



## University of North Texas

EDCI 4010: Classrooms as Communities University of North Texas	
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### DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION: PREPARING TOMORROW'S EDUCATORS AND SCHOLARS

The Department of Teacher Education and Administration seeks to improve educational practice through the generation of knowledge and to prepare education professionals who serve all students in an effective, inclusive and equitable manner. Its focus is on the preparation of highly competent educators, researchers and administrators who employ current theory and research as they fill these important roles.

#### Mission

The Department of Teacher Education and Administration integrates theory, research, and practice to generate knowledge and to develop educational leaders who advance the potential of all learners.

#### Vision

We aspire to be internationally recognized for developing visionary educators who provide leadership, promote social justice, and effectively educate all learners.

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#### COURSE PREREQUISITES:

Admission into the Professional Development Sequence. Concurrent enrollment in Mathematics Methods; Tools for Reading; and Tools for Writing.

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#### CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to guide preservice teachers in cultivating a reflective, professional teacher identity while building and sustaining a classroom learning community that effectively serves all students. Preservice teachers will also study culturally responsive, anti-racist, ethical teaching practices as well as orientations to classroom organization viewed through an equity lens. Throughout this course, preservice teachers will position themselves as practice-based

researchers in a clinical field experience, and plan the initial stages of a research project that will be completed in the final semester of the EC-6 program.

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## COURSE GOALS

In this course, preservice teachers will:

- Explore and evaluate models of teaching and learning alongside forms and functions of curriculum and assessment;
  - Explore and evaluate theories of classroom organization and social and emotional learning (SEL) to determine what behaviors, routines, and actions cultivate inclusive, joyful communities of learners;
  - Create pathways for building classroom communities where students are empowered to shape their own learning experiences and celebrate their linguistic and cultural identities.
  - Articulate the elements of a vision for teaching built from the UNT core values and commitments;
  - Consider the ways in which sociocultural knowledge influences beliefs and practices as a teacher;
  - Challenge and disrupt traditional, biased, and/or culturally blind notions of discipline, rewards, and behavior management that exist in schools today;
  - Consider “choice words” in the ways in which you engage with teaching practices (and imagine more powerful possibilities).
  - Demonstrate a research mindset that supports critical inquiry as central to the practice of teaching.
  - Get a head start on the Practice-Based research project for next semester.
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## REQUIRED FIELD HOURS

This course will serve as the centering course for Block B in the teacher preparation program. The students enrolled in this course will be placed in classrooms for two days a week for the duration of the semester.

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## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND/OR MATERIALS

Ayers, W. (2010). *To teach: The journey of a teacher*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Minor, C., & Alexander, K. (2019). *We got this: Equity, access, and the quest to be who our students need us to be*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

The Mustard Manual: Organizing and Managing the Elementary Classroom. (available free on line:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZY9BUqnPDvPXvc2cey4aO-JQiZMglR7K?usp=sharing>

Sailors, M. & Hoffman, J. (2020). *The power of practice-based literacy research: A tool for teachers*. Taylor & Francis Ltd. This book is available free through the UNT library. This is the same text you will use in your final semester with the Practice-Based research class.

(We will also be reading a variety of book chapters and articles in this course. All additional readings will be posted on Canvas for you to access.)

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

**Attendance:** This course is designed and organized to be highly collaborative and interactive. Our sessions will involve small and whole group activities and discussions. Therefore, your attendance and participation are essential to the learning of everyone in our course. It is very difficult to be enriched by discussions and collaborations if you are not physically present or prepared for class. [University policy 06.039](#) will be followed for attendance problems. If necessary, students may miss one class with a valid excuse (see [university policy for excused absences](#)) and not face penalties related to their grade (yet students are encouraged to save this absence for illness or emergencies that may arise). Students must let the instructor know as soon as possible if they will be missing class. It is the students' responsibility to obtain all notes and handouts missed during their absence. All assignments are due on dates indicated on the syllabus regardless of student absences. A second absence will result in a loss of points from the total grade. In the event that a student misses **four or more classes**, they will receive a failing grade. Students who miss more than one hour of class will be considered absent from that class meeting. Chronic tardiness or early departure will result in the lowering of a final grade at the instructor's discretion (arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 15 minutes early). Please note: it is the student's responsibility to drop this course, if necessary.

### *For courses offered 1 time per week*

# of Absences	Total participation points for the class (out of 10 points)
0 – 1	10
2	7
3	3
4 or more	You will automatically receive an F for your final grade

## UNT TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM COMMITMENTS

While teaching has always been a relational and intellectual endeavor, we acknowledge that *teaching is also both an ethical and a political act*. We recognize that many of the practices and traditions in schools

today perpetuate long-seated historical and social oppressions. These social inequities are structural *and* socially constructed along dimensions of intersecting identities, including, but not limited to, race, color, ethnicity, national origin and identity, dis/ability, gender identity and expression, sex, sexual orientation, religion, immigration status, language, social class, age, and genetic orientation.

It is through our radical imaginations that we can create spaces for critical inquiry and engagement in schools at multiple levels: intellectual, ethical, physical, social, emotional, ecological, and aesthetic. We envision classrooms to be inclusive places that serve as complex and just ecosystems that allow for multiple identities, modes of expression, and ways of engagement to thrive together. We do this because we are committed to dismantling oppression. Teachers play an important role in this movement. Our teacher education program supports the development of core values related to:

**Identity.** Preparing teachers who have agency and critically reflect on their lived experiences and identities as a way of informing their professional knowledge and humanizing pedagogies.

**Inquiry.** Preparing teachers who value and inquire into the complex identities, as well as intellectual and transformational capacities, of children and youth.

**Activism.** Preparing teachers who create curriculum that responds to children’s and youth’s inquiries and identities, as well as the sociopolitical and socioeconomic conditions of the world outside of schools—in neighborhoods, communities, and society-at-large.

**Community.** Preparing teachers who recognize and honor the unique sociocultural experiences and communities of children and youth with whom they work.

We commit to teaching and teacher preparation that takes a transformative stance toward school change. We believe—acting in solidarity with teachers, children, youth, school leaders, and communities—we can radically reimagine and reconstruct schools and, thus, our society.

### Teacher Preparation at The University of North Texas Core Commitments

Commitments	As Teachers	Children and Youth	In our Practice	To Radically Imagine
<b>Identity</b>	<b>We are</b> individuals with cultural histories, knowledge, talents, and interests that we use as resources in our teaching.	<b>We value</b> and nurture the love, grace, humor, compassion, creativity, patience, joy, and peace young people bring into our teaching spaces.	<b>We practice</b> humanizing pedagogies that are asset-based, equitable, and appreciative of who we are and who we are becoming.	<b>We imagine</b> schools as spaces where teachers are encouraged and given space to be different in what they do with young people and their communities.
<b>Inquiry</b>	<b>We are</b> intellectuals with a deep	<b>We value</b> young people’s	<b>We practice</b> curriculum as critical	<b>We imagine</b> a curriculum in

	understanding of academic content, curriculum development, and flexible pedagogies.	knowledge, creativity, curiosity, aesthetics, imagination, and embodied ways of being as essential, educative and liberating.	inquiry and research where children and youth are positioned as capable, knowledgeable and social agents for change.	schools that is shaped by societal goals and influenced daily by events unfolding in the world around us.
<b>Advocacy &amp; Activism</b>	<b>We are</b> activists working against injustice for young people, teachers, and communities rooted in racism and other forms of discrimination.	<b>We value</b> and embody caring in all its forms- personal, social, cultural, linguistic, and ecological as essential to growing a positive learning and living environment.	<b>We practice</b> activism in the curriculum by engaging children and youth in work that contributes to the creation of a more just, more caring, and more peaceful world.	<b>We imagine</b> metaphors for schools as nurturing spaces for the whole individual rather than as efficient factories or businesses that produce products and profit.
<b>Communities</b>	<b>We are</b> members of multiple communities- connected in ways that make our successes intertwined.	<b>We value</b> inclusive learning communities that connect us within and outside of our classrooms.	<b>We practice</b> humility throughout vulnerability; hope in the face of adversity; and resilience in response to our efforts that have fallen short.	<b>We imagine</b> schools as sustaining intersecting ways of being, knowing, and languaging.

## Course Assignments

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS
<p><b>Envisioning My Classroom Community (20%)</b></p> <p>Assignment: Teaching Philosophy product that contains both components listed below.</p> <p>Vision Statement. Students will write/create a personal vision for the teaching profession built upon the UNT core values and commitments. You should take care to align your vision with the UNT commitments (above in the syllabus). This is the “who do you want to become” portion.</p> <p>Envisioned Classroom Learning Community. Students will envision an ideal classroom</p>

community and create a product that communicates a description of the instructional processes, strategies, and routines that contribute to a classroom learning community. It is expected that students will incorporate the course materials into the final product. This is the “how” are you going to achieve your vision based on what you’ve learned this semester.

### **Professional Learning Community (60%)**

#### **Assignment #1: Building Classroom Communities (10%)**

Each student (working with a partner as an option) will design and facilitate a community building activity that is focused on SEL principles. Your activity might be one you want to try to incorporate into your mini-lesson in your Tools course.

#### **Assignment #2: Readings, Responses, and Discussion-PLC Meeting each class (25%)**

Students will engage in a PLC meeting each week using written and spoken dialogue around selected weekly materials intended to inspire and challenge your thinking. Students will sign up to facilitate one of these PLC meetings.

#### **Assignment #3: Teaching Journal Entries & Engagement (25%)**

Students will maintain a journal that will inform their research and teaching -and- will be used next semester in the action-based research class during student teaching. There should be at least 1 entry per field experience day, but you are encouraged to write as many entries as you wish. The journal will not necessarily be graded on entries being “correct”, but rather evidence of your observations, questions, and concerns that you have during your time in a classroom. Pictures (not of students) are encouraged so that you can remember things. Your final entry for the journal should be a statement of the research question that you would like to pursue next semester.

### **Field Experience & Practicum Reflection (10%) – Complete/Incomplete**

#### **Assignment #1: Field Experience Documentation Log (5%)**

Students will participate in a field experience in which they will observe, teach, and receive coaching support in a classroom setting. Responses and engagement with coaching and practice will be considered in this area. Your attendance, professionalism, and engagement in this course (both in the classroom & in the field) will be considered for this portion.

#### **Assignment #2: Practicum Reflection Direct & Indirect Teaching from Tools course (5%)**

Students in this class should also be enrolled in a Reading Tools or Writing Tools course. In that course you will design a lesson plan based on a specific instructional approach and be asked to reflect upon your experience. For the assignment in my class, you will upload a copy of your reflection to Canvas and we will provide feedback and support to each other to strengthen your teaching.

### **Attendance and Professionalism (10%)**

Teachers are required to exhibit a high degree of professionalism with their students, colleagues, administrators, parents, and members of the community. Student teaching is a time for you to begin practicing professional characteristics such as, reliability, integrity, flexibility, punctuality, and openness as you work with your mentors and classmates. This includes attending class, arriving to class on time, being prepared by fulfilling all written assignments and responses from course readings, and engaging actively during in-class experiences.

### **EVALUATION AND GRADING:**

90-100% =A; 80-89% =B; 70-79%= C; 60-69%= D; Below 60%= F

NOTE: This Syllabus is provided for informational purposes regarding the anticipated course content and schedule of this course. It is based upon the most recent information available on the date of its issuance; it is as accurate and complete as possible. I reserve the right to make any changes I deem necessary and/or appropriate.

### **UNT'S STANDARD SYLLABUS STATEMENTS**

**Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.** According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

**ADA Accommodation Statement.** UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at [disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu). (UNT Policy 16.001)

**Course Safety Procedures (for Laboratory Courses).** Students enrolled in [insert class name] are required to use proper safety procedures and guidelines as outlined in UNT Policy 06.038 Safety in Instructional Activities. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use proper safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the UNT is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance. Brochures for student insurance are available in the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the Student Health and Wellness

Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If students have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, they should be sure that the plan covers treatment at this facility. If students choose not to go to the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center, they may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. Students are responsible for expenses incurred there.

Emergency Notification & Procedures. UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course.

Student Evaluation Administration Dates. Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via *IASystem* Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](mailto:no-reply@iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at [www.spot.unt.edu](http://www.spot.unt.edu) or email [spot@unt.edu](mailto:spot@unt.edu).

Sexual Assault Prevention. UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](mailto:SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648.

Acceptable Student Behavior. Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct).

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#### DEPARTMENT SYLLABUS STATEMENTS

Foliotek ePortfolio (where applicable). Foliotek is a software data management system (DMS) used in the assessment of your knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to program standards and objectives. You will be required to use your Foliotek account for the duration of



your enrollment in the College of Education in order to upload required applications, course assignments, and other electronic evidences/evaluations as required. This course may require assignment(s) to be uploaded and graded in Foliotek. The College of Education will track your progress in your program through this data to verify that you have successfully met the competencies required in your program of study. All students must register in the program portfolio that aligns with their degree plan. Registration codes and tutorials can be found on this site: <https://coe.unt.edu/educator-preparation-office/foliotek>

#### Tentative Course Calendar

Class Meeting	Topics	Readings and Assignments Due
Week 1	<b>NO CLASS: Semester Starts Tuesday</b>	
Week 2 Jan. 23	Course Introduction Sign up to facilitate PLCs	
Week 3 Jan. 30	Social-emotional Learning Curriculum	Read Ayers Intro & Ch. 1
Week 4 Feb. 6	Instructional Approaches	Read: Ayers Ch. 2 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 5 Feb. 13	Students in your classroom- labels/levels/limits Deficit Theory Caring Classrooms	Read: Ayers Ch. 3 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 6 Feb. 20	Teaching method: Direct Teaching  Start Building Classroom Communities Project	Read: Ayers Ch. 4 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 7 Feb. 27	Teaching method: Indirect teaching	Read: Ayers Ch. 5 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 8 March 6	Motivation and classroom organization UDL	Read: Ayers Ch. 6 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 9 March 13	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
Week 10 March 20	Student families and the classroom community	Read: Ayers Ch. 7 & 8 Supplemental Reading/Viewing

Week 11 March 27	Humanizing Pedagogies	Read: Minor: Ch 1 & Intro Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 12 April 3	Teacher Identity and Research	Read: Minor Ch. 2 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 13 April 10	Practice Based Research	Read: Minor ch. 3 Supplemental Reading/Viewing
Week 14 April 17	<b>CLASS ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE</b> Practice Based Research	Read Minor Ch. 4 Supplemental Reading/Viewing  <b>Draft Research Question Due</b>
Week 15 April 24	Vision Statements	Read: Minor Ch. 5 & 6
Week 16 May 1		<b>Envisioning My Classroom Community Due</b>