



**George Mason University  
College of Education & Human Development/Graduate School of Education  
Secondary Education Program**

**EDUC 597 (Section 001), "Secondary Education Abroad"  
(3 credits)**

**Key Information**

Instructor: Kristien Zenkov, PhD, Professor

Office hours: Mon/Tues, 3:00-4:15; by appointment, via phone, or via Skype or Google Hangout

Phone: 703.993.5413 (O); 216.470.2384 (M)/Email: kzenkov@gmu.edu

Office/Mail: 1808 Thompson Hall, 4400 University Drive, MSN 4B3, George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development, Fairfax, VA 22030

**Class Meetings**

Please note that our class will meet face-to-face on the Fairfax campus for three sessions and in Cambridge schools and in the Cambridge region for eight all-day sessions and two site visits and seminars. Attendance at all school, site visit, and seminar sessions is mandatory. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on assignments, but please contact us within a reasonable timeframe. We look forward to collaborating with each of you as you work toward your goals:

- Seminar #1: Mon, Aug 29<sup>th</sup>, 2-4 pm, Thompson 1507
- Seminar #2: Weds, Sept 14, 2-4 pm, Thompson 1507
- Seminars #3/#4 (Cambridge): Weeks of Sept 16<sup>th</sup>/Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>; days, times, locations TBD
- Seminar #5: Week of Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Instructor Introduction and Theoretical Framework**

I believe that the best teachers know themselves as literate people in the broadest sense. I will ask you also to know yourselves as professionals with a variety of literacies, including those of photographers, visual sociologists, and community constituents. Teachers and those who work with children and youth must be resilient individuals who are willing to take risks to let school literacies matter to themselves, their students, and the broader community. I will expect you to be your best, brightest, most thoughtful, and most creative selves. I intend that this course will be one that you remember, and that you will care passionately about the work we do. I will have uncompromising professional standards for your behavior, participation, and openness. At the same time, I will do everything possible to ensure that you meet these standards. My hope is that we will experience much intellectual camaraderie, engaging discussion, and laughter as we proceed. I encourage you to take risks and celebrate the risks taken by your colleagues.

I bring the perspectives of a veteran teacher and teacher educator, as well as the points of view of a community activist and artist. I approach all educational experiences with the goal of helping students to learn to be active, creative, "real world" members of a just society. It is important for us

as educators to approach our teaching with a simultaneously critical and creative perspective: when we assess current teaching practices, we also begin to develop new ones. I offer an explicit critique of schooling: as a classroom teacher with more than fifteen years' experience, an active scholar, and an advocate for children and youth and schools, playing a critical role is my right and responsibility. It is my hope that you will take on this same role.

Perhaps most importantly to you, I have spent my school and university teaching career working across school and university settings with a wide range of children and youth, so I am confident that I will be able to support you in this class. Finally, much as you as university students must be concerned with your own development and others' assessments of your class efforts, I am committed to my growth as a teacher and teacher educator. I will ask for your support in my research as I study your inquiry processes and as I consider the prospect of authoring (or co-authoring with you) a book exploring how best to help early career teachers conduct action, teacher, or practitioner research. I am particularly interested in comparing efforts of members of our class who use traditional action, teacher, or practitioner research methods with those who use Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) methods.

I will ask you to think of the teaching strategies we use in class and that you plan to use as research interventions in your own classroom in three categories, which are framed by an assessment-driven, "backwards" design:

- 1) "Ways Out": What is the student's "way out" of the text or activity with which you are asking them to engage? That is, what artifacts and demonstrations will the student complete to exhibit her/his comprehension of the key ideas that they are encountering? How will you assess students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes? How will students demonstrate their retention of and relationship to the material?
- 2) "Ways In": What is the student's "way in" to this text or activity? That is, how are you approaching the student's natural interests in or motivations for this assignment? Think about how you might use the student's existing "literacies" to do this. What specific strategies will you use?
- 3) "Ways Through": What are students' "ways through" this text or activity? That is, what strategies and tools are you giving students to make sense of and understand the sources you are using with this assignment? How will students translate the material into their own terms?

#### **Prerequisites/Corequisites**

Pre-requisites: Admission to the Secondary Education (SEED) program is recommended; all program participants must be interviewed by the SEED Academic Program Coordinator and Cambridge director to gain admission to the program.

#### **Course Description**

EDCI 597, "Secondary Education Abroad" is a study-abroad course designed to support the development of reflective, professional, collaborative, and research-based secondary school practitioners across subject areas. The clinical focus of the course offers teacher candidates the opportunity to observe and experience secondary school practices in The United Kingdom. Candidates will develop authentic and relevant artifacts related to these experiences and undertake a comparative assessment of U.S. and UK expectations and practices. EDCI 597 is intended as an elective for Mason secondary education program candidates pursuing licensure and a masters degree.

Students will complete two weeks of supervised field experience in a secondary school in Cambridge, England. The two-week experience in a secondary school in Cambridge, England, will provide Mason

pre-service teachers with an opportunity to compare and contrast UK and US instructional and management approaches in collaboration with host teachers at the school site. During students' time in schools, they will observe educational practices, engage with teachers and head teachers, and participate in classroom activities. From time to time, Mason teacher candidates may volunteer to teach a lesson. They will also co-plan an extracurricular activity for a group of Cambridge students and participate in one evening seminar with their supervisor per week.

### **Course Delivery**

The course will be delivered through a face-to-face approach and include two sessions prior to and one session after the clinical experiences in Cambridge, UK. Class meetings at Mason will focus on preparation for and reflection on the clinical practice. Preparation will include learning about the Cambridge schools and other sites we will visit, and review of specific assignments, and course expectations. Work in Cambridge, UK will include work with youths on large group, small group, and individual activities, with a focus on one-to-one and small group interactions between students in this course and youth and teachers in the Cambridge schools. We will also have two seminar sessions during our visit as a means to debrief and reflect on the experiences. Additionally, you will help plan and execute two place-based excursions that offer your peers ideas and experiences they may integrate into their secondary teaching practices. After the two weeks in Cambridge, the final class session at Mason will include debriefing and sharing ways these experiences inform you as a secondary educator.

### **Course Outcomes/Objectives**

This course is designed to support pre-service and in-service secondary school teachers as they:

- compare and contrast how students learn and develop in international contexts
- compare and contrast different approaches to learning, management, and instructional strategies across international contexts
- be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her own choices and actions on others and actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally
- foster relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being
- articulate their own perspectives on school, professional collaboration, and exceptional teaching in their subject areas based on international clinical experience
- develop lessons, activities, and assessments designed to support the international teacher(s) with whom they will work abroad
- produce a report comparing subject-specific UK and US standards of learning
- develop a portfolio of effective subject-specific place-based teaching strategies for engaging children and youth in international contexts

### **Professional Standards**

In addition to the content and pedagogy standards of their specialized professional associations (the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, or the National Science Teachers Association), students in this course should grow more familiar with the standards of the Interstate Teacher Assessments & Support Consortium (InTASC):

- **Standard #1: Learner Development.** The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- **Standard #2: Learning Differences.** The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

- Standard #3: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.
- Standard #4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- Standard #5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- Standard #6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
- Standard #7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- Standard #8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
- Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

#### **Required Texts**

No texts are required for this course; students may need to purchase texts or materials for the required projects.

#### **Course Expectations and Projects**

All written work must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 pt font, with 1-inch margins, and must be submitted electronically. All projects are due by midnight (Eastern time) on the day of the given course session; projects late due to unsatisfactory tardies or absences will be accepted at the instructors' discretion. You will also be assessed on your writing proficiency (grammar, spelling, coherence, etc.) in addition to the requirements of each assignment. Incompletes will only be an option for students who have consistently attended and participated in class and have completed and turned in all required work except the final projects.

#### **Class Attendance/Participation (20 points)**

By virtue of agreeing to work together in this course we instantly form a new community. Our goal is to develop a comfortable classroom community where risk-taking is encouraged; we can only grow through such open-heartedness. This community will be rooted in mutual respect and shared responsibility; these foundations translate into consistent and punctual attendance and active participation in all class activities. Our class time will provide opportunities for (1) participation in activities, (2) presentations and demonstrations of effective teaching strategies, and (3) discussions and reflection on course readings, class activities, and assignments. You are expected to complete

assignments for each class day, and contribute as both a listener and speaker in large and small group activities and discussions.

Attendance in this class is *critical*. Students are expected to be on time and well prepared to participate in class as active, thoughtful discussants. Absences and tardies will impact your grade. Two tardies or early departures are equal to one absence, and attendance at the school sessions is mandatory, given that each is equivalent to three campus class sessions. Missing 30% or more of class sessions will result in automatic failure of the course. Please note that this policy makes no distinction between “excused” or “unexcused” absences or tardies. If you must be late to or miss a class, you must contact the instructor ahead of time.

The purpose of these seminars is to debrief school experiences, with a particular emphasis on making meaning of their new learning in an international context. Because you will also be enrolled in courses during this abroad experience, the seminars will also place an emphasis on your observations/experiences in an international setting as it relates to your course content. These seminar discussions will culminate in a collaborative project and presentation that you will present to faculty at Mason as well as their cohort peers.

**Learning Activity #1: A brief report comparing standards of learning and pedagogical methods in your subject area in the U.S./VA and the UK (10 points)**

Identify a set of SOL and/or professional association standards that are commonly addressed in the US, in which you are interested, and that parallel similar standards and content in the UK. Research and summarize how these standards are addressed in each context, including the primary pedagogical methods used and what counts as assessment of in the US and UK of these objectives. Illustrate your 3-5 page report with images and artifacts that help your reader to see the similarities, differences, texts/resources, and outcomes of each of these sets of standards.

*Draft due Weds, Sept 14; final due Fri, Oct 7<sup>th</sup>*

**Learning Activity #2: Place-Based Learning Activity Plan (10 points)**

Working with two or three of your peers in this class, identify a set of SOL and/or professional association standards that are commonly addressed in the US, in which you are interested, and that parallel similar standards and content in the UK. Research a location in the Cambridge to which our class might travel during our time in England. This site must be close enough for us to Cambridge for us to reasonably travel to and from in less than a day. You must plan the full learning activity day, including making travel arrangements for members of our class and instructors, preparing or arranging an instructional tour, developing instructional materials that you and your peers might use in instruction of these standards in our US settings and that you can share with your Cambridge mentor teachers. Your project must also take a virtual form, so that you can share this trip with your peers in the US and with your future students.

*Drafts due Fri, Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> and Fri, Sept 30<sup>th</sup>; finals due Fri, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>*

**Learning Activity #3: RAP-Lessons, Activities, and Assessments for your host teacher (25 points)**

As a part of your clinical experiences in Cambridge you will observe in a secondary school teacher’s classroom, assisting this teacher with instruction and aiding students with learning. To ensure that we are making a contribution to these teachers’ instruction and these students’ achievement, you will correspond with this teacher ahead of time, gathering information about a lesson or unit s/he teaches and with which s/he would appreciate some additional input or some new resources, particularly materials available in and unique to the US. In summary, you will serve as a “Research Assistant” to this teacher for the RAP—the Research Assistant Project. You must provide this teacher with a minimum of one new/revised lesson plan, including a minimum three activities, and one culminating, authentic assessment.

*Drafts due Thurs, Sept 29<sup>th</sup>; finals due Fri, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>*

**Learning Activity #4: Photo-Journal Blog your experiences (20 points)**

To ensure that you are gathering the richest set of information about and reflecting on your study abroad teaching/learning experiences you will keep a photo-journal blog of your experience. You will be required to make two entries in your blog prior to your departure, three times weekly blog entries while in the UK, and one entry upon our return. You will document your insights about UK and US schools, lessons about teaching methods, observations about how teachers plan and partner in the UK and how these are similar to and/or different from planning and partnering practices in the US.

*Drafts due Fri, Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> and Fri, Sept 30<sup>th</sup>; final due Fri, Oct 14<sup>th</sup>*

**Learning Activity #5: Presentation and Portfolio of Clinical Experiences (15 points)**

Draft a portfolio and a presentation that illustrate the collective answers you have encountered regarding the following question, illustrating each with at least one photograph and one example of a teaching practice (feel free to appeal to your Photo Blog for these images):

- 1) What do you now believe makes an exceptional teacher in your subject area and/or in general—in US and international contexts?
- 2) What do you now believe is the evidence that an exceptional teacher is successful at her/his job—in US and international contexts?
- 3) What do you now believe is the evidence that an exceptional teacher is successful at her/his job, from students' perspectives?
- 4) What do you now believe is the evidence that an exceptional teacher is successful at her/his job, from the public's perspective?

Take risks, be creative, and embrace the freedom that this project provides. Illustrate each of your responses to these questions with one image—ideally metaphorical, representational, poetic pictures, rather than just literal ones. Be sure that your project provides insights that are useful to both pre-service and in-service teachers. On our final class day you will present a highlight of this draft project—one image and one slide.

*Due Fri, Oct 21<sup>st</sup>*

*Note: I have attempted to communicate with all of your instructors about your absences during the weeks of Sept 16<sup>th</sup> and Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>. It is expected that you will also communicate with them, to discuss make-up assignments. Ideally you will complete activities while in Cambridge that will not only serve as substitutes for your absences and missed assignments but that might actually supplement your own and your peers' learning in these courses.*

**Course Assessment: Assignment (Points)**

Class Attendance/Participation = 20 points

Learning Activity #1/Comparing Standards = 10 points

Learning Activity #2/Place-Based Learning Plan = 10 points

Learning Activity #3/RAP-Learning activities, lessons, and assessments = 25 points

Learning Activity #4/Photo-journal = 20 points

Learning Activity #5/Presentation and Portfolio of Learning Experiences = 15 points

Total = 100 points

### **Grading Criteria and Mastery Grading**

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system, the general rubric described below, and a specific rubric provided with each assignment. A student must demonstrate “mastery” of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a “B” level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he be assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant components. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers’ efforts.
- “B” level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- “C” level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- “F” level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible.

### **Grading Scale**

A = 95-100%

A- = 90-94%

B+ = 87-89%

B = 83-86%

B- = 80-82%

C = 70-79%

F = Below 70%

### **Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement**

Every student registered for any Secondary Education course with a required Tk20 performance-based assessment(s) (designated as such in the syllabus) is required to submit this/these assessment(s) to Tk20 through ‘Assessments’ in Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). Failure to submit the assessment to Tk20 (through Blackboard) will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required Tk20 submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### **GMU/CEHD Policies and Resources for Students**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703.993.5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community (<http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>) and the staff will follow up with the student.

### **GSE/CEHD Information**

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>]

### **Important Information for Licensure Completion** **Student Clinical Practice: Internship Requirements**

#### ***Testing***

Beginning with Spring 2015 internships, **all** official and passing test scores must be submitted and in the Mason system (i.e. Banner/PatriotWeb) by the internship application deadline. Allow a minimum of six weeks for official test scores to arrive at Mason. Testing too close to the application deadline means scores will not arrive in time and the internship application will not be accepted.

#### ***Required tests***

- Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators Tests (or qualifying substitute)
- VCLA
- Praxis II (Content Knowledge exam in your specific endorsement area)

For details, please check <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/test/>



***Endorsements***

Please note that ALL endorsement coursework must be completed, with all transcripts submitted and approved by the CEHD Endorsement Office, prior to the internship application deadline. Since the internship application must be submitted in the semester prior to the actual internship, please make an appointment to meet with the Endorsement Specialist and plan the completion of your Endorsements accordingly.

***CPR/AED/First Aid***

Beginning with spring 2015 internships, verification that the Emergency First Aid, CPR, and Use of AED Certification or Training requirement must be submitted and in the Mason system (i.e. Banner/PatriotWeb) by the application deadline. Students must submit one of the "acceptable evidence" documents listed at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/emergency-first-aid> to CEHD Student and Academic Affairs. In order to have the requirement reflected as met in the Mason system, documents can be scanned/e-mailed to [CEHDacad@gmu.edu](mailto:CEHDacad@gmu.edu) or dropped-off in Thompson Hall, Suite 2300.

***Background Checks/Fingerprints***

All local school systems require students to complete a criminal background check through their human resources office (not through George Mason University) **prior to beginning the internship**. Detailed instructions on the process will be sent to the student from either the school system or Mason. Students are **strongly advised** to disclose any/all legal incidents that may appear on their records. The consequence of failing to do so, whether or not such incidents resulted in conviction, is termination of the internship.

***Please Note***

Your G-Number must be clearly noted (visible and legible) on the face of the document(s) that you submit.

***Application***

The internship application can be downloaded at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/internships-field-experience>

***Deadlines***

Spring internship application:

- Traditional: September 15
- On-the Job: November 1

Fall internship application:

- Traditional: February 15
- On-the Job: May 1

### Schedule of Readings, Assignments, and Topics/Activities

*Note: This schedule and its contents are subject to change, as we attempt to construct the most responsive, worthwhile learning experience possible.*

Details	Structure/Site	Assignments Due	Topics/Activities
Mon, Aug 29 <sup>th</sup>	• Seminar in Fairfax	• None	• Discussion of syllabus, schedule, plans
Weds, Sept 14 <sup>th</sup>	• Seminar in Fairfax	• Learning Activity #1 draft	• Learning activity #1; departure plans
Week of Sept 19 <sup>th</sup>	• Clinical experiences in Cambridge; seminar in Cambridge	• Learning Activity #2 draft • Learning Activity #4 draft	• Learning Activity #2 and #4; discussion of our first week of clinical experiences in Cambridge
Week of Sept 26 <sup>th</sup>	• Clinical experiences in Cambridge; seminar in Cambridge	• Learning Activity #3 draft • Learning Activity #4 draft	• Learning Activity #3 and #4; discussion of our second week of clinical experiences in Cambridge
Week of Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup>	• Seminar in Fairfax	• Learning Activity #1 final;	• Learning activities review; post-Cambridge discussion
Week of Oct 10 <sup>th</sup>	• 1:1 conferences as necessary	• Learning Activity #1, #2, #3, #4 final	• None!
Week of Oct 17 <sup>th</sup>	• 1:1 conferences as necessary	• Learning Activity #5 final	• None!