



ArmchairEd Course Syllabus  
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**Overview:**

ArmchairEd.com currently provides continuing education to educators, using Educational Leadership magazine and premiere published books on cutting-edge educational themes and topics. The program has been operating since Fall, 2000, and has provided continuing education to hundreds of educators.

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

As a result of these courses, the student will be able to:

1. Stay current on educational themes and topics pertinent to teaching and education
2. Identify current research in education
3. Apply this knowledge to the student's current educational position

The following published books are currently being used as a text for the ArmchairEd course:

**Practicing Practice Through Mindfulness**

Lucas, L. J. (2018). *Practicing presence: Simple self-care strategies for teachers*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Mason, C. Y., M., R. M., & Jackson, Y. (2019). *Mindfulness practices: Cultivating heart centered communities where students focus and flourish*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

*Practicing Presence through Mindfulness* provides scientifically proven evidence and strategies for teachers and students to address behavior issues and improve executive functioning. Using breath, yoga, meditation exercises, and step-by-step sensation-, emotion-, and presence-based mindfulness activities to create compassionate learning environments. Educators will learn to become present in the classroom and promote compassionate self-regulation in the classroom.

- Explore the theory behind mindful education, including the interrelated nature of physiology, cognition, emotions, and mindfulness for students.
- Learn how mindfulness in schools contributes to a positive mindset, alleviates the impact of toxic stress, and takes advantage of neuroplasticity.
- Understand the effects of trauma and ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) on student behavior and the ability to learn and discover trauma-informed practices that support healing.
- Acquire research-based mindfulness practices, including breathing exercises, yoga for the classroom, meditation for students, and cognitive reflection and awareness.

- Reignite the passion that first drew you to education and prioritize self-care for yourself and your students.
- Discover how to build a heart-centered learning community in classrooms and create mindful schools.

**Credit Options:**

The course will be offered for five credits, based on the length and substance of the book. The five-credit course will include 50 multiple-choice questions and five required essays.

**Grading Rubric:**

Pass/Fail: Coursework must be passed with 70% criterion.

Letter Grade: 90%: A grade?  
80% B grade  
70% C grade

Multiple Choice Test: 25% of overall grade

Essays: 75% of overall grade

**Two Essays Required for: Mindfulness Practices**

**Essay Options:**

**Option 1:** At the end of each chapter are questions for thought entitled Mindful Reflection. Choose the questions at the end of one chapter and answer them to frame your essay.

**Option 2:** Teach yourself all of the breath exercises in Chapter 4. Use them for a minimum of 4 weeks, about 15 minutes four times a week. In your essay, describe learning the exercises and then using them for a month. Have you noticed any difference in your approach to teaching and being with your students? Has life outside school changed at all? Will you continue with mindful breath exercises?

**Option 3:** In the text, on page 93, the authors talk about the documentary film *Room to Breathe* ([www.mindfulschools.org](http://www.mindfulschools.org).) Watch the film and in your essay, talk what you saw, your feelings, your reaction to the kids you met and their experiences with mindfulness. What can you envision mindfulness doing for the students you teach?

**Option 4:** Create your own demonstration of the learning you take from this text. Identify your topic and describe it in an introductory paragraph. You may choose from the list below or develop your own.

Plan a unit with assessment

Action Research

Extended learning, including research and developed activities

Compare/contrast your current education practice to that of the text

Create forms or systems for use in your classroom including assessment tools

Plan an 'event', meeting or other pertinent program and report/reflect on it

**Two Essays Required for: Practicing Presence**

**Essay Options:**

**Option 1:** Give yourself some new habits. Make a chart similar to the one at the top of page 28 in the text. Make room for four "drains." Identify and list four things in your life that you'd like to change. Then come up with cues, rewards, or routines that will help you clear those drains. Work on them for at least a month. The chart will begin your essay and a description of how it worked out for you will be the remainder.

**Option 2:** To sum up your reaction to the first two chapters, answer the questions on p. 69 in the text. Use your essay to talk about what you tried or didn't and the reasons that motivated your actions. Have you experienced any positives from trying the suggestions?

**Option 3:** Look through the five quotations in the text, p.84-89. Choose the one that has the most relevance to you. Begin your essay with the quote. Talk about its relevance to your life and the ways that quote can be an action plan for you beginning now.

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**One essay required from Mindfulness Practices and Practicing Presence**

**Essay Option:** You've read two books about Mindfulness from very different perspectives. Which of the two is the most useful to you in teaching? Why? How will you use what you've learned from these texts? What expectations do you have for your students and yourself after taking this course? Has anything changed for you?

You may e-mail [info@armchairedclockhours.com](mailto:info@armchairedclockhours.com) if you desire specific permission for your topic. The essay must demonstrate knowledge of the course and text, and direct application to your own educational position.

**Essay scoring rubric:**

Two essays required for, Practicing Presence

Two essays required for Mindfulness Practices,

Each essay 10% of overall grade

One essay required for both Practicing Presence and Mindfulness Practices

35% of overall grade

Single spaced, 10 to 12 size font

Use of introduction and summary statement (even when a unit is developed)

Demonstration of grammar, spelling and writing skill

Demonstration of applied knowledge

- **All essays must be fully completed and the rubric followed to receive a grade. Essays not completed to required length will not be processed and revisions will be required.**
- **You must download the coursework before starting this course.**
- **Submit all coursework together.**