

ABE 503
Graduate Seminar: Integrity, Teaching and Research
Course Syllabus – Fall 2026

Thursdays at 12:00 – 12:50
Room 208 AESB
Credit: 1 hour

Coordinators: Kent Rausch and
Kelsie Woodward
Office hours: by appointment
Course web page: TBD

Description: Introduction to teaching and pedagogy, strategies for engaging students, presentation techniques, feedback, research integrity and thesis preparation.

Course Format: One 50 minute lecture and discussion period per week for 16 weeks, all in person.

Audience: Students enrolled in ABE or ETMAS graduate programs (thesis based).

Objectives:

1. Explore resources and programs designed to prepare students to become effective teachers, and researchers understand teaching methods and pedagogy
2. Learn strategies for engaging students and other audiences, theory and application of presentation techniques
3. Gain understanding of methods for gathering feedback on teaching
4. Develop methods to assure research integrity, professional ethics, project management and data collection techniques.
5. Become aware of thesis writing and submission processes

Expectations of Students:

1. Arrive for class and sign in by 12:00. This is professional courtesy to our invited speakers. We will start promptly. If your schedule prohibits you from arriving by 12:00, please talk with the coordinators in advance. Late arrivals may not be counted.
2. Attend all classes and actively engage with each speaker and topic. Your behavior during guest presentations represents our department and its programs.
3. Come to each seminar prepared to ask the presenter a question.
4. At all times, seek to gain new understanding from the seminar topic even if it may seem peripheral to your interests.
5. Complete all assignments.
6. Provide constructive feedback to the coordinator and/or department head.

Expectations of Instructors:

1. Communicate during class as well as via email and Canvas announcements.
2. Organize seminars and class discussions that are helpful to students' education and degree program.
3. Be attentive to students' concerns and refer them to appropriate resources.

Student Effort

This 1 hour credit course will involve 1 hour of classroom time and a minimum of 2 hours of out-of-class work each week. See <https://provost.illinois.edu/policies/policies/courses/credit-hour-definition/> for details.

Grading and Assignments:

Attendance: It is expected that you will attend each seminar each week unless you have made prior arrangements. Attendance will be taken each week. You are allowed two absences for any reason without penalty. An REF is to be submitted even when class is missed due to absence.

Reflective Evaluation Form (REF): Following each seminar, submit a form that requires you to reflect on each topic presented. The REF will be tailored to each seminar topic. Slides from the seminar may be available and can be consulted as you complete the form. Other times, you may have to submit additional items with your REF (e.g., draft syllabus).

Professional Ethics Case Study Essay: Develop an essay for a specific ethics case study. A grading rubric will be posted with details when the case study is assigned. See the separate assignment description for details and guidelines.

Assignments

Component	Points	%
Attendance (15 weeks @ 5)	75	18
Lightning presentation	100	24
Reflective Evaluation Form, REF (~15 @ 10) Includes Lightning talk evaluations, and a syllabus	150	35
Professional Ethics Case Study Essay	100	24
Total	425	100

Grading Scale – a plus/minus scale will be used

	Course points earned	% earned
A+	412.0 or higher	97.0 or higher
A	395.0 to 411.9	93.0 to 96.9
A-	382.0 to 394.9	90.0 to 92.9
B+	369.0 to 381.9	87.0 to 89.9
B	352.0 to 368.9	83.0 to 86.9
B-	340.0 to 351.9	80.0 to 82.9
C+	327.0 to 339.9	77.0 to 79.9
C	310.0 to 326.9	73.0 to 76.9
C-	297.0 to 309.9	70.0 to 72.9
D+	284.0 to 296.9	67.0 to 69.9
D	267.0 to 283.9	63.0 to 70.0
D-	255.0 to 266.9	60.0 to 62.9
F	254.9 or lower	Less than 60.0

Late Policy: All assignments are to be submitted on Canvas through the appropriate portal and will be due by 12:00 on the Thursday after they are assigned. If an assignment is submitted within 24 hours of the time due, they will be subject to a 20% late penalty. Submissions more than 24 hours late will be given a zero grade.

Course Schedule – see separate document in Canvas

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy. Use of AI to create essays and other written work that is

projected to be your own creation is dishonest and therefore is a type of plagiarism and not allowed in this class. Specifically, the ethics essay writings should be your own. AI can be a helpful tool in checking grammar, spelling and organization, but should not be relied upon for writing your own compositions. Specific proper and prohibited uses of AI are given in the ABE 503 Canvas page. Please refer to these guidelines before submitting a writing assignment.

Academic Integrity. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Student Code should also be considered as part of this syllabus. Students should pay particular attention to Article 1, Part 4: Academic Integrity. Read the Code at: <http://studentcode.illinois.edu/>.

Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade. Every student is expected to review and abide by the Academic Integrity Policy: <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/>.

In this course you are expected to produce your own work in all assignments. Creative writing assignments such as the Ethics Essay are expected to be original writing of your own. Written assignments will be submitted through a software tool that compares your writing against a large database as well as to the work of your current classmates and previously submitted assignments. Assignments with close matches to other work will be flagged and investigated.

Ignorance is not an excuse for any academic dishonesty. It is your responsibility to read this policy to avoid any misunderstanding. Do not hesitate to ask the instructor(s) if you are ever in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or any other breach of academic integrity.

Mental Health. Significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, substance/alcohol misuse or interferences in eating or sleep can have an impact on academic performance, social development, and emotional wellbeing. The University of Illinois offers a variety of confidential services including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric services, and specialized screenings which are covered through the Student Health Fee. If you or someone you know experiences any of the above mental health concerns, it is strongly encouraged to contact or visit any of the University's resources provided below. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do for yourself and for those who care about you.

- Counseling Center (217) 333-3704
- McKinley Health Center (217) 333-2700
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255
- Rosecrance Crisis Line (217) 359-4141 (available 24/7, 365 days a year)

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

Community of Care. As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Student Assistance Center (217-333-0050 or <http://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/>). Based on your report, the staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe.

Further, as a Community of Care, we want to support you in your overall wellness. We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the Student Assistance Center (SAC) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources.

Students with Disabilities. To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor as soon as possible and provide the instructor with a Letter of Academic Accommodations from Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES). To ensure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the

beginning, students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class should apply for services with DRES and see the instructor as soon as possible. If you need accommodations for any sort of disability, please speak to me after class, or make an appointment to see me or see me during my office hours. DRES provides students with academic accommodations, access, and support services.

To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 217-333-1970, e-mail disability@illinois.edu or visit the DRES website at <http://www.disability.illinois.edu/>. Here is the direct link to apply for services at DRES, <https://www.disability.illinois.edu/applying-services>.

Disruptive Behavior. Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution (<https://conflictresolution.illinois.edu>; conflictresolution@illinois.edu; 333-3680) for disciplinary action.

Emergency Response Recommendations. Emergency response recommendations and campus building floor plans can be found at the following website: <https://police.illinois.edu/em/run-hide-fight/>. I encourage you to review this website within the first 10 days of class.

Religious Observances. Illinois law requires the University to reasonably accommodate its students' religious beliefs, observances, and practices in regard to admissions, class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and work requirements. Students should complete the [Request for Accommodation for Religious Observances](#) form should any instructors require an absence letter in order to manage the absence. In order to best facilitate planning and communication between students and faculty, students should make requests for absence letters as early as possible in the semester in which the request applies.

Sexual Misconduct Reporting Obligation. The University of Illinois is committed to combating sexual misconduct. Faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX and Disability Office. In turn, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office will provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options.

A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here: wecare.illinois.edu/resources/students/#confidential.

Other information about resources and reporting is available here: wecare.illinois.edu.