Course Syllabus

Title: EDLI 200: Library or Learning Commons?

Credits: 3 credits

Instructors: Judith Kaplan, Daniel Greene

Meeting dates and times: Online

Location: Blackboard online

Course Description:

The vision for a new library media center for 21st Century schools is embodied in concepts for a “learning commons,” a physical and virtual space for active learning. (Loertscher, 2008) This course is designed to examine the theory and practice that support the rationale for revisioning school libraries to meet 21st Century educational practices. Educational reforms and changes driven by ubiquitous computing, 21st Century skills, and Common Core Standards, will be considered in assessing the services and goals of school libraries. Models of learning commons, both in the U.S. and internationally will be a focus of study, as well as action planning for change. The course is designed as a community of practice model for professional development that features collaboration and learning in an online environment.

Goals:

The school library media program includes flexible and equitable access to physical and virtual collections of resources that support the school curriculum and meet the needs of diverse learners. These are guidelines for a 21st Century learning space described in Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs (ALA 2009, 33-4). Library Media Specialists create environments that are conducive to active and participatory learning, resource based learning, and for collaboration with teaching staff and students. The physical space enhances technology use, leisure reading and browsing, and the use of materials in all formats. Areas for group and independent work, and access to computers and networks provide opportunities for collaboration and learning. A virtual library is available 24/7 allows access to resources at a point of need.

Accomplished library media specialists partner with teachers to create, implement, and evaluate student learning experiences, and take proactive roles in promoting the use of technology and other instructional innovations. (NBPTS, Standards IV & V, 19, 23). Library media specialists are committed to life long learning and understand that self reflection is a continual process that strengthens teaching. ((NBPTS, Standard VII,43).

Learning Outcomes:

Participants will:

- Describe 21st Century learning skills and how they are reflected in school library, technology, and Common Core standards, as well as in best practice models for education.
- Identify quality indicators for a 21st Century school library as a physical/virtual space for active and participatory learning for diverse learners.
- Explain the role of the Library Media Specialist as an instructional partner and an information specialist who provides resources and services for students, teachers, and others in the community.
- Create actions plans to establish goals and processes for adopting change in the educational community.
- Collaborate within a community of practice and model the use of social media to achieve goals.
- Use self-reflection and metacognition as tools for transformational learning.
General Course Information

Course Policies/Expectations:
The following are necessary for successful completion of this online course:

- Active participation in online modules, class discussions of readings, and collaborative projects
- Completion of readings and reflections
- Completion of course projects

Typically, participants should expect to devote 10 hours per week in reviewing online lessons and resources, reading required texts and articles offline, creating and completing assignments, and participating in discussions or collaborative projects. Discussion postings should reflect students’ understanding and transfer of concepts contained in lessons and readings.

Attendance Expectations:

- Online participation in Blackboard each week to complete assignments and post discussion messages and reflections. Students are expected to visit the Blackboard site at least four times per week.
- Active participation in all class discussions of readings, synchronous and asynchronously.
- Collaborate in group projects using social media platforms.

The official policy for excused absences for religious holidays: Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. Faculty must permit students who miss work for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work.

Contributions in Class:
Students are expected to participate online. See above.

Academic Honesty & Professionalism:
All students are required to be familiar with and adhere to the “Academic Honesty Policy Procedures” delineated in the most recent edition of “The Cat’s Tale”. (http://www.uvm.edu/~dosa/handbook/).

Accommodations:
Accommodations will be provided to eligible students with disabilities. Please obtain an accommodation letter from the ACCESS office and see one of the instructors early in the course to discuss what accommodations will be necessary. If you are unfamiliar with ACCESS, visit their website at http://www.uvm.edu/access to learn more about the services they provide. ACCESS: A-170 Living Learning Center, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405. PH: 802-656-7753, TTY: call 711 (relay), Fax: 802-656-0739, Email: access@uvm.edu, Instant Messenger: UVMaccess. General office hours: 8:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday. Call to make an appointment.

Required readings from:

*Common Core Standards* http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards
*ISTE Standards* http://www.iste.org/STANDARDS

**Supplemental recommended texts: (available through libraries-ILL or perhaps you have them in your professional library)**


**Articles and more (Subject to change):**


**Links to various websites based on topic**

Electronic Submissions/Internet Use:
Assignments and projects will be submitted through the Blackboard, class wiki, or email.

**Student Evaluation/Assessment**

**Grading:**
97-100 points=A+; 94-96=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 84-87=B; 80-83=B-

**Description of Class Assignments:**

The following performance tasks and activities will be used to evaluate/assess participant performance in this course:

Discussion board, blogs, interactive chats -ongoing 20%
Reflections will be posted on individual blogs or discussion board based on assigned readings, research, field experience, personal observations. Weekly topics and/or prompts will be assigned.

Participants will log on to Blackboard site at least four times a week to respond to questions and posts by other participants. Participants will take advantage of opportunities for interactive chats or synchronous meetings that will be offered to allow students real time conversations with group.

Criteria: Thoughtful, well written posts demonstrate understanding of topics or raise provocative questions for the group to explore. Posts will reference assigned readings, personal experience or prior knowledge, and new learning.

Personal Learning Network 15% Due date: End of Modules and 2

Participants will set up a personal learning network site for gathering information through websites and blogs using a Web 2.0 tool such as a wiki, Livebinders, Scoopit!, Pinterest, Diigo, Del.icio.us, or or application.

Criteria: PLN site is created, and linked to the course wiki site by end of module 1. Evidence of research will show a range of resources that support theory and practice of the learning commons model, final posts, end of module 2.

Focus Group Collaboration: Self-Assessment Project 25% Due Date: End of Module 1

Groups of 3-4 participants will be formed by middle of week 1, based on grade level. The group will collaborate to create a checklist of quality indicators for the physical/virtual spaces evident in the learning commons model. The members of the group will use the checklist to evaluate the existing library spaces in the members’ schools. The result of the self-assessments will be presented and summarized through a presentation that is linked to the course wikispace.

Criteria: Presentation should be well organized and designed, and contain evidence of collaborative and thoughtful group work that shares information and deeper understanding about the topic, and provides a baseline for conversation about members’ school libraries.

Focus Group Collaboration: Advocacy and Action Planning 25% Due date: End of Module 2

Groups of 3-4 participants organized by grade level will continue collaborate to create an action plan proposal for change to improve members’ school libraries and move towards a learning commons model. Emphasis will be on rationale for change and identifying goals and steps to achieve the goals. Possible means for evaluating and assessing the efficacy of the planned actions will be also included. An important part of the overall plan will look at advocacy as a means for moving the plan forward at the local level. The plan will be presented as a website that is shared with other participants through a posting on the course wiki space.

Criteria: Website should be well organized, easy to navigate, and contain evidence of collaborative and thoughtful group work that demonstrates the rationale, goals and steps in the action plan, as well as recommended advocacy actions to promote support for change.

Final Reflection 15% Due date: End of Module 2

Participants will write a final reflection that offers personal connections to the knowledge gained through this course, and the impact that school library media specialists can have leaders for change in educational communities. References to readings, experts in the field, and personal experience are encouraged to scope out a personal vision for the future. Emailed to instructors as an attachment.
Instructional Sequence: - List the course topics for each scheduled class meeting date including readings and assignment due dates.

The class meets asynchronously through the Blackboard course management system. Students are expected to log on at least four times a week to participate in online readings and activities. There will be opportunities for synchronous webcasts or chats. The instructors will be available through online office hours, email or phone. The course will have an off site wiki that will also be used to manage student projects and resources, and will be available for participants when the course ends.

Module 1: Weeks 1-2:
Content: 21st Century Learning Environments

**Essential question:** How do 21st Century skills and learning standards drive change in school communities? What does an effective learning commons model look like? Why should we move to a new model?

- Introductions, course overview, projects, and exploration of Blackboard website resources and platforms for communication. Organize focus groups according to grade level, elementary, middle, and high schools.

- Explore topics through readings, links to websites, and self-reflection and sharing through discussion board and blogs. Topics include: Revisioning physical and virtual space needs and functions for 21st Century learning; Standards and 21st Century learning skills; Participatory culture: student learning and engagement in a technological society; Personal learning networks; Pedagogy: Inquiry and information rich exploration that allows for deep understanding of topics, and creative self-expression.

- Resources: Readings-books, articles, websites, videos, webinars, synchronous sessions, online interviews/chats with movers & shakers

- Assignments: Reflections on blogs, discussion board prompts, PLN site, collaborative work in web 2.0 platforms-self assessment project due at end of Module 1.

Readings from:

Module 2: Weeks 2-4:
Content: Action Planning and Advocacy

**Essential questions:**
Who will lead? How can we plan and implement a new vision for the school library? How can we advocate for change and involve others in the decision making process?

- This two week module will look at various methods and practices for developing action plans for change and establishing advocacy tools to provide transparency and continuous
participation by constituents. Topics will be introduced through various readings and website links. Focus groups will continue collaborative work and will participate in action planning and advocacy. Topics include: Analysis of constituencies involved and impacted: Students, administrators, teachers, specialists, support staff, parents, community; Leadership and advocacy: Ongoing, shared, transparent and continuous; Task committees for change; Action Planning: Process for asking questions, proposing action steps, implementation and review for adjustments.

- Resources: Readings-books, articles, websites, videos, webinars, synchronous sessions, online interviews/chats with movers & shakers

- Assignments: Reflections on blogs, discussion board prompts, collaborative work in web 2.0 platforms-action plan project due last day of Module 2. Final reflection emailed to instructors by July 15.

Readings from:
Harland, Loertsher, Martin, Keochlin, Ferrance, Buchanan, Kerr, Kowalski, White.