

EDPD 501: Mentoring Methods for Teaching Gifted Learners
4-VA AYGS Course Summer-Fall 2014
Graduate Credits: 3

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a graduate-level course that will focus on the mentorship experience. Mentorship is defined as mentored student research by internal or external persons in the field of research being performed. Throughout the course, students will learn about different tools for research, in addition to gaining knowledge of topics such as MATLAB, statistics, and GIS. Students will be required to compose an action plan for how they will carry out mentorship in their own academic year governor's school (AYGS). Each student will present their plan at the conclusion of the conference, and then give follow-up information in the fall.

II. STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- Identify different models of mentorship
- Create an action plan to improve the mentorship experience at their school
- Learn about current research projects/topics
- Learn about technologies useful for student research

III. COURSE STRUCTURE:

Students will participate in a summer institute, from June 23- June 27, at the Front Royal Smithsonian Institute learning about technologies, the overall experience, methods, and other concepts related to mentorship. Throughout this week, the action plans will be completed with assistance from facilitators and peers. On June 27, students will travel to George Mason University's Fairfax campus to tour facilities and present their action plans. In fall 2014, there will be another meeting to discuss how action plans were carried out and related results.

IV. GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Assignment	Percentage of final grade
Action plan deliverable	50%
Action plan presentation	10%
Homework Reflections (5)	20%
Pre- and post-assessment or alternate assignment	5%

Follow-up webinar presentations	15%
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Graduate Grading Scale:

Determination of the Final Grade:

A	93%-100%	B+	87%-89%	C	70%-79%
A-	90%-92%	B	80%-86%	F	Below 70%

V. ASSIGNMENTS

Action plan deliverable (50%):

The action plan is a document that each student will create as a result of the course that is a descriptive plan of how they will improve mentorship in their school. This 5 page document should explain the method for advancing student research in the school; it can have a variety of forms and should be a useful document for actually improving the amount, kinds, and quality of mentored research experiences for students in the AYGS.

Guiding structure

- 1) Current methods (1 page)
 - a) Discuss current methods of mentorship that are taking place in your school
 - b) Guiding questions
 - i) Who mentors your students?
 - ii) What is effective mentorship in your school?
 - iii) Is there a system for mitigating mentor-mentee issues as they arise?
 - iv) Evaluate the diversity and quality of projects available to students.
 - v) Are students developing their own research questions?
- 2) Identify realistic needs your school could achieve (1 page)
 - a) After evaluating the current methods, reflect on your response and identify areas of need within your mentorship program.
 - b) These areas may include, but are not limited to:
 - i) Mentors
 - ii) Independence in student projects
 - iii) Facilities
 - iv) Funding
 - v) Research course design
 - vi) Time in school
- 3) New plans (2 pages)
 - a) Describe your plans for addressing your areas of need, in addition to anything you have learned in this course that you would like to introduce into your school. This section should focus on what you would like to change. (Implementation belongs in the next section.)
 - b) Guiding questions
 - i) What features of this 4-VA institute could be used in your school?
 - ii) How will this mentorship approach be tailored for your area of teaching and expertise?
 - iii) How will teachers and partners work together?
 - iv) What will the student milestones be for completing their research?

- v) Where will the resources to support the research come from?
 - vi) What is the motivation for partners to participate?
 - vii) What are the opportunities for the school mission?
 - viii) What are the barriers for students completing the research?
- 4) Implementation (1 page)
- a) Explain the steps that you will take to disseminate the information you learned in this course to your colleagues.
 - b) Explain the steps that you will take to realize your plans described in the previous section.

Action plan presentation (10%):

Students will present their action plan at the conclusion of the conference. Time will be moderated based upon the number of presenters. Sufficient notice of the time limit will be given.

Reflections (20%):

Each day, students will be expected to complete a journal entry with the following components for a total of five (5) entries.

Your homework each night of the Summer Institute will be to write an entry in your journal. These entries should be an *in-depth* reflection on the work you did that day. In particular, we would like you to:

1. Provide a brief summary of what you learned/covered that day in the institute. Please provide a one to three sentence summary for each session you attended.
2. Reflect upon the connections within mentorship and/or between mentorship and other STEM disciplines you saw today in your work. This reflection should be *at least* 4, but no more than 7 well-developed paragraphs.
3. Reflect upon how your work today could impact your work as a governor’s school teacher. In particular, discuss how you plan to incorporate some aspect of what you learned today into a lesson you teach. This reflection should be *at least* 3 but no more than 6 well-developed paragraphs.

The journals must be typed or written very neatly. We hope that writing in these journals will provide you with the opportunity to think about your work for the day and how you might use what you learned in your practice as a governor’s school teacher. The journals will be graded on completeness and on the quality of the reflection. There is no right or wrong answer for any of the pieces of the journal. We encourage you to use some of the products that you may create during the institute in your journals (e.g., your statistics and math modeling results).

Rubric:

0 points	Journal entry not completed
1 point	Journal entry is has been written but <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the requirements for length are not met, or • the requirements for topics to be covered are not met, or • there aren’t enough paragraphs devoted to each topic

2 points	Journal entry is completed (all requirements met) but <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the paragraphs/ideas are not well-developed or • connections are weak
3 points	Journal entry is completed (all requirements met) and the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paragraphs/ideas are well-developed and • connections to how what was learned can be applied to teaching are well-developed

Alternative assignment (5%):

If the student chooses to opt out of participating in the research, they will be given an alternative assignment. This assignment is to write a one page paper on how mentorship is currently being undertaken at their school;

Pre- and post-assessment (5%):

Before the course begins and after the conference is completed, students will answer an assessment of their knowledge and thoughts on topics covered during the Institute.

Follow-up webinar (15%):

In the fall, students will be required to attend a follow-up webinar conference to discuss and present on how they have worked on implementation of their action plans, and other feedback on improving the mentorship experiences in their schools.

VI. TIMELINE

Assignment	Due date
Reflections	6/27/14
Action plan deliverable	8/8/14
Follow-up webinar	TBD
Pre-assessment	6/23/14
Post-assessment	6/27/14

VII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The university has a policy that requests students to turn off pagers and cell phones before class begins.

HONOR CODE

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, George Mason University has set forth a code of honor that includes policies on cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying and stealing. Detailed information on these policies is available in the GMU Student Handbook, the University Catalog, and on the GMU website (www.gmu.edu).

Individuals with Disabilities Policy

The university is committed to complying with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by providing reasonable accommodations for applicants for admission, students, applicants for employment, employees, and visitors who are disabled. Applicants for admission and students requiring specific accommodations for a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center at 703-993-2474, or the University Equity Office at 703-993-8730.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. Although absence alone is not a reason for lowering a grade, students are not relieved of the obligation to fulfill course assignments, including those that can only be fulfilled in class. Students who fail to participate (because of absences) in a course in which participation is a factor in evaluation, or students who miss an exam without an excuse, may be penalized according to the weighted value of the missed work as stated in the course syllabus (GMU University Catalog, pg. 32).

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

Rubric for Action Plan:

<p>Current methods (10%) 0 points- Section is incomplete or absent 5 points- Section gives a general overview of current practices in the school and addresses some of the guiding questions 10 points- Section fully describes current practices in the school in detail, addressing all of the guiding questions</p>
<p>Identify realistic needs your school could achieve (15%) 0 points- Section is incomplete or absent 5 points- Section is completed, but does not describe realistic needs that could be fixed by the school 10 points- Section gives an overview of a few realistic needs 15 points- Section gives a detailed overview of realistic needs that the school can fix that may greatly improve the mentorship experience students will have</p>
<p>New plans (50%) 0 points- Section is incomplete or absent 10 points- Section does not give new plans that are related to the identified areas of need 20 points- Section gives a general description of new plans loosely related to the identified areas of need 30 points- Section gives an in-depth description of new plans strongly related to the identified areas of need, possibly in addition to include topics covered in the Institute. Plans show vision for improving the school's mentorship experiences offered.</p>
<p>Implementation (25%) 0 points- Section is incomplete or absent 5 points- Section gives an implementation plan that does not relate to the previous section (new plans) or is clearly unrealistic 10 points- Section gives a general description of one of the areas of implementation 15 points- Section gives a general description of both of the areas of implementation 20 points- Section gives a detailed description of both areas of implementation, but does not break it into realistic steps 25 points- Section gives a well-developed description of both areas of implementation along with steps to take in implementation and possibly a timeline</p>