

**COURSE TITLE:** GENERATION Z: Understanding & Teaching The Kids In Our Classrooms  
**NO. OF CREDITS:** 6 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 4.00 credits]

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 60  
**OREGON PDUs:** 60  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 60

**INSTRUCTOR:** Suzanne Warner  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Who is this new generation in our classrooms? Generation Z is comprised of those students born 1995 or thereabouts – they’ve never known a world without the Internet or cellphones. They are enmeshed with social media and have been criticized for having little to no social skills. Yet they are the future and have a lot of positive attributes to offer, but first, we need to teach them in our classrooms in a manner that will lead to their success.

In this course you will learn about Generation Z, how to best meet their unique learning needs, how to engage them in the classroom, as well as learn from them – about what they think, where they’re going, how they’ll change the world. This course is applicable to all content areas and all school personnel, K-12.

The course text, We are Generation Z, is approximately \$14 at Amazon.

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

1. An understanding of the characteristics of Generation Z and how they differ from previous generations.
2. Strategies for engaging Generation Z students in the classroom.
3. The opportunity to learn what Generation Z thinks of themselves and their future.
4. The opportunity to delve into the social media that is important to Generation Z.
5. A deeper understanding of the concerns about Generation Z as well as the positive influence of Generation Z.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

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

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants 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**

*We are Generation Z* by Vivek Pandit is about \$14 from Amazon.

- ***We Are Generation Z: How Identity, Attitudes, and Perspectives Are Shaping Our Future***

ISBN# 9781612542188

by Vivek Pandit

Brown Books Publishing

[Buy from Amazon](#)

#### **MATERIALS FEE**

none.

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

#### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Different Generations and Their Characteristics**

The times we grow up in shape our attitudes and outlook, as is clear when we explore the differences between these generations: The GI/Greatest Generation (born 1901 – 1926), The Silent Generation (born 1927 - 1945), Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1964), Generation X (born 1965 – 1980), Generation Y/Millennials\* and Generation Z\*. (\*Note that there are no exact dates for Millennials and Generation Z, however Millennials are thought of as those born early 1980's to mid 1990's or early 2000s, and Generation Z thereafter.)

1. Make notes as you read of the long-term trend in generations and what characteristics become more pronounced in more recent generations.
  - The Whys and Hows of Generations research: <http://www.people-press.org/2015/09/03/the-whys-and-hows-of-generations-research/>
  - The Six Living Generations in America: <http://www.marketingteacher.com/the-six-living-generations-in-america/>
  - The Generation Guide: <https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/style/generation-names-and-years-a-cheat-sheet-for-parents/>
2. Using powerpoint, a web page or other media to organize graphics and text, display photos or videos of persons you either know or have heard about from the media that represent each of the above generations. Label each according to generations. Note two characteristics that are most outstanding for each person. Which persons would have the most conflict and on what issues? What trends do you see from G1 generation to Z, and if you were to project that out what might a generation born from 2050-2075 be like? Can you find a photo and make a description? Describe what may be the major factors influencing generations over the next 50-70 years? (This should be 300-500 words, or word-equivalent, depending on the type of media you choose to present your ideas.)

## Assignment #2: Millennials v. Generation Z

1. Now consider in more detail the two most recent generations that have been students in your classroom: Millennials and Generation Z:
  - How Generation Z Will Change the World According to Experts (Time Magazine): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFaEPe6T\\_m4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFaEPe6T_m4&feature=youtu.be)
  - 8 Key Differences Between Gen Z and Millennials: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/george-beall/8-key-differences-between\\_b\\_12814200.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/george-beall/8-key-differences-between_b_12814200.html)
  - Millennials vs. Gen Z: 5 Ways They're Totally Different: <https://www.salesforce.com/blog/2017/10/how-millennials-and-gen-z-are-different.html>
2. Answer the Review Questions.
3. Create a graphic comparing the two generations – include concepts from the readings so far as well as any additional research you may partake.

## Assignment #3: GROUP FORUM - Generation Z in Their Own Words

The book, *We Are Generation Z*, is written by a Gen Z'er for Gen Z'ers. Granted that anyone taking this course is not the target audience; however, it still has valuable information for us as teachers of Generation Z. Read the book along with watching the following videos to gain insight into the Gen Z mind:

- Gen Z: In Their Words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MmT9N4ZTns>
- Gen Z: Who Are We? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abxMT7HJIT8>
- Generation Z: In Their Own Words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBEBcTJHoik>

In 250 – 500 words, briefly summarize what you read/watched and answer the following questions:

- What surprised you about what was said and/or written? Why did this surprise you?
- What did you learn from reading/listening to Gen Z'ers that you were unaware of previously?
- Has your perspective of Generation Z changed? Why or why not and if so, in what way?
- What do you perceive are the more positive attributes of Gen Z and how that reflects in the classroom?
- What do you perceive are the more negative/challenging attributes of Gen Z and how that reflects in the classroom?
- Please feel free to share any other thoughts or comments.

## Assignment #4: The Fluid Reality of Generation Z

1. Whether you personally agree or not, Generation Z no longer views gender as a defining characteristic of a person, but rather acknowledges gender fluidity. Read the following articles about Generation Z and gender fluidity:

- The Gender Spectrum: <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2013/the-gender-spectrum>
- The Future is Fluid: Generation Z's Approach to Gender and Sexuality is Indeed Revolutionary: <https://www.dailydot.com/irl/generation-z-fluid/>
- Redefining Gender at Work: How Companies are Evolving: <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/redefining-gender-at-work/>

2. Answer the Review Questions.

3. In 250 words, briefly summarize what you read and share any experiences/thoughts you have about gender fluidity in your classroom and how this affects your teaching Generation Z students.

## Assignment #5: GROUP FORUM - Is Generation Z in Trouble?

There are some that have concerns regarding Generation Z and their future – such as: that they are entitled, that they are socially awkward, that they don't know how to work hard. There are also concerns of depression and anxiety in a generation filled with social media and the self-comparison it seems to encourage. Read the following articles on a variety of concerns:

- General Articles from Psychology Today:
  - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/how-do-life/201510/generation-z>
  - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/tech-happy-life/201805/is-generation-z-in-trouble>
- Mental Well-being: <https://www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/how-mental-health-affecting-generation-zs-ability-achieve>

- Entitlement: <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/the-positives-and-negatives-of-generation-z>
- Narcissism: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/allinthemind/young-people-today-are-more-narcissistic-than-ever/5457236>
- Anxious/Distrustful: <https://www.inc.com/jessica-stillman/gen-z-is-anxious-distrustful-and-often-downright-miserable-new-poll-reveals.html>

In 250 words, describe if as a teacher you've experienced any of these issues (or any others related to Generation Z) in the classroom and how it has impacted teaching and learning. Considering all the reading you've done until now, what strategy/strategies could you implement to alleviate your problem/concern.

### **Assignment #6: Generation Z and Social Media**

Social media is paramount for the Gen Z crowd and they use it differently than any generation before them. Did you know that 98% of Gen Z own a smartphone!

Read the following articles detailing Gen Z and Social Media:

- 15 Stats on How Gen-Z Spends Their Time on Social Media and Mobile Messaging: <https://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2017/04/stats-gen-z-social-mobile/>
- How Gen Z Is Using Social Media To Affect Real-Life Social Change: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jefffromm/2018/02/21/how-gen-z-is-using-social-media-to-affect-real-life-social-change/#152adf6849f4>
- What Generation Z Really Thinks About Social Media: <https://www.likeable.com/blog/2018/what-generation-z-really-thinks-about-social-media/>
- Infographic: Where to Find Generation Z on Social Media: <http://www.womensmarketing.com/blog/favorite-social-media-platforms-generation-z-infographic>
- U.S. Surgeon General: We need to protect kids from social media risks immediately: <https://www.cNBC.com/2023/05/23/us-surgeon-general-we-must-protect-kids-from-social-media-risks-now.html>

As you can see, Generation Z is moving into more “real time” platforms such as Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram. Spend some time researching each platform and decide if you would prefer to learn how to use Instagram, TikTok, or Snapchat and then create an account in whichever platform you choose. (You can create a personal account of one to use in your classroom – totally up to you.)

Spend significant time working within whichever platform you choose – find coworkers or organizations that appeal to you. Try and post photos and videos – communicate with others within the platform - really explore the space - and consider why Snapchat/Instagram appeals to generation Z, the pros and cons of social media, as well as possible implementation practices in the classroom.

Create a PowerPoint Presentation (or Google Slide Show) illustrating your foray into TikTok/Snapchat/Instagram, share how the platform works, and share how one could incorporate it as a learning tool in the classroom. Include screen shots of your posts and detail your experience. Explain how you could use Snapchat, TikTok, or Instagram as a component in student learning. Your presentation/slide show should have 10-20 slides and your explanation 100-200 words.

### **Assignment #7: The GenZ Kids in Your School & Community**

Differences in environment (urban, suburban, rural), ethnic diversity, and regional cultures distinguish people everywhere, including GenZ young people. In this assignment you'll explore what's different or the same between the GenZ kids in your community and school compared to what you've been learning about Generation Z nationally or internationally.

1. Conduct one or more chat sessions with 3-5 GenZ young people. Prepare beforehand a few questions you want to explore.
2. Talk with other educators or parents and get feedback on your findings. Do they agree with yours, and what more did you learn from these conversations?
3. Summarize in a chart what is the same and different between local vs. national GenZers as well as your discoveries from your conversations (number 2, above).

### **Assignment #8: Engaging Generation Z in the Classroom**

What have we learned about how to best reach GenZ students?

1. Read the following articles:

- 4 Simple Tactics to Engage Better With Gen Z Students: <http://corwin-connect.com/2017/09/4-simple-tactics-engage-better-gen-z-students/>
- The Rise of Gen Z and How to Earn Their Trust: <https://christophergrate.medium.com/the-rise-of-gen-z-how-to-earn-their-trust-b3b9116fe9f7>
- Six Ways to Engage with Generation Z: <https://blog.disqus.com/6-ways-to-engage-with-generation-z>

- How to Teach Gen Z Students: <https://www.aicpa.org/interestareas/accountingeducation/newsandpublications/how-to-teach-generation-z-students.html>
- Here Comes Z: Strategies To Engage A New Generation Of College Students (although focused on college students, still very applicable K-12): <https://elearningindustry.com/engage-a-new-generation-of-college-students-strategies>

2. Watch the following video (you can start around the 11 minute mark, as the first 11 minutes are repetitive of what you learned in Assignment #1): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCxI4TggQZA>

3. Reflect on your current teaching style and how it is similar/different than what you learned in these readings/video. Think of two or three lessons that you currently teach and consider how you could revamp them to better meet the needs of your Generation Z students.

- Share one lesson plan with a description of how you currently teach it.
- Rewrite the lesson plan incorporating some of the engagement strategies outlined in the readings/video.
- In approximately 250 words, explain how the updated lesson plan better meets the learning needs of Generation Z students. Be sure to post both of the lesson plans as well as your explanation. In what ways did your strategies reflect any differences your GenZ'ers show compared to the broader view of all GenZ'ers.

## **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 do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #9: Journaling**

Considering your new knowledge from your work in Section A.....

If you are currently in a classroom, consider this new knowledge as you interact and teach your Gen Z students over a 2 – 3 week time period. Keep a journal of :

- strategies you have tried – what went well, what didn't go well, how you'd do it differently next time.
- thoughts/concerns/positives you had while interacting with your Gen Z students
- things you tried to do/say differently given your new-found understanding of Gen Z
- anything else you'd like to add

The journal can be in whatever form you'd like – paragraph form, bullet points, video – it's your journal so you chose the format. Also, it's OK to have a digital journal, on google docs, for instance.

Post the journal/screenshots/video link.

If you are currently not in a classroom or do not have access to students, you are welcome to simply write a plan of implementation, if that better suits your needs. You can also journal about non-students – your own children, friends' children – whatever may apply. Also, please contact me if you need other accommodations or have any ideas of your own that you'd like to do for this assignment.

#### **Assignment #10: Lesson Implementation**

Assignment #10-A:

- Use the lesson from Assignment #8 or adapt a different one.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a 450-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback or noteworthy student products.
- Submit your lesson to your instructor via the lesson tab below.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the [lesson library](#) box when you submit your lesson.

- Use The Heritage Institute [lesson template](#) or one from your district.

**OR**

#### Assignment #10-B:

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

- Adapt/create a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- 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 for our [blog What Works: Teaching at its Best](#) prior to writing your article.
- When you submit your article to your instructor, please also email a copy to [Yvonne Hall](#) 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 article to your instructor via Response field and the modified lesson via Submit Lesson.
- As you submit your lesson, consider sharing it with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box.

#### Assignment #11: Online Blog/Website/PowerPoint

Create either an online blog, website (free websites can be easily created on Google), or PowerPoint Presentation sharing the information you learned in this course. The information should be geared to fellow teachers with the goal of educating them on Generation Z and how to create a successful learning environment for out gen Z students.

Submit the URL if blog or website; attached if PowerPoint.

#### Assignment #12: (500 Level ONLY)

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **ONE** of the following:

##### Option A)

Conduct additional research via periodicals, online articles or videos on student anxiety in the classroom, and document the key points you learned in either a 3-4 page paper or a mind map with equivalent scale of content. Include an analysis of how this research supports or contrasts with the course text and assignments, and a bibliography of your sources.

**OR**

##### Option B)

Create an annotated bibliography focused on the topics learned in this class. Include 6 - 8 resources.

**OR**

##### Option C)

Another assignment of your own design with the instructor's prior approval.

#### C. INTEGRATION PAPER

Assignment #13: (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)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

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?
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#### 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:

**Suzanne Warner, M.S.**, received her Masters Degree in Education from the University of Rochester, New York. She has taught mathematics in the middle school, high school, and college settings, most recently in Oregon. Suzanne has been lauded by administrators, colleagues, students and parents regarding her teaching and classroom management skills. Her students enjoy learning in a respectful, productive environment, where each student is in control of her/his own learning and behaviors. She strongly believes that all students want to do well, and creates a teaching environment for them to succeed.

When not in the classroom, Suzanne enjoys spending time with her family reading, hiking, backpacking and traveling.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### GENERATION Z: Understanding & Teaching The Kids In Our Classrooms

**Barna Group**, *Gen Z: The Culture, Beliefs and Motivations Shaping the Next Generation*, Barna Group, 2018, paperback, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-1945269134

Produced in partnership with Impact 360 Institute, *Gen Z: The Culture, Beliefs and Motivations Shaping the Next Generation* is Barna's most comprehensive research on the perceptions, experiences, and motivations of 13 to 18 year-olds. Based on interviews and analysis, this report is our best thinking thus far on the worldview of teens in the next, next generation.

In *Gen Z*, you'll find: Statistics on teens' views of themselves, their spiritual lives, and the world, Comparative data with older generations, Analysis of the cultural trends forming Gen Z, Full color Infographics and data visualizations

**Seemiller, Corey and Meghan Grace**, *Generation Z Goes to College*, Jossey-Bass, 2016, hard cover, 320 pages, ISBN: 978-1119143451

Generation Z students grew up in a recession and are under no illusions about their prospects for employment after college. While skeptical about the cost and value of higher education, they are also entrepreneurial, innovative, and independent learners concerned with effecting social change. Understanding Generation Z's mindset and goals is paramount to supporting, developing, and educating them through higher education. *Generation Z Goes to College* showcases findings from an in-depth study of over 1,100 Generation Z college students from 15 vastly different U.S. higher education institutions as well as additional studies from youth, market, and education research related to this generation.

**Twenge, Jean M.**, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood--and What That Means for the Rest of Us*, Atria Books, 2017, hard cover, 352 pages, ISBN: 978-1501151989

Born in the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s and later, iGen is the first generation to spend their entire adolescence in the age of the smartphone. With social media and texting replacing other activities, iGen spends less time with their friends in person—perhaps why they are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety, depression, and loneliness.

But technology is not the only thing that makes iGen distinct from every generation before them; they are also different in how they spend their time, how they behave, and in their attitudes toward religion, sexuality, and politics. They socialize in completely new ways, reject once sacred social taboos, and want different things from their lives and careers. More than previous generations, they are obsessed with safety, focused on tolerance, and have no patience for inequality. iGen is also growing up more slowly than previous generations: eighteen-year-olds look and act like fifteen-year-olds used to.

**Zarra, Ernest J.**, *The Entitled Generation: Helping Teachers Teach and Reach the Minds and Hearts of Generation Z*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, paperback, 2017, 146 pages, ISBN: 978-1475831924

*The Entitled Generation: Helping Teachers Teach and Reach the Minds and Hearts of Generation Z* brings teachers into the twenty-first century world of 24-7 technologically-wired up and social media-driven students. This book asks teachers to consider pragmatic and sensible ways to teach Gen Z and to understand the differences between today's students and those of the past.

**Zarra, Ernest J.**, *Helping Parents Understand the Minds and Hearts of Generation Z*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, paperback, 2017, 130 pages, ISBN: 978-1475831894

*Helping Parents Understand the Minds and Hearts of Generation Z* takes parents into the daily lives of their 24-7, wired-up children. It allows parents and children to speak for themselves. This highly practical book provides parents insights into how Gen Z thinks, the ways their brains learn, and illustrates why children of this technological generation believe and act the ways they do. There are some red flags in American culture and smart technology and digital devices are right there at the center of them all. Students in Gen Z do not recall a time before the Internet and smart technology. As a result, serious issues are arising in American culture within Gen Z. These considerations have implications for families and interpersonal relationships and will also impact future economics, as more and more student from Gen Z graduate college and enter the workforce. Parents will find this book compelling and will be challenged to consider whether their withdrawn, ear-budded children are addicted to their devices and social media, and to where all of this might lead.