EDUC 618
Comprehensive Examination Preparation
(1 unit)

Professor: Tiina Itkonen, Ph.D.
Office: Bell Tower East 2844
Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4 pm, or by appointment
Office Phone: 437-3294
Email: tiina.itkonen@csuci.edu

Class Meeting Time: Sept 13, Sept 27, Oct 11, Oct 25, Dec 6
Location BTW 2716
Prerequisites: Completion of required MA courses, or final semester

Course Description:

This is a required course for the MA in Education for students choosing the comprehensive exam for their culminating experience. Students will survey all MA program course readings and content and prepare to respond to comprehensive questions that require analysis, synthesis, and application of theory, research, and policy to real life problems.

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to evaluate the candidate's ability to (a) analyze a real life (applied) problem from policy, research, and theoretical perspectives, using course work and other non-university experiences as evidence; and (b) make informed, evidence and research based suggestions on how to address the problem, and (c) what further questions to ask and data to collect to address the problem.

Program areas within the School of Education may determine the format to be either a take-home or an on-site exam for a specific cohort.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students completing this course will be able to:

1. Students will be able to synthesize research
2. Students will be able to analyze real life problems from theoretical, research based, “best practice,” and policy perspectives
3. Students will be able to apply research to practice
4. Students will be educated consumers of research
Mission Statement
Placing students at the center of the educational experience, California State University Channel Islands provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives.

The Special Education Program Faculty is committed to infusing exceptionality, family, language, culture, technology, and gender competencies across the curricula. These competencies are drawn from the standards established by the national Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC).

COURSE MATERIALS:

1. All readings, notes, and assignments from MA coursework, including Level II

Grading Policy and Procedures

1. Attendance: Since the course meets for only 6 extended times, it is imperative to attend all sessions.
2. Sample essays: Students must complete the sample essays in order to receive instructor and peer feedback and fully be prepared for the examination.
3. Readings: Required.

Important Policies

ATTENDANCE
Given the intense nature of the course and limited amount of meeting times, all sessions must be attended. Should the candidate have extenuating circumstances such as a medical excuse, s/he should advise the professor before the class meeting.

DUE DATES
Late assignments will not be accepted.

WORK QUALITY
All assignments must be typed (10 point or 12 point font), double-spaced when appropriate, and have 1” margins to receive consideration for full credit. All referenced works must be cited using the most current APA style. Content and mechanics will be considered when grading written assignments. It is expected that all assignments will reflect graduate-level composition and exposition. Use of electronic spelling and grammar checking is encouraged.
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
Individuals who have any disability, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the professor at the start of the semester with a written note. Adaptation of methods, materials, testing, or practicum may be made as required to provide for equitable participation in the course. For further information, contact the University’s Disability Accommodation Office, at 437-8528.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Any form of scholastic dishonesty will result in an F and the CSUCI scholastic dishonesty policy will be followed. Scholastic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to): cheating on assignments or exams; and plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one’s own work anything done by another individual).

The Professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus.

Course Outline

Before first meeting: Students are contacted and asked to bring all course syllabi and notes to the first session.

Meeting 1 (September 13)
- Review of Culminating Experience handbook, EDUC 618 syllabus, and timelines.
- Review of all core and elective course syllabi.
- Students identify areas they are strong in, and areas they need to review more thoroughly.
- Review of what a comprehensive exam answer would look like.
- Students receive a sample exam question, and brainstorm how to synthesize various course content to analyze and solve the given situation, applying theory, research, education policy, and best practice.
- Assignment: Write a sample answer to the question. Due at the next meeting.

Meeting 2
- Students peer review their answers.
- Students brainstorm, with instructor guidance, how to make papers stronger.
- Students develop an action plan of their need areas (these can include, but not limited to, theories, policy, research, court cases, APA style, specific course content, etc.)
- Review of APA style.
- Assignment: Re-write essay based on peer and instructor feedback. Due at the next meeting.

Meeting 3
- Develop an outline to a sample questions. Faculty and peer review of outlines. Constructive critique on content and APA style.
• Students receive a sample exam question, and brainstorm how to synthesize various course content to analyze and solve the given situation, applying theory, research, education policy, and best practice.
• Assignment: Write an outline to a sample question. Due at the next meeting.

Meeting 4
• Faculty and peer review of outlines. Constructive critique on content and APA style.
• Students receive a sample exam question and brainstorm alone how to synthesize various course content to analyze and solve the given situation, applying theory, research, education policy, and best practice.
• Students compare brainstorming notes.
• Students problem solve of their areas of need that still require intensive review.
• Comprehensive exam questions are given to candidates. Assignment: Develop an outline.

Final meeting
• Peer review of outlines/writing.

Exam due December 8, 2008, at 4 pm.

For timelines and graduate student policies, please refer to Culminating Experience Handbook, CSUCI School of Education, September 2008.