Graduate Course Number: 7192

Course Title: Poverty, Barriers, Music & Success: Understanding & Helping Low-Income Music Students Succeed

Days/Times of Class Meetings: Asynchronous

Number of Credits for the course: 2

Instructor with phone number, email address, and office hours: Don Stinson; 815-919-8980; dstinson@vandercook.edu; Appointments available by request.

“This Syllabus is a general outline of the course and is subject to change upon notification to the students during a regular class session.”

Student Engagement Statement: Each hour of credit implies a 50-minute class period plus 2 hours of outside the class preparation or its equivalent. Students in compressed courses are required to prepare for the first day of classes by preparing the pre-course readings and any pre-class assignments.

Course Description: For some students and families, financial and time barriers are a limiting factor in their participation in school music. There are many labels available to describe students without a lot of money and/or support: Low-income, high needs, underserved, less fortunate, poor, poverty-stricken and impoverished are just a few. In a pandemic world, we may see more families afflicted by poverty, and therefore, we must be prepared to help our students and community.

This course will help teachers to understand where low-income and high-needs students are coming from, present strategies and ideas to help with teaching, supporting, and advocating for students from low-income and high need situations, and will help instructors develop plans to locate financial resources for their students and programs. Every student deserves a good teacher and a fair chance at success, and band, orchestra, choir and general music can be offered to all students.
Student Learning Outcomes | Outcomes Assessments
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Students will be able to inspect various data sources and research to further understand empathy, advocacy, and designing instruction for students. | Project: School Report Card summarization; identify how your program is reflected by the school report card.

Students will be able to differentiate between the main types of poverty that affect students and implement intervention plans to positively affect students. | Project: Final Project proposal.

Students will question the current philosophies and trends in music education and determine whether these guidelines are fair and equitable. Furthermore, students will suggest new considerations for inclusion in a music education philosophy. | Final Project: Program Improvement based off School Report Card. Create action items to serve an underserved population or student in your program.

Program-Level Outcomes Addressed: Professionalism in Teaching - Candidates will participate in group and character-building activities by working alone and with others to explore personal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to personal and professional growth. Students will demonstrate the ability to: Research best educational practices; Discern new uses for information from a variety of course work; Reflectively discuss their teaching and ways to enhance it, Strength in Character- Candidates will develop new approaches to the praxis of
teaching by learning about, experiencing, and using best practice techniques as borne out in proven traditional practices and those demonstrated as effective through current research. Students will demonstrate the ability to:

Discuss a variety of educational approaches; Describe why particular educational approaches are chosen for use;
Choose and apply new approaches to the teaching praxis.

Course Requirements and Assessment:
Regular participation in posted online forums and classroom discussions.
Reading and understanding of posted reading material.

Grading Breakdown:
Online Forum and Classroom Discussion: 50%
School Report Card Summary: 15%
Final Project Proposal: 15%
Program Improvement Proposal: 20%

Instructional Materials:

Course Bibliography:


Course Calendar or Schedule: Sessions are asynchronous and are organized by weekly discussions and topics.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to participate in weekly online discussions at their convenience.

Candidate Conduct

“An important part of VanderCook’s Conceptual Framework and Candidate Dispositions and Outcomes is the focus on professionalism and character. Specific descriptors include participation as well as attendance, flexibility in the face of changing circumstances and institutional needs, the commitment to continual personal development, self-reflection and growth, respect for the academic community and the individuals and resources of that community, and behavior, speech and dress that is appropriate and respectful in the educational environment. Failure to observe standards of professional behavior may result in referral to the Standards Committee and/or the appropriate dean. Consistent concerns in this area will have an impact on successful completion of the program.”

- Cell Phone/Computer Policy: An important part of VanderCook’s Conceptual Framework and Candidate Dispositions and Outcomes is the focus on professionalism and character. Specific descriptors include participation as well as attendance, flexibility in the face of changing circumstances and institutional needs, the commitment to continual personal development, self-reflection and growth, respect for the academic community and the individuals and resources of that community, and behavior, speech and dress that is appropriate and respectful in the educational environment. Failure to observe standards of professional behavior may result in referral to the Standards Committee and/or the appropriate dean. Consistent concerns in this area will have an impact on successful completion of the program.

Health and Safety

VanderCook College of Music is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Basic information regarding the maintenance of health and safety within the contexts of practice, performance, teaching and listening is provided throughout the academic year. Health and safety information specific to this course will be addressed. It is the responsibility of each individual musician to take an active role in making informed decisions to help maintain their own health and safety.

Academic Honesty

“Candidates are expected to maintain the highest standards of integrity in their academic work. Failure to do so will jeopardize a candidate’s success in the program. Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- Presenting another’s words, music, or concepts as your own by failing to acknowledge or properly cite the source.”
● Communicating or receiving answers or information to/from another in a testing situation.
● Consulting notes or any other source of answers/information in a testing situation, unless the instructor authorizes such access.
● Making available or accessing tests or quizzes from current or previous classes unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
● Bringing, by any means, answers or information into a testing situation except as explicitly authorized by the instructor.
● Collaborating or turning in jointly produced work on any test or assignment that is intended to reflect individual effort.”

Plagiarism
“Plagiarism means taking someone else’s words, ideas, data or work and presenting them as your own. This could mean an exact duplication of someone else’s work without proper citation of the source, or it could mean you present it with only small changes and do not cite the source. Plagiarism can occur in art, music, literature, or technology – really in any area of intellectual work.

All work submitted should be properly credited to the original source of the information or idea whether the source is a book, Internet site, article, or any other medium. In written work, quotation marks or block indentations show direct quotations and the source must be cited. If information that is not common knowledge is paraphrased or summarized from a source, that source (including websites) must be cited. Failure to do so in academic assignments represents cheating and carries the appropriate penalties.

Copyright compliance is the goal of VanderCook College. Information to help with clarification of what constitutes fair use of copyrighted material, including photocopying, is on permanent reserve in the Ruppel Library.

No candidate should expect to receive a passing grade on any test or assignment that reflects dishonesty or academic irregularity. Cheating in any form may result in failure of the class and academic expulsion.”

Disability Statement
“If a student has a disability which might interfere with that student’s ability to function in this course it is the responsibility of that student to notify the instructor at the beginning of the course.”