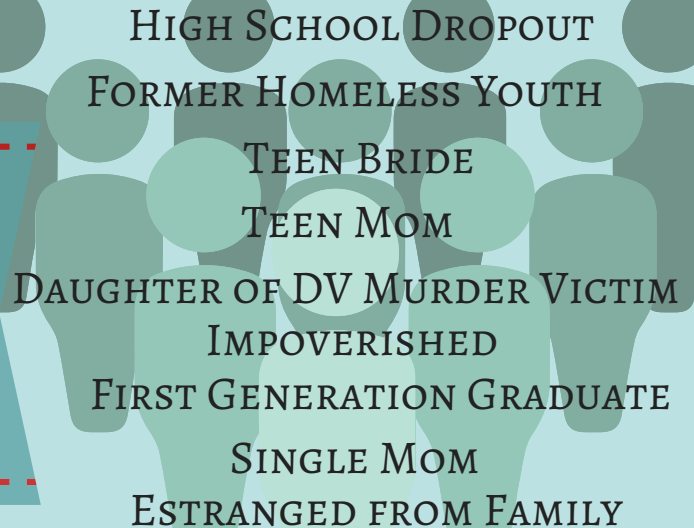


the pedagogy of
HEATHER DAVIDSON
teacher. advocate. community organizer.

nontraditional
teaching style

I don't belong here, statistically speaking,
BUT THERE'S NEVER BEEN
A PLACE I BELONGED MORE.
COLLEGE CHANGED MY LIFE, AND MY
TEACHING CHANGES THE LIVES OF OTHERS.



HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT
FORMER HOMELESS YOUTH
TEEN BRIDE
TEEN MOM
DAUGHTER OF DV MURDER VICTIM
IMPOVERISHED
FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE
SINGLE MOM
ESTRANGED FROM FAMILY

COURSE LIST

AY 2014-15

Comm244: Advocacy through Media

Comm308: Fundraising

Comm318: Professional Communication (4 sections)

Comm416: Event Planning

I grew from these grounds and found my potential, my inspiration,
my path and my voice. It happened while I was a WWU student.

MY HISTORY SHAPES THE CLIMATE I TRY TO FOSTER.
POSITIVE. FORWARD. TRUTHFUL. SAFE. OBSERVANT.

"Professor Davidson has an innate ability to interact and engage with her students in a remarkable and impacting way. She daily strives to challenge her students to ponder the hard issues in life and has created an incredible dynamic within the classroom that is honestly, hard for me to even explain. The honesty, safety, and vulnerability that occurs each class is unlike anything I have experienced. Professor Davidson has a keen ability to bring up very difficult subjects and engage the class and get them to interact with what she is teaching. We have covered subjects from sexual harassment, to racism, to sexism and never once has it been uncomfortable. I am a very private person, and in this class I have opened up to my classmates as if they were family." COMM318 Student

Professor Davidson offers a comprehensive professional communication course, with a twist. While her course undoubtedly includes many of the same elements as other professors, I feel that Professor Davidson offers a completely unique perspective about professional communication. 318 Student

"Professor Davidson is the best teacher I have ever had, hands down. If you have the option to take a class with her, DO IT! She has an incredible way of connecting with you as an individual, and bonding the class as a whole. Her teaching style is inspiring and motivating! She is engaging and interactive. Each class is something new! Convinced yet?"

comm318

rate my professor comment

WHAT THE EDUCATOR DOES IN TEACHING IS MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE STUDENTS TO BECOME THEMSELVES.

~PAULO FREIRE

THE TABLE IN MY CLASSROOM IS LARGE.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

(EXACTLY AS THEY ARE)

"MY CLASS IS A POTLUCK. BRING WHAT YOU HAVE TO SHARE. IT IS PLENTY."

authenticity
&
inclusivity

encouraging
**authentic
narratives**

"WHEN COMPARING MYSELF TO SOME OF MY FRIENDS AND PEERS, I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT THEIR JOB EXPERIENCES HAVE BEEN FAR MORE "REAL" THAN MINE, AND THAT THEY ARE ALREADY A STEP AHEAD OF ME IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD. THIS CLASS HAS SHOWN ME THE REMARKABLE SKILLS I DO HAVE BECAUSE OF MY PAST EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH YOUTH AND AT MY SUMMER CAMP, AND HOW PROUD I SHOULD BE OF MYSELF FOR MY DEDICATION AND WORK ETHIC." 318 STUDENT

completing
**queer
safe
zone
training**

validating
**diverse
opinions**

"MS. DAVIDSON IS SO INSPIRATIONAL! SHE PUTS HER HEART AND SOUL INTO THE COURSE LESSONS AND IT SHOWS." 318 STUDENT

assuring
safety

"HEATHER HAS BECOME ONE OF MY FAVORITE TEACHERS AT WESTERN. ALTHOUGH SHE IS NEW, SHE IS INTELLIGENT. SHE IS A VERY PASSIONATE HUMAN BEING AND REALLY DOES CARE ABOUT HOW YOU DO IN AND OUT OF CLASS." 244 STUDENT

fostering
**thoughtful
dialogue**

modeling
citizenship

embodying
benevolence

"I FELT THAT I WAS UNDERSTOOD AND CARED FOR AS A STUDENT, AND THIS GREATLY CONTRIBUTED TO MY MOTIVATION TO SUCCEED." 244 STUDENT

personalized
service
learning

IT STARTS WITH A SURVEY AND A PROJECT.

IT ENDS WITH PARTNERSHIPS AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT.

I survey students on day 1 to assess their skill sets and what they are most interested in developing, and to determine what pathways, causes, experiences and resources will be most engaging for each group, I then partner them with complimentary peers and prearranged community partners for the quarter.

sustainable
connections

Whatcom Dispute
Resolution Center

DVSAS

North sound
CFI

Middle
Women

Max Higbee
center

film is truth

The Arthritis
Foundation

Dignity & Respect
campaign

B'ham Girls
Rock camp

★ fall2014 partner sample ★

“Any team that gets out in the open air to break up the normal routine will come back to whatever task they are working on with increased focus, connectedness, and productivity. I will not soon forget my time spent at Lakewood with this class I am now very closely connected to, and I know the skills honed on the ropes course will be evident in every team I am a part of.”
318 Student

“I think that part of the reason the SL project was so successful was because of the level of instructor involvement. Most group projects the professor just assigns groups and then leaves you alone. This leaves room for people to never speak with their group and be scrambling at the end of the quarter to do something, anything for a grade. Since we had so many “checkpoints” with you, there wasn't really room for us to lose control of the project. We were constantly in contact to the point where we spoke pretty much everyday.

Everyone was aware of what was happening, what needed to be done still, and who was doing what. That level of instructor involvement helped our group to stay together and be a stronger team.”
244 Student

Professional Communication students completed a high ropes course to foster cohesiveness. It was such a useful exercise that I sought and was granted permission to add a nominal course fee to provide the opportunity each quarter.

personalized
service
learning

STUDENT-CENTERED PEDAGOGY, PARTNERING & COMMUNICATION CAN LEAD TO AFFIRMING FEEDBACK FROM PARTNERS & STUDENTS.

Overt, realistic, and tactful communication with community partners and student-teams is vital to the achievement of learning outcomes. I consistently communicate with each partner, each team, & each student.

**Hi Heather,
Thank you so very much. The students are GREAT. Professional, purposeful, and a lot of fun. I'm very happy to participate with it. I know its been a very independent project and that freedom can be frustrating, but it is working, they have met their deadline admirably; and are moving forward. I am glad to know them and to hope to get a chance to meet with you soon, too...**

Obviously you're doing a great job.

**I look forward to our meeting...
Thanks,
Linda Kehoe, Ed.D.
North Sound Region
Dignity & Respect Campaign**

★ winter2015 partner sample ★

wwu queer
Resource center

Brigid
collins

Birthroot
Midwifery

Ragfinery
RE-Use Industries

Growing
Veterans

Dry county
Distillery

Whatcom Dispute
Resolution Center

city of Bellingham
Parks & Recreation

"I can't remember the last time I was that productive. I had another group project for a different class this quarter and the comparison made me want to rip my hair out." 244 Student

"I just want to start off by saying that is probably the best group project I've ever been a part of. [My teammates] have been amazing people to work with, and we're probably going to end up being friends after this, which is more than I can say about any other group project I've done." 244 Student

"I HOPE THAT YOU RECEIVED MY UPDATE A FEW WEEKS AGO ABOUT THE STELLAR JOB THAT YOUR SERVICE LEARNING TEAM IS DOING. WE ARE 4 DAYS AWAY FROM THE PEACE BUILDER AWARDS GALA AND THE STUDENT TEAM IS CONTINUING STEP UP IN CRUNCH TIME. THEY HAVE EACH VOLUNTEERED TO GO BEYOND THEIR 15 REQUIRED HOURS TO BE KEY VOLUNTEERS AT OUR GALA THIS FRIDAY. NOT ONLY HAVE THEY EACH DONE A WONDERFUL JOB OF TAKING A PROJECT FROM START TO FINISH, THEY HAVE ALSO BEEN QUITE WILLING TO JUMP INTO ANY TASK THAT COMES UP, AS TENDS TO HAPPEN WITH EVENT PLANNING. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THEM NEXT WEEK, WRAPPING THINGS UP, AND REFLECTING ON THE EVENT AND PLANNING PROCESS. I ALSO AM EXCITED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY WRAP UP EVALUATIONS THAT YOU HAVE FOR US AND COMPLETE YOUR SURVEY.

REGARDING YOUR FUTURE CLASSES, WE WOULD LOVE TO PARTNER WITH YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS THIS WINTER QUARTER..."

iris maute-gibson
development & outreach coordinator
whatcom dispute resolution center

"I have had several service learning projects, but I think I gained the most from this one." 318 Student

"Our group had so much cohesion and worked efficiently as a unit. I have never been a part of such a positive group dynamic and am looking forward to the next opportunity I have to be involved with a service learning team."

"Despite the hiccups we had along the way, our team was able to take a great deal away from this service-learning project. We stayed focused, we did not give up, and we supported each other every step of the way. Looking back on activities like the high ropes course we completed at Lakewood, it makes me realize how fun activities like those help us during serious times, like tackling professional responsibilities that involve teamwork." 318 Student

timely,
thoughtful
feedback

Part of valuing the whole student is recognizing the weight of my words as their guide. The impact can be so valuable, so I strive to provide it quickly.



THE PROMPT AND REALISTIC NATURE OF THE FEEDBACK GIVEN WAS AN INVALUABLE ASSET TO ME... THIS FEEDBACK WILL HELP FACILITATE MY FUTURE SUCCESS, IT WAS ON POINT, NO EXCUSES AND EXACTLY WHAT I NEEDED TO HEAR (WHETHER I WANTED TO OR NOT). THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEING SO INVOLVED.”
244 STUDENT

“I learned much from the process of feedback throughout the quarter. It was fast, accurate and well thought out. I have never received such extensive feedback from an instructor and I greatly appreciated it. Genuine feedback is a rarity in the academic setting at times, and the personal interest that you took in us as students was so empowering.” 244 Student

YOUR EMAIL WAS INCREDIBLY HUMBLING, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE HUGE COMPLIMENT. I ABSOLUTELY ADORE YOU BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY AND FEEL INCREDIBLY LUCKY TO HAVE HAD YOU THIS QUARTER. YOUR FRESH APPROACH AND GENUINE CARE FOR US AND WHAT WE ARE LEAVING 318 WITH IS NOT OVERLOOKED.”
318 STUDENT

Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 1:48 PM

Hey Heather,

I was looking at my final grades just now and I saw that my “final grade” is an A-, even though Canvas says I have over a 94%. I’m hoping that I actually have an A.
Thank you, 318 Student

December 17, 2014 at 2:05pm, I replied:

Sorry man, no dice. I regrettably, yet still somehow happily, inform you that one has to have a 95% or above for an A in my courses. I will say this: you missed the mark by two-tenths of a point. Two bloody tenths. You should be proud of the work you did and know that the “-” indicates only the slightest deviation from perfection as a professional-in-training. From an instructor who totally believes in average grades reflecting effort that is average, the A- is a high compliment my friend! I understand the slight sting of disappointment, but hope that my affirmation of you as both student of mine and student of life helps to buffer it a little.
Here’s to nailing that A to the wall in Winter!

•Hello Heather,
Thanks for the explanation, I appreciate it. See you in class!

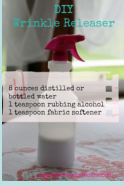
318 Final Reflection Paper Submitted: Dec 3 at 4:58pm; Instructor Assignment Comments Submitted: Dec 3 at 9:24pm

As you noted, I am not blind to the challenges your team has faced this quarter. I have been consistently impressed by your team’s grace and poise, and the professionalism with which you responded to [your SL partner’s] critique was right on point. As I, too, learned this quarter, mistakes happen and yes, you are right when you say that acknowledging them and trying again is a solid professional (and, I’d add, personal) approach. I appreciate your work, your thoughts on the tasks throughout the quarter, and the obvious cohesion you strove for with your teammates. Also, the last round of materials you sent to [your SL partner] looked incredible. I hope you saw my positive feedback on the corrections in the email correspondence, too, as I was watching it all unfold. You are on to great things, and I’m so honored to have been a part of your professional development path!

MY STUDENTS NEVER WAIT MORE THAN ONE WEEK FOR THIS TYPE OF CUSTOMIZED FEEDBACK.

diverse resources

My history is wrapped in a wide blanket of people, places, resources, and interests. This creates a vast repertoire from which to draw from for student-centered teaching and allows lessons to go beyond the textbook and into the lives of my students. The relevance they find in the resource variety creates a space wherein everyone can see themselves, their future, and their precious and unique skills and potential. Here are some samples of guests, activities, readings and resources my students explore and engage with over the quarter.



High Ropes Course

CORRESPONDENCE WITH MACKLEMORE AFTER SENDING AN OUTREACH EMAIL.

campus resources

experiential activities

practical guidance

art & music

inspirational community members

World champion athletes

documentaries

alternative narratives

nonprofit and for-profit models

engaging textbooks

Neil McKay, Communication Specialist Ferndale School Dist.

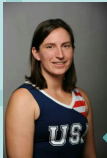


Ivan Owen, 3D Printable Prosthetic Hand Inventor



Jen Owen, Key Coordinator, E-Nable Volunteer Network

Galen Emanuele, Founder, Pass the Hat



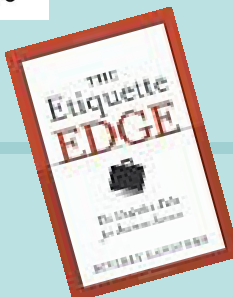
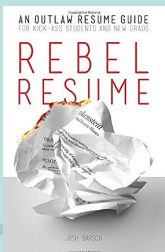
Lacey Ramone Team USA Roller Derby



"Thank you so much for having me!! It was really an enjoyable experience! I would love to come back!! The opportunity reminded me how much I love education and the importance of communication....and actually made me want to pursue a masters after I am ready to retire for my current life adventures, so I could teach. Thank you for inspiring those young minds in fresh and exciting new ways, you are making the world a better place!!"

Lacey "Carmen Getsome" Ramone

"She shows you videos that make you cry. It's great." 244 Student



advocacy

President Shepard on WU's 2014
1st Place ranking for Peace Corps
Volunteer-Producing Schools.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION IS A GIFT TO BE CHERISHED.

**IT PROVIDES THE TOOLS
TO CHANGE THE WORLD,**

AND MY STUDENTS SURELY WILL.

"MANY STUDENTS COME TO WESTERN LOOKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD. OUR AIM IS TO EMPOWER THEM WITH LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM SO THAT THEY CAN PUT THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION TO HIGHER PURPOSES WHEREVER THEY ARE AFTER GRADUATION."

identify



integrate



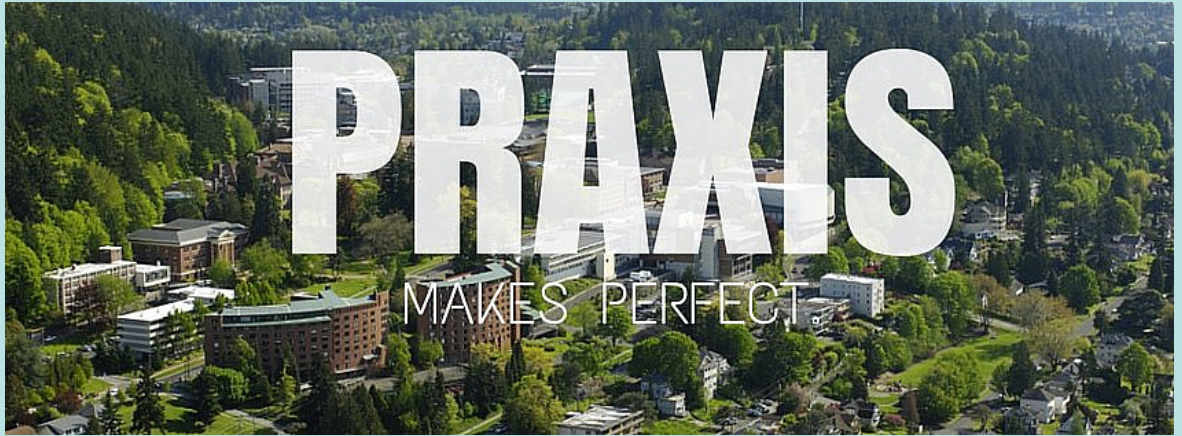
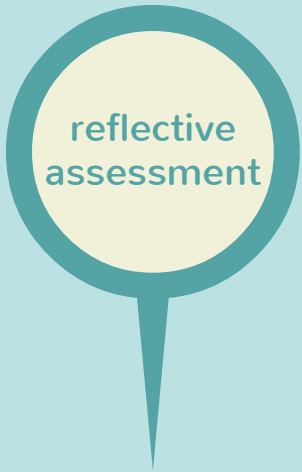
model



"My favorite part of this course was not only all of the causes that you enlightened us to but that fact that you yourself took part in so many. You could relate to them which shows that you know what you are talking about and that students should listen to you!" 244 Student

"Heather Davidson... is a fantastic instructor that puts a lot of work into planning our lessons. Heather has a special talent to make every student feel an important member of our society and university. Heather is incredibly inspiring with all the work she does in our community and encourages her students to do the same through service-learning projects. She often takes a creative approach to teaching her lessons and inviting guest speakers to come in for additional insight." 318 Student

STUDENTS IDENTIFY ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THEM. I INTEGRATE THE ISSUES INTO CURRICULUM IN ALL OF MY COURSES. I MODEL ADVOCACY IN OUR COMMUNITY, ENGAGE STUDENTS IN ADVOCATING FOR THEMSELVES AND THE THINGS THEY CARE ABOUT, AND WATCH THE WAVES RIPPLE OUTWARD.



THEORY. ACTION. REFLECTION. REPEAT.

Whether in discussions, class activities, written assignments or capstone projects, each assignment includes a reflective component.

IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO GUIDE STUDENTS TOWARD TESTING IDEAS ABOUT THE WORLD. COUPLED WITH REFLECTION AND A SAFE LEARNING CLIMATE, STUDENTS CAN FEEL CONFIDENT SPREADING THEIR WINGS. TRACKING STUDENT GROWTH THROUGH REFLECTION IS ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE AND RAPID METAMORPHOSES I HAVE EVER WITNESSED.

I LEARNED HOW TO FIND THE SKILLS THAT I HAVE, AND HOW TO IDENTIFY WHAT I AM GOOD AT. THIS IN TURN MAKES ME CONFIDENT. CONFIDENCE WILL ALLOW FOR ME TO UTILIZE MY SKILLS TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITIES IN MY PERSONAL, ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE. CONFIDENCE ALSO ALLOWS A PERSON TO BE MORE SECURE IN ADMITTING THEY NEED HELP, OR WERE WRONG, OR MESSED UP IN SOME WAY. BEING ABLE TO DO THIS HELPS EVERYONE TO IMPROVE AND MOVE FORWARD, CREATING THE BEST WORK POSSIBLE.” 318 STUDENT

I LEARNED SO MUCH FROM MY BOTH MY SERVICE-LEARNING TEAM AND MY SERVICE-LEARNING PARTNER; THE IMPORTANCE OF ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF AS WELL AS YOUR TEAM, NOT GIVING UP EVEN WHEN FACED WITH CHALLENGES, THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARED TEAM EXPERIENCE, AND HOW TO REALLY BUILD A COLLABORATIVE CLIMATE WITH A TEAM EVEN WHEN THINGS AREN'T GOING AS YOU PLANNED (WHICH CAN ALSO BRING YOU CLOSER TOGETHER). I AM WALKING AWAY FROM THIS COURSE MORE CONFIDENT IN MY COMPETENCY BOTH AS A STUDENT, AND AS A FUTURE PROFESSIONAL.” 318 STUDENT



“Heather is absolutely phenomenal. I am coming away from this class with such real-life experience that is directly applicable to future courses as well as in life. She is real, genuine, smart as hell, and really makes you leave class thinking about the things we talked about in class. Any class with Heather is bound to be a positive experience.” 318 Student