

Assignment 2: Syllabus Project

EAD 866

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Michigan State University

TE 300

Introduction to the Middle School Classroom

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Course Goal

The goal of this course is to critically examine teacher strategies and techniques that influence the classroom management of a middle school classroom. We will work collaboratively to design effective lesson plans and a philosophy of education for your future classroom. Ultimately, this course is intended to ground your teaching philosophy in educational theories and best research practices.

Exploration will include:

- ❖ Educational theories (Piaget, Dewey, Maslov, etc)
- ❖ Understanding student motivation
- ❖ Teacher planning and preparation
- ❖ Creating a classroom management plan
- ❖ Cooperative learning strategies

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, learners will be able to

- Explain the connection between educational theories and middle school education
- Analyze and evaluate motivation of adolescent students through case studies
- Explain how various intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors influence students in school
- Developing lesson plans that connect educational theory, motivation, and research
- Apply course readings to create a framework for their classroom management plan
- Engage in purposeful discussion with classmates to analyze the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategies

This course is intended for secondary level undergraduate education students. It is intended to provide an overview of educational theory, adolescent development, and research-based best practices to develop lesson plans and classroom management strategies.

Course Readings

- Evidence-Based Strategies for Effective Classroom Management- David Hulac & Amy Briesch
 - *Available at no cost to you [HERE](#)
- Educational Learning Theories- Molly Zhao & David Brown
 - *Available at no cost to you [HERE](#)
- Motivation: Biological, Psychological, and Environmental -Lambert Deckers
- The Courage to Teach-Parker Palmer
- Cooperative Learning Articles (assigned and given in class)

Course Outline

Our course will consist of two-week modules that will include

1. A brief overview of our learning objective
2. Course Readings
3. Group activity
4. Real-World Application
5. Individual Reflection

**There will be larger projects as well. Please see sections titled Course Outline and Project Descriptions below for detailed information.

Modules and Due Dates

Module 1: Introduction and Overview (August 27-September 7)

Module 2: Educational Theory Perspectives (September 10-21)

Module 3: Motivation in Adolescent Students (September 24-October 5)

Module 4: Lesson Planning for Success (October 8-October 19)

Module 5: Creating a Classroom Management Plan (October 22-November 2)

Module 6: Cooperative Learning Strategies (November 5-November 16)

Module 7: Personal Teaching Philosophy (November 19-30)

Module 8: Putting it all together- Creating a classroom plan for success (December 3-14)

Learning Plan/Expectations for Modules

Week/Topic	Reading *Due before class	Exploration *In-class activities	Project/Reflection *Due at end of week unless otherwise specified
1- Course Introduction	Palmer- Ch. 1	Explanation of syllabus and course expectations Team Builder	
2-Group Introductions	Palmer-Ch 2.	Share out-selfie project Chalk Talk on Palmer-Group Share out after	<i>Selfie Project Due at beginning of class</i> Reflection #1 Due- end of week
3-Educational Theories	Educational Theories- *Chapters to be assigned in class	Jigsaw: Students will each be assigned two different chapters from “Educational Learning Theories” and have to create short presentations (Powerpoint, Prezi, iMovie, etc) to teach the rest of their group in class.	
4-Educational Theories	Educational Theories- *Chapters to be assigned in class	Educational Theory Guided Analysis through case studies (model for project)**	Reflection #2 Due

5-Motivation	Deckers- Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4	Students will choose a student from their field experiences and collect data on to use for case study	<i>Movie Analysis Due</i>
6-Motivation	Deckers- Ch. 5, 6	Case study analysis with group	Reflection #3 Due
7-Lesson Planning	Bring in cooperating teachers lesson plans	Lesson plan lecture-examining examples of non-examples Teacher Tube-clips of excellent plans in place	
8-Lesson Planning	Bring in own lesson plans	Lesson Plan Analysis	Reflection #4 Due <i>Lesson Plan due</i>
9-Classroom Management	Hulac Ch. 1-2	Teacher Tube-exemplars of excellent classroom management (3 clips to show differing styles) Jot Thoughts after clip	
10-Classroom Management	Hulac Ch. 3-7	Begin designing classroom management plan-bring materials to class- scaffold with teacher/peer mentoring	Reflection #5 Due <i>Skeleton Classroom Management Plan Due</i>
11-Cooperative Learning	Kagan Articles *assigned in class	Jigsaw- share out and teach small group different strategies. Choose one short 15 minute lesson incorporating a cooperative learning strategy for your group to teach to the whole class next time.	
12-Cooperative Learning	Kagan Articles *assigned in class	Peer teaching/reflection on each implemented strategy	Reflection #6 Due
13-Teaching Philosophy	Sample teaching philosophies	Compile portfolio/work time	
14-Teaching Philosophy	None	Compile portfolio/work time	
15-The "Big Picture"	None		Final Reflection Due

			<i>Teaching Philosophy Due</i>
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Reflections

Reflections are designed to provide you a space to reflect on our readings, field experiences, and explorations to develop understanding that is meaningful for you. I want you to leave this course feeling like you have a toolbox full of tools that will prepare you for your future classroom. Reflections should be 1-2 pages long, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font. Prompts will be given in class. Your reflection should include our topic and learning objective as well as drawing on course readings, field experiences, and in class explorations.

Project Descriptions

**Complete project descriptions will be given in class and then available on our course website*

Selfie Project

Movie Analysis-Breakfast Club, Sky High

Lesson Plan

Classroom Management Plan

Teaching Philosophy

Communication

My goal in this course is for you to LEARN. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or clarifications. I am on campus Tuesday and Thursday and will be able to arrange office hours on those days. I am very flexible and your learning is very important to me.

Academic Integrity

Michigan State University defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs for possible further disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Communication

My goal in this course is for you to LEARN. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or clarifications. I am on campus Tuesday and Thursday and will be able to arrange office hours on those days. I am very flexible and your learning is very important to me.

Last Word

I am looking forward to working with you as you embark on your journey through and into education!

Syllabus Rationale

I chose to create a syllabus for a course similar to one that I am interested in teaching. My personal learning goals for this course include leaving with a repertoire of skills to take with me and use when I enter the field of adult education. I found this assignment engaging, relevant, and incredibly challenging. In my current practice, middle school education, I am continually striving to make sure that all my lessons and plans are tied directly to learning goals and important skills as well as making sure to cover the common core standards. This assignment allowed me to think very meticulously and purposefully to create my ideal adult level course. My ideal course includes specific learning outcomes that make it very transparent for the student to know what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to show me that they have learned (evidence of learning.) McKeachie explains that “the first step in preparing for a course is working out the student learning goals as expressed by the course objectives, because all the other decisions involved in course planning should derive from those objectives.” (McKeachie, 2014, pg. 6) This is exactly where I started!

My purpose statement, or course goal, was carefully crafted to meet two different needs. First, I wanted to make the purpose of the course interesting and engaging. By making a strong, specific goal, I hope to inspire students to be motivated to learn in my course. Second, I wanted to be incredibly clear about my learning expectations.

Like Brookfield simply stated, I just want my students to learn. (Brookfield, 1995, pg. 24). In order to create an encouraging and motivating classroom, I used Fink’s instructional design process as a template to create my course and syllabus. I first identified situational factors. My target audience is third year undergraduate students who have fulfilled most of their general and introductory courses. I intended for this to be an overview of research-based best

practices grounded in theory. Because I do not know my student's prior knowledge before the class begins, the first few weeks are spent introducing ourselves and visiting (or re-visiting) educational theory. I also knew that my students would be in their field placements, so I designed learning/lessons around that crucial (and wonderful!) experience. (Fink, 2003)

I found that creating my learning objectives were the most challenging to create. I wanted to “create a course in which students have ‘significant learning experiences’” so I needed to “design that quality into [my course].” (Fink, 2003, pg. 5). Because I could choose any type of course and any type of information, I found it challenging to narrow down specific learning outcomes. I found that as I worked, I created outcomes that were too general or too narrow. I needed to really sift through and find what I thought was most important for my students to learn first. I made sure that my learning outcomes directly related to my course goal and then was able to design the rest of my course based upon those outcomes.

I also used the course design tip sheet provided on the D2L site to help ensure my course was on the right track. The first question on course design states “How are you going to tie the course together?” (Harvard University, Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning). I first decided on important topics within the subject area I chose. Then I created learning outcomes that tied themes together. I also made sure that my projects pushed students out of simply “understanding and remembering” but to think critically and analyze the classroom. I also pulled up Bloom's taxonomy to make sure I was creating assignments that help my students think and learn at a deeper level. As McKeachie states “we want [our students] to develop interest in further learning and have a base of skills that will facilitate further learning.” (McKeachie, 2014, pg. 8). I tried to incorporate a lot of analyzing and examining to push student's thinking further.

I truly used the backward design model to create my course. After I identified my desired results, I then had to determine “acceptable evidence of learning”. I created my projects to ensure that my students could show that they were critically analyzing information and applying it to the real live classrooms that they experience in the field. I used technology sparingly. I chose to have a course website with valuable information-including copies of course documents, assignment descriptions, and rubrics. I also chose to incorporate one technological assignment, creating a selfie video. I think that would be engaging for the demographic I am teaching, as well as provide a different way to introduce everyone to the course. Of course, I would make sure it is known that if someone is unable to access technology, I will have an alternate project. I want students to continue to learn and think about this course long after it is over. Wiggins talks explicitly about the learning in the classroom that extends far beyond one course. He explains that he wants his courses to promote student’s continuation of learning and application two to three years and beyond after the course has ended. I wanted to select useful materials that students could use and reference in their own classrooms.

Using reflections (or learning logs) in my course, provides my students the opportunity to “explore how the course content relates to their individual communication skills.” (Weimer, 2013, pg. 241). This course (EAD 866) has shown me how efficient and useful learning logs are. I am able to think more critically about the material and also directly relate it to my current or future practice.

Next, I carefully chose texts that are research-based and have proven to be successful in the classroom. Having the experience of being a low-income college student with no family financial support, I ensured that my texts were affordable and available. Four of the five texts are available for free, and the motivation text was under forty dollars. I also chose to jigsaw (a

cooperative learning strategy) to help break up larger chunks of text. I remember being overwhelmed with too much reading in too many classes and thought “jigsawing” would be a good way to still learn content, but in an efficient way. It also promotes cooperation in the classroom! As Weimer states “learner-centered teachers use content to help students develop a knowledge base, to remediate basic skill deficiencies, and to develop more sophisticated learning skills.” (Weimer, 2013, pg. 126). I believe my use of educational theories jigsaw in the classroom truly does this.

Designing a syllabus is, in essence, designing a plan for a successful course. This assignment truly pushed my learning and encouraged me to continue to think about facilitating and promoting future learner and using my classroom as the catalyst to promote this in students. This is my first syllabus I have ever created and I am looking forward to your feedback!

References

Brookfield, S. (2013). *Powerful techniques for teaching adults*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass

Fink, L. (2003). *A Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.

McKeachie, W. (2014). *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, Theory for College and University Teachers*. California; Wadsworth.

Weimer, M. (2013). *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.