

Professional Profile –Jeni McRay, Ph.D

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Credentials and Experience

I have had a variety of professional responsibilities over the years in corporate, non-profit and higher education environments. I am both a “natural” and “learned” educator and have developed skills as a leader, teacher, administrator and/or consultant in all of the following settings: technical/professional training, corporate training, traditional college classrooms, adult classrooms - online, hybrid and on- ground, and all types of higher education institutions – proprietary and non-profit. I earned my undergraduate degree from Oklahoma City University (1995), my Master of Education from Newman University (1998), and my [Ph.D. in Educational Leadership](#), with an emphasis in *Adult, Occupational and Continuing Education*, from [Kansas State University](#)(2005).

I love working with adult learners and emerging leaders in any setting and especially enjoy working with diverse audiences! As an educational consultant for higher education, I lead or assist in projects dealing mostly with programs for adult, professional students, particularly online, advanced programs. I am also an expert in course design, development, and delivery using [Blackboard Learn](#) and have extensive experience in faculty development. I also design, develop and deliver customized training for various organizations in the areas of leadership; communication skills; personality styles; conflict management; 360-degree feedback; supervisory/management training; and learning/teaching styles. I also have experience developing instructional materials and delivering instruction to students in China.

See page 4 for a comprehensive grid of my classes, publications, and presentations.

Thesis/Dissertation

My thesis explored the relationship between learning style and teaching style, using Robert Sternberg’s theory of mental self-government, and gathered data from the Thinking Styles Inventory and Teaching Styles Inventory. My [dissertation](#) assessed the concept of quality in adult degree-completion programs (ADCP’s) from a multiple-stakeholder perspective, employing a modified and updated version of the *Institutional Goals Inventory*. Faculty, staff, and administrators of Southwestern College, Friends University, and Newman University participated in the study. The results were shared with the leaders of those respective institutions in an effort to help improve organizational and programmatic quality and inform leaders about the perspectives of multiple stakeholders.

Areas of Interest

I strive to stay current on all major topics in educational and organizational leadership, especially in higher education programs geared toward professional, adult, online learners. I am also passionate about interdisciplinary programs/approaches and seek to integrate a cross-discipline or cross-sector approach when possible. Here is personal **Top Ten favorite** list (unranked...they are all important enough to be number 1 at any given snapshot in time!)

Leadership Development

Capstone Experiences (Field Work, Service Projects, Internships, Portfolios, Dissertations)

Cross-Sector/International Partnerships

Organizational Culture

Educational Technology

Academic Quality

Institutional Effectiveness

Instructional Design

Faculty Training and Development

Online Course Development/Delivery

Fort Hays State University



As an Assistant Professor of Leadership Studies since 2013, I design and deliver graduate level courses in the [Master of Professional Studies, Organizational Leadership](#) program as well as online courses for international students enrolled in *Leadership Studies* programs at [SNU](#) and [Sias International University](#), Chinese partners of [FHSU](#). This is part of a unique “cross-border” program in which students are earning dual degrees, one from their “home” institution, and one from FHSU. This requires a unique blend of distance delivery using Blackboard, overseeing all instructional materials and lectures/presentations, and working with a “cooperating instructor” who is employed by the Chinese institution.

Southwestern College



I have an especially long professional relationship with Southwestern College. I have been teaching at SC continuously for 17 years and have taught a variety of courses at the undergraduate and graduate level in two departments: leadership and education, for the main campus and for Professional Studies. I received the *Professional Studies Affiliate Faculty Member of the Year* award in 2004. I also have experience in administration, having served first as the *Director of Graduate Programs* and chair of the Graduate Studies Council, and later as the *Director of Academic Affairs* (chief academic officer) for [SC Professional Studies](#). In these positions I was responsible for the academic governance of all graduate and undergraduate programs delivered to adult, professional learners. This included [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) programs in leadership. In these roles I was responsible for faculty hiring, training, development and oversight; curriculum planning and program development; regular academic program review; outcomes assessment planning and execution; and development and implementation of organizational strategic planning in concert with enrollment management and learner services directors. I currently teach doctoral level courses to students enrolled in the [Ed.D program](#) and serve on several doctoral committees.

Call me Dr. J

I am commonly known to students as "Dr. J." I ask them to please call me either Jeni or Dr. J, but not Dr. McRay. When I first earned my Ph.D and asked my students to continue to call me "just plain Jeni," I had several who were simply unable to comply (chiefly, but not exclusively, military students and those raised in the south and/or in households where parents required their kids to refer to elders as "sir" and "ma'am" and with proper titles ...or else...). So, we compromised with "Dr. J," and it stuck. This provides me the level of informality I desire but creates an alternative for those who "just don't feel right" not using my proper title. No matter what students call me, they know I am dedicated to their success. I care very much about each individual learner and do whatever I can to facilitate the best learning environment possible, including extra face-to-face or online chats, extended deadlines, individual tutoring, opportunities for re-writes, etc.

Expectations/Philosophy

Below is a list of expectations I publish for my students in all courses. It provides a window to my teaching philosophy.

What I Expect From You

- ✓ **I expect you to care about your educational journey in its entirety.** This should show in the timeliness and quality of your discussions, assignments, and communications with me and your classmates. You should take every class seriously even if it isn't a "core" or required course and even if it is a subject that is not of significant interest to you.
- ✓ **I expect you to care about the subject matter.** I do not teach this class with the assumption that you have enrolled in this degree program simply to "get a piece of paper." Rather, I teach it with the assumption that you have entered this program to learn the most you can in your journey to become the best you can possibly be in your chosen field/profession/job. I assume you care about learning. I assume you not only will work hard but that you want to work hard.
- ✓ **I expect you to take an applied or practical approach to all readings and assignments.** Each time you read a text passage or write a discussion post or complete an assignment I want it to be grounded in what is real to you. I want you to share your experiences, apply the principles discussed to your own work and life, and constantly find ways to make meaning (this is called "constructivism"). In classes designed for professional, mature adults, it is not my responsibility to "teach" you. Rather, it is my responsibility to create a learning environment, provide direction and resources, and offer feedback and guidance. **What** and **how much** you learn is entirely up to you.
- ✓ **I expect you to devote time to your studies.** You will spend a number of hours each week in your coursework. You must understand this and be willing to devote the time to your studies in order to get the most from them. Having said that, please understand that should unexpected (or even expected) life circumstances occur, I am more than willing to be flexible and understanding as long as you communicate with me. I am not flexible, however, if you consistently rush the process, rush through assignments, or display a lack of critical thinking skills due to inadequate reading or reflection of the material.
- ✓ **I expect excellent writing abilities, a high degree of self-direction, a high level of participation in discussion, and solid critical thinking skills.** If you do not possess these skills I will help point you to resources that will help you remediate them, and I expect you to avail yourself of those resources and to seriously endeavor to come up to speed. I always offer the opportunity to re-submit major assignments for additional credit and sometimes allow extra credit depending on the situation. I'm open to just about anything reasonable to ensure you succeed, learn, and grow in your academic skills.

What You Can Expect From Me

- ✓ **You can expect me to be your learning partner, not a learning dictator.** I consider myself your partner-in-learning and sincerely hope you grow both personally and professionally through your courses. I take my teaching responsibilities very seriously and will be available to help guide you in any way possible but also expect to learn things from you. Ours is not a one-way relationship, or at least I hope it isn't! I strive to develop relationships with learners and often call just to chat. Feel free to do the same.
- ✓ **You can expect high quality, timely, honest feedback** that includes both praise and constructive criticism.
- ✓ **You can expect me to care about you as a whole person, not just as a student in my class.** I strive to demonstrate care and concern for your personal and professional growth and consider myself a mentor. I am happy to provide references, dole out advice, and share professional contacts when appropriate.
- ✓ **You can expect me to be a subject-matter expert as well as an involved, dedicated, experienced facilitator of your learning.** I possess solid expertise in the fields of education, interpersonal communication, and leadership and will do all I can to maximize your learning and understanding of the subject matter we cover. I have extensive knowledge of outside resources and research and extensive experience as facilitator/instructor. Trust me.
- ✓ **You can expect me to ask as much or more from myself as I do of you.**

	Instructor Graduate Level	Instructor Undergrad Level	Author White Paper/ Report/Lectures	Designer Presentation/ Training	Facilitator Higher Ed, Corp. or Non- Profit
Action Research	X				
Assessments, Tests and Measurements	X		X	X	
Blackboard 9.1			X	X	X
Business & Administrative Communications		X			X
Capstone ePortfolio	X	X	X	X	X
Capstone Research Project		X		X	
Characteristics of the Adult Learner	X		X	X	X
Conflict Resolution				X	X
Developing Workforce Talent		X	X		X
Education Foundations	X			X	
Educational Psychology	X	X			
Educational Technology				X	X
Emotional Intelligence			X	X	X
Faculty Mentoring			X	X	X
Grade Inflation			X	X	X
Instructional Design	X		X	X	X
Kouzes & Posner's Leadership Challenge	X	X	X	X	X
Leadership Styles and Theories	X	X	X	X	X
MBTI		X	X	X	X
Organizational Leadership & Ethics	X				
Motivating Adult Learners			X	X	X
Outcomes Assessment			X	X	X
Plagiarism/Academic Integrity			X	X	X
Rubric Development			X	X	X
Self-Awareness & Relationship Management		X	X	X	X
Teaching Methods for Adult Learners	X		X	X	X