exceptions to these guidelines may be made as determined by the program director.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate the student must:

1. Successfully complete all required courses
2. Submit a graduation application
3. Successfully submit a professional portfolio
Note: Anyone who has completed the Education Administration program and would like to add the Curriculum Supervisor endorsement on their license can complete the following five courses: EDUC 506, 514, 531, 532 and 590

Value Propositions of the Program

Strongest FEATURES of this program

- **Tied to Nebraska Department of Education Indicators for Curriculum Supervisor and Model Core INTASC Teaching Standards.**
  - Benefits: Students in Nebraska who complete the degree program and the practicum qualify for State certification. Many other states accept all or part of this program for certification. Nebraska Indicators adhere to a national model.
  - Proof: Curriculum map connecting State Indicators to courses

- **Faculty – mix of academics and practitioners (Superintendents, Principals and Teacher Leaders).**
  - Benefits: Students learn both the theoretical and the practical from instructors that have been in and are in the role of educational administrators and leaders.
  - Proof: Attached statements from Student Summaries of Learning

- **Provides knowledge, skills and experience while building confidence.**
  - Benefits: Not just in administrative areas but teaching and other aspects of students’ lives.
  - Proof: Attached statements from Student Summaries of Learning

- **Provides growth as a teacher, leader, spouse, parent and person**
  - Benefits: Yes, all facets of our students’ lives.
  - Proof: Attached statements from Student Summaries of Learning

- **The flexibility of an engaging online program.**
  - Benefits: Teachers lead busy lives, especially if they have families. Our instructors have found ways to engage these busy people while allowing them the flexibility of being able to do course work when they can find the time to study.
**Proof:** Attached statements from Student Summaries of Learning

*Statements from Student Summaries of Learning submitted at the conclusion of their programs of study*

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Student Comments</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Throughout the past two years there have been many really good classes. Although I learned something in all of the classes I believe there were three I benefitted the most from: EDUC 531 Differentiated Instruction with Mike Lucas, EDUC 501 Contemporary Thought with Brian Stark, and EDUC 506 Integrating Technology with Angela Wassenmiller.</td>
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<td>EDUC 531 was important for more than the reason of the content which is important and really changed the way I thought about teaching, but because it was my first class in the program it really set the bar for what my expectations were of the program. There was a good balance between the work that was required for the class Mike allowed us to read the material and then follow up at the next class with our peers and discuss the different techniques we used in class. As the class progressed I realized I was only doing the minimum when it came to differentiating the instruction during my first three years in the classroom. The weekly discussion and readings gave me many more ideas to use in the classroom. The class was very practical as well the content we talked about really mattered to the teachers and was things we could bring into our classrooms.</td>
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<td>EDUC 501 I thought was the most fun. Dr. Stark made this class a blast for me and the rest of our class. Dr. Stark really allowed us to discuss the critical issues of education. The discussion and the cohort I was lucky enough to be a part of really made this a great class. We all had strong personalities and were passionate about teaching so when an issue came up we were divided on Dr. Stark allowed us to talk it out and really express our feeling on the topic. I find this kind of discussion borderline debate is where I learn the best because I hear points I may avoid when working on something myself.</td>
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<td>EDUC 506 was a great class as well and the only online class I enjoyed. I believe because of the content this class worked as an online class. Every week I was introduced to new technology that I could bring into the classroom. Some of the tools I learned how to use were ePals, Poll Everywhere, Google Drive, Jing, Twitter and many others. Technology is always changing and it can be hard to keep up this class allowed me to see how much more technology was available and not only available but free.</td>
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<td>The course that I found the absolute most beneficial out of all the courses I took in this program was EDUC 552. I took this class because I had intended on doing the specialist endorsement and I am so glad I did. It was so real life and Anita Baldwin was amazing to learn from. The assignments were actually applicable to what we may need for the future. Although the majority of it focused on Administration, this was by far the best class of the program! The other class that I really enjoyed was EDUC 501. It wasn’t to the same level as EDUC 552 but it was good. Anne was teaching it for the first time and I think she will only become more dynamic as time goes on! I really liked the great discussions we had about what was going on in our schools and classrooms with others from many different districts! What a great way to learn!</td>
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<tr>
<td>The two courses that I found most beneficial were the differentiation class (531) and the technology class (506). I found these two courses most beneficial due to their timely application within my own</td>
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classroom. I had recently received a new teaching assignment, so these courses were very instrumental in my attempt at creating lessons/units for the new curricular areas that would benefit all learners. With encouragement from the instructor, I was able to create a differentiated unit that was deemed successful by students and co-teachers. With assistance only a tweet or a text away, I was not as intimidated by the use of technology in my classroom. This was a bonus time to discover new online resources too.

Personally I really enjoyed EDUC 552 with Rob Slauson. As a person who likes to get to the point and boil down the nonsense, I really enjoyed his approach to the class and to teaching in general as it was the same as mine. I learned a lot of practical tips about how to handle real-life situations that I will face as a teacher and a coach. I also found Integration of Technology really helpful for ideas for lessons when I’m in class and when I can’t be there.

EDUC 552 Educational Leadership: I took this course instead of Classroom Mgmt. and Practice. I found this course to be extremely useful mainly because of the rich discussions that always took place. This course was tangible, real-life, and didn’t sugar coat procedures and expectations. I found the topics that came up to be very relatable. The instructor was engaging, direct, and fair.

I also found the course Psychology of Learning PSY 511 to be interesting as well--I learned a lot about the brain, learning styles, and how the brain changes. Again, the information was clear, tangible, and direct.

Lastly, EDUC 531--I thought the end project was tangible, something we could truly take back to our classrooms to implement, and encompassed what we learned.

Chrystal Townsend Frye was an excellent instructor and had so much to contribute to her many experiences. Anita Baldwin also had great real-life situations to contribute. Angie Wassenmiller was very thorough and helpful!

I felt I benefited from all the courses however, Integrating Technology into the Classroom and the Practicum are the ones that stick out in my mind the most. Angie’s technology class challenged me and forced me to learn more about technology. I knew I needed to further my knowledge of technology but had been putting it off. Angie taught me things I would have never done on my own. I am will be a much more technology savvy teacher for having taken her class. As for the practicum I did the blog, I had to look at different topics in education and I felt this was very valuable in keeping me current in what is happening in education and where it is going. As I created my blog I also set up an RSS reader and returned to my Diigo account. Since I am moving into a private school that has not had special education I feel a strong need to keep myself up to date and informed.

I also enjoyed our last class, Serving and Leading in Community and World. This class gave me the opportunities to self-reflect. Often times our lives are so busy we don’t take the time to reflect on our mission and goals. This class had me do that and helped me to move forward with more focus.

Let me begin with a story... (I know, shocking!) I once entered a Master’s program that was in the beginning stages of development. I learned a great deal from the program, enjoyed the entire experience, I sailed through...
Fast Forward one year.

I've accomplished obtaining my Master’s degree. Thinking of going forward and I am kicking around the idea of a Ph.D. program. A colleague of mine wanted to work towards her Master’s degree. She had had one bad experience after another for years. I thought, you know what, if she needs someone to walk next to her while she works for something for herself.

I entered the C & I program at Concordia... After one class, my colleague dropped out of the program. Unable to walk away from something without seeing through is not something I'm very good at! Besides, I've got one Master’s degree that was a piece of cake, remember I sailed through!!

Concordia's program is probably more indicative of a proper Master's program. It is challenging, rigorous, it stretches and pulls you. I felt the impact of this program from the beginning, but what a difference it has made. The knowledge base, confidence and leadership skills I've acquired are immense.

With each class I gained. Whether it be knowledge, skill, perspective or discipline I grew. I can't say that any one class was more beneficial than another. I can tell you that I was impacted most deeply from Dr. Warren's class. That Dr. Elwell's class gave me an understanding of research that allows me to use research in my practice. And Gretchen Oltman challenged me as a professional and as a student.

EDUC 534 - Teachers as Leaders-Angela pushed us as students out of our comfort zone, but with her assignments she made us, the students, engaged in our learning. She let us be discussion leaders in small groups, she made us do "ice-breakers" activities with our cohort, and everything we did in her class was engaging. She made me feel like I was really learning. Although she pushed us, it's what I needed; she set the bar high with her class being the first for our cohort.

Educ 506 - Integrating technology-Again with Angela, I learned so much in this class, she continued to raise the bar and push us as learners but she was there for support and help when we needed it.

SOC 565 - Serving/Leading-I learned a lot about myself in this class and enjoyed the engaging activities. I also enjoyed that it was hybrid since this was our last "class" of our program. I learned a lot about myself and I learned a lot from my classmates with their presentations. I wouldn't mind if this class was earlier in the program.

EdUC 501 and PSYCH 511 - I learned a lot from Bob Acamo's classes, the activities and presentations we interested, and we had good discussions. I would consider moving these classes up and be the first two in the program.

I truly enjoyed all the classes that we took during our program. I took something away from each class that was beneficial in my classroom, my own research, or for my own personal growth.

The class that challenged me the most was EDUC 506 Integrating Technology into the Classroom with Angie Wassenmiller. Angie pushed me to step out of my comfort zone and to use technologies that I had never heard of. I felt that the projects and the new technology were very applicable to my classroom. I learned so much in this class, and Angie was one of the best instructors that I have ever had.

I also learned a great amount in PSYCH 511 with Bev Urbach. I enjoy all of Bev’s stories and find her to be very knowledgeable. I also really liked the required text Teaching with the Brain in Mind by Eric
Jensen. It is a great read, and it is the only textbook that I kept.

I found the Technology Integration and the Empowering Teachers as Leaders classes as the most beneficial. The technology class exposed me to a world of technology that I was not familiar with and it inspired me to think of what is possible in my classroom with integrating technology. The Empowering teachers as leaders class was just plain inspirational and set the tone for me that I was embarking on a journey that will help me grow professionally and personally.

I found Psychological foundations of Teaching and Learning, Differentiating Instruction to Improve Student Achievement and Empowering Teachers as Leaders to be the most beneficial. I loved learning about Brain Research, I enjoyed conducting Action Research.

EDUC 506 was especially beneficial because we were not only sharing and learning about new technology, but we were asked and encouraged to actually use the technology or to try new technology. The instruction and activities were a perfect balance.

I found the research class to be the most beneficial. It was a great overview of doing research. The technology class was also helpful in learning new was to use technology in the classroom. Both of these courses were full of useful information that could be used in the classroom.

The following fuses the discussion of most and least beneficial as well as suggestions for improvement.

EDUC 501—Contemporary Thought in Education

This was my first class of the program. As a Lutheran educator, the open and varied discussions were beneficial opening my eyes to “the real world” of education. Much of this was due to the varied public school backgrounds of my cohorts, but the professor was well versed in the Socratic method and engaged us in discussion of the many educational issues of education, past, present and future. Plus, the first research paper of the program was a nice refresher of what it means to be back in college again. Our professor went above his duty to explain APA citations, now a second nature form of citation, but intimidating when you haven’t written a research paper in many years.

As for Empowering Teachers as Leaders—it did just that! I was very uplifted as an educator during that class

EDUC 514 - Analyzing and Applying Assessment Data

Coincidently, at the time I was taking this class, my school PLC also concentrated on assessment. I was able to read 2 different textbook ideas about assessment. Based on the single text for the class, and the professor’s teaching style and assignments, I didn’t get as much out of the class as I would have liked. But combined with my professional experiences at the time, I appreciated the over-exposure to a topic that was very sensitive in nature at that time in my career.

Empowering Teachers and Integrating Technology were the two most beneficial courses. I learned a lot form Angie and overcame my fear of technology. I learned how to do many different instructional activities using technology and I know that my students will continue to benefit from this.
The course that I found most beneficial to me was the technology integration class. Our society has turned to technology as a resource for everything and I learned endless ways to incorporate it into my classroom. The class was very challenging and overwhelming to me at times but I learned so much! Just to name a few, I found ways to become part of the education world through twitter and blogs and how to present information to my students was such as Prezis.

Although it is not required for this degree, I felt I learned a lot in the administration class we took. The information was very interesting and the issues were fascinating to work through.

I can honestly say that all of the courses were beneficial in some way, although some more so than others. I think highly of this program and would recommend it, and do, to anyone who is wanting to work for a master's degree. One of the classes that stands out for me is the Administration class. I learned so much from the instructor about being a leader/administrator. He gave some great insight into how to manage time and people. The assignments, like the shadow experience, were great to see how others in leadership positions do their job. Another class that was really helpful was the technology class. As far as bringing things back into my classroom, this one was the one that I will do that with the most. With our technology rich world, it's important to teach students that and I learned a lot of great ideas. The research class, while rigorous, was helpful in the sense of teaching me more about professional research and the process of research.

I truly thought every course in this program was quite beneficial, but the one class that sticks out to me the most was Bob Acamo's EDUC 501 course on contemporary issues in education. Not only did we learn the latest on important issues in our career such as NCLB and the increasing emphasis on high stakes testing, but we also got a chance to hear the opinions of non-educators on the state of education in the "Reporter on the Street" presentations. I really enjoyed presenting my information, but also enjoyed observing the results that my classmates came up with. Also, Bob brought a positive attitude to class every week and consistently kept us laughing and engaged in the material. He also let me borrow a book, which I finally gave back to him about a year later.

I must say that when I first signed up for the program I thought it would go a lot faster than it did. Having said that, once I got into the program I realized that I’m glad it didn't move too fast because I needed the extra time to really take everything in and be able to properly apply it in my classroom and in my life. As far as the best course I had... I would have to say the course in which I enjoyed and took the most from was EDUC 533. In this course I was able to learn a lot about setting up my own site and how to manage that site. This is something I've never even thought of doing or could've done so I am grateful for that. I also liked the topic in which my classmates and I made our page about. It was built for new teachers and things they would need to know or advice they might need in areas that aren't taught so much in school.

What advice would you give to a new student entering the program?

Be the student you expect your students to be. Don't expect professor to go light on work because you are a full time teacher. There is a full workload in every class and you are expected to get it done. The best way I worked around this was to work on the final project of each class a little bit at a time each week. Keep your class work organized because it will help when it is time to put your portfolio together. Don't be intimidated by teachers that have more experience they are there to learn as well. I tried to use them as an additional resource because advice from an experienced teacher is better than anything
The advice that I would give a new student entering the program is to keep all of the course work in an organized fashion (in multiple places), as well as make notes on the grades/comments that were earned for each task.

I would also suggest that every assignment be created as a means of improving classroom instruction, not just a quick grade to get through the program. It is my belief that you only get out of a class what you put into it, so for the benefit of student learning - put your all into it.

There's always help available and to not be afraid to ask. I would also tell new students that no matter whether they are experienced teachers, or like myself, new teachers fresh out of undergraduate level, we all have stories, opinions, and experiences to share in these classes that can help everyone and to not be shy about sharing or getting involved right from the start.

- Never be afraid to ask questions.
- If a teacher doesn't use BB, keep ALL paper copies of materials.
- Back up all of your documents on two spots (ex. Flash drive and hard drive).

Pace yourself and work ahead if possible. Life is too unpredictable, if you get behind you may find yourself stressed out and unable to perform at your best.

To a new student I would say, "buckle your seatbelt, it's a fast and furious ride".

Balance! I successfully (almost) completed this program with 2 little kids, having a class of 30 my first year of this program and all the other stresses of life. You have to balance school, work, and home life. You will have to make sacrifices but the end reward is worth it. Also, pace yourself and don't wait until the last minute to do an assignment. You never know what might come up (sick kid, you get sick). If you have time to get something done early, do it! Submit things early and get the feedback, then you may have time to revise and resubmit. Also, know that if you have to miss class for whatever reason, it is okay! Also-ask questions!!

First, manage your time wisely. It can be difficult at times to manage full-time teaching, family obligations, and graduate classes. Do not put homework and projects off to the last minute.

Second, keep all your materials organized. I kept a folder for each class with ALL of the documents, projects, etc. that I created for that class. Make sure to get a copy of anything you do with a partner as well, and back these folders up regularly. I also made a giant binder that contains important information, like the syllabus, notes, handouts, etc., from each class to use as reference. These folders on my computer and my binder were a big help when trying to find artifacts for my portfolio.
I actually had a conversation with a new student in the program and told them to save everything that they do in class. I told them to use the cloud based storage site dropbox to save their files so they would not have to worry about hardware failure and losing their stuff.

It’s great. I loved the classes and my cohort.

I would advise new students to keep up on their portfolio. I began working on my portfolio right away. This made it tremendously easier during the last term.

It is important to find a balance between work, school, and personal life.

Thinking back to the very first night of my first class, and the number of women (because we were an all female cohort) who cried when we received the syllabus I would offer the following advice:

1- It’s college. It’s a graduate degree. Toughen up. No matter that Concordia promotes the program as “doable” while working and raising a family, many sacrifices will be made. Some classes/professors will have unrealistic expectations about what can be accomplished while working full time and raising a family. But it’s 2, maybe 3 years of life and the rewards and feelings of accomplishment will, hopefully, overshadow the missed time with family and lost hours of sleep, planning time and grading time for your current job.

2- Refresh yourself on how to write a paper using APA citations. Purdue’s OWL is your best resource!

3- That first night, know that not everything is due the next day.

The advice I have is keep all of your assignments, plan ahead, keep an open mind, and enjoy the classes, two years go very quickly.

The advice I would give someone coming into the program would be to make sure you save everything. Some of the teachers did not require you to turn in your assignments on Blackboard and now I am searching all over for them to put on my portfolio project. I would also suggest understanding the portfolio project right away in the program and make sure you stay on top of it. Being a teacher and going to school can get really busy but find time to work on it little by little.

My number one piece of advice would be to save EVERYTHING. If I would have been better organized, I would have had a separate folder for each class and saved all of the work from each class in the corresponding folder, which I am sure many people did. I just saved everything in one “Concordia” folder, and a lot of time was spent searching through when it came time for portfolio work. Another piece of advice...you will always feel overwhelmed the first night of class. It always gets better after the first night when you can process everything and sort it out in your mind. Lastly, stay on top of assignments and don't be a procrastinator. (a little of "the pot calling the kettle black," here!)

As stated above, I would advise future students to begin their portfolios prior to the capstone course. The capstone in itself was enough of a workload and putting the portfolio on top of that while trying to enjoy summer and get ready for the upcoming school year was not the most enjoyable experience. So basically, don't procrastinate as much as I did.
For an incoming student... There will be ups and downs during your journey, just as in life, but keep moving forward and in the end you appreciate the ride!!!