

TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS & EVALUATION

Matthews Hall 108
Monday-Thursday, 12:00-1:50

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Office hours by appointment

Course Description

This course examines human learning across the multiple contexts of our daily lives and in classrooms. We will examine the processes of human learning and development as they relate to teaching in diverse EC-12 classroom settings. Understanding of these processes is applied to lesson design, instructional strategies, and assessment. Students will take up an explicitly socio-cultural and critical lens on their past learning and designs for future learning.

Course Prerequisites

Students are expected to have junior standing. No prior education courses are required. Students should be fluent in using Canvas and UNT's email system and proficient in using word processing software, including Word or Pages and Google Drive.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the role of developmental/learning theories in supporting equitable, inclusive, anti-racist, and affirming approaches to teaching and learning.
2. Articulate how learning environments can support youth learning, identity, and participation in class, school, and society.
3. Envision and describe how your classroom will be a site of resistance and transformation toward a more equitable and just society.

The course is also designed to help students succeed on the *Professional Responsibilities & Pedagogies Exam* (PPR). Examples of core standards addressed in the course include, but are not limited to:

- Standard I: Domain 1. Designing Instruction and Assessment to Promote Student Learning
 - Competency 001: The teacher understands human developmental processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to their developmental characteristics and needs.
 - Competency 002: The teacher understands student diversity and knows how to plan learning experiences and design assessments that are responsive to differences among students and that promote all students' learning.

Course Texts

None. All course readings will be provided via Canvas.

Assignments

In addition to course readings and class activities, the instructor will use the following graded learning activities as indicators of progress and understanding over the duration of the semester. These primary activities are described briefly below. Additional details will be provided at the beginning of the semester and/or before each assignment due date. All assignments will be submitted through Canvas.

- 10% 10 points Professionalism, preparation, and participation
- 30% 30 points Learning community participation
- 30% 30 points Reflection essay
- 30% 30 points Lesson plan analysis
- 0% 0 points Mental health modules must be completed to pass

If students wish to know the instructor's assessment of their participation and current understanding, they are encouraged to visit office hours (or another time by appointment). The instructor will notify any student if there is a concern regarding their participation.

Class Participation

You are expected to come to class prepared to participate actively. Being prepared means you've completed reading before class and assigned individual tasks for that week. Your experiences with readings are a critical part of how, as a classroom community, we make sense of learning together. Sharing your ideas and questions will be a weekly occurrence as part of our class dynamic. In-class participation will be evaluated based on attendance, participation in activities, and contribution to discussions.

Learning Communities

You will participate in a working small group with several students this semester. In these Learning Communities (LCs), you will have an opportunity

to work together to make sense of readings, respond to reflection questions, discuss and reflect on your observations, and provide feedback to one another as you develop your major assignments. Your LC members are the first people you text/email/call when you're unsure what's due next, how to complete an assignment or need someone to read through a draft of an assignment. You will also have collaborative tasks to complete together each week. Participation in LCs will be evaluated on your involvement in these working groups. Issues or concerns about the interpersonal dynamics of your group should be communicated with the instructor early and often.

Reflection Essay

You will choose one of the following prompts and write a three-page essay. All papers should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, with standard margins. You cannot exceed three pages. You must reference at least three readings or class materials. All citations should be in APA format.

Prompt 1: Complete an educational autobiography using your K-12 schooling experience to (1) describe the purpose of schools and (2) what it means to be a K-12 student. Questions you might consider include:

- What routines, systems, practices, and structures were normalized at your school?
- How did students and teachers maintain and/or disrupt these routines, systems, practices, and structures?
- How would you describe your experience as a student and those of your peers? Pick a time to focus on in your essay (e.g., elementary school, middle school, or high school).
- Did you or others encounter any deficit framings of students?
- How was learning structured? What did learning typically look like at your school?

Prompt 2: Choose two subtopics from Steinberg's (2023) textbook chapter 8 and reflect on your adolescent identity development.

- Changes in self-conceptions
- Changes in self-esteem
- Identity crisis
- Identity development
- Identity and ethnicity
- Identity and gender

What theories shared and points made by Steinberg stand out to you in relation to your biography? What theories shared and points made by Steinberg stand in contrast to your biography? Do any of the ideas from the

chapter particularly resonate with you? Are there any ideas from the chapter you disagree with? Explain.

Prompt 3: Compare and contrast Piaget and Vygotsky. Describe the basic tenets of their theories of development. Which theorist do you think best describes cognitive development? Which theorist do you think best describes Learning? Make an argumentative claim.

Lesson Analysis

The Lesson Analysis assignment will allow you to apply what you are learning about sociocultural and critical lenses on development and learning to examine and modify an existing lesson plan related to your disciplinary focus. As a future teacher, you will often pull lessons from existing curricula and online sources. It is a central part of your teaching practice that you examine these learning designs from a critical standpoint, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and address those weaknesses to ensure that your future students are best positioned to learn. Positioning your students to learn requires a thorough understanding of developmental and learning theory so that you can design for the unique histories of your students as your learning community changes from year to year. This is a central part of teaching equitably.

Mental Health Modules

These are required by Texas. There are three training programs (CBITS, Project Alert, and ASK). Please notify me if the suicide prevention module may be triggering.

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)

The Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) program is a school-based, group and individual intervention. It is designed to reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and behavioral problems, and to improve functioning, grades and attendance, peer and parent support, and coping skills. CBITS has been used with students from 5th grade through 12th grade who have witnessed or experienced traumatic life events such as community and school violence, accidents and injuries, physical abuse and domestic violence, and natural and man-made disasters.

Instructions on how to complete **Early Mental Health Intervention** on-line training:

1. Go to <https://cbitsprogram.org> or Google "Cognitive behavioral intervention for trauma in schools"
2. Click "register with our website"
3. Follow registration instructions
4. After registration, log in and click "My Account" located in the upper right corner

5. Take the training entitled "CBITS Provider Basic Training Course, Part 1." This training is approximately 2 hours long.
6. **Print and save a PDF of the certificate of training. *Warning, official copies via email may take days.***
7. Submit your electronic certificate to Canvas by due date.

Project Alert

Project ALERT is a free classroom-based substance abuse prevention program for 7th and 8th graders that's proven to reduce the experimental and continued use of drugs. Through a series of comprehensive lessons, Project ALERT motivates students against drug use, cultivates new non-use attitudes and beliefs, and equips teens with the skills and strategies they'll use to resist drugs. Project ALERT is proven to:

1. Motivate students against drug use
2. Provide skills and strategies to resist drugs
3. Establish new non-use attitudes and beliefs

Instructions on how to complete **Substance Abuse (Project ALERT)** on-line training:

4. Please go to the following link: <https://www.projectalert.com/>
5. Click on "Online Training"
6. Click "Login to access Online Training!"
7. Create your Project ALERT account.
8. Complete 11 lessons and 3 booster lessons
9. **Print and save a PDF of the certificate of training. *Warning, official copies via email may take days.***
10. Submit your electronic certificate to Canvas by due date.

ASK about Suicide to Save a Life Gatekeeper Training

ASK about Suicide to Save a Life is a gatekeeper training that can be modified between 1-3 hours, based on the needs of the trainees. It is similar to Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) and is a best practice training that was developed in Texas, with Texas specific data, resources and information. Participants have opportunities to learn the warning signs, protective and risk factors about suicide. They will learn how to ask people directly about suicidal thoughts and behaviors and how to refer them to appropriate help. There are trainings offered across Texas, as well as an online video of two ASK Master Trainers teaching a sample course for an hour.

Instructions on how to complete **Suicide Prevention** on-line training:

1. Please go to the following link:
<http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/ask-about-suicide-save-life>
2. Select "Training" at top of screen, pull down menu and select "Online Courses"
3. Select "A Strategic Planning Approach to Suicide Prevention" only.

4. Click on the link to Register or Login.
5. Create a New Account.
6. Check your email to complete registration
7. Only take the course titled "A Strategic Planning Approach to Suicide Prevention"
- 8. Print and save a PDF of the certificate of training. *Warning, official copies via email may take days.***
9. Submit your electronic certificate to Canvas by due date.

Course Overview

This course runs for three weeks and includes 12 class sessions. The course is broken into three parts.

PART I: SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, AND TEACHERS		
5/13	Class 1	What is the purpose of schools?
5/14	Class 2	How should we think about students and learning?
5/15	Class 3	What does it mean to be a teacher?
PART II: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION		
5/16	Class 4	Adolescence and identity development
5/20	Class 5	Theories of cognitive development: Piaget & Vygotsky
5/21	Class 6	Cultural ways of learning: Neo-Vygotskian research
5/22	Class 7	Constructivism and assessment
PART II: PRACTICAL APPLICATION		
5/23	Class 8	Re-tooling the classroom
5/27	Class 9	Building classroom communities
5/28	Class 10	Classroom labor relations
5/29	Class 11	Lesson analysis workshop
5/30	Class 12	Lesson analysis workshop

*I reserve the right to change the course plan. All changes will be communicated promptly.

Grading and Assessment

Letter grades will be allocated on the following scale:

A	90-100 points
B	80-89 points
C	70-79 points
D	60-69 points
F	50-59 points

I expect all students will earn an A in the course if they are participating regularly and turning in major assignments. My approach to assessments aligns with UNT policies concerning academic integrity (UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy, 06.003).

Attendance and Participation

Because this course involves collaboration, participation is essential to learning. Class activities require you to be actively engaged in discussions and group work. I understand tardiness and absences may occur. If you are late to class, please drop me an email to let me know the circumstances. If you must miss class, please let me know prior to your absence. Because collaboration and participation are central to your success in the course and given the accelerated nature of a Maymester, the following will be the attendance policy for our course:

- 1 absence Deduction from learning community grade (3 points)
- 2 absences Second deduction from learning community grade, and 5 points from participation grade
- 3 absences Failure

Accommodations

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during

faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Inclusion

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.