



AG 589 – Independent Study Fall 2026

Curriculum Development and Instructional Practicum in Beginner Equitation

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Nathan Wells, Instructor and Coordinator of Equine Studies

Office Location: AG/IT 233F

Office Hours: By Appointment only

Office Phone: 903-886-5355

Office Fax: 903-886-5990

University Email Address: Nathan.Wells@etamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: **Email**

Communication Response Time: **48 hours M-F. I will not be checking email on the weekends, however, I will respond to all emails sent over the weekend on the following Monday.**

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

There are no required textbooks for this course.

Course Description

This graduate-level independent study provides advanced experience in curriculum development, instructional design, teaching methodology, and equine education through participation in the Beginner Equitation course. The student will evaluate existing instructional materials, develop curriculum enhancements, implement instructional strategies, assist with laboratory instruction, and assess student learning outcomes. Emphasis is placed on applying educational theory to practical equine instruction while improving student engagement, safety, and skill acquisition.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Course Outcomes/Objectives

Upon successful completion of this independent study, the graduate student will be able to:

1. Evaluate existing equitation curriculum using educational best practices.
2. Design curriculum enhancements that improve student learning outcomes.
3. Develop instructional materials that support beginning equitation students.
4. Apply instructional strategies during laboratory and riding instruction.
5. Teach and demonstrate safe horsemanship practices.
6. Develop lesson plans that integrate mounted and unmounted instruction.
7. Evaluate student performance using formative assessment techniques.
8. Reflect upon instructional effectiveness through professional self-analysis.
9. Collaborate with faculty to improve course organization and instructional delivery.
10. Produce graduate-level curriculum materials suitable for future implementation.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, the graduate student will demonstrate competency in:

- Curriculum analysis
- Lesson planning
- Equine instructional methods
- Laboratory teaching
- Student assessment
- Classroom management
- Horsemanship instruction
- Educational research
- Reflective teaching practice

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Major Responsibilities

Throughout the semester, the graduate student will participate in:

Curriculum Review

- Review the current Beginner Equitation syllabus
- Evaluate course objectives
- Analyze instructional sequence
- Identify gaps within the curriculum

Curriculum Development

Develop or revise instructional materials, including:

- Lesson plans
- PowerPoint presentations
- Groundwork activities
- Horsemanship skill sheets
- Safety handouts
- Equipment identification materials
- Grooming instruction
- Horse behavior instruction
- Mounted exercise progression
- Student assessment rubrics

Teaching Practicum

Assist with weekly instruction by:

- Leading groundwork activities
- Demonstrating horse handling techniques
- Assisting mounted instruction
- Supervising student practice
- Reinforcing safety procedures
- Assisting with evaluations
- Providing individual student feedback

Educational Research

Review current literature related to:

- Equine education
- Experiential learning
- Adult learning theory
- Motor skill acquisition
- Teaching novice riders
- Equine safety education

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Reflective Practice

Maintain weekly reflections discussing:

- Instructional successes
- Teaching challenges
- Student engagement
- Curriculum improvements
- Professional growth

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology in your online courses. The following technology is recommended to be successful in this online course.

Internet connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

Word Processor

Power Point

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use myleoonline: Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

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<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

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Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

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University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a

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learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Major Assignments

Assignment 1

Curriculum Evaluation Report (15%)

Review the existing Beginner Equitation curriculum and prepare a written evaluation identifying strengths, weaknesses, and recommended improvements.

Assignment 2

Curriculum Development Portfolio (30%)

Develop new instructional materials including:

- Lesson plans
- Student handouts
- Skills checklists
- PowerPoint presentations
- Laboratory exercises
- Assessment rubrics

Assignment 3

Instructional Practicum (25%)

Assist with instruction throughout the semester while demonstrating professional teaching practices.

Evaluation areas include:

- Preparedness
- Professionalism
- Teaching effectiveness
- Student interaction
- Safety awareness

Assignment 4

Reflective Teaching Journal (15%)

Maintain weekly reflections documenting:

- Teaching observations
- Curriculum revisions
- Student progress
- Instructional strategies
- Personal professional growth Minimum: 10–12 entries

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Assignment 5

Final Curriculum Project (15%)

Submit a completed revised curriculum package containing:

- Updated lesson sequence
- Revised learning objectives
- Instructional materials
- Assessments
- Teaching resources
- Recommendations for future implementation

Grading

Assignment	Percentage
Curriculum Evaluation	15%
Curriculum Portfolio	30%
Instructional Practicum	25%
Reflective Journal	15%
Final Curriculum Project	15%

Required Activities

The graduate student is expected to:

- Attend all scheduled Beginner Equitation classes
- Meet regularly with the supervising faculty member
- Assist with laboratory instruction
- Complete assigned curriculum projects
- Participate in instructional planning meetings
- Maintain professional conduct
- Complete all graduate-level assignments by established deadlines

Expected Deliverables

By the conclusion of the semester, the graduate student will produce:

- Revised course curriculum
- Lesson plans
- Student instructional materials
- PowerPoint presentations
- Assessment rubrics
- Skills checklists
- Laboratory teaching resources
- Weekly teaching reflections

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- Final curriculum portfolio suitable for future implementation within the Equine Studies Program

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