

School of Education
University of Puget Sound
Summer 2009

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Wyatt 208

Education 629B
Educational Experience, Context and Meaning
The Master's Project: A Learning Portfolio

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“It is not so much a matter of doing action research *on* teaching as it is of viewing teaching itself as a form of inquiry or experimentation.” Ken Zeichner

“All of us should first define ourselves not as teachers or researchers but as persons who teach, read, write, discuss, and research (among other things), and learn from each other in the process of doing so. Consequently, we enter more easily into an interactive and interpretive learning community.” Ken Kantor

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this seminar you will analyze and reflect on teaching and learning during your student teaching experiences, share your thinking in a portfolio, and present your project to an audience of educators. You will also give feedback to peers as a way of engaging in collegial and collaborative professional work.

It is easy to say, “I believe that all students can succeed.” It is much harder to support individual students toward “success.” This seminar uses reflective analysis to understand student thinking and improve teaching. We will create a purposeful collection of teaching and learning documents and consider how to improve classroom instruction and student performance. We will consider the following questions:

What do I think is worthy of understanding?
How do I teach for significant understandings?
What counts as evidence of student learning?
How will I continue learning?

Learning to be a great teacher is the work of a lifetime; this seminar aims to help you examine teaching as an ongoing, active intellectual process. Creating a learning portfolio is part of a larger continuum of professional development of reflecting on student teaching experiences and envisioning your future teaching practices.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

A goal of the M.A.T. program is to prepare educators who continue to grow and make informed professional decisions about the conditions and practices that sponsor learning in all students. In this seminar you will use lesson and unit plans, student work, educational research, journal entries, and discussion to inquire and reflect. The learning objectives of this seminar are:

- Explore teaching dilemmas
- Reflect on your student teaching and M.A.T. course work
- Set directions/commitments for future teaching practice

M.A.T. PROGRAM GOALS

To prepare teachers who:

- 1) have deep understanding of subject matter and pedagogies that teach for understanding
- 2) have ability to manage the complexities of teaching
- 3) promote student learning of challenging content
- 4) have ability to reflect on one's own practice, to look for principles underlying what "works" or "does not work" and to persist in determining one's own appropriate practice
- 5) have commitment to serving everyone's children, particularly those who historically have not been well-served by traditional schooling
- 6) have ability to learn and work in collaborative fashion, and to create settings in which others can learn and work
- 7) have capacity to engage in the remaking of the profession and the renewal of schools with understanding of the social and cultural context in which students live and learn

OUTLINE OF CONTENT AND SCHEDULE OF COURSEWORK (A Blueprint for the Summer)

Understanding Content	
Writing Workshop: Framing Issues and Questions Syllabus and Organization of M.A.T. Project	6/24
Draft of Framing and Evidence Due (bring 2 copies) Writing Workshop: Sharing Questions & Evidence Conceptual Web: Identifying Evidence and Resources	7/1
Draft of Reflections Due (bring 2 copies) Writing Workshop: Sharing Reflections	7/8
Understanding Content Framework, Evidence, and Reflections posted to Ning.com	MONDAY, 7/13
Planning for Student Understanding	
Draft of Framing Due (bring 2 copies) Writing Workshop: Framing Issues and Questions	7/15
Draft of Evidence Due (bring 2 copies) Writing Workshop: Sharing Questions & Evidence Conceptual Web: Identifying Evidence and Resources	7/22
Draft of Reflections Due (bring 2 copies) Writing Workshop: Sharing Reflections	7/29
Significant Reframings	
Draft of Significant Reframings Due (bring 2 copies) Presentation Planning Seminar Summary and Evaluation Course Evaluation	8/5
Presentation Practice, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon	MONDAY, 8/10
Master's Project Panel Presentations , 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	8/12
Final Portfolio Due (by 12:00 noon)	FRIDAY, 8/14

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the due date. Make an appointment with the professor in the event that you must submit late work. Late work will not be credited at full value.

Learning Portfolio—You will create an electronic learning portfolio; a purposeful collection of teacher created documents and student work to demonstrate your growth as a teacher. The purpose of the portfolio is to analyze the questions and dilemmas about teaching/learning that have emerged from your student teaching experience, to make connections to readings from the M.A.T. program, and to suggest alternatives for future teaching practice. Your portfolio will be organized into four areas of inquiry (see syllabus p. 6), two of which we will address in this seminar. For each area of inquiry you will state your question(s), present evidence, and reflect on your evidence. Below are thinking/writing prompts that may be helpful as you develop your portfolio. (60% of final grade)

Framework: What does the area of inquiry mean to me?

This issue is important because . . .

I'm interested in this issue because . . .

A question I'm pondering is . . .

Evidence: What is my evidence?

What is the context for this evidence?

What does the evidence tell me?

How have other educators managed this dilemma?

What questions does the evidence raise?

Reflection: How will my new insights shape my future teaching?

My biggest insight/significant reframing of my thinking is . . .

The commitments I make as a result of this knowledge are . . .

I'm now wondering about . . .

Oral Presentation—You will be a panelist in a discussion with other M.A.T. students. As a panelist you will give a 10-minute oral presentation to an audience of educators. Panel members will share responsibility for planning the two-hour session that will consist of oral presentations, audience discussion, and closing remarks. In addition, you will attend a second panel presentation. Requirements will be discussed in class. (20% of final grade)

Seminar Attendance, Punctuality and Participation—You will take multiple roles in the seminar; engaging in activities such as sharing insights from your teaching experiences, providing feedback on writing, discussing readings, completing in-class writing assignments, and participating as a productive and positive community member. You will self-assess your participation and the professor will assess your participation. (20% of final grade)

Required Texts

The primary texts of the seminar will be seminar participants' original writing. Articles/book chapters will be distributed as appropriate. These articles will be selected to address issues that arise as a result of our mutual inquiry. In addition, you will research and locate readings that relate directly to the topic of your inquiry.

LEARNING PORTFOLIO AREAS OF INQUIRY

WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATIVE CODE (W.A.C.) TOPICS

The Washington Administrative Code W.A.C. 181-78A-220(5) identifies four knowledge and skill areas for teacher certification: (1) knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals, 2) knowledge of teaching, 3) knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts, 4) understanding teaching as a profession). Many of the items we explore in this course are given complementary coverage in additional MAT courses. We often treat important topics in a spiral fashion, raising them more than once during your coursework to place them in a broader, more meaningful context.

Standard 5.1: Understanding Content (629)

Knowledge of Subject Matter and Curriculum Goals

(a) Teacher candidates positively impact student learning that is:

(i) **Content driven.** All students develop understanding and problem-solving expertise in the content area(s) using reading, written and oral communication, and technology.

(ii) **Aligned with curriculum standards and outcomes.** All students know the learning targets and their progress toward meeting them.

(iii) **Integrated across content areas.** All students learn subject matter content that integrates mathematical, scientific, and aesthetic reasoning.

Standard 5.2: Planning for Student Understanding (629)

Knowledge of Teaching

(b) Teacher candidates positively impact student learning that is:

(i) **Informed by standards-based assessment.** All students benefit from learning that is systematically analyzed using multiple formative, summative, and self-assessment strategies.

(ii) **Intentionally planned.** All students benefit from standards-based planning that is personalized.

(iii) **Influenced by multiple instructional strategies.** All students benefit from personalized instruction that addresses their ability levels and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

(iv) **Informed by technology.** All students benefit from instruction that utilizes effective technologies and is designed to create technologically proficient learners.

Standard 5.3 Connecting to Students' Worlds (628)

Knowledge of Learners and their Development in Social Contexts

(c) Evidence of teacher candidate practice reflects planning, instruction and communication that is:

(i) **Learner centered.** All students engage in a variety of culturally responsive, developmentally, and age appropriate strategies.

(ii) **Classroom/school centered.** Student learning is connected to communities within the classroom and the school, including knowledge and skills for working with others.

(iii) **Family/neighborhood centered.** Student learning is informed by collaboration with families and neighborhoods.

(iv) **Contextual community centered.** All students are prepared to be responsible citizens for an environmentally sustainable, globally interconnected, and diverse society.

Standard 5.4: Growing as a Professional (628)

Understanding Teaching as a Profession

(d) Teacher candidates positively impact student learning that is:

(i) **Informed by professional responsibilities and policies.** All students benefit from a collegial and professional school setting.

(ii) **Enhanced by a reflective, collaborative, professional growth-centered practice.** All students benefit from the professional growth of their teachers.

(iii) **Informed by legal and ethical responsibilities.** All students benefit from a safe and respectful learning environment.

LEARNING PORTFOLIOS

Listed below are and websites that you may find helpful as you develop your learning portfolio:

Organization	Web Site
The Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in K-12 Education	http://gallery.carnegiefoundation.org/gallery_of_tl/castl_k12.html
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	www.nbpts.org
National Center for Research on Teacher Learning	http://ncrtl.msu.edu
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (WA)	www.k12.wa.us
Online Platform/Social Network	www.ning.com

Masters Project Rubric—Summer 2009

	Question Posing	Teacher Evidence	Student Evidence	Reflection/Reframing
Exceeds Criteria	See meets criteria below. The question(s) and frame of the project reflect unique depth and/or complexity. In addition, the student may draw on instructional contexts outside of student teaching.	See meets criteria below. The representation and analysis of artifacts is of exceptional quality. In addition, the student may draw on relevant artifacts outside of student teaching.	See meets criteria below. The representation and analysis of artifacts is of exceptional quality. In addition, the student may draw on relevant artifacts outside of student teaching.	See meets criteria below. The overall analysis and reframing are of exceptional quality. In addition, the student draws on evidence outside of student teaching as the basis for analysis.
Meets Criteria	The student poses an authentic question from the context of student teaching. The framing of the project connects to issues described in Standard V.	Selected artifacts, drawn from student teaching are strongly connected to the question(s). Artifacts are presented, described, and analyzed.	Selected artifacts, drawn from student teaching are strongly connected to the question(s). Artifacts reflecting student work are presented, described, and analyzed.	There is a high quality analysis that is grounded in theory. The student makes connections between various artifacts. The student shares a significant reframing of pedagogical and/or curricular thinking. The reflection also looks ahead and identifies a course of future professional development.
Needs Improvement	Question(s) and frame or project are not of sufficient depth and/or complexity. Standard V is not addressed or only in a marginal way. The extent to which the project is grounded in student teaching is minimal.	The artifacts are marginally relevant to the question/frame, and/or they are poorly described or analyzed.	The artifacts are marginally relevant to the question/frame, and/or they are poorly described.	Analysis is weak and only marginally related to teacher and student artifacts. There is little or no plan for future professional development.

Standard V Areas of Inquiry

- 5.1 Understanding Content
- 5.2 Planning for Student Understanding
- 5.3 Connecting to Students Worlds
- 5.4 Growing as a Professional