



EDU 555: Foundations of Student-Centered Pedagogy
Fall 2023 Syllabus
1.5 units

"I am not a teacher, but an awakener."
~Robert Frost

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Location: HTH Forum & Classrooms
Course meetings: 1pm - 4pm, Fridays

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to support candidates in developing the foundations of effective instructional practice. The core course goals are as follows:

1. Candidates will explore the processes by which students construct meaning and develop understandings of themselves, each other, and the world around them.
2. Candidates will learn how to plan, facilitate, and reflect on “thinking routines” which engage all students in developing conceptual understandings.

By design, this course will involve a blend of theory and practice. Course readings will be selected to help candidates understand the theoretical and scholarly warrants for specific pedagogical traditions (the “why”), while in-class activities and weekly Put It to Practice assignments will be designed to support application (the “what” and “how”). In alignment with best practices in teacher education as well as HTH’s values, the key theories informing this work will be those of constructivism and situated learning.

As a part of the sequence of courses focused on both general and subject-specific pedagogy, EDU 555 will support candidates in developing and demonstrating *novice-level proficiency* of the California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), and will introduce them to several GSE program learning outcomes. Gateway I, a multi-part performance task which candidates will complete in November, will serve as key assessment evidence of the competencies introduced in EDU 555.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do children learn? What implications does learning theory have for teaching practice?
- How can we create structures in our classroom that support constructivist and collaborative student learning?
- How can we reflect and iterate on our practice in ways which allow us to grow as educators?



LEARNING OUTCOMES

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

HTH GSE is committed to developing reflective practitioner leaders who work effectively with colleagues and communities to create and sustain innovative, authentic, rigorous learning environments for all students. This shared vision is articulated in our Institutional Learning Outcomes for all HTH GSE students:

Practice Thoughtful Inquiry & Reflection (IR)

- **Reflective Practice (IR1):** Reflect on and critically analyze their own practice to guide future action.
- **Connection (IR2):** Synthesize and connect relevant theory and scholarship to their practice.
- **Scholarly Inquiry (IR3):** Design, conduct, and share inquiry that addresses essential questions from their practice.

Design Equitable Learning Environments (D)

- **Instructional Design (D1):** Design approaches to learning that emphasize personalization, connect to the world beyond school, and offer access and challenge to all learners.
- **Authentic Assessment (D2):** Design reflective, dialogical approaches to assessment, both formative and summative, to assess student learning and guide instruction.
- **Differentiation (D3):** Design learning experiences that honor student voice and choice and are responsive to cultural, linguistic and neurodiversity in the classroom.

The curriculum for this course is based on the above-listed essential questions and program learning outcomes, as well as a corresponding set of course-level learning outcomes, activities and products. Together, they represent the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for this course.

Course Learning Outcomes mapped to program learning outcomes	Activities/Products
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Candidates will explore the processes by which students construct meaning and develop understandings of themselves, each other, and the world around them. ❖ Candidates will learn how to plan, facilitate, and reflect on “thinking routines” which engage all students in developing conceptual understandings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Discussions and PTP assignments; Gateway I ➔ Discussions and PTP assignments; Gateway I



ALIGNMENT WITH THE CALIFORNIA TPEs

This course, in conjunction with clinical practice, will support candidates in learning, applying, and reflecting on the competencies specified by the California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). As part of this process, candidates will receive feedback from program faculty on weekly “Put it to Practice” (PITP) assignments. PITP assignments ensure that coursework supports fieldwork experiences. Each assignment is aligned to specific TPEs and is designed to measure and provide feedback on a candidate's ability to plan, teach, assess and redesign. Additionally, cooperating teachers and fieldwork supervisors align their coaching and feedback to the theory and practice being explored concurrently through the coursework.

Throughout EDU 555A and upon course completion, the following TPE competencies are introduced (I), practiced (P) and/or assessed (A):

- ❖ **TPE 1.1** Apply knowledge of students, including their prior experiences, interests, and social-emotional learning needs, as well as their funds of knowledge and cultural, language, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to engage them in learning. (I, P)
- ❖ **TPE 1.5** Promote students' critical and creative thinking and analysis through activities that provide opportunities for inquiry, problem solving, responding to and framing meaningful questions, and reflection. (I, P, A)
- ❖ **TPE 1.8** Monitor student learning and adjust instruction while teaching so that students continue to be actively engaged in learning. (I, P)
- ❖ **TPE 4.1** Locate and apply information about students' current academic status, content- and standards-related learning needs and goals, assessment data, language proficiency status, and cultural background for both short-term and long-term instructional planning purposes. (I)
- ❖ **TPE 6.1.** Reflect on their own teaching practice and level of subject matter and pedagogical knowledge to plan and implement instruction that can improve student learning. (I, P)

COURSE MATERIALS

Course Texts (to be distributed in class and/or on the course Google Classroom):

- National Academy of Science, *How People Learn: Mind, Brain, Experience, and School*
- Richhart, Church, & Morrison, *Making Thinking Visible*
- Elizabeth City, “Talking to Learn.” *Educational Leadership*, 2014
- Windschitl, “The Challenges of Sustaining a Constructivist Classroom Culture.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1999.

Additional texts (articles, videos, podcasts) will be provided throughout the course.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS and ACTIVITIES

There will be two assignments per week: 1) a reading assignment to be completed outside of candidates' time in the classroom, and 2) a “Put It To Practice” (PITP) assignment to be implemented



in the context of their teaching fieldwork. In addition, each week candidates will be required to upload a post to the assignment-specific discussion forum on the course website. These posts will be about *either* the week's reading *or* the P1TP assignment; course instructors will indicate which one is required each week. Candidates are encouraged to respond to each other's commentaries as well as to post their own. **Discussion posts must be uploaded to Google Classroom no later than the Wednesday night prior to class.**

EXPECTATIONS & ASSESSMENT

"If something is worth doing, it is worth doing well." ~ Proverb

Assessment in this course is discourse-based, combining reflection, peer critique, and instructor response. Final papers and overall course participation are assessed in a "student-led comment" format, where the participant presents a self-assessment and the instructor responds. Contributions to discussion forums are not assessed formally, but are assessed for completion and serve as an essential component of the ongoing dialogue with peers and the instructor. The instructors recognize that assessment is a two-way street and invite critique on the course content and process through exit cards following each session and in a course evaluation at the end.

The effectiveness of our learning community depends upon each person's consistent and thoughtful participation. GSE courses are pass/fail. Rather than focusing on grades, we will strive to create our best work. The learning process throughout will be supported through conversation, critique, and multiple opportunities for revision. We will create work that is worth doing and worth sharing, often discussing the idea of audience and how to make a broader impact on the educational community. Each student's participation in this course will be assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

Pass: Student's class participation and outside work reflect professionalism, effort, and dedication; readings and assignments are completed on time. In order to earn a passing grade, students must achieve the learning outcomes stated on the second page. The final assignments must "meet" or "exceed" the criteria stated on the rubric and students will be required to revise their work if they "approach" the criteria. Students attend every class session, providing advance notice in the event of unavoidable absence and making up for missed work in a timely manner, as approved by the instructor.

Fail: The student makes little to no progress toward completing course assignments, and fails to achieve the learning outcomes for the course. Assignments are missing, or class participation and/or outside work are below average. The final assignments are missing, incomplete, or fails to meet the assignment parameters and/or the standards set by the class. If a candidate misses more than 2 class meetings, she/he will be required to take the course the following year; this means that the candidate cannot be recommended for his/her Preliminary Credential at the end of year 1. In extreme cases, please talk to the instructors if you must miss class or need an extension.



CREDIT HOURS

This is a 1.5 credit course (6 weeks). Each credit represents 45 hours of learning, for 67.5 total hours. There will be 18 hours of face-to-face instruction, either in class or virtually, 13.5 hours of out-of-class instructional time and 36 hours of out of class work.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The schedule below outlines the important deadlines to meet throughout the course. More detailed weekly agendas will be distributed at course meetings and posted on Google Classroom. *Please note that for each week, the assignment about which candidates should post online is marked with a triple asterisk.*

Session 1: August 25 ~ Introduction to Constructivist Teaching	
Reading Due Today:*** <input type="checkbox"/> How People Learn: Mind, Brain, Experience, and School . Chapter 1: “Learning: From Speculation to Science.”	Put It To Practice due today: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Session 2: September 1 ~ Constructing Knowledge Together: The Power of Peers	
Reading due for session 2:*** <input type="checkbox"/> Windschitl, “The Challenges of Sustaining a Constructivist Classroom Culture.” <i>Phi Delta Kappan</i> , 1999. <input type="checkbox"/> Richardt et al, <i>Making Thinking Visible</i> . Chapter 2: “Putting Thinking at the Center of the Educational Enterprise.”	Put It To Practice due for session 2: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBSERVE: As you go through your next week of school, look for ways that your CT gets students actively participating and sharing their thinking? How is your CT gathering information about who students are and what they already know? (TPE 1.3, 2.2 -- I)
Session 3: September 8 ~ Whoever is Doing the Talking is Doing the Thinking	
Reading due for session 3: <input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth City, “Talking to Learn.” <i>Educational Leadership</i> , 2014.	Put It To Practice due for session 3:*** <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRY: Facilitate a think-pair-share during an activity that is scheduled to happen in your classroom. While students talk in pairs, circulate and listen to their ideas, jotting down what you hear and then feeding back some noticings during the group-share. Reflect on how it went, especially

	<p>given the focus areas of your rehearsals in class. (TPE 1.5, 1.8, 2.2 -- I)***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ OBSERVE: Watch for when your CT provides opportunities for kids to discuss something in pairs or groups. How do they set it up? What do they do afterward?
<p>Session 4: September 14 ~ Disrupting Status and Hierarchy **note that this date is a Thursday, due to GSE retreat on Friday</p>	
<p>Readings due for session 4: *** Status in the Classroom.</p>	<p>Put It To Practice due for session 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ TRY: Sometime in the next two weeks, try facilitating a world cafe. If you're teaching in grades K-2 do a shortened version (~10 min). ❖ TRY: Try using questions which encourage students to expand on their thinking. ("What makes you say that?" "Tell me more about that.") (TPE 1.5 -- I) ❖ OBSERVE: Try charting roughly how much teacher talk-time and student talk-time there is. What's the ratio? Did you see opportunities where there could have been more space for student talk? (TPE 2.2 -- I)
<p>Session 5: September 22 ~ Developmental Considerations & Goals</p>	
<p>Reading due for session 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Yardsticks: read the chapter that addresses the age of the students that you teach. 	<p>Put It To Practice due for session 5:***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ TRY: By class today, try facilitating your "simple world cafe." Post your reflection on how it went on Google Classroom. ❖ OBSERVE: Continue noticing how status is playing out in your classroom. Optional: Try out a status intervention in response to what you notice!
<p>Session 6: September 29 ~ Goals in Student-Centered Classrooms</p>	



<p>Read (due for session 6): (TPE 3.1 -- I)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ EL Education Leaders of Their Own Learning: Chapter 1: Learning Targets <p>Browse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Learning for Justice Standards (Teaching Tolerance)❑ Explore the CA Common Core State Standards (look at your own subject area / grade level)❑ Next Generation Science Standards (for science and MS teachers)	<p>Put It To Practice due for session 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ TALK & WRITE: Talk to 1-2 colleagues (which can include your CT, your colleagues, your director, your supervisors, etc.) about how they think about using learning standards in their work. Ask them, <i>In what ways do learning standards support your planning and your teaching?</i>
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FINAL PRODUCT DUE OCTOBER 4: Complete your [Emerging Teaching Philosophy](#). Submit the document in Google Classroom. Then upload it to your digital portfolio.