

EDM310 is Different

Fall 2011

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EDM310 Needs Your Attention

9

Hours A Week

Introduction

This are 6 essential documents that make up the Instruction Manual for EDM310 Fall 2011:

[Syllabus for EDM310 Fall 2011](#)

[EDM310 is Different - An Introduction](#)

[Project Instructions](#)

[Required Activities Instructions](#)

[Blog Post Assignments](#)

Your Personal Checklist which you will “create” following the instructions for Activity #3 in the Required Activities Instructions. This document contains all of the due dates and also allows you to keep track of your progress in this class. It will reside in your Google Docs. **Use it!**

EDM310 is Different

Ways in Which EDM310 is Different

1. You are training to be a professional. Act like one. What does this mean? Do your best. Have a positive attitude. Do your work on time. Dress appropriately. Don't fail the third grade by failing to use correct spelling, grammar, HTML, and capitalization in your posts. When you read Mrs. Yollis' instructions for her third graders, and learn [why she rejected some comments left by EDM310 for her students](#) you will understand this better! Be an enthusiastic learner. Ask questions. Seek "answers."
2. You are leaving an intellectual trail. All of your work is in the public. You will be Googled. Be sure you make a good impression when you are found on Google.
3. One of the class mottos is: *I don't know. Let's find out.* We don't expect you to know it. All information is in all places at all times. And information is not just text. Its images, videos and sound as well. It's OK not to know. Questions are more important than the answers. Just be sure to find out. And let's is plural. Ask for help. And don't wait to do so. Finding out is a cooperative venture.
4. A central question of this class is: **Should all teachers be technologically literate?** What do we mean by technological literacy? Are you technologically literate?
5. In EDM310 grades are replaced (to the extent possible) by self-reflection. Honest self-reflection. We automatically get an enormous amount of information about what you do, when you do, what computer you are on, and who else contributes to the project on which you are working. You need to honestly evaluate your own work in EDM310.
6. Projects. EDM is a project based class. No burps allowed. **No burp back education in EDM310.** You have, for the most part, had burp back classes. The teacher drills a hole in your head, pours in chopped up facts, and gets out of the way while you burp it back. In EDM310 we coach. You work. Projects, projects, projects. EDM310 is more like an apprenticeship, a sports team. Practice and Projects.
7. We respect and encourage creativity in EDM310. And we try to provide you with the freedom and opportunity to exercise your creativity. Take advantage of that.
8. We travel the world in EDM310. One goal is to break down the classroom walls and to connect you with kids and teachers throughout the world. Watch the map. Add your own map. See how much of the world you encounter and make friends in.
9. To be successful, EDM takes disciplined, self-directed work. We ask that you allocate 9 hours a week to EDM310. Many students get very interested in the work we do in EDM310 and spend even more time than that on EDM310. And why do we say nine hours? It is generally accepted by all faculty members that a course should require 3 times the credit hours for the course. Why is this the case? I am not sure, but my guess is that a "full" course load is considered to be 5 courses which equates to 45 hours a week - close to what is considered a full work week in the United States.

Being An Independent Learner

You have been educated in a system which, for the most part, has not required you to be an independent learner. You have been told what to learn (memorize, remember). You have been given tests to see how much you remember at that point in time. And then you have forgotten most - or all - of the information you have learned, especially if you did not use it. I call this Burp Back Education. *And I want to end that kind of education forever. In this class and in the classes you will teach. Everywhere. For all times.* In other words, you will NOT experience that kind of education in this class and I hope that you will never use it in your classes!

That causes a number of problems for some students. One student recently said to me, “Dr. Strange, I just want you to teach me so I don’t have to learn.” Many others have said that we should **require** classes so the student would be forced to do the work. And you want to be a teacher?

In Rate My Professors.com one student wrote “If you like to teach yourself and reach [sic] required deadlines then you will like [Dr. Strange’s] class.”

Yes, you are responsible for your own learning. We are here to help, to provide you will the tools and the setting in which you can learn. But we do not drill a hole in your head, pour in facts, have you burp them back, and then evaluate the product of your burping! Not my cup of tea, thank you! Instead, you will learn to use tools, find other tools and resources, solve problems, create projects. You will create a network of people and resources to help you be a learner after you leave EDM310. School doesn’t last forever. But learning must! And yes, you must meet all deadlines. You are in training to be a professional and I expect you to act like one!

Compare these two comments by different students:

“This was possibly the most painful course I have ever had to take at this university.... Its a useless course, I suggest teaching yourself. Unfortunately you have to suffer through. I suggest high doses of booze...”

and

“[Dr. Strange] teaches through hands on instruction. If you don't understand something, there's always an instructional video on the class blog. Keep up with your blog posts or it's hell catching up.”

Quite different. But the first student quoted has made one point with which I agree: “I suggest teaching yourself.” That is a key part of being an independent, lifelong learner. We will help you learn, but we will NOT do things for you! You must *do to learn*.

Of course, other students had different opinions:

“This is a class where you will learn things for later use. If you take the easy way out, you do yourself an injustice and your grade will suffer. Although not required, go to [the lab] . Dr. S. is always willing to help and will go the extra mile if you take initiative. Best course ever - you actually learn!” Note what this student said: “*if you take the initiative*”!

and

“Dr. Strange teaches you how to manage your time and learn. LEARN. There are no tests, just projects that you post to a blog. This class helps you discover yourself and your goals and exposes you to teachers and students from all over the world.”

Well, I am not sure I teach anyone anything. But if you do not learn to manage your time, and if you do not learn how to learn, then you will be miserable in EDM310. It certainly will be “painful.” Just remember that YOU are responsible for your learning. We will help. But we cannot do it for you. So turn on your brain and leave it on. Explore, try things, don’t be afraid to make mistakes, ask for help, find new resources, build a network of supporters. And have fun. “... [H]igh doses of booze” is not a recommended strategy for dealing with EDM310, however.

Take a break. Watch two videos produced by EDM310 students: [The Chipper Series](#) and [EDM310 for Dummies](#). Think about what these movies have to say about EDM310, some students, education in general. Think about making movies to communicate ideas instead of writing papers. Think about how to interest students, your students, in addressing issues of importance in a world where kids do not like to read and write but would rather watch and listen. In fact, I think I am probably talking about YOU!

So how do you become an independent learner and manage your time? Here are some suggestions:

Set aside 9 hours a week for EDM310. Be honest with yourself and the class. If you do not have enough time to devote 9 hours per week to EDM310, do not take this course until you do have the time to take it. Get a daily organizer, if necessary, and block out the time for EDM310 just as you do for your work and other activities. Use those 9 hours as if you were at work with many tasks to accomplish. Set goals and deadlines for yourself. Meet those deadlines. Think of the staff in EDM310 as coaches rather than “teachers.” Assume a positive attitude. Ask questions. Explore on your own. Share what you find. Take risks in doing new things. Make use of the lab. Understand that you are NOT expected to know it all when you enter this class. You are here to LEARN, not demonstrate what you know already. And also be forewarned that you will NOT know it all when you leave this class. We don’t know it all either. Technology is changing so rapidly that no one can “know it all.” But we can learn to be learners. And being a learner is required for survival in a fast changing world like the one in which we live. Have fun. This is a different kind of class that most you have encountered. Take advantage of the opportunities that are here and you will do well. Complain about having to learn (instead of being “taught”) or about having to work “too much and too hard” and you will not succeed.

Some More Things I Have To Say (An Elaboration with Assignments)

- 1. All of your work will be posted to your blog - in public.** There are several implications to this:
 1. All of your work is public. It can and will be Googled. In other words, you are leaving an intellectual trail for all to see. See my comments about Anthony Capp's post [You Are Creating Your Intellectual Trail](#) and his post [How to Make Your Own Podcast](#). You should do your very best at all time in EDM310. You should also pay careful attention to your writing. If your writing is sloppy, vacuous (empty, says nothing), potential employers will take notice. If your grammar is poor, your spelling bad, your punctuation leaves the impression that you do not know about capital letters, you will be creating a public record of which you cannot be proud. Mrs. Yollis, a 3rd grade teacher in California, rejected the comments of three EDM310 students because they did not meet the spelling and grammar standards she had established for her third grade. Read the post [Some of You Won't Make It Through the Third Grade](#). I wrote about that event. As you can imagine, I was not pleased with the students involved. And they were terribly embarrassed. Proofread everything you write. Be proud of your intellectual trail.
 2. Blogger notes the time of all of your posts and comments. Be on time! I know when (and if) you did your work. You are training to be a professional in one of the most important professions in our culture. Act like a professional and be on time with all your work. You will not pass EDM310 if you do not demonstrate that you have the skills, attitudes, and aptitudes necessary to be a successful professional in the field of education. Be on time with your work!
 3. Google Docs is a wonderful set of collaborative tools. Google records every contribution, change, or alteration of every participant as well as the time of the action. I gave access to all those records. If I ask you about what you have done or not done, I most likely already know the answer. I am merely trying to get you to engage in self-reflection. Honest Self Reflection. Read my post on this subject: [Honest Reflection is Required](#)
- 2. You must be an independent learner.** This means that you should not only rely on our suggestions of how to learn and apply the tools covered in this class. You must also seek out other, even better ways of learning. You find better techniques for learning, or even better tools, share them with all of us. One of the most important goals in EDM310 is to create a true learning community. This will be new for many of you. You have been trained to be taught. In EDM310 you must know how to learn. As I noted earlier, a student in EDM310 recently said to me "Dr. Strange, I just want you to teach me so I don't have to learn." Yes, that is exactly what she said. She was accustomed to what I call burp-back education. A teacher says: "This what you should know. Learn it. Burp it back on the test." I have several things to say about this:
 1. I am TOTALLY opposed to burp-back education. I do not use it and I do not want you to use it when you are a teacher. So I work very hard to break any bad habits you may have in this regard.
 2. A job in the profession of education does not rely on the ability to burp-back information. It requires an independent, self-directed, lifelong learner. EDM310 requires that you develop these skills and attitudes.

3. **Ask for help.** EDM310 does not force you to learn. We try and provide a setting in which you can learn. We offer suggestions on how to learn. We operate a staffed lab Mon-Fri 9-6. The lab is open until 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday nights and from 1-6p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Any changes to the lab hours will be published in the [Class Blog](#). We urge you to visit the lab when it is open. You can also call, email, text or Tweet us at any time asking for help. We promise to respond in 24 hours. Our goal is to respond in 6 hours or less during the times 6 am-11 pm. We will help you learn. But we will not do it for you! Call the EDM310 Help Line 251-272-9023 or send an email to EDM310 Help at edm310help@gmail.com. Or text us. Or Tweet us. Or go to the lab.
4. **Have a positive attitude.** EDM310 seems overwhelming to many. It is not a course which covers what you already know: word processing; spreadsheets; presentations. You must learn many new things quickly in order to accomplish the tasks set forth in the course. There are 16 projects to do in 16 weeks. Many things are due every week. At the start of the class everything seems to be happening all at once. The method of learning is quite different from other classes. You have a great deal of freedom which can lead to bad situations when you misuse that freedom but which can also enable you to be exceptionally creative when you take advantage of that freedom. You are in charge of your time and must plan accordingly. You may not believe that EDM310 really takes 9 hours a week; or you may not want to believe it; or you may never have had a class that demands that amount of time. You may not like technology, or you may not believe that you need to learn about technology because you will never need to use it in your classroom. You will find that you are wrong about technology and its importance on learning whether or not you like it or not and it will become very clear to you that if you are to be a professional in the field of education you absolutely cannot be technologically illiterate. In the midst of all these possible negatives, have fun. Watch these two movies starring Jamie Lynn Miller ([EDM310 For Dummies](#) -3:54 in minutes and seconds- and [The Chipper Series](#) 17:51) and put on your happy face in this course. It helps!
5. **Organize your time and use it wisely.** In the fall session EDM310 takes at approximately 9 hours per week. If you are not prepared to devote 9 hours of your time to EDM310, **drop the course now.**
6. **Read the advice given by the students** in the summer EDM310 class. As part of their final reflection, I asked all EDM310 students to write a paragraph or two containing advice for the next group of EDM310 students. You can find a complete list of links to student blogs at [Student Links](#). Read the advice left for you in the final posts of the students. [Erin Knowles](#) did a Letterman List of 10 in her final post:
 1. Be prepared to spend a lot of additional time outside of EDM 310.
 2. Familiarize yourself with Facebook, Twitter, and Google.
 3. Learn how to PROOFREAD yourself!
 4. Come to class with an open mind.
 5. Go to the lab time, even though it is not required.
 6. Make sure Dr. Strange and his lab assistants know you by name and face.
 7. Exercise great time management skills.
 8. Make friends with people in your class.
 9. Check the EDM 310 Blog daily.
 10. Even though it is a lot of hard work be sure to have fun!

7. Follow these steps for success

1. The first thing you should do is review Your Personal Checklist. This will give you an overview of what you will encounter during the week, what is due at the end of the week (midnight Sunday), and what projects you should begin to address. There are 16 projects in EDM310. In addition, there are many different tools which you must know how to use to do the projects.
2. Do your required blog post or posts.
3. Do your required comments
4. Complete your required assignments - ON TIME!
5. Begin your projects when indicated in the Instruction Manual. It is very easy to determine which projects are hurried, incomplete, rush jobs that do not reflect well on a prospective professional. Remember that you are leaving your intellectual trail and that you *will* be Googled!
6. Keep track of your progress on Your Personal Checklist.
7. Create an RSS Feed for the [Class Blog](#) and any blogs summarizing EDM310 such as the [Alumni Blog](#), and others which may be useful and/or which we may suggest.
8. Read the class blog EVERY DAY. I am always changing my mind. We are always finding new things to share. Technology never stops happening. Learning Never Ends.
9. Read the instructions we have provided as well as the instructions for which we provide links. Also search for other instructions if you need them. There are LOTS of instructions available for material covered in this class. Some can be found with Google searches, others with You Tube or Vimeo searches. We know when when you do not read instructions. For example, ever semester we get dozens of requests of this type: My teacher (or student or classmate) did not have a post. What do I do? I am always tempted to answer: READ THE INSTRUCTIONS! Here are the answers (and they are found elsewhere as well:
 - a. If a **teacher** has not written a new post since you last commented, go back in time to the most recent post that is not a “housekeeping post” on which you have not left a comment and leave a comment on that one.
 - b. If a **student** or a **classmate** does not have a post, choose another student or classmate and comment on them. Then send an email to edm310comments@gmail.com telling me who did not have a comment **and** whom you commented on instead.