



Building an Engaging Collaborative Classroom Site-Based Participant Syllabus

Course Description

Participants in this course will examine collaborative, engaged, cooperative learning—a significant shift away from the typical teacher-centered classroom. Participants will learn how developing a classroom culture of trust, safety, challenge, and joy can foster engaged and effective learning. Research suggests that effective communication and collaboration are essential to becoming a successful learner. Participants will learn how to develop classroom learning experiences around students' constructing knowledge and engaging in action together. Techniques to develop intrinsic motivation that leads to student engagement and achievement will be researched. Foundational work in this course will include the research and use of collaborative learning, engaged learning, and cooperative learning models. Participants will synthesize these paradigms and create applications for implementation into their own classrooms.

Course Prerequisites

This course is recommended for K-12 teachers and administrators looking to gain background information concerning engaged learning and collaboration research and application of these tenets in classroom and school community. Participants must hold a baccalaureate degree.

Text Books/Supplemental Reading

No textbook is required for this course. Critical reading of assigned articles and text is embedded throughout the course.

Global Goals of the Course

1. To examine seminal and current research in the area of best practice instruction (NBPTS 3,4)
2. To develop an understanding of the need for collaborative and engaged learning in today's classroom (NBPTS 1,3,4)
3. To analyze current instructional practices in order to infuse more collaborative and engaged practices to better support student learning (NBPTS 1,3,4)
4. To explore possible applications for student-centered instruction in the classroom (NBPTS 1,2,3,4)
5. To synthesize best practice research and classroom applications (NBPTS 2,3,4)

Instructional Objectives

By the conclusion of this course, each participant should be able to do the following:

1. Develop a framework of student-centered instruction

- 1.1 Reflect on one's personal learning experiences
- 1.2 Explore individual belief systems in relation to collaborative and engaged learning
- 1.3 Examine the need for student-centered learning
2. Create a classroom culture of trust and collaboration
 - 2.1 Define and develop learning targets, classroom norms, and other integral learning processes
 - 2.2 Explore strategies and methodologies to build trust within the classroom
 - 2.3 Discuss methods of self reflection
 - 2.4 Examine current classroom and school-wide culture
3. Develop the growth mindset
 - 3.1 Investigate current growth mindset strategies and models
 - 3.2 Research classroom strategies to change classroom culture
 - 3.3 Select growth mindset strategies for implementation based on classroom culture
 - 3.4 Design a learning strategy to evaluate classroom culture and change
4. Construct a collaborative classroom
 - 4.1 Explore collaborative classroom models and frameworks
 - 4.2 Examine national organizations that help educate others about collaborative learning models
 - 4.3 Consider grade level factors and classroom culture for collaborative learning frameworks
 - 4.4 Appraise feasibility of collaborative learning strategies
 - 4.5 Develop a comprehensive plan for a collaborative learning project
5. Construct an engaged classroom
 - 5.1 Explore engaged classroom models and frameworks
 - 5.2 Examine national organizations that help educate others about engaged learning models
 - 5.3 Consider grade level factors and classroom culture for engaged learning frameworks
6. Construct a cooperative classroom
 - 6.1 Explore cooperative classroom models and frameworks
 - 6.2 Examine national organizations that help educate others about cooperative learning models
 - 6.3 Consider grade level factors and classroom culture for cooperative learning frameworks
7. Assess the engagement and collaboration in your classroom
 - 7.1 Explore assessment techniques that measure engagement, collaboration and classroom culture
 - 7.2 Examine and explore assessment data and how it correlates to strategies to measure change in the classroom

- 7.3 Self reflect on current classroom culture and what changes need to be assessed
- 7.4 Identify targeted areas where systemic change can be implemented through assessment
- 8. Reflect on student-centered teaching
 - 8.1 Reflect on the shift from teacher-centered to student-centered classrooms.
 - 8.2 Identify targeted areas where systemic change can be implemented for more student-centered instruction
 - 8.3 Apply current research concerning collaborative, engaged, and cooperative classroom
 - 8.4 Devise/plan constructive modifications to instruction

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.

1. 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.
2. The course is taught with instructor-participant and participant-participant feedback. Course content, activities, and assessments are organized into segments totaling 45 seat hours. Assessments are due two-weeks following the end of the course.
3. 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.
4. 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, three formative assessments are embedded within 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. Copies of the course performance assessment rubrics are included in Appendices A-C.

Compliance with National Board of Professional Teaching Standards

The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards represents the highest level of professional achievement in the continuum of teacher professional development. There are five core principles (standards) which cover five aspects of professional educational practice: (1) commitment to students and their learning, (2) knowledge of subject matter and instructional strategies, (3) management and monitoring of student learning, (4) systematic reflection about the teaching profession to learn and grow from experience, and (5) collaborative participation in the educational learning community.

Topics Agenda

Day One:

Introduction and Belief System Examination

Course expectations and assignment overview is covered. Participants will engage in an examination and sharing of their own beliefs concerning classroom collaboration and engagement. The course roadmap of learning experiences is explained.

Building a Classroom Culture of Trust and Collaboration

Participants will learn how to develop a classroom culture of trust, safety, challenge, and joy which will lead to engaged and effective learning. The culture and community building at the classroom and school-wide levels will be discussed. Students must feel safe to communicate honestly about their progress and feelings before engaged learning can occur.

Day Two:

Developing the Growth Mindset - and Why That Matters

Participants will learn about the impact of mindset on student motivation and engagement. How to recognize growth and fixed mindsets in their students, and how to increase student motivation through research-proven growth mindset practices will be reviewed. Research on how to develop a collaborative mindset and tools for cultivating a classroom culture that supports a growth mindset in students will be discussed.

What is the Collaborative Classroom? – Why That Matters and Classroom Applications

Current research concerning the importance of creating a collaborative classroom and

fostering collaborative learners will be discussed and reviewed. Participants will create a personal definition of a collaborative classroom at their own grade level band after engaging in numerous opportunities to read and discuss different examples. Current practices will be explored and assessed in order to prepare to infuse the classroom with more collaborative exercises.

Day Three:

What is an Engaged Classroom? – Why That Matters and Classroom Applications

Current research concerning the importance of engaged learning will be discussed and reviewed. Participants will create a vision of an engaged classroom at their own grade level band after engaging in numerous opportunities to read and discuss different examples. Current practices, taking into account needs for whole-group participation, will be explored and assessed in order to prepare to infuse the classroom with engaged exercises.

What is a Cooperative Classroom? – Why That Matters and Classroom Applications

Current research concerning the techniques involved in Cooperative Learning activities will be discussed and reviewed. Utilizing Cooperative Learning across the disciplines is investigated. Cooperative Learning as a component of a Collaborative Classroom is explored. Participants will create a vision of how to best utilize Cooperative Learning techniques at their own grade level band after engaging in numerous opportunities to read and discuss different examples. Specific examples and clear roles will be explored in order to ensure fidelity of the cooperative learning strategy.

Day Four:

Assessing the Classroom Application of Engagement/Collaboration Activities

Participants will synthesize new learning from Milestone 4 through 6 in order to reflect on best practices within their classrooms. Assessment techniques that provide authentic feedback on classroom culture will be studied and reviewed. Participants will learn several strategies to assess their classroom environments change.

Day Five:

Creating a Student-Centered Classroom Approach and Course Reflection

Participants will explore the shifting paradigm from teacher-centered classrooms to student-centered classrooms. Journal readings and reflections/discussions will drive the culmination of the previous 7 milestones into the development of new knowledge and dispositions concerning collaboration, engagement, and cooperative learning in the classroom. Participants will synthesize material and learning experiences in the course and reflect on their growth as educators.

Final Projects

Participants taking courses for professional development unit (not-for-credit) must follow the same Participation Expectations as posted in the course syllabus. Participants will complete readings and tasks as outlined in the Task List. Forum Postings are also required. However, participants will be exempt from completing the Formative and Summative assignments unless otherwise noted. Proof of seat hours will be presented to the participants after completing the state required course evaluation located on the student portal.

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 and will be submitted to the instructor within the 8 weeks of the allotted class time. Unless the instructor states otherwise, all papers are expected to be properly formatted electronically.

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. Participants 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.