

**COURSE TITLE:** ENGAGING STUDENTS OF POVERTY: Practical Strategies That Raise  
**WA CLOCK HRS:** 50  
**NO. OF CREDITS:** 5 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 3.33 credits]  
**OREGON PDUs:** 50  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 50  
**INSTRUCTOR:** Brenda McKinney  
bbbrain@comcast.net

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The bad news is that poverty can create chronic, devastating changes in the brain. It would be easy to look at the statistics and want to give up. The good news is that there are powerful solutions to boost attendance, lessen behavior issues and turn your classroom into a high performance success, BUT you need the engagement strategies to help you do your job well. High performing students need high performing teachers. Every student deserves a caring engaging teacher. Attitudes and the strategies of yesterday are not enough.

Join me to upgrade your teaching skills. Make it a priority to engage far more students every day. Fasten your seatbelt: These strategies work for all kids across the grade and content levels. Sign up NOW for an engaging, fast moving, practical experience. Appropriate for all educators and administrators K-12.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

1. Understood why engagement is a vital factor in achievement.
2. Discovered factors crucial for engagement that are tied to socio-economic status.
3. Discovered purposeful engagement strategies that allow you to upgrade your skill set.
4. Discovered how you can create a high-energy, engaging, positive class.
5. Focused on how to build cognitive capacity through engagement, greater student motivation and effort.
6. Learned to deepen and sustain the learning and understanding of content.
7. Learned to automate engagement and use instructional time more effectively.
8. Discovered ways to empower students to take ownership of their own learning.
9. Designed activities to create an exciting but realistic action plan, generate ideas, and implement the learning.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participant's their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%

**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind: Practical Strategies for Raising Achievement*, is required and I would prefer that hard books are used because they will become a reference for you.

None. All reading is online.

### **MATERIALS FEE**

Text: *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind: Practical Strategies for Raising Achievement* is available used on Amazon from \$11 and up. I recommend that all of my students purchase the book and not download this one on an electronic device. It is meant to be a handbook for you.

## **ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

#### **Assignment #1: Introduction.**

For those participating in Group Collaboration, you must read and follow the instructions outlined in the Group Collaboration Guidelines. Click on the link for Guidelines. <https://www.hol.edu/about/group-collaboration>

- Assignment #1, each participant must complete this assignment independently.
- There should be a minimum of (4) four group meetings during which the course content is discussed.
- Teleconferences or live meetings are acceptable. A good videoconference option is Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>).
- Each participant must attend at least 75% of the group meetings (a minimum of 3 of 4 meetings).

You must complete the introduction before moving on to other assignments.

In 1-2 pages describe your background, professional situation, and the challenges you've had that led you to register for this course.

What do you hope to achieve once you've completed the coursework?

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #1.'

#### **Assignment #2: 7 Positive Brain Based Models.**

##### **7 Positive Brain Based Models to End the pattern of Failure. 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read pgs. 1-19. Respond to the statistics about brains from poverty and discuss the unique difficulties teachers have working with and graduating students of poverty? Explain your new learning about why teaching matters more than any other factor in a student's school experience. Discuss where the reading of the Seven (7) Engagement Factors either affirmed or changed your thinking.

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #2.'

#### **Assignment #3: Skyrocket Engagement in Five Easy Steps.**

##### **Skyrocket Engagement in Five Easy Steps. 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize the Five (5) Core Rules for Engagement, pgs. 20-33. Watch Hattie's video on *What Really Matters in the Classroom*. Summarize your findings. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcP1tXqkEdE> Discuss how the Five (5) Core Rules can create high achievement and a foundation for success. What solutions seem the most practical for your teaching/professional situation? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #3.'

#### **Assignment #4: Class Climate.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize the Five (5) Actions to Create a Positive Class Climate, pgs.

34-51. What changes can you make to create academic optimism in your classroom? Discuss what has been most problematic in your teaching and which of the 5 actions best addresses your needs. What was new learning for you and how can this help you upgrade your skills in creating a positive climate with positive energy and caring for students? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #4.'

#### **Assignment #5: Building Cognitive Capacity.**

##### **Cognitive Capacity and Holding Ideas in your Head. 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize the Five (5) Actions to Build Cognitive Capacity, pgs. 52-70. Why is it critical to develop critical thinking skills and fluid intelligence?

Watch the Captivology link and summarize the learning on the 3 types of attention.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnnukQPpzh0> three types of attention. What solutions are most applicable for your professional situation?

Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #5.'

#### **Assignment #6: Linking Motivation and Effort.**

##### **Linking Motivation and Effort. Respond with a 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize Five (5) Actions to Increase Motivation and Effort, pgs. 71-91. Discuss the myth of unmotivated students and mind-body states? Watch the following link on boredom.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCJ46vyR9o>. Watch the video on mindsets and motivation .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPNeu07I52w> Summarize your learning from the reading and the video clips linking motivation, effort, and your understanding of what is needed to drive students to work hard. What solutions are most applicable for your professional situation? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #6.'

#### **Assignment #7: Thinking about the Thinking.**

##### **Deeper Understanding while Thinking about the Thinking. 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize Five (5) Actions to Build Deep Understanding, pgs. 91-110.

- Watch this video link to understand knowledge and learning, by Michael Wesch - From Knowledgeable to Knowledge-Able.  
<https://youtu.be/LeaAHv4UTi8?t=42>
- Watch this video to analyze and think about knowledge vs. learning through the Five (5) Actions to Deepen Understanding.  
(The Backwards Brain Bicycle - Smarter Every Day 133 - <https://youtu.be/MFzDaBzBIL0>)

What did you learn about the core building blocks that will help your students develop deep sustained learning over time? Use both the reading and the video links. What solutions are most applicable for your professional situation? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #7.'

#### **Assignment #8: Energy from Energizers.**

##### **Energy from Energizers. Actions to Elevate Energy & Focus. 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize Four (4) Actions that Elevate Energy and Focus, pgs. 113-123. Discuss what has been most problematic in your teaching and solutions that are practical for your professional situation. Read pgs. 122-125 and summarize the section that focuses on self-regulation. What stands out as the most practical application for controlling the energy in your classroom? Read pgs. 136-130 to find out how music can influence energy levels and discuss whether this is practical for your professional situation. What solutions would be practical for influencing automaticity in mind-body states in your classroom? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #8.'

#### **Assignment #9: Automating Engagement.**

##### **Automating Engagement. Respond in a 1-2 page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize Five (5) Actions to Automate Engagement, pgs. 131-151.

What did you learn in this section that will enable you to make engagement happen day after day without tons of extra preparation and without creating chaos in your classroom? Explain the connection between automating engagement and empowering students. Watch [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aqocgrd\\_xmE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aqocgrd_xmE). What did you learn about engagement from watching this clip? Which one stands out

to you as a technique that creates that spark with kids? What solutions improve school wide support and engagement? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

**Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #9.'**

#### **Assignment #10: The Challenge of Implementation.**

**Meeting the Challenge of Implementation. Respond in a 1-2- page paper.**

In the text, *Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind*, read and summarize Four (4) Actions for Successful Implementation, pgs. 156-176. Discuss solutions for managing your own stress level and frustrations with students Define the difficulties in raising the bar and stretching limits as defined in this section. What solutions are presented for breaking down the barriers to change? Discuss where the reading either affirmed or changed your thinking.

**Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #10.'**

### **ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

#### **B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you are a classroom teacher and start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, (they will often be glad to sponsor community-based learning), or with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session.

#### **Assignment #11: Lesson Development.**

**For those participating in Group Collaboration, this assignment is Required to be completed individually by all participants. Complete one (1) of the following options:**

##### **Option A)**

- Adapt a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 250-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by also contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library [here](https://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library). (<https://www.hol.edu/lesson-plan-library>)
- You may download a copy of THI's lesson plan template [here](https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/). (<https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/>)
- Send your modified lesson and your commentary via email to your instructor.
- **Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #11-A.'**

**OR**

##### **Option B)**

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Adapt a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library [here](https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/). (<https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/>)
- You may download a copy of THI's lesson plan template [here](https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/). (<https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/>)
- Write a 500+ word article concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.
- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog [What Works: Teaching at its Best](https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/) prior to writing your article. (<https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template/>)
- When you submit your article to your instructor, please also email a copy to [Renee Leon](mailto:renee@hol.edu), [renee@hol.edu](mailto:renee@hol.edu), THI blog curator and media specialist.
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Submit your modified lesson and your article along with your article via email to your instructor.
- **Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #11-B.'**

#### **Assignment #12: Share Your Learning.**

Share what you have learned with a colleague/administrator/PLC/team/district leadership. Go over the research on engagement that has had the most impact for your teaching and explain the science of why engaging students is critical if we expect them to be successful. Use the journal you have been keeping for ideas. Explain the long term ramifications for the classroom. Write up this conversation and the follow-up that might be part of this conversation. 2-3 pages.

**Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read 'Engaging Students #12.'**

### **Assignment #13: (500 Level ONLY)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one(1)** of the following assignment options:

#### **Option A)**

Answer the question, "What are the most pressing needs in my classroom?" Using the ideas presented in the book on pgs. 160-161, design a folder/graphic for each domain and list strategies that you can use for each domain. The point of this assignment is to create clarity about WHAT you need to address, which direction to take, and to develop a master plan to help with implementation. You will develop a graphic/mind map that organizes strategies from your learning by domain and subcategory.

**Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read "Poverty #13-A."**

**OR**

#### **Option B)**

Create a PowerPoint presentation for your staff based on this course and focused on perspectives that would benefit your school. Save it as a PDF. The presentation should include graphics, pictures, color, correct font size, and be presentation ready. Check for errors before you submit. It must be at least 15 slides.

**Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read "Poverty #13-B."**

**OR**

#### **Option C)**

Design your own assignment (action plan) with instructor's prior approval (examples include doing a podcast, collecting data, journaling and assessing for at least 3 weeks, designing a website full of ideas, and so on. This should involve 2-3 weeks of detailed work.

**Send to Brenda at [bbbrain@comcast.net](mailto:bbbrain@comcast.net). Subject line to read "Poverty #13-C."**

### **C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #14: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

#### **SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments.)**

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when, and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Send to your instructor at their email address. Subject line to read "(put course name here) Integration Paper"**

#### **INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Brenda McKinney, CEO of Vancouver, WA based BrainVolution, is a developer and dynamic facilitator of workshops that teach practical thinking and learning tools for raising student achievement with the brain in mind. She has trained educators throughout the Pacific Northwest and is a popular presenter because of her ability to motivate, make things fun, and teach practical techniques for the classroom that can be used immediately. Brenda continues to read hundreds of books and articles on the subject of neuroscience and searches for the answer to success for every student. Her work with at-risk students and those with reading problems have made her a popular speaker at the state, regional and national level.

Brenda is able to synthesize the new research and continues to address the role of how to use the latest findings to create high achievement classroom. She brings 30+ years of experience at the elementary, middle school, high school and university level as a mentor teacher, consultant, motivational speaker, university instructor, and reading specialist. Brenda has her Master's in Education from Washington State University and is nationally certified in Brain Based Learning through the renowned Jensen Corporation, led by Eric Jensen, a noted international spokesperson for neuroscience and education.

Brenda will inspire and motivate you with her energy, enthusiasm and knowledge. Her wisdom, techniques, and brain based approach to education will inspire you and challenge you to meet the demands of this ever changing world.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ENGAGING STUDENTS OF POVERTY: Practical Strategies That Raise

**Allen, Rich & W.W. Wood.** *The Rock & Roll Classroom. Using Music to Manage Mood, Energy, and Learning.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 2013. This is a terrific resource if you need music ideas for the classroom. Rich will also provide everything you need to know about song choices, what to play in the background, and what to use to get kids moving, and how to settle them down. Even if you know music, that doesn't mean you know how and when to incorporate. I believe you will find this one invaluable.

**Dweck, Carol.** *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.* New York: Ballantine. 2006. Dweck's work should be included in any study on engagement. If you have not already read the book or taken the Mindset course from Heritage, this would be a perfect addition to your toolbox. With the right mindset, we can motivate our kids and help them to raise their grades, as well as reach our own goals—personal and professional. Understanding the mindsets of all students, parallels reasons why they all need to be engaged in order to be successful. Don't miss this selection.

**Jensen, Eric.** *Poverty with the Brain in Mind. What Being Poor Does to Kids' Brains and What Schools Can Do about It.* ASCD. 2009. Eric's book was the basis for my first poverty course, Poverty and the Brain. You do NOT need to have read this book in order to succeed with Engaging Brains of Poverty. It is, however, a must read if you teach in a poverty school and have not already embraced the latest science.

**Jensen, Eric.** *Top Tunes for Teaching: 977 Song Titles & Practical Tools for Choosing the Right Music Every Time.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 2005. This resource offers research-based tips and lists of songs that can enhance cognition, improve memory, energize sluggish learners, and make lessons fun for students of all ages.

**Jensen, Eric.** *Tools for Engagement Managing Emotional States for Learner Success.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 2003. Newer version is now available. This resource provides more than 150 practical and creative activities to promote student curiosity and accountability, ease transitions, boost confidence, and enhance understanding and retention. This was the book that I carried to every class and used every day. It is an amazing reference and resource.

**Jensen, Eric & LeAnn Nickelsen.** *Deeper Learning. 7 Powerful Strategies for In-Depth and Longer-Lasting Learning.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 2008. This book for Grades 4–12 outlines the Deeper Learning Cycle (DELC), a brain-based teaching model for applying powerful learning and content processing techniques to everyday instruction. This book has a ton of resources and engagement ideas. Intensive with information, but lots of great ideas.

**Yazzie-Mintz, E.** *Voices of students on engagement: A report on the 2006 High School Survey of Student Engagement.* Bloomington, IN: Center of Evaluation on Education Policy, Indiana University. 2007. If you are looking for proof that engagement and brain breaks are necessary for academic achievement, then you will want to consult this resource.