

**Major Proposal Change
School of Education**

(Approved by the Graduate Studies Committee 12.9.2010)

APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION FACULTY
(Regular monthly meeting – 11/17/2010)

PROPOSAL: to offer an existing course GED 672, Philosophy of Education, via an online format

Rationale: Philosophy of Education is a required course in all Master's programs in the School of Education. Therefore, the course enrolls candidates with diverse backgrounds and professional goals. The course composed of this diverse candidate pool offers a unique opportunity to provide an innovative and engaging learning experience through an online environment. The School of Education is seeking approval from GSC (and, if approved, from the full faculty) to offer this online option. As part of continuous improvement, members of the School of Education will pilot this offering in summer 2011, evaluate the assessment data, and make revisions to the course based upon our evaluation of the candidates' engagement, learning outcomes, and satisfaction.

I. Mission and Role of the Institution

GED 672, Philosophy of Education, serves a vital place within each Master's program in the School of Education. It is a common course, in that candidates in all programs enroll in the course as a required component of their program of study. The course seeks to engage candidates in formulating a personal philosophy of education through gaining a deeper understanding of the foundations of philosophical thought, of the traditional, modern, and contemporary philosophies, and of the intersection of these concepts with the Christian faith. The intention of the course is to challenge candidates' ideas about their professional practice in education and to empower them with a Christian response to public schools. The prevalence of this course in our graduate programs and the content covered makes this course vital to the mission of PLNU.

Although goals of the course have been met in a traditional format, advocates of this proposal within the School of Education believe that by effectively employing an online format, the possibility exists for candidates to achieve a comparable, or possibly, a more significant level of engagement with the content of the course, the ideas of fellow candidates, and the instruction of the professor (Ajayi, 2010). By effective online instruction that utilizes the available tools offered in Eclass for collaboration, discussions, and distribution of material to engage candidates through purposeful strategies that support diverging learning modalities, it is possible for some candidates to achieve a higher level of engagement than is currently experienced in a traditional format that may afford passive engagement on the part of the candidate merely through class attendance (Thornburg, 2010).

Through a highly engaging instructional design and implementation, the mission of the university will be enhanced through this format. In this delivery option, candidates encounter the instruction of a Christian professor, the ideas of fellow candidates, and selected texts and media—all of which support a vital Christian community. The content of this course involves intentional integration of faith as candidates embrace and refine a personal philosophy of education that intersects their professional practice with their Christian faith. Through this online format, an environment will be fostered that

draws out candidates spiritual perspectives as they engage in this learning experience. Indeed, through this format, the minds of candidates can be richly engaged and challenged.

Each of the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) aligned with School of Education Learner Outcomes can be met through the online instruction for this course.

- ILO: Display openness to new knowledge and perspectives, think critically, analytically, and creatively, and communicate effectively.

The Candidate Learning Outcomes (CLOs) for this course explicitly address this goal. Through the online format of this course this outcome will be fulfilled through the delivery of content, the assignments, and the interaction between the professor and candidates as well as among candidates. Collaboration tools in Eclass, such as Discussion Boards, Groups, and Journals will be used to facilitate interaction among candidates and the professor. Presentation of content via assigned readings, brief presentations from the professor digitally recorded using Adobe Connect, and structured learning experiences will serve the purpose of engaging candidates to achieve these ILOs.

- ILO: The development of students as whole persons - A complete education prepares women and men to live full lives that integrate the pursuit of knowledge with beliefs, values, and actions. Holistic learning prepares students to make a positive difference in the world.

In this course, candidates develop of a personal philosophy of education that integrates their beliefs about education and their work as professionals in the public sector. Candidates will encounter the professional standards of their respective fields and the Wesleyan tradition of social action as they develop a personal philosophy that guides their work and presence in the world. Engagement with the professor and with fellow candidates through the collaboration tools in the online community will support the process of holistic learning.

- ILO: Serving in the context of faith: The university community understands itself to be stewards, not owners, of time, talent, and selves. Part of the call to Christians is to serve the world, working to better the condition of humankind both locally and globally.

Candidates engage in ideals regarding education and the role that education as an institution plays in society. A CLO for this course involves candidates assessing their professional growth that involves reflection on their personal philosophy and strategies to put this into action in their professional work in schools. This will be addressed through interaction with the professor through Threaded Discussions and Journaling.

Candidates will have the opportunity to select this course delivery option or the traditional format, thus the intended student population will be served by offering choice that meets their learning and professional needs. As many of our candidates in the School of Education are working professionals with competing demands for their time, this online format could afford them a greater level of flexibility with meeting course learning outcomes.

II. Accreditation

The School of Education will work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to ensure that any substantive changes meet with the approval of regional accreditation agencies. WASC only requires a Substantive Change application if the Program exceeds 50% of the curricula being delivered by technology.

III. Faculty Qualifications and Support

A. The professor to teach this course in the pilot for summer 2011 will be Josh Emmett, Ph.D. As a member of the School of Education and the Program Director for the MAT-Single Subject Program, he possesses academic qualifications to teach this course. He has taught the course in the traditional format in summer 2009, spring 2010, and summer 2010, thus he possesses familiarity with the content, the CLOs, and the assessments for the course. Dr. Emmett has participated in PLNU-offered training in use of Eclass 9, Adobe Connect, and Video Conference Certification program. He utilized a number of Eclass tools in structuring the series of courses EDU 622-629 for candidates across all Regional Centers in summer 2011. He is also a member of the Technology Committee for the School of Education.

Dr. Emmett will collaborate with Instructional Technology to employ a high-quality online instructional model and the use of best practices for electronically delivered curricula. Dr. Emmett will also collaborate with his colleague Dan Hall, member of the School of Education and co-chair of the GSC subcommittee on Technology. Dan Hall is currently completing his doctoral studies in Instructional Technology as much of his research focuses on using technology to engage learners, including the use of online instruction. He is well well-versed in best practices of online instruction and has experience in delivering online instruction and as a graduate student receiving online instruction. This collaborative process between Dr. Emmett and these colleagues will ensure a high quality course design, quality implementation of the online instruction, and inform course revisions which will be based on formative and summative feedback. This will also serve the assessment of candidate learning outcomes.

B. The School of Education will arrange for technical support with ITS to produce this instructional delivery. Such support will include access to the media server to store large media files that will be part of the instructional delivery, technical support with use of Adobe Connect, including licenses to support student access, and technical support to ensure reliability of features of Eclass. Compliance with fair use policy and copyright guidelines will occur. Dr. Emmett is participating with an ad hoc group of PLNU faculty and library personnel regarding the development of revised copyright procedures, including for digital media.

C. The university will need to develop a policy regarding the impact on faculty load for developing online courses. At this time, there is no particular impact on faculty load. The ownership of the course content remains with the university as well as the responses/communication of the students and the professor. At this time, the university does not have a policy regarding ownership of intellectual property for online course content, structure, or delivery. Presence of such a policy would address any prospective issues that might arise regarding intellectual property rights. For faculty evaluation purposes, candidates will use the IDEA evaluation forms as part of the university evaluation system.

IV. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

A. Candidate Learning Outcomes

1. The Candidate Learning Outcomes for this online course format will match the CLOs for the course offered in a traditional format. Therefore, those CLOs are currently in alignment with

ILOs and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and are not subject to change as a result of this alternate format of delivery.

2. The content (including texts, journal articles, lectures, learning activities) will be consistent with the content provided for the course offered in the traditional format. Some modifications of the learning activities, such as use of collaboration tools in Eclass and use of asynchronous instruction will be needed. Concise, supportive, mini-lectures will be recorded via Adobe Connect technology with the video saved to the media server, and accessible to candidates through Eclass in an asynchronous form. Instruction using these brief lectures will integrate reflective writing by candidates, use of discussion boards, and webquests that support the content covered in the lectures. Such use of technology affords candidates the opportunity to engage with content at a pace that meets their learning styles. Rigor, as reflected in instructional time and demands on candidates' time should be consistent in both traditional and online formats.
3. Assessments used in the traditional format course will match those assessments used in the online course. The assessments of CLOs in the traditional format (various written assessments, participation in class learning experiences, and completion of the signature assignment) will be used in the online delivery of this course. Assessment rubrics, consistent with those used in the traditional format, will be used for evaluation of candidates' academic work in the online format as well. This consistency will support the ongoing evaluation and improvement process for this course.
4. Candidates will submit assignments through Eclass using their log in. This is the same process used in traditional class arrangements. Use of threaded discussions will serve as a significant means of interaction between professor and candidates as well as between candidates. Included in this will be group learning activities using collaboration tools in Eclass as the candidates reflect upon assigned texts and the course content to integrate new learning with their professional experience. The high degree of frequency of interaction will help ensure the integrity of candidate work and participation.
5. The Culminating Activity/Final assessment will involve candidates interacting in a one-on-one meeting with the instructor using video technology to demonstrate their knowledge of CLOs. Such technology could include use of Adobe Connect or a feature in the new video conference tools that allows connection from RCs to individual computers requiring only an internet connection. The use of video technology will allow the professor and candidate to have direct contact to ensure authentic participation. Candidates will reflect upon the instruction, texts, and group learning experiences to successfully complete this final assessment. An evaluation rubric will be used.

B. Academic Instruction and Assessment

1. The use of communication and collaboration tools in Eclass (such as Discussion Boards, Journals, and Groups) will be used for instructor-student and student-student interaction in this course. Expectations regarding frequency of interaction and extent of interaction will be specifically detailed in the course syllabus as standards for accountability. The design of the course rests on this regular, extensive interaction.

2. As stated previously, matched assessments will be used for both the traditional course and the online course. Regular feedback to candidates from the instructor will serve as the catalyst for candidate engagement with the course. Additionally, peer feedback among candidates will provide other opportunities for engagement and promotion of critical thinking.

V. Student Academic Support

A. PLNU Community

A vital attribute of PLNU graduate education in the School of Education is the personal connection that candidates establish with their instructors and with other candidates. These connections offer support to candidates throughout the program and often serve as launching points for professional networking. Such a personal connection will remain a key component of this course offering. By engaging in group learning activities and threaded discussions that necessitate multiple contributions per week through Eclass, candidates can establish personal interaction with other candidates and with the instructor. In fact, anecdotal evidence from other Institutions of Higher Education reveal that candidates who embrace this learning format can develop even deeper personal connections through this type of interaction. Since many candidates in the Master's programs in the School of Education are working professionals, the frequency of personal interactions afforded in the online format (beyond a once-a-week class session in the traditional format) may more readily enrich these relationships. Colleagues who've used this virtual learning environment affirm that community can be more thoroughly supported through this learning environment than in the traditional format.

B. Information, Orientation and Access

1. Candidates enrolled in the online course will have access to library resources, the PLNU bookstore, Help Desk, and other technical support through the same means that all candidates enrolled in courses at the various Regional Centers experience. Candidates access these resources through the PLNU website and MY.POINTLOMA.EDU portal.
2. Candidates enrolled in the online course will have access to administrative services including registration, admissions, and student financial services through the same means that all candidates enrolled in courses at the various Regional Centers experience. Candidates access these resources through the PLNU website, MY.POINTLOMA.EDU portal, and phone contact with personnel in these departments.
3. Candidates enrolled in the online course will receive orientation training in the technology used for the course through an initial orientation session offered by use of Adobe Connect. The professor, Josh Emmett, will provide the training prior to the start of the course. The professor will also be available for regular office hours and for communication via phone, email, or Adobe Connect to support candidates with any issues that may arise regarding use of the learning technologies. Personnel from Information Technology will also provide Eclass orientation materials for candidates to support the use of these tools.
4. Candidates enrolled in the online course will interact with their instructor and other candidates primarily through the communication tools in Eclass. When necessary, candidates will be able to communicate with the instructor through phone or through Adobe Connect using the web-based features available with this tool. Email will also serve as a key communication tool.

5. Expectations for completion of all course requirements will be articulated through language in the course syllabus, timelines detailed in the communication tools in Eclass, time restrictions in place through features of Eclass, and personal communication from the instructor.
6. Accommodations for candidates with disabilities will be extended as with candidates enrolled in the traditional course design. To ensure that all candidates with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities, graduate school policy, as articulated in the syllabus, will be implemented in consultation with the Academic Support Center (ASC) on the San Diego campus. Current practices employed in traditional format courses will be followed in cases where accommodations are necessary, including with the use of assistive technology. Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act will be followed in the design of this course to ensure access for all candidates who select this learning format. Instructional materials will be provided in an electronic format through Eclass Learning Management System for all candidates that can be modified to support individual candidate disabilities. Features of Eclass afford options for accessibility for candidates with disabilities.
7. All measures taken to protect candidate privacy under FERPA will be extended to candidates enrolled in the online course. The Grade Center feature in Eclass is password protected and available only to the candidate. Any evaluative communication between the professor and candidates will occur through private password restricted communication tools through Eclass or email. Candidate work products (assignments, quizzes, papers, etc.) will remain in the online storage within Eclass.

VI. Support from Administration and Academic Units at PLNU

A. Information Technology Services

The School of Education, and the instructor particularly, will work closely with ITS and Instructional Technology Specialists to realize the technology requirements to implement this course by accessing presently available resources and tools to design an effective instructional delivery.

1.

PLNU currently possesses the technology necessary to implement this course delivery. Use of available resources such as Eclass, Adobe Connect, Video Conference equipment at all Regional Centers, and the media server offer the foundation for this course delivery. No additional costs are anticipated. Josh Emmett is participating in a workgroup related to copyright issues and policy. Collaboration with library personnel will help ensure compliance with the anticipated Cabinet-approved copyright policy.

2.

- a. The School of Education and the professor particularly, will work closely with Instructional Technology Specialist regarding course/program design, copyright considerations regarding digital media, piloting, technical support, assessment, and ongoing oversight. The professor has collaborated with ITS and the Instructional Technology Specialists regarding effective and efficient use of digital media.
- b. The professor will work closely with Instructional Technology Specialists to engage in support and training to teach a course in the online format. Also, collaboration with Dan Hall, member of the School of Education, will support the capacity of the professor to effectively deliver the course.

- c. The delivery of the course will be provided in pedagogically appropriate manner. Although the candidate learning outcomes and assessments will match those of the traditional format course, the organization of the online course will have a modified design. Tools in Eclass will be utilized for much of the instructional design including dissemination of selected course readings, display of course content, instructions regarding course assignments and assessments, group collaboration, and instructor-to-candidate interaction. Group learning experiences will be facilitated through the collaboration tools. Instructor delivery will be extended through pre-recorded vignettes using presentation tools in Adobe Connect. Candidates will construct journals in Eclass for direct interaction with the instructor and use the Threaded Discussions feature for interaction with all candidates in the course. Submission of signature assignment(s) will be made through TaskStream.

B. School of Education will meet with Graduate Admissions and Marketing and Creative Services to determine any additional support or resources that may be required for the online delivery of this course. At this time, we do not anticipate a need for an increase in tuition. There are no anticipated impacts on the enrollment for the program.

C. School of Education and particularly the instructor will work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to review the alignment of the online course delivery with the assessment of student learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes as well as program learning outcomes.

1. As part of the evaluation and ongoing improvement process, comparisons between the online delivery and the traditional delivery can be conducted on a number of possible metrics.

Comparison data can include:

- assessment of candidate learning outcomes through common assignments used in both the traditional format section and the online format section.
- surveys of candidate satisfaction—both IDEA course evaluations and survey of candidate satisfaction with the online format.
- feedback from the professor. The professor will draft a critique of the instructional experience using the online format. To enhance the evaluation, feedback from Dan Hall on the course materials and delivery would enrich this process.
- student competency with communication, comprehension, and analysis will occur through the assessments included in the course.
- Since there will be no additional costs incurred by the university to offer this course in this format, the level of cost effectiveness will be in the university's favor. Some marginal cost savings may be realized through the use of the online delivery as the cost of classroom space, energy usage, and facility demands will be reduced. Cost saving to the candidates can be realized by a reduction in travel expense through commuting to campus.

2. The online delivery of this course will have minimal impact on the administration of the School of Education program. The candidate learner outcomes and assessments will remain the same as the traditional course format and faculty load will not be impacted by this offering.

D. The School of Education will work with the Office of Records to make sure the online delivery of the course is consistent with the Universities policies concerning articulation, transfer credit, transcript, course equivalency, and course substitutions.

- E. The School/Department will work with the Vice Provost for Academic Administration to identify the implications to the University in terms of legal and regulatory requirements of the jurisdiction in which it operates, e.g. requirements for service to those with disabilities, copyright law, state and national requirements, etc.

The goal of this proposal is to inform PLNU School of Education and other stakeholders of the feasibility of offering a course in an online delivery format that meets candidate learning outcomes at a comparable level as through a traditional format of instruction. The evaluation and improvement process, informed by the data will reveal the viability of this format as learning option for PLNU.

References:

Ajayi, L. (2010). How asynchronous discussion boards mediate learning literacy methods courses to enrich alternative-licensed teachers' learning experiences. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*. 43(1), 1-28

Thornburg, D. (Summer, 2010). Thoughts on e-learning. *OnCUE*, 5.