Course Outline: *Creative Problem Solving in Education*

2 graduate credits course associated with Creative Problem Solving Workshop
UW La Crosse, La Crosse, WI
Summer 2017

Target Audience:
K-12 Teachers and Coaches, School Leaders, District Leaders, Curriculum Specialist, and Teacher Leaders.

Objectives (participants will know and be able to):

- Identify and explain several reasons for the importance of creativity;
- Define creative and critical thinking and explain how both contribute to effective problem solving;
- Identify their own personal problem-solving style preferences and the implications of style for working effectively on problems or to manage change, both individually and as part of a team or group;
- Identify four main categories of personal characteristics associated with creativity and their implications for educational practice;
- Identify and explain four guidelines to consider when generating options, and four guidelines to consider when focusing options;
- Define, explain, and apply five tools for generating options and five tools for focusing options;
- Identify three important roles taken by participants in any group application of CPS;
- Describe the important purposes, tools, and methods for each stage in the *Understanding the Challenge* component of CPS;
- Describe the important purposes, tools, and methods for the *Generating Ideas* component of CPS;
- Describe the important purposes, tools, and methods for each stage in the *Preparing for Action* component of CPS;
- Know when and how to apply the three CPS process components in their own settings;
- Describe the nature and importance of metacognition in CPS;
- Describe, distinguish among, and give examples of foundations, realistic tasks, and real problems or challenges in teaching, learning, and applying CPS;
- Formulate a personal plan for applying CPS in your own setting.

Outline of course content:

This two and one half-day professional learning will focus on the application of creative and critical thinking instruction as applied in the classroom, and also team and group training for competitive teams or in professional settings. District and school level leaders, teacher leaders, classroom teachers, and coaches, will acquire additional tools, skills and understandings in productive thinking, and problem solving and change management. Some instruction will be delivered directly, but instruction will be mainly delivered through discussion and hands-on, interactive, group experiences. Participants will exit the training with a plan to address an issue of personal importance.

Course requirements:

- Attendance at the entire workshop beginning the afternoon of June 11 and ending on the afternoon of June 13, 2017. (17 hours for the workshop)
- Participation in all conference activities
- Write a paper that includes (paper should be submitted as an email attachment to Ed Selby by June 20th to ecselby@me.com):
  - A summary/synthesis of your learning, a reflection of the workshop indicating how you will plan to use the information in your setting.
  - A description of your personal problem solving plan, how it was developed, and your success in implementing your short-term implementation task.

Instructional methods:

1. Direct instruction:
   - Reading and evening preparation: Participants should read and be familiar with the required text, and will individually develop expertise in understanding one step in the problem-solving process.
2. Group discussion:
   - The importance of creative productivity and creativity instruction; the role of problem solving styles; what is a tool; generating and focusing tools; guidelines for productive thinking; components of the problem-solving process; the application of key learnings to classroom and team instruction.
3. Activities:
   - Working in groups, engage in ten experiences using problem solving tools (2 as a committee of the whole and 8 using prepared work stations;) each participant will become an expert on one step in the problem-solving process and share that expertise with others, jigsaw fashion; working in groups, each participant will develop a problem statement of personal importance, and then develop a proposed plan of action.

Text

- Treffinger, D. J., Isaksen, S., & Dorval, B. (2006). *Creative problem solving: An introduction* (4th ed.). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Suggested reading

- Treffinger, D. J., Schoonover, P. F., & Selby, E. C. (2013). *Educating for Creativity and Innovation.* Waco, TX: Prufrock Press

Assessment procedures

Assessment of written paper:

- A summary/synthesis of your learning, a reflection of the workshop indicating how you will plan to use the information in your setting.
- A description of your personal problem solving plan, how it was developed, and your success in implementing your short-term implementation task.

Grading:

A = Effectively demonstrates a synthesis of topic through reflection on learning, the individual and group activities and discussions, and reflection on the implementation of your personal problem solving plan of action.

B = Provides a summary of the topics; however, the paper either lacks development beyond the workshop summary or the application.

NY (not yet) = Incomplete information is turned in.

Course Logistics

- **Instructor of Record:** Edwin Selby
- **Location: UW La Crosse**
- **Course dates & times:**
  - June 11, 2017 2pm to 6pm
  - June 12, 2017 9am to 5pm
  - June 13, 2017 9am to 4pm
- **Student work due:** June 20, 2017

Standards Addressed in Course by its letter or number designation only:

WI Teacher Standards (1-10)*:* 1; 3; 4; 5; 7 and 10
Pupil Services (1-7): 2; 3 and 5
Administrative (1-7): 2; 5 and 7