

George Mason University

College of Education and Human Development

EDUC 614: DESIGNING AND ASSESSING TEACHING AND LEARNING

Fall 2004 Section 625: Rappahannock Regional Cohort

Class Dates: Session one will be held on Thursday Sept. 9 from 5:00-7:00PM at the Professional Development Center in Stafford; Sessions two and three will be held on Saturday Sept. 11- 9:00 AM-4PM at PW-1; Sessions four, five and six will be held on Thursdays, Sept. 16, 23, and 30 from 5:00-9:00PM at the PDC building. Session eight will be held on Oct. 14 from 5:00–9:00PM at the PDC building. Note: Session seven will be held as an independent study group session at a location and time of the students' choosing. This will be a 3 1/2 hour collaborative review of unit plan implementations and can be held anytime between Oct. 1st and Oct. 13th.

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This two-credit course explores the design and development of curricular, pedagogical, and assessment strategies that are effectively responsive to the needs and interests of students. It investigates the implications of a wide range of factors that affect teaching and learning, such as culture, politics, ethnicity, class, wellness, and gender. The course provides opportunities for studying the theoretical and practical arguments underpinning a variety of specific recommendations for improving teaching practice and student learning. In addition, the course will examine multiple ways of knowing that the academic disciplines, students, and teachers potentially bring to classrooms.

Prerequisite: Admission to Graduate School, completion of EDUC 612 and 613.

II. STUDENT OUTCOMES

This course is designed to enable participants to:

- A. Analyze the recommendations for improving teaching practice and student learning
- B. Study curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment strategies that are responsive to the needs and interests of a diverse population of learners
- C. Create a practical and effective assessment tool (rubric or performance checklist) to better assess student learning in a specific subject area and critique its effectiveness after use
- D. Design a teaching portfolio that demonstrates effective teaching and assessment strategies

III. RELATIONSHIP OF EDUC 614 TO ASTL PROGRAM GOALS AND NBPTS PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

EDUC 614 is one of the five courses in the 12-hour, year long ASTL CORE. It is aligned with the following GSE Priorities: Diversity and Equity; Children, Families, and Communities; High Standards and Research-Based Practices; and Effective Use of Technology. EDUC 614 is also aligned with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' (NBPTS) five core propositions, which provide the guiding principles for *what teachers should know and be able to do*. Specifically, this course is aligned with Proposition II: Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach them to students and Proposition III: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning. The focus of EDUC 614 is to increase students' ability to: 1) articulate, reflect on, and question how best to create and assess positive learning experiences appropriate for diverse student identities both collective and individual; and 2) effectively teach knowledge emanating from the various academic disciplines. This course provides opportunities for participants to challenge, hone, and refine their ability to create constructive learning environments and appropriate assessment strategies for children.

As a result of participating and completing the requirements for the course, participants will engage in these learning experiences:

- Analyze student work to monitor student learning and achievement and provide feedback to students
- Analyze one's practice through videotaped classroom interactions
- Develop a teaching portfolio

The performance-based assessments will include:

- Development of a teaching portfolio containing written commentaries on one's teaching accompanied by a video analysis of teaching practice
- Analysis of student work with the development of a rubric/performance assessment checklist to guide and assess student learning
- Blackboard forum responses that will reflect learning, showing the ability to analyze teaching experiences and reflect upon those experiences in order to determine implications for future teaching

IV. Required Textbooks:

Heacox, Diane (2002) *Differentiating instruction in the regular classroom*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc. Order from: <http://www.freespirit.com> (appropriate for gr. 3-12).

McTighe, J. & Wiggins, G. (1999) *The Understanding by Design Handbook*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Supplemental Readings: (These texts are recommended to help develop lesson plan unit)

Jensen, E. (1998) *Teaching with the brain in mind*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Hill, B.C., Ruptic, C. & Norwick, L. (1998). *Classroom based assessment* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.

Tomlinson, Carol Ann (1999) *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Required journal readings: *The Articles listed below are found in GMU's Electronic Reserves:*

<http://oscr.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/ers/OSCRgen.cgi> When retrieving articles from the electronic reserves, choose **EDUC 614** and **Fox, Rebecca** as the instructor.

Finn, L. (March 2002). Using video to reflect on curriculum. *Educational Leadership*, 59(6), 72-74.

Goodrich, Heidi (1997). Understanding rubrics. Originally published in *Educational Leadership*, 54(4). Retrieved September 1, 2003, from <http://learnweb.harvard.edu/alps/thinking/docs/rubricar.htm>

Meisels, Samuel (Dec.96/Jan.97). Using work sampling in authentic assessments. *Educational Leadership*, 54(4), 60-65. This article can also be found at http://www.ascd.org/publications/ed_lead/199612/meisels.html

O'Neil, John (March 1999). Core knowledge and standards: A conversation with E.D. Hirsch, Jr. *Educational Leadership*, 56(6), 28-32.

Pettig, Kim L. (September 2000) On the road to differentiated practice. *Educational Leadership*, 58(1), 14-19.

Sherin, Miriam (May 2000). Viewing teaching on videotape. *Educational Leadership*, 57(8), 36-38.

Tomlinson, Carol A. (Sept. 2000). Reconcilable differences? Standards-based teaching and differentiation. *Educational Leadership*, 58(1), 6-11. This article is in the electronic reserves and also at http://www.ascd.org/ed_topics/el200009_tomlinson.html.

V. MODE OF COURSE DELIVERY

Course delivery will be through lecture, structured collaborative assessment groups based on teaching levels, and discussion groups based on topics aligned with national standards and program/student outcomes.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION (20%)

This includes active participation in class discussions and online responses, in cooperative learning groups, and in the structured collaborative assessment groups. Regular and thoughtful evidence of and the initiation of higher order

questions related to class readings and discussions; regular and thoughtful participation in both cooperative learning groups and in the structured collaborative sessions will be the criteria for evaluation. Evidence of application of course content to personal practice will be demonstrated through discussion and reflection in the public journal responses given on Blackboard.

2. TEACHING PORTFOLIO (80%)*

Develop a teaching portfolio to reflect your progression of thought regarding curriculum design and assessment. The portfolio will be a snapshot of personal growth and development as it pertains to the acquisition and application of the essential components of this course. It will include a written commentary and videotape. The portfolio is designed to reflect activities that teachers engage in naturally during their work. The portfolio entry captures teaching in real-time, real-life settings and yields valuable evidence. The contents of the portfolio will include:

1. A unit plan that includes relevant features of your teaching setting, content area with instructional goals/objectives, student outcomes, materials and resources, and sequences of learning experiences of students. The unit template found in the assignments section of Blackboard will serve as a guide to the portfolio development.
2. A rubric or performance checklist that guides and assesses student learning of one of the authentic performance task products along with a description and analysis of how it was used and tested in the classroom.
3. A 15-20 minute video clip of a portion of a lesson with a written analysis.
4. Two different authentic performance task products (work samples) from two students that will be described and analyzed with interpretative and reflective comments in the unit evaluation.
5. A discussion of your teaching experiences with the unit and implications for future teaching will be made in the reflection part of the unit evaluation.

This teaching portfolio represents the selective collection, documentation, analysis, and presentation of materials from one's own setting showing what was taught, why it was taught, and how it was taught. See the rubrics at the end of the syllabus for the criteria for evaluation. Different parts of the portfolio will be turned in at various times during the semester for instructor feedback. There will be a possibility to earn a total of 100 points for all assignments and those points will be used to determine your final grade for this course. Portfolios will be submitted in both hard copy format and electronic format to the instructor. Send the electronic format to the instructor via the Blackboard's drop box or as an email attachment to the instructor.

*NOTE: Partially meets the NBPTS' guidelines for portfolio entries.

Grading Scale:

| 98-100 =A+ | 95-97=A | 90-94 =A- | 86-89=B+ | 83-85=B | 80-82= B- | 70-79=C | Below 70=F |

INTEGRATED TEACHING PORTFOLIO LESSON OR UNIT PLAN GUIDELINES

The unit plan you choose does not have to be elaborate. The unit should be a strong sample of what you do on a regular basis that demonstrates *what teachers should know and be able to do*.

Your unit should indicate that you know the subject you teach and how to teach it to students. According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards:

Accomplished teachers command specialized knowledge of how to convey and reveal subject matter to students. They are aware of the preconceptions and background knowledge that students typically bring to each subject and of strategies and instructional materials that can be of assistance. They understand where difficulties are likely to arise and modify their practice accordingly. Their instructional repertoire allows them to create multiple paths to the subjects they teach, and they are adept at teaching students how to pose and solve their own problems.

Your unit should also indicate that you are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning. According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards:

Accomplished teachers command a range of generic instructional techniques, know when each is appropriate, and can implement them as needed. They are as aware of ineffectual or damaging practice as they are devoted to elegant practice. They know how to engage groups of students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to allow the schools' goals for students to be met. They are adept at setting norms for social interaction among students and between students and teachers. They understand how to motivate students to learn and how to maintain their interest even in the face of temporary failure. Accomplished teachers can assess the progress of

individual students as well as that of the class as a whole. They employ multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding and can clearly explain student performance to parents.

When choosing a particular unit, ask yourself:

- Does this particular unit provide me with ample opportunities to demonstrate my teaching proficiency?
- Does this unit offer me enough *depth* to write an analytic and reflective commentary?

Select two students whose work you will collect and analyze during this unit of study. The work will consist of two authentic performance task products (work samples) as well as a rubric or performance checklist that will guide and assess their learning when completing one of those tasks. Consider selecting two students who show a range of abilities. Remember that selecting only the “best” students does not always provide you with much to analyze in relation to your practice.

You should identify a unit that you must teach in your class. You will determine the enduring understandings and essential questions as well as the content goals/objectives (standards and/or benchmarks) of the lesson or unit. Once the instructional goals/objectives with expected outcomes have been planned, you will teach your unit in October and present your experiences to the class on the last class session on Nov. 8.

For a unit plan example, refer to Wiggins and McTighe’s *Understanding by Design Handbook* pgs. 54-59 and for unit ideas, access *Intel Teach to the Future* <http://www97.intel.com/education/teach/index.htm>. A WORD template entitled teachingunit.doc is posted in the assignments section of Blackboard for you to use. If you do not have WORD, then follow the list of items on the hard copy of the template that you will receive in the first class meeting and type the items into your word processing program of choice, but be sure to save the document in RTF.

For ideas on meeting the varying needs of students, creating flexible instructional groups, and giving students choices, you will be referring to Heacox’s [Differentiating Instruction in the Regular Classroom](#), as well as articles found in the electronic reserves.

Maintaining a personal journal will be extremely important in order for you to document your teaching and learning so that the written commentary section of your portfolio will be rich, authentic, and complete. *You will not turn in this personal journal to your instructor.*

Developing and Assessing a Performance Tool

You will create a rubric or performance assessment checklist that will guide your students through a particular assignment or activity and help evaluate their understandings. Your evaluation of its use will include a brief description of the device and how it was used and its effectiveness in guiding and assessing learning; student feedback about its use (if possible); and any changes and reasons for changes that need to be made in the instrument before using it again.

Videotape Analysis

You will make a 15 to 20 minute video of a lesson within your unit that will take place in your classroom. A homework guide for class seven will help you complete an analysis of that video. That guide is posted in the documents section on Blackboard. You will be given an opportunity to meet with a small group of classmates to obtain additional feedback in order for you to complete the analysis. Your responses to the forum questions will also help you respond to the specific descriptive, interpretive and reflective questions in the written commentary portion of your final teaching portfolio.

Authentic Performance Task Products

During the implementation phase of your unit, plan for two different authentic performance task products (see pg. 151 in *The Teaching by Design Handbook* for ideas) your students will create. 2) Collect the two different products from each of two students. You will use the four products to help you determine student understandings. 3) Include copies of these products in an appendix of your unit plan portfolio and complete the descriptive, interpretive and reflective questions in the written commentary portion of your final teaching portfolio. If your products are not practical to include in the portfolio, incorporate digital or photo images of the products in an appendix.