



The Heart of Teaching Site-based Participant Syllabus

Course Description

In teacher preparation education, there is very little focus on the personal character and social emotional skills the teacher brings to and practices the learning process. This course exposes and examines these untapped areas of teacher quality. *The Heart of Teaching* includes an awareness and examination of the educator's personal preparedness for the classroom, as compared to universal norms for quality teaching.

Course Prerequisites

Participants enrolled in this course are required to hold a baccalaureate degree. This course is recommended for K-12 educators and administrators. No prerequisites are required for this course.

System Requirements

- Computer with word processing software
- Internet access connection
- Online video viewing capabilities/Adobe flash player
- Software capable of reading PDF files
- Software capable of viewing PowerPoint presentations

Text Books/Supplemental Reading

There is no textbook required for this course. Refer to weekly reading assignments and additional resources within each Milestone to support course content.

Global Goals of the Course

Upon completion of the course, the learner will be able to:

1. Identify the major themes of people that are seminal components of quality teaching. (NBPTS 1,4)
2. Develop an "eye" for identifying quality teaching by descriptions of themes of teachers. (NBPTS 2,3)
3. Understand the connection between personal character and teacher quality and how this translates into the idea that we teach "who" we are. (NBPTS 4)
4. Experience the interaction of community in learning about quality teaching and quality schools. (NBPTS 5)
5. Learn love as a teaching tool and demonstrate its utility in the learning process.

Instructional Objectives

The learner will deepen existing knowledge of content and apply professional expertise to the skills and strategies contained in this course by meeting the following instructional objectives:

1. Explore the effects of various typical classroom procedures and methods on the motivation of students.
2. Develop an understanding of the types of activities that increase or decrease the motivation of students. Gain understanding of how the current system of education affects the motivations of segments of a school population especially the unengaged student.
3. Work as leaders and collaborators in the professional community to improve programs and practices for students and their families.
4. Read widely in the literature on motivation. Compare current professional practice and begin to implement changes to improve effectiveness.
5. Understand the types of difficulties students may have and develop resources to help students be successful learners.

Teaching Methodology and Delivery Model

Teaching methodologies of this course are designed to support intensive, graduate-level course work in an interactive setting. Instructional plans support the content of this course, which focuses on the improvement of professional teaching expertise in any or all of the following categories: assessment, collaboration, communication, diverse learners, educational reform, instructional strategies, planning instruction, productivity, reflection of practice, student learning, subject matter, and/or technology.

- Methodologies include instructor presentations, specific skill practice, discussions, audio-visual presentations, self-evaluation, project development, course readings, research/inquiry exercises, and the synthesis of new knowledge and skills with previously acquired skills/expertise in relation to transition knowledge and content.
- The course is taught with instructor-participant and participant-participant feedback. Course content, activities, and assessments are organized into 10 modules totaling 45 seat hours. Assessments are due two-weeks following the end of the course.
- Research-based content, presentations, educator resources in print and on the Internet, notes from instructor presentations, class activity work pages, references, and assessments are supported by content designed specifically for educators.
- Daily activities include a variety of research-based instructional approaches appropriate for adult learners. Class participants actively construct their own learning and make it personally relevant by acquiring and applying course knowledge/skills during hands-on practice and problem-solving activities, personal reflection, in-class presentations, whole-class and small group discussions and activities, assigned

readings, research/inquiry, projects, and collaborative work in various group formats. All are designed to make it possible for educators and other school-related personnel to learn the same basic content and skills with an emphasis on application to their own specific content area or grade level.

Learning Assessment

Formative assessment of learning objectives for this course is conducted informally throughout the course via discussion, critiques, peer- and self-evaluations, journal entries, instructor feedback, small-group sharing and activities requiring participants to make sense of new knowledge and/or skills within their realm of teaching. Additionally, formative assessments are embedded throughout the course. Summative assessment for the course occurs in the form of a final project which requires each participant to synthesize class content and apply it within the teacher's specific teaching environment.

Topics Agenda

Milestone 1: Good Schools, Good Teachers

Participants will understand author's view on how school quality relates to teacher quality and compare that to their own view. Participants will explain how they would improve schools as well as create an "ideal" model for improving schools.

- Assignment "Textbook Reading 1-10" – This assignment will describe good schools and good teachers from the author's perspective then challenge the student to do a critical analysis of their thoughts and experience with good schools and good teachers. The objective of the assignment is to elicit from the student his/her beliefs about quality educational institutions.
- Assignment: "The Rs of School Improvement" This assignment will propose a school improvement plan for student critique. Students will also submit their own ideas for how schools could improve. The objective of this lesson is to get students thinking about how they can grow and improve their contribution to the quality of their school.

Milestone 2: Teaching as a Calling

Participants will examine how inventors, authors, and other creator find inspiration for what they do. Participants will do a thorough examination of their own mission and determine how close they approximate, "working on purpose".

- Assignment: "What Do You Do and Why Do You Do It?" – This assignment is founded by a video of Simon Sinek explaining that it is the "why we do it" that determines our level of passion for our work. Students are subtly directed through an examination of why they do what they do.
- Assignment: "Determining Your Mission" – This assignment prompts the student to look at their passion for their work as well as considering if they are in the right line of work.

Milestone 3: Elements of Great Teachers (Themes of Teachers)

Participants will study how some of us can discover our purpose - accidentally.

Participants will watch an "ideal" teacher employ teacher themes to change the learning atmosphere in an urban school.

- Assignment: "The Ron Clark Story" This full-length "Hollywood quality" film is based on a true story and is replete with examples of the qualities of teaching that are studied in the course. Its major emphasis is the emotional bond between a teacher and a student and how it underpins the learning process as nothing else can.
- Assignment: Textbook Reading 11-30 – "The Themes of Teaching" – This assignment is a study of research-based qualities of teachers. Extensive studies over more than fifty years have produced revealed and validated certain qualities that all groups (parents, teachers, administrators, students, etc.) recognize as the most important.

Milestone 4: Another View of a Great Teacher

Participants will learn the themes of teaching and, through the "Ron Clark Story" be able to identify the practice of the themes. Participants will cite examples of how attention is the key "steering mechanism" of the learning process. Participants will be able to provide reasoning for the "lunacy" of teacher competency testing as a means of improving teacher quality.

- Assignment: "The ABC's of Attention, Balance & Compassion" – This assignment highlight yet another example of what most consider "soft skills" that are hard core elements of quality teaching.
- Assignment: "A Great Teacher – Sabrina Moore" – This assignment is designed to show examples of the aspects of teacher quality that are studied throughout the course.

Milestone 5: Quiet Desperation

Participants will purposely employ affirmations in their workplace or home and report the results. Participants will identify students or others close to them and practice meeting their psychological needs of affirmation, validation, understanding and appreciation. Participants will study the connection between caring and the learning process and explain situations where this principle was practiced.

- Assignment: "Quiet Desperation – A Cipher in The Snow" – This assignment emphasizes the power a teacher possesses to affirm, appreciate, validate and understand his or her students and what a big part it plays in the growth and progress of the student.

Milestone 6: The Courage to Teach and Teaching Who You Are

Participants will study and explain in their own words the basic tenets of teaching as authored by Parker Palmer. Participants will understand the meaning of and give examples of how they teach “who they are”.

- Assignment: “Parker Palmer – The Heart of a Teacher” – This assignment gets to the core of the affective domain of teaching explaining a concept of teaching that is almost never considered when assessing teacher effectiveness, “who the teacher is”. This is usually new to the students but critical for their awareness.
- Assignment: “Teaching Who You Are” – This assignment directs teachers to determine how they practice teaching “who they are”.

Milestone 7: Going Beyond: What is Required

Participants will study and understand the course author’s beliefs about qualities of teachers beyond the themes studied earlier in the course. Participants will learn the power of restoration and employ practices helping them reach a state of restoration. Participants will learn how too much focus on weaknesses is counter-productive to student growth.

- Assignment: “Textbook Reading (31-48 - Beyond the Themes)” – This reading examines additional aspects of teaching quality including personal strengths, grit and habits.
- Assignment: “Maintaining Strength – Sufficient Rest” – This assignment specifically addresses sleep as it relates to teacher effectiveness mostly designed to emphasize the value of quality bodily rest.

Milestone 8: Love and Growth

Participants will learn of love from a non-traditional perspective and practice love from this perspective in their professional and personal lives. Participants will be reminded of and affirmed for all they do and can do for children.

- Assignment: “Textbook Reading - Love” – This assignment explains a “new” and unique definition of love and explains how love is the bottom line in building the emotional bonds that determine the learning.
- Assignment: “You Are a Teacher – You Make a Difference” – This is a simple poetic illumination of the importance of a teacher in his or her role as a life leader, a difference maker.

Final Projects

In keeping with best instructional and assessment practices, this course requires participants to demonstrate synthesis and application of course knowledge in an applied final project linked to the instructional objectives of this course. Assessment of the project should not be limited to the quantity of work submitted but should carefully consider the quality and intellectual value of the work.

Final projects are due within two weeks of the end of class. Projects submitted during the third week “grace period” will have their grade reduced one full letter grade. No papers will be accepted past the grace period, and participants will, consequently, forfeit credit for the course. Papers are expected to be properly formatted and submitted to the instructor either in person or via mail or an email attachment.

Participants taking professional development unit (not-for-credit) courses must attend all scheduled class sessions and complete all formative assignments. However, they will be exempt from completing the final summative project unless otherwise noted. Proof of seat hours will be presented to the participants after completing course reflection via the student portal and all hours are met.

Grading

Throughout the course, participants will engage in both formal and informal formative and summative assessments. Points are assigned based on a four-point criterion rubric specifically delineated for each assessment that can be further defined as follows:

Distinguished: The assessment is highly imaginative; demonstrates critical thought; is unique; shows substantial application to one’s own teaching or professional position; goes above and beyond requirements; is creative; demonstrates both breadth and depth of knowledge of transition-related subject matter; shows individual’s personality; is professional in presentation and appearance; and demonstrates considerable effort. The assessment is exceptionally completed and demonstrates clear understanding of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in “Distinguished” on the course rubric.

Proficient: The assessment is well-organized and complete; is effectively and clearly presented; demonstrates clear understandings; applies what has been learned to the author’s own classroom situation; clearly shows connections; is detailed; and is thoughtful and supported with ideas. A thoroughly completed assessment demonstrates that the participant shows awareness of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in “Proficient” on the course rubric.

Basic: This is the lowest passing grade. The assessment meets minimum requirements; includes general information but lacks descriptive detail; shows limited application to teaching/learning; and lacks originality. This denotes work that does not meet **all** aspects of standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in “Basic” on the course rubric.

Unsatisfactory: The assessment is missing evidence or information; is sloppy and poorly organized; demonstrates only surface understandings; shows no evidence of application to the author's own teaching situation; is poorly written; and does not meet minimum standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Unsatisfactory" on the course rubric.

The assessments for this course are weighted as follows:

Participation and Reflection	30%
Formative Assessments	30%
Summative Assessments	40%

Academic Honesty and Integrity

All participants are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the participant receiving a zero for that assignment or paper.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, participants who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the first session. Reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

Attendance

Participants are required to attend all classes as well as participate in class discussions, small group activities, and projects. Absence from any part of the class will require that you withdraw from the class. You will need to contact The Connecting Link at (888) 550-5465 in the event this occurs.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy

Participants are expected to keep pace with assignments and expectations. If a situation arises in which an assignment cannot be completed, the participant is expected to make arrangements with the instructor for the timely submission of such work. Failure to complete all work in this time frame will result in an **incomplete** or a grade of **F** for the work, depending on the reason for the delay.

University Compliance

Course content and instruction are bound by policies associated with the university granting academic credit for the course. Such policies include, but are not limited to: academic integrity and honor codes, institutional objectives and grade grievance procedures. These policies are located within the official academic catalogs which can be accessed through the university's official website.