INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Desley Plaisance
Office: 106-A Peltier
Phone: 985.448.4433 (Office)
Email: desley.plaisance@nicholls.edu

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday (10-10:30; 1:30 – 4:00) and by appointment

NOTE: These are hours that I will be in my office and/or online. In addition, I am usually online from 7 – 9 each evening. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time if you have questions and/or concerns.

Catalog Description: MATH 580. Topics in the School Mathematics Curriculum. 3-3-0. Practices, activities, and delivery methods related to curriculum development, problem solving, and critical thinking. The four focus areas are algebra, geometry, precalculus, and calculus. Standards and guidelines from professional mathematical and educational organizations are examined as rubrics for curriculum development. (27.0101)

Prerequisite or Corequisite: MATH 509. Logic and Foundations of Mathematics for Teachers. Cornerstone course normally taken in first semester of graduate study. Developing and evaluating arguments and proofs, the use of various types of reasoning, methods of proof, making and investigating conjectures.

Required Text and Other Materials:

http://standards.nctm.org/


Note: Other materials may be brought in as needed.

Course Goal:

Given that many of the students in the MCCM program plan to work in a secondary or post-secondary setting, this course has been designed to assure that MCCM graduates can apply both general and discipline-specific curriculum theory to secondary and college mathematics curriculum development.

Students will become conversant with the thought processes that are the basis of secondary and college mathematics curricula. Curriculum issues and topics emanating from these thought processes will be detailed, along with forces that shape curriculum content, integration, delivery, and design. Mathematics curriculum research will be examined in an effort to identify critical issues such as sources of curriculum, elements of quality, and factors of importance for further research.
Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1) Analyze the processes of mathematics curriculum development from epistemological, historical, psychological, and sociological perspectives.
2) Relate secondary and college mathematics curricula to external professional standards and accreditation processes as well as internal institutional development and approval processes.
3) Design, analyze, and assess mathematics programs and courses in conformance with the goals and objectives of the broader curriculum and institutional mission in addition to relevant external standards.
4) Articulate the major content themes in secondary and college mathematics courses.
5) Examine critically the role of textbooks and other materials in the mathematics curriculum.
6) Demonstrate an understanding of current research issues in mathematics curriculum at the secondary and college levels.
7) Judge sources of curriculum knowledge and research as reliable or otherwise.

Course Content (Tentative Schedule of Topics)
(Note that an overall understanding of the mathematics curriculum is the focus of the course, but each course topic will focus specifically on the areas of algebra, geometry, precalculus and calculus. In addition, analysis of appropriate research articles will be a component of each week’s topic.)

Weeks 1-2: Understanding Mathematics Curriculum
- Defining curriculum
- Historical antecedents
- Intellectual traditions
- Psychological and sociological perspectives

Weeks 3-4: External Standards & Processes for Mathematics Curriculum
- Discipline-specific educational organizations
- Development of national, state, and local standards
- Nature of accreditation and accreditation organizations
- Roles of the state departments of education
- Roles of the federal government and its agencies
- Syllabi standards

Weeks 5-7: Mathematics Curriculum Design Models
- Defining curriculum design
- Curriculum design issues
  http://mathecurriculumcenter.org/research_framework.php
- Schools of thought on curriculum
- Secondary and college design models

Week 8: Mathematics Curriculum Evaluation
- Evaluation of design effectiveness within specific courses (algebra, geometry, precalculus, and calculus)
- Evaluation of appropriate course sequencing including prerequisites
Week 9: Internal Institutional Processes
- Curriculum approval within institutional governing structures
- Overview of curriculum approval practices nationwide

Weeks 10-12: Themes and Strands in the Mathematics Disciplines (Mathematics, Computer Science)
- Major themes and strands in secondary and college mathematics
- Continuity of disciplinary themes and strands within the secondary curriculum
- Distinctions in rigor between courses for majors, service courses, and general courses for nonmajors

Week 13: Mathematics Curriculum Implementation
- Delivery modes and issues
- Development of appropriate learning materials
- Identifying appropriate textbooks

Hardware and Software Requirements:

The course will be conducted via Internet using Blackboard and e-mail. The URL for the university’s distance learning website is http://www.nicholls.edu/distance/. FAQS about Internet courses can be viewed at http://www.nicholls.edu/distance/FAQS/. A download for minimum computer requirements for taking a course on Blackboard can be found in the last question on the FAQS site given above. A Blackboard Tutorial can be viewed at http://www.nicholls.edu/distance/blackboard-tutorial/.

Course Requirements:

1) Assigned readings from books and journals
2) Substantive class discussion participation based on readings
3) Minimum of four short papers
4) Final Examination
5) Term Project: The development of a comprehensive teaching syllabus for a college-level mathematics course, the selection of an appropriate textbook, and other relevant learning materials.

Methods of Evaluation:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class discussion</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Four short papers</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term project:</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>700</td>
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Grading Scale:
- 90-100% A
- 80-89.9% B
- 70-79.9% C
- 60-69.9% D
- Below 60 F
- (630-700 pts) (560-629 pts) (490-559 pts) (420-489 pts) (0 – 419 pts)
**Class discussion** will primarily involve use of the Discussion Board on Blackboard. A minimum of 11 Forums will be posted and students will be expected to respond to a minimum of 10 Forums. Each Forum response will be 5 points. Please note that specific instructions will be provided in the Forum and not following those instructions will result in a loss of points. A single Forum may involve more than one question or topic and all questions/topics from a single Forum should be responded to in one “thread.” Follow-up comments in new threads are encouraged to allow for discussion among students.

**Short papers** will be assigned four times throughout the semester. APA format is required. In addition to purchasing the APA Guidelines, assistance can be found at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/. Specific instructions with topics will be provided for each short paper. Topics will relate to assigned readings and/or research issues. Please familiarize yourself with the NSU Library website: http://www.nicholls.edu/library/ Citations for the short papers must come from reliable sources such as research journals, books, etc. Sites such as “Wikipedia” are not considered reliable. If you are not sure if a source is considered reliable, please contact me. It is recommended that all or most research be conducted using libraries and/or library databases as opposed to open Internet searches. A specific rubric will be used to grade each short paper and that rubric will be provided within the first two weeks of class.

**Term project** description will be given within 2-3 weeks and will be due the last week of class. An exact date will be provided with the description.

**Final examination** will be “take-home” with a specified amount of time for completion. It is anticipated that the exam will be posted on Day 1 of Finals and will be due on Day 4 of Finals. Exact information will be provided within the last two weeks of class.

**Make-up Procedure:** In that all assignments and examinations will be take-home assignments, students will have ample time to complete assignments. If a student has an emergency situation resulting in a late assignment, each situation will be handled based upon the circumstances.

**Academic Honesty Policy:** Disciplinary action for academic dishonesty will be handled according to the *Code of Student Conduct*. You may find a copy at the following Internet website: http://www.nicholls.edu/documents/student_life/code_of_conduct.pdf

**Attendance Policy:** Participation in activities is required where an electronic record which clearly indicates time and date activity was submitted. For financial aid purposes, student must complete at least one activity, which is equivalent to having attended a class at least once.

**Americans With Disabilities Act:**
If you have a documented disability that requires assistance, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Office of Disability Services is located in Peltier Hall, Room 100-A. The phone number is (985) 448-4430 (TDD 449-7002).

**Academic Grievances:**
The proper procedure for filing grade appeals or grievances related to academic matters is listed in Section 5 of the *Code of Student Conduct* and at the following link: http://www.nicholls.edu/documents/student_life/code_of_conduct.pdf.
Continued Learning following an Extreme Emergency:
In order to make continued learning possible following an extreme emergency, students are responsible for:
- reading regular emergency notifications on the NSU website;
- knowing how to use and access Blackboard (or university designated electronic delivery system);
- being familiar with emergency guidelines;
- evacuating textbooks and other course materials;
- knowing their Blackboard (or designated system) student login and password;
- contacting faculty regarding their intentions for completing the course.

Faculty are responsible for:
- their development in the use of the Blackboard (or designated) software;
- having a plan for continuing their courses using only Blackboard and email;
- continuing their course in whatever way suits the completion of the course best, and being creative in the continuation of these courses;
- making adjustments or compensations to a student's progress in special programs with labs, clinical sequences or the like only in the immediate semester following the emergency.

Turnitin Policy:

By taking this course, students agree that all assignments are subject to submission to Turnitin.com, an online plagiarism prevention and detection service. All work submitted to Turnitin.com will be added to its database of papers. Turnitin's privacy policy and a description of the service are available at http://www.turnitin.com. Specifically, this service compares your paper with Internet webpages, articles in databases, and all papers previously submitted from this university or any other. Turnitin then either confirms the originality of your work or gives the source of plagiarism. In cases of detected plagiarism, the paper and supporting evidence will be handled in compliance with the Student Code of Conduct (http://www.nicholls.edu/life/policy/code_of_conduct.pdf).

Bibliography

Articles (Partial List):


**Books (Partial List):**


