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### EDU 370.00: Integrating Technology Into Education

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# Education 370

## Integrating Technology into Education

Department of Teaching & Learning  
Phyllis J. Washington College of Education  
Spring 2023



### Jason P. Neiffer, Ed.D. (UM '18)

Adjunct Professor, Phyllis J. Washington College of Education  
Executive Director, Montana Digital Academy @ PJWCOE

### Office and Office Hours

My day-job office is in the Montana Digital Academy suite, ED365. My hours are Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm. I am typically scheduled out much of the day; please make an appointment.

### Email Address

[jason.neiffer@mso.umt.edu](mailto:jason.neiffer@mso.umt.edu)

### Phone Number

(406) 662-8555 (this is a 24-hour calling, texting, and message number)

### Stay in Touch

Both texting and email are appropriate ways to contact me, but *if you expect your communication to be in any way contentious or controversial, or if you are making a big ask, you should defer to [a professional email](#) unless it is of an emergency nature.* Unless you have had multiple direct communications with me, please introduce yourself to me in the email and text. I am also available to schedule phone calls and Zoom meetings by appointment.

I will utilize email to send out messages of a timely or urgent nature. Please check your University email at least once each weekday, and before contacting me with a specific issue to see if I have already addressed it.



## About this Syllabus

As I am sure you have already experienced, a syllabus is an important tool for both students and instructors in a course. It serves as a clear outline of the course objectives, expectations, policies, and schedule. **I expect that you will come here first with class questions, and if you need clarification, contact me directly.**

The last section of this document is the class schedule. I have a proposed class schedule, but it will remain fluid based on *your* needs throughout the semester. Please keep that document bookmarked in your browser to refer to regularly.

Yes... this is a lengthy syllabus. You might be used to ignoring the syllabus, but trust me when I say **there are many clues here on how I think and plan this class.** I am adding extra time to our first week to give you 30 minutes to read through this document. Don't waste the opportunity!



## Introduction

**Instructional technology is no longer a novel or optional add-on to classroom instruction.** The Covid-19 pandemic proved that both teachers and students must treat technology as a core component of the modern classroom. We must empower students to work effectively, creatively, efficiently, collaboratively, and reflectively while building, communicating, solving, designing, and sharing, they learn the content and skills necessary for the ongoing 21st century.

The dynamic and ever-changing instructional technology environment must be embraced as a benefit rather than a detriment. Each new variation of instructional technology brings new opportunities and new outcomes. Therefore it is the teacher's responsibility to model an appropriate attitude when faced with change. As the pandemic becomes endemic, there are new challenges to teachers to embrace. **In just the last eight weeks, artificial intelligence tools blasted into the mainstream after being relegated to science fiction.** Although its impact is yet to be seen, I see AI as a potentially paradigm-shifting force in K-12 education, and very beneficial *if we embrace its power rather than shun it.*

Although this is a technology course, it is based upon the underlying philosophy that **instructional technology should be about learning more with the technology and from the technology, and less about learning specific technologies.** The core principles of education remain the foundation of this course, even though the content, application, and products may change from semester to semester or even week to week.

[The International Society for Technology Education \(ISTE\) Standards for Educators](#) will be used as guidelines for the scope and direction of this course. In essence, education is at a unique crossroads where the accessibility to information and the speed of personal communication is equivalent for both the teacher and the student. Further, there is a somewhat odd wrinkle in the public education paradigm where in many cases, the student has better and less restricted access to information when at home than when at school.

This course is part of a **pre-professional program**, and I consider each course an opportunity to grow not just your skills and abilities as a teacher but also your opportunity to be a mature **professional teacher and colleague.** Each communication and interaction with me, your fellow students, and others related to this class should strive to be **polite, professional, and mindful of your role as a role model for students and colleagues.**

# Instructional Planning Philosophy

My philosophy in planning and executing this course:

- My role in this course is teacher, educational technology expert/advocate, distance learning expert/advocate, and facilitator.
- Covid 19 (the pandemic) and the transition to Covid 19 (the endemic disease) have exposed huge gaps in the use of technology in the classroom, in addition to incredible amounts of data on how technology can be used to drive instruction to be more efficient, student-centered, and effective. As a pre-service professional, you **must** develop core skills to be nimble throughout your career.
- Although there are best practices in instructional technology that can provide guidance, the foundation for educational technology is still **individual teachers using technology to improve good classroom practice**. Your strategy for using any hardware or software is as important as the technologies themselves.
- Technology is a means and not an end. The ultimate end is an engaging, challenging environment for students to learn and grow.
- The course itself should model the same good practices in using technology to enhance education as it being discussed in the course.
- The course is a lab course, which means there is a greater emphasis on products and production. Most of the assigned activities in this course will produce a product.
- That all said, *technology can give superpowers to students and teachers*. To deny the power of technology is at the peril of your effectiveness as a teacher in a 21st-century classroom.

In this course, you will set up a simulated classroom, participate as both a teacher of your own class and a student of those in your small group (team). Through this platform, you will be able to test out assignments you design, gain feedback from your team and improve upon them. Your classroom can act as a portfolio for evidence of your ability to teach with technology and should be of value to you not only in gaining skills for the classroom but also as another selling point to prospective employers.

## Course Objectives

Students will learn strategies to effectively integrate technology for professional and personal purposes. This class is designed to provide a positive beginning to a lifelong learning process. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to use many Google tools, like docs, slides, spreadsheet applications, and Google forms. You will learn about and set up a Google Classroom. You will explore other digital tools to meet a variety of educational and professional needs.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to use email and other social networking tools to communicate electronically with others.
3. Demonstrate good information management habits such as backing up files and organizing files in a logical fashion.
4. Locate and evaluate resources from the Internet and other electronic databases for use in teaching and learning.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to use digital tools, such as cameras, scanners, and recorders, and relevant software to enhance learning.
6. Advocate for the use of technology in ways that transform teaching and learning practices.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of and evidence of meeting the ISTE International Technology Standards for Educators.

## Course Format

As this is an all-online course, 100% of all activities will be completed online. **Online classes put more demands on YOU an learner**, and I expect that you will engage with the class appropriately in this context.

I have 16 years experience teaching and administering in online learning programs, and have taken over two dozen online courses myself at five different institutions, so, my expectations are high. At ANY point, if you need assistance or advice on how to be an better online learner, I expect you to reach out to me in a timely manner for assistance.

## Required Materials

I have chosen NOT to require a for-purchase, paper textbook for this course. There is a handful of decent-to-good instructional technology texts, however, most of them focus too much on technology that is dated quickly. We will defer to regular readings from popular sources on the larger Internet along with two “open source” textbooks:

- [The K-12 Educational Technology Handbook](#) by Ottenbreit and Kimmons gives a good philosophical foundation to educational technology, and a deeper description of particular setups like blogging/student publishing, gamification, and open educational resources.
- [Teaching in a Digital Age](#) by Gates is updated with important recent information about emerging technologies.

We will use a number of applications on the Internet for hands-on learning throughout the semester. These applications will either be free or have free versions. **You are not at any time expected to purchase a premium account** unless you choose to do so. A Gmail account and adding the Google Suite (Gsuite) will allow you to use Google Drive, Docs, and Slides with your Google Classroom. Google Classroom is just one component of the suite of Google tools.

Throughout the semester, I will post information videos from YouTube or other sources to assist you with tasks, but by all means, **you are free to search for tutorials that best speak to you**. Additionally your team can share helpful tips and resources for you to accomplish the tasks.

I strongly advise that you complete this class with a laptop or a desktop. A Windows, Mac, or Chromebook device will all work just fine. Don't try to complete this class with a tablet or cell phone. I get it, these are very functional devices but they aren't really all that useful when working on long text or application projects. They ARE amazing complementary devices to a laptop or desktop computer!

**Finally, in 2023, there is absolutely no excuse to lose a document or otherwise miss a deadline or expectation due to a computer error. I strongly believe in the [3-2-1 backup strategy](#).**

# Anticipated Schedule

\*\* Expect updates as I adapt the class to better meet your needs!

January 16, 2023	Getting Started
January 23, 2023	Digging Deeper
January 30, 2023	Google Classroom
February 6, 2023	Google Classroom Deep Dive
February 13, 2023	Google Team Support
February 20, 2023	Refining Google Classroom Assignments
February 27, 2023	Interactive Video Instruction
March 6, 2023	Interactive Video Instruction
March 13, 2023	Interactive Video Instruction
March 20, 2023	Spring Break
March 27, 2023	Interactive Lessons
April 3, 2023	Interactive Lessons
April 10, 2023	Apps and Resources Review
April 17, 2023	Apps and Resources Review
April 24, 2023	Choice Board Final Project
May 1, 2023	Choice Board Final Project
May 8, 2023	Finals Week: ISTE Standards

## Assignments and Grading

Unless clearly noted on the schedule or assignment description (which will be provided digitally for each assignment), all assignments will be turned in via Moodle, a process that is discussed in the [Moodle for students course](#). I am able to read almost all format files except for Microsoft Publisher. When in doubt, save the file in PDF or Rich-Text Format (rtf).

A note about deadlines... ***I abhor technology excuses***. That doesn't mean that technology doom can't happen, but you need to adopt a strategy as a tech-savvy teacher not to let it impact your performance, **professionalism** or attempts to complete assignments. This means ***always planning ahead*** on deadlines, contacting me *right away* if doom impacts you (I can troubleshoot a ton of problems!), *and* having backup systems in case the hardware or software you are working with stops working with you. If you believe you have a legitimate excuse for not turning in an assignment, by all means, discuss it with me, but I will be suspicious if suddenly your Internet or hard drive dies at

8pm the night before a deadline. **Save early, save often. Use the cloud.**

Appropriate computer and Internet access is a minimum requirement for participating in this course. **Lack of access, local technical problems, viruses, and other access problems won't be accepted as excuses for late assignments or missing work.** You should plan for at least one other alternative access method should your main access go away.

## Grading Notes

- **No late assignments will be accepted.** If you believe you have a legitimate excuse or situation that justifies the consideration of a late assignment, *you absolutely must discuss it with me before a deadline and not after.* There is a 24-hour grace period built into ALL assignments, except the final project. I expect this to cover 99.9% of any eventuality that requires flexibility. Deadlines and meeting course expectations are, in part, an opportunity to grow and prepare for your **professional** career.
- **All assignments turned in on time (except for the final project) are eligible for a redo with some conditions.** See the instructors for details should you want to do so.
- The gradebook will be kept up-to-date and in Moodle. Please check there first before inquiring about a grade.

All assignments for this course must be:

1. Assignments must be submitted on time unless you have obtained prior approval of the instructor for late work.
2. Presented professionally.
3. Proofread for spelling and grammatical errors
4. Marked with your name, class, section, and assignment name
5. Named with a filename in this format: 370 LastName AssignmentName

## Grading Breakdown

<b>Forums</b> will be posted and answered through Moodle. They are graded on a 5-point system of completion and quality. Forums include interaction with your group, responses to readings, reflections, etc.	15%
<b>Explorations</b> involve ongoing research, review, skill development, and implementation. They are graded similarly to forums but with 5 points awarded to each component of the assignment.	35%
<b>Yellowdig Discussion</b> is an educational platform that allows for interaction among teams and class participants. Participants can post in a social media format, topic-related photos, ideas, links, text, and use hashtags to identify conversations. This platform will be introduced after the first few weeks of class and requires a minimum number of points to be earned each week.	15%
<b>Apps Review</b> is a way to share with your group a tool you have researched, tested, and reviewed. Details will be given in the related Unit on Moodle.	10%
The <b>Final Project</b> provides students the opportunity to explore and learn to use hardware or programs that will enhance their professional skills or grade level or content area instructional skills. You will showcase the skills you have acquired and demonstrate how these skills relate to enhancing the learning process for K-12 students. A rubric for the final project will be provided in Moodle.	25%

## Grading Scale

Highest	Lowest	Letter
100.00 %	93.00 %	A
92.99 %	90.00 %	A-
89.99 %	87.00 %	B+
86.99 %	83.00 %	B
82.99 %	80.00 %	B-
79.99 %	77.00 %	C+
76.99 %	73.00 %	C
72.99 %	70.00 %	C-
69.99 %	67.00 %	D+
66.99 %	63.00 %	D
62.99 %	60.00 %	D-
59.99 %	0.00 %	F

**\*\*The grade you get is the grade you get and is not up for negotiation. Please don't ask me about rounding. I understand that you believe that your 99.6% justifies an A without you pointing it out. In the end, that's my call.**

### About My Grading Philosophy

In my mind, grading starts with a C, as an "average grade." That means if you meet basic requirements and turn everything in, you are likely to get a C grade. As and Bs denotes good or excellent work, while Ds or Fs denotes work well short of average. **Assignments are graded for their quality, NOT completion.** Please don't assume that meeting basic requirements justifies an A or B for completion.

**In addition, please don't fall into the trap that confusing effort with excellence or quality.** As this is a **pre-professional program**, part of my mission is to help certify that you are appropriately prepared for the coming classroom environment. We judge you against a standard that evaluates your skills and output, not your effort and time.

# Course Expectations

## Attendance and Participation

As this course is both online and asynchronous, attendance is a little fuzzy. You are responsible for logging in on a regular basis and make progress per the course deadlines.

## Discussions

Discussion is required and your questions and comments are most welcome. Discussion is a graded event in this course.

## Cite Sources/Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. I strongly believe that one of the critical skills required of a college-aged scholar is citing sources. Although I am sure you have mad copy-and-paste skillz, this class will expect you to move beyond that. Sources must be cited in all assignments in the format of your choosing (APA, MLA, Turabian, etc.). If we suspect you have a problem, I will give you a one-time opportunity to redo an assignment and the next time it is a zero without recourse. There is no opportunity to redo the final project.

The University of Montana Student Conduct Code details expectations and implications.

AI has become a sudden, disrupting force in just the last few weeks. We shouldn't simply ban AI from the classroom, as our students will need to engage with AI in various future careers. Please don't use AI to complete your assignments without you engaging in the learning process yourself. If you utilize an AI tool, please cite it and how you used it. Need help here? Connect with me, and we'll talk!

## Respect

**Treat each member of the class with respect.** Help foster a collegial learning environment by sharing your knowledge and skills, encouraging intellectual honesty, and respectfully listening to the viewpoints of others.

## Disability Statement

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please contact both the instructors *and* Disability Services for Students (DSS) in the first week of class:

Disability Services for Students (DSS)  
(406) 243-2243 (Voice/Text) FAX 406-243-5330  
Lommasson Center 154  
The University of Montana Missoula, MT 59812

## Behavioral Expectations

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. [The Code is available for review online.](#) Bottom line, however? *You should be nice.* Seriously... be nice. That's good advice for your future career in classrooms.

# Emergency Preparedness and Response

(Included regardless of online or face to face course)

As members of a learning community we all have responsibilities for each other that extend beyond the teaching/learning experience and transcend our roles in that dimension. We are, as human beings, responsible for the protection and well-being of other members of our group, and one dimension of our individual and group responsibility in that area relates to how we prepare for, and respond to, emergencies.

Toward that end, the following are important:

- In the event we need to evacuate the building, our primary route will be through the main door, to which you are closest, in the Education Building. If that route is blocked, our secondary route will be through the door at the opposite end of the building.
- If you hear an alarm or are told to evacuate, always assume the emergency is real. Be sure to take coats, backpacks and valuables since the building may be closed for some time.
- Everyone should report to either the designated outdoor rally point or the indoor rally point (should conditions make it necessary to seek shelter in another building). Our outdoor rally point is in the area to the south of Education Building at least 300 feet from the building exit. Our indoor rally point is in the McGill Hall. We should reconvene as a group at the rally point so we can determine if anyone is missing.
- Do not use elevators as a means of evacuating, and do not use cell phones until safely away from the Building.
- As the instructor of this course, I would ask students who feel they may require assistance in evacuating to privately inform me of that need. Together we will pre-plan appropriate assistance.
- I would also request that students with a medical condition that could present an emergency privately inform me of that situation. Again, this notification is so we can pre-plan an appropriate response should an emergency occur.
- Please let me know if you possess a current first aid and/or CPR certification. This information will be passed on to the Facility Emergency Coordinator for use should a need for first aid expertise arise.