



## Syllabus

### Continuing Education for Educational Professionals

**Course Title:** What Great Teachers Do Differently

**Credit Hours:** 1 Graduate Credit

**Course Format:** Online

#### Instructor Name & Contact Information:

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#### CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

What are the beliefs and behaviors that set great teachers apart? In this introductory course, learners will use portions of Todd Whitaker's book *What Great Teachers Do Differently* to explore, define, and reflect on tactics to become more effective in the classroom. Learners will gain knowledge and understanding on why it's about more than relationships, how to focus on a consistent, engaging learning environment, and the importance of choosing the right mode - business, parent child - to improve classroom management. This course is for ALL grade levels, curricular area and educational experience. Learners will be inspired and ready to do the things that matter most for the people who matter most - students!

#### LEARNING GOALS and OUTCOMES:

- ◆ Clarify best educator practices
- ◆ Gain strategies for effective classroom management using 19 keys of *What Great Teachers Do Differently*
- ◆ Understand the impact of creating life-altering relationships with students and families
- ◆ Learning how to use an empowered mindset to develop a positive classroom culture
- ◆ Analyze and apply tactics outlined in *What Great Teachers Do Differently*
- ◆ Complete reflection activities to reinforce learning
- ◆ Analyze beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and interactions that form life in the classroom and schools.
- ◆ Gather information from several sources on supporting and reaching various student populations in the classroom
- ◆ Discuss patterns of classroom interactions that are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect
- ◆ Discuss what motivates children to do well in school and in the outside world

- ◆ Employ constructive use of consequences and practice empathy in classroom role-play situations
- ◆ Employ nineteen keys in ways supported by research strategies (Nineteen Things That Matter Most)

**Text(s) and Other Materials:**

Whitaker, T. (2012). *What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Link on website to purchase:

Paper edition:

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/what-great-teachers-do-differently-todd-whitaker/1136755546>

(We will be referencing the 3rd edition)

Audible:

<https://www.audible.com/pd/What-Great-Teachers-Do-Differently-Audiobook/1977336493>

**Teaching/Learning Activities:**

Chapter discussions, video clips, multimedia presentations, graphic organizers, teaching tools, classroom discussion, lecture, etc. will all be implemented to facilitate content mastery.

**Course Requirements:**

Requirement	Points
Module One	100
Module Two	100
Module Three	100
Module Four	100
FINAL ASSIGNMENT	50
TOTAL	450

**Course Outline/Content:** This course will choose specific chapters/sets of chapters for the one credit hour option.

Instructional Activity	Description of Activity
<p>Module One: 100 points (50 pts Discussion Board, 50 pts Personal Journal)</p> <p>Review Syllabus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics covered in posted lecture notes, articles, content presentation and websites:</li> </ul> <p><b>KEY CONCEPTS:</b></p> <p>Why Look at Great?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective teachers study effective teachers</li> </ul> <p>It's People, Not Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are a school's keystone of greatness</li> <li>• It is never about programs; it is always about people</li> <li>• Classrooms without walls (historical look)</li> <li>• Assertive discipline: The Problem or the Solution?</li> <li>• The Poor Lecturer's Classroom</li> </ul> <p>The Power of Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations</li> <li>• Rules</li> <li>• Stop the Thumping</li> <li>• Consequences</li> <li>• Set Expectations Start of the Year</li> <li>• We are still undefeated</li> </ul> <p>If You Say Something, Mean It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice how you want to play</li> <li>• Follow through</li> <li>• Smile when you say it</li> <li>• Don't lose your power</li> </ul> <p>Required Reading:</p> <p>Whitaker, T. (2012). <i>What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most</i>. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education. (1-22) - 32 pages (including introduction)</p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION QUESTIONS 50 points</b></p> <p>Module One Reflection Questions: a. Quote from the book "What's the point of focusing on the past? Directing energy there?"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Studying Effective Teachers. Educators who want to promote good teaching find value in examining what effective teachers do that other teachers do not. Compose a one-page reflection on your memories/experiences with amazing teachers. Focus on what you felt vs. what the process of the teacher.</li> <li>2. In what ways is looking at ineffective teachers pointless? On the other hand, why must we also study less effective teachers and schools when determining what constitutes great teachers and schools?</li> </ol> <p><b>PERSONAL JOURNAL PROMPT: 50 points</b></p> <p>Effective teachers are always examining their teaching and skills, and trying to refine their skills to best meet the needs of their students. I am sure you will have some "I do that!" moments, and possibly some "Why didn't I think about that?" moments.</p> <p>Discuss this with 4-5 supporting statements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Read and respond thoughtfully and critically to another learner</li> <li>e. The author wrote a note to herself and taped it to her desk that read, "Be careful. Everything you say, every single day, may be recorded in your students' hearts forever." Try this for the duration of this course.</li> </ol>

Module Two: 100 points (50 pts Discussion Board, 50 pts Personal Journal)

- Topics covered in posted lecture notes, articles, content presentation and websites

**KEY CONCEPTS:**

Prevention versus Revenge

- When a student misbehaves
- Teacher's Bag of Tricks
- Respect Your Students, Their Parents - and Yourself. Discipline with dignity

It is More than Relationships

- Relationships, Expectations, and Consistency (start of the school year)
- It Takes All Three
- You cannot relationship your way into being an effective teacher

Required Reading:

Whitaker, T. (2012). *What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education (23-37) 14 pages

This module focuses heavily on the Teacher Bag-of-Tricks. What is your first reaction as an educator of what to do when a student misbehaves? What can teachers do when a student misbehaves (pg. 25)

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Module Reflection Questions: a. Quote from the book "Great teachers never forget that it's about more than relationships. Relationships are important but are not magic beans. Great teachers work hard to deliver consistent, engaging instruction.

Discuss the differences in the ways that effective and ineffective teachers react when a student misbehaves

What are three specific teacher behaviors in every teacher's bag of tricks that great teachers never exhibit?

Why is it important that teachers focus not only on relationship building, but also on creating engaging lessons and ensuring student learning?

Discuss this with 4-5 supporting statements

**PERSONAL JOURNAL PROMPT:**

Reflect back on a situation (or imagine a situation) in your classroom when, despite your best efforts to clearly establish proactive expectations, you were compelled to refer a misbehaving student to a school administrator. Wrote about what behavior prompted the office referral and the result of the student's visit to the office. Did the student's behavior change? Did the student come back from the office angry? How did you follow up on the student's misbehavior in the days that followed? In hindsight, would you have changed how you handled the misbehavior? Do you feel that the school administrator should have handled the referral differently?

b. Reflect back on your own journey as a student. Think of 2-3 teachers who still stand out as people with whom you had a great relationship. Conversely,

	<p>think of 2-3 teachers with whom you had very little in the way of a personal relationship and perhaps even a negative relationship with.</p>
<p><b>Module Three:</b> 100 points (50 pts Discussion Board, 50 pts Personal Journal)</p> <p><b>KEY CONCEPTS</b></p> <p><b>Ten Days Out of Ten</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great teachers create a positive atmosphere each day in their classrooms despite inevitable negatives such as irate parents, troubled students, and limited resources.</li> <li>• Effective teachers treat everyone with dignity and respect ten days out of ten. They may not like all their students, but they act like they do.</li> <li>• Focusing on all the positive things in their classrooms and schools gives teachers the drive and energy to get through the less positive times</li> </ul> <p><b>Be the Filter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is the filter who models appropriate behavior in the classroom. If the model teachers establish is positive and professional, students will match it; if the teacher’s attitude is negative and confrontational, students will respond in kind.</li> <li>• Great teachers realize that teaching is a demanding job, yet they focus on its rewards and challenges in a positive way rather than complaining.</li> </ul> <p><b>Don’t Need to Repair - Always Do Repair</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective educators know that a relationship, once damaged, may never be the same.</li> <li>• Great teachers practice behaviors for repairing a situation; they also teach students behaviors for repairing, rather than escalating, a negative situation</li> </ul> <p><b>Required Reading:</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</b></p> <p>Why must great teachers always act as if they like all their students?</p> <p>Define the five necessary attributes of effective praise: authentic, specific, immediate, clean, and private. Explain why each is important and provide an example. Which of the five characteristics is often most challenging for educators? Why? Who determines how much you praise someone? Who feels better each time you do?</p> <p>In what ways do teachers serve as “filters” at the schools in which they teach?</p> <p>In what ways can choosing not to share information with colleagues create a more productive environment?</p> <p>Why is the simple act of say “I am sorry that happened” such a powerful tool?</p> <p>Discuss this with 4-5 supporting statements. Create 2-3 options for greeting students based on your educational situation.</p> <p><b>PERSONAL JOURNAL PROMPT: (3) hours)</b>  On page 67, the text notes that one reason teachers give for not praising more is lack of time. Make the time during the next school days (or make a plan for the upcoming/past school year) to praise at least different students and give different colleagues. For the students, the praise should take the form of a phone call to parents praising a specific behavior or accomplishment or a postcard or handwritten note sent home in the mail. For colleagues, send a positive note via the teacher's mailbox (or electronic mail)</p>

<p>Whitaker, T. (2012). <i>What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most</i>. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education (61-82)</p>	<p>Record your reaction to this activity as well as the reactions of the people you praised.</p> <p>Make a conscious decision, upon your return to school (break, summer, weekend) to filter out negative situations that inevitably face you, whether they come from inside or outside the school. Respond cheerfully to any colleague who asks you how you are doing. Politely dismiss any negative comments made by your teacher peers. Brag about your students each day to anyone who will listen. Tell your students at the end of each day that you can't wait to return to school the following day because you are so excited about what they will be learning tomorrow. After doing this for several consecutive days, record in your study guide any changes you have noticed in your own perspective or those of others, including students you teach and your colleagues.</p>
<p><b>Module Four:</b> 100 points (50 pts Discussion Board, 50 pts Personal Journal)</p> <p><b>KEY CONCEPTS</b></p> <p><b>The Ability to Ignore</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great teachers are aware of almost everything that happens in their classrooms, and they know which situations demand immediate attention and which can wait for a more teachable moment.</li> <li>Great teachers do not automatically react every time a student steps a little out of line.</li> <li>High achievers put so much of themselves into what they do that any criticism, no matter how minor, can become a personal dig. This is true of both high-achieving students and high-achieving teachers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Base Every Decision on the Best People</b></p>	<p><b>DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</b></p> <p>Why do great teachers ignore certain behaviors?</p> <p>Why do most students misbehave?</p> <p>How do great teachers balance the contradictory themes of ignoring certain behaviors and paying attention to those students who crave it?</p> <p>Quote from the book "Children are not born with a natural aversion to reading." (pg. 171) Discuss this with 4-5 supporting statements.</p> <p>Create 2-3 options for greeting students based on your educational situation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great teachers have a plan and purpose for everything they do. They reflect on what did and did not work and adjust accordingly.</li> <li>Great teachers take responsibility for what happens and plan for success. Less effective teachers allow classroom events to happen randomly and then blame others when things do not work out well.</li> <li><b>Great teachers do not try to prove who is in charge of their classrooms; everyone already knows.</b></li> <li><b>Great teachers always treat students as if the students' parents were in the room. They deal with students who disrupt learning, but they do it respectfully.</b></li> </ul> <p>Required Reading: Whitaker, T. (2012). <i>What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most</i>. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education (83-97)</p>	<p><b>PERSONAL JOURNAL PROMPT:</b> The author notes the advice of a friend who is a police officer: "You can look for trouble or you can look away." Similarly, William James famously theorized, "The art of being wise is knowing what to overlook." Take a moment to write your reactions to these two quotes as they relate to the classroom setting. What behaviors that often occur in the classroom should teachers regularly overlook? When should they go with the flow and when should they stop and take a stand? How do they determine which disturbances are trivial and should be ignored and which should be responded to? How can they respond without escalating the situation?</p>
<p><b>FINAL PROJECT/ASSIGNMENT</b> <b>50 points (Final Journal Reflection 25 points, Final Focused Reflection 25 points)</b></p> <p>In Every Situation, Ask Who is Most Comfortable and Who is Least Comfortable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great teachers avoid lecturing the entire class about rules and never punish the entire class because of a few students' misbehavior.</li> <li>Effective educators attempt to make people who do the right thing feel comfortable. They reinforce such people and such people.</li> <li>Great teachers treat everyone as if they are good and continually ask themselves who is most comfortable and who is least comfortable with each decision they make.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pre-planning, brainstorming, compiling, researching, initial composition of reflection, revisions and final composition of reflection of work.</b></p> <p><b>FINAL JOURNAL RESPONSE: (25 points)</b></p> <p>Why does Whitaker suggest that teachers ask a superstar teacher in the building to observe them while teaching? Reach out to two teachers who have a different number of years of experience. (20 years, 5 years, etc) Answer the questions: What was known as the teacher, who the teacher believed they were as a teacher, and what was done as the teacher on a consistent basis over the multiple years.</p>

<p>Put Yourself in Their Position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even when a group of students look pretty much the same, great teachers know that every student has unique strengths and needs, ideas and emotions, troubles and joys. Great teachers work effectively with all students by remembering to put themselves in their students' shoes periodically.</li> <li>• Effective teachers have a keen sense of self-awareness. They know their strengths and weaknesses and consistently try to build on the former and improve on the latter.</li> </ul> <p>Clarify Your Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All effective teachers have a core set of beliefs to which they adhere as educators.</li> <li>• The real challenge - and the real accomplishment - is to get all students to care about what happens in the classroom and to create an atmosphere in which it is "cool to care"</li> </ul>	<p><b>FINAL BIG PICTURE REFLECTION: (25 points)</b></p> <p>In his book <i>Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't</i>, Jim Collins maintains that good is actually the enemy of great. Reason there are so few great companies is that so many people are willing to settle for good companies. He extends this example to schools. Maintaining anonymity, identify two teachers who are settling for good and two teachers who always strive for greatness. What is the obvious difference between the two pairs? Write your insights and reflect on what the great teachers are doing differently from those classified as merely "good".</p> <p>*Collins, J. C. (2001). <i>Good to great: Why some companies make the leap ... and others don't</i>. New York, NY: HarperBusiness.</p>
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**Attendance/Participation:**

**Student Expectations:**

- ◆ The discussion board is a crucial part of this class. Not only will you be asked to respond to questions from each module, but you will also need to read and respond to others to fully benefit from this learning experience.
- ◆ Stay on task and answer the question being addressed
- ◆ Be respectful and polite at all times when responding to your fellow classmates even if you do not share the same opinion
- ◆ Read all posts so you do not repeat what someone else has written
- ◆ No cursing
- ◆ Please be thoughtful and use complete sentences.
- ◆ All discussion comments should be made before the start of the next Module.

- ◆ Complete all four sections showing a competent understanding of the material presented in each section
- ◆ Complete all course readings, journal articles and essay writing assignments with the minimum word count.
- ◆ Complete course evaluation form at the end of the course

**Grading:**

<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>GPA</i>
100% to 94%	A	4.0
93% to 90%	A-	3.7
89% to 87%	B+	3.3
86% to 84%	B	3.0
83% to 80%	B-	2.7
79% to 77%	C+	2.3
76% to 70%	C	2.0
69% to 67%	D+	1.3
66% to 64%	D	1.0
63% to 60%	D-	0.7
59% and below	F	0.0

**EVALUATION TOOLS:**

Discussion Board (online board entries)

You will receive a participation grade for each module. The scoring is as follows:

- 3 You participated in all components of the module.
- 2 You participated in most components of the module.
- 1 You participated in some components of the module.
- 0 You did not participate in the module.

The sum of your participation grades will be included as a % of final grade.

**Discussion Rubric:**

Score:

- 3 You thoroughly participated in the discussion (3 or more posts). Your contributions were relevant to the posted topic(s), detailed & keep the conversation moving.
- 2 You participated in the discussion (2 posts). Your contributions were relevant to the posted topic(s) & helped keep the conversation moving.
- 1 You participated in the discussion (1 post). Your contributions were somewhat relevant to the posted topic(s).
- 0 You did not participate in the discussion.

## Reflection Rubric

Exceptional 80-100% A

Almost There 70-60%

Not yet 59% and below

	Exceptional	Almost There	Not yet
<b>Engagement</b>	The entry reflects in-depth engagement with the topic	The entry reflects moderate engagement with the topic	The post reflects passing engagement with the topic or No evidence of student engagement with the topic
<b>Perspectives</b>	Considers multiple perspectives when appropriate; demonstrates awareness of limitations of authors own perspective	New insights are offered, but they are not fully developed or not significantly put into context of other perspectives	No new insights are presented within a larger context
<b>Use of Examples</b>	Coherently integrates examples with explanations or analysis	Explanations and analysis are mostly based on examples or other evidence	Few to no additional examples; this post is mostly a description or summary

## PERSONAL JOURNAL RUBRIC:

Excellent 90-100% A

Very Good 80-90%

Satisfactory 70-80%

Needs Work 60-70%

Unsatisfactory 69% and below

CRITERIA Score	EXCELLENT 4	VERY GOOD 3	SATISFACTORY 2	NEEDS WORK 1	UNSATISFACTORY 0
<b>Writing Quality</b>	Strong writing style with clear ability to express thoughts and point of view. Excellent grammar, syntax, spelling, etc.	Good writing style with solid ability to convey meaning. Very good grammar, syntax, spelling, etc.	Writing style conveys meaning adequately. Some grammar, syntax and spelling errors.	Difficulty expressing ideas, feelings or descriptions. Limited syntax. Needs to work on grammar, spelling, etc.	Considerable difficulty expressing ideas or descriptions clearly. Many grammatical, syntactical, and spelling errors.
<b>WHAT?</b>	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Description of Service-Learning Session(s)</b>	Clear incisive description that reveals situation and dynamics vividly. Excellent use of adjectives, metaphors, etc. Sensitive and perceptive.	Solid description that fully discloses the scene. Some interpretation of events, meanings, etc.	Factual description of sequence of events with little "texture" or interpretation. Clearly not fully developed.	Brief or general statement with few details. Little if any sense of meaning.	Little description at all, or brief, perfunctory statements glossing over the event(s). The reader has little idea what transpired.
<b>SO WHAT?</b>	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Insights and Understanding</b>	Definite insights into issues and implications of events for self and students. Aware of increased complexity of issues and situations.	Some insights into situations, issues and personal change/growth. Making connections with implications for self or students. Some sense of complexity.	Positive experience at an intuitive or emotive level. Gains affectively from the 'experience' but insights based on conscious reflection are few or simplistic.	Doing the assignment. Neutral experience without personal resonance or impact.	Rigid attitude. Resistant to change in established point of view.
<b>NOW WHAT?</b>	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Commitment and Challenge</b>	Creates a personal plan of action or personal challenge based on commitment to class or insights into teaching.	Creates a 'next step' based on previous events or progress in teaching.	Committed to class through rapport or personal caring. Notes class' progress.	Somewhat committed to class and/or teaching. Unchallenged.	Not committed to the class or teaching. Definitely not exerting self to a level of commitment.
<b>Progress and Leadership Development</b>	4	3	2	1	0
	Significant growth or personal development. Evidence of synthesis of experience into goals or plan of action, with implications for the future.	Increased sensitivity, change of attitude, and awareness of connections.	Steady course. Incremental progress of which the teaching assistant may not be personally aware.	No progress. Repetitious experience and reflection.	Losing ground. Bored or frustrated. Negative attitude in reflection.

Created by Dr. David Burton

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students who enroll at Framingham State University agree to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. They shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. Academic honesty requires but is not limited to the following practices: appropriately citing all published and unpublished sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise expressed, in all of the student's oral and written, technical and artistic work.

**Academic Accommodations Policy:**

*Please refer to the FSU handbook found here:*

<https://www.framingham.edu/Assets/uploads/academics/center-for-academic-success-and-advising/documents/disability-services/Accessing%20Academic%20Accommodations.pdf>