

## **Innovative Teaching Proposal**

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EDUC 1010 Exploring Teaching 3 credits

Students will explore the exciting world of teaching, examine what it means to be a teacher, and participate in field experiences. This course is designed to introduce students to personal and professional experiences within the educational community. This course or an equivalent approved course is a prerequisite to all licensure programs in the Department of Teacher Education.

### **Rationale:**

Education 1010 is a prerequisite course required of all WSU students seeking recommendation for teacher licensure. The on-campus sections Education 1010 are currently taught using traditional methods. Students are requesting a restructuring of this course to meet course load and work demands. This is evidenced by the high enrollment in the online version of this course. Online students often comment in course evaluations their desire but inability to meet face-to-face due to the static structure of these courses. In addition faculty often voice concerns about the inability to adequately model the methods needed by future teachers in the online environment. A restructuring of this course is needed.

### **Description of Innovation:**

The restructuring of EDUC 1010 will synthesis current best practices in a variety instructional methods including; Community Engaged Learning, Project-Based Learning, Learning Communities, and Hybrid Instruction. This synthesis will create a course structure uniquely designed to meet the diverse needs of today's students, both academically and socially.

This new course will be designed to help students be self-directed in exploring interests, identifying their most important questions, and dialoging about concerns relative to the teaching profession -(Interests, concerns, questions = IQCs). Through community engaged learning and a series of exploratory (research) activities, students will study, explore, and pursue answers to their IQCs as part a small (focused) learning community. Synthesis of these learning experiences will occur via a culminating research project (project-based learning) that requires them to incorporate technology to share the results of their research with the class.

Adding to the strength of this design is our intent to develop an ongoing partnership with schools/teachers in the Ogden School District (OSD). District teachers will help determine specific education related topics that are important for students to

explore. Additionally, we will work with (OSD) central administration personnel to place each learning community within a relevant school based on IQC questions. This partnership will help foster a spirit of collaboration and prepare WSU teacher education students for employment in schools with high-risk students.

At the beginning of the course, students will spend time working in public schools in community engaged learning. Two hours will be spent in each of three settings elementary school, junior high school, and high school. Following this experience students will attend an initial class meeting where they will be engaged in a variety of activities to prompt student's initial identification of IQCs. Students will then participate in information gathering sessions. Each team will have substantial freedom to pursue their research agenda as they see fit but will have periodic check-ins that will track progress and keep students connected to faculty. Classrooms, including the McKay Mac Lab, will be available for teams to meet in and faculty will be available for scheduled meetings. Reusable learning and information objects, as well as study guides will be available on-line. A selected bibliography would be on reserve at the library. Students will attend a second large group meeting where they will be organized into small learning communities based on IQCs. Each team will, drawing from the master list of IQCs, formulate a research agenda to be completed during the semester. Based on IQCs, school partnerships will be given, and an additional 12 hours of community engaged activities geared to aid in completion of the IQC project will be completed in assigned partnership schools. Finally learning communities will complete the IQC project and present projects in a large group poster session themed activity.

#### Course Session Outline

CEL

Initial Full Group Meeting

Information Gathering (online or on-campus depending on need)

Second Full Group Meeting

Learning Community research including:

CEL

Question specific information gathering (online or on-campus depending on need)

2-3 check in

Final Full Group Meeting-Poster Session

A general outline of learning objectives/outcomes and the learning activities which meet each objective is listed below. However, final and specific outcomes and activities will be developed with teachers in the OSD.

Through a Community Engaged Educational Opportunity with a Partnership School District, Course Educational Modules, Content Expert Presentations, and Project Based Learning Experiences students will meet the following outcomes:

Outcome 1 – students will be able to describe the effects of school/student demographics on student learning and teaching.

- Describe the demographics of their cooperating school and the impact its demographics will have on teaching and learning.

Outcome 2 – students will be able to make correlations between historical education and today's school organization and teaching practices.

- Describe the history of education in past time periods and then relate how the structure of their school, its class sizes, course selection process, and other items are influenced by the history.

Outcome 3 – students will be able to describe the different types of classroom management and discipline plan and their particular strengths, weaknesses, and applications.

- Discover different types of classroom management plans, the strengths and weaknesses of them, and identify which plans are being used in their school, what is the school's referral and discipline plan, etc.

Outcome 4 – students will be able to distinguish between different types of grading and assessment systems.

- Describe the grading and assessment systems that are being employed at the school.

Outcome 5 – students will be able to recognize characteristics of effective teaching practices

- Describe characteristics of effective teaching practices and make recommendations for future successful teaching.

Outcome 6 – students will be able to ask questions and process information in a meaningful ways to make informed decisions about education.

- Develop a personal philosophy of teaching.
- Create and present an IQC research project.

Outcome 7 – WSU teacher education department will develop a positive working collaboration with Ogden School District

- Ogden school teachers help to plan learning outcomes and activities
- Ogden School district will provide schools for WSU students to collect their data and progress through their learning modules.

**Breadth of Impact:  
Student**

Approximately 290 to 350 students pursuing a teaching degree will be positively affected by this course innovation. We currently offer 12 section of EDUC 1010 throughout the school year; five sections fall, five sections spring, and two sections summer.

**Faculty**

All teacher education faculty will benefit from this course innovation. The restructuring of instructor responsibilities will allow for greater flexibility in current 1010 faculty instructor load. In addition faculty currently not involved in 1010 instruction will be able to highlight their expertise in guest lecture experiences.

In addition, approximately nine sections of EDUC 1010 are taught in area High Schools as concurrent enrollment classes. Proposed innovations would begin with the on-campus sections with eventual migration of successful components to concurrent enrollment classes.

**Community**

The proposed course innovation will positively impact the local community through a developed school to university partnership.

School district partnerships will be developed, teachers in local school districts will receive volunteers in their classrooms, and local K-12 students will interact with WSU students assisting them in educational activities.

**Depth of Impact:****Student**

Students receiving instruction through this new synthesis model will allow students to gain a deeper knowledge of the field of education and their role in the education profession.

**Faculty**

Faculty participating in the EDUC 1010 course will be trained in this synthesis model, and will be engaged in the evaluation of course instructional methodologies.

**Community**

The partnership school district will benefit from this course change in many ways.

Future educators will work with schools to tackle current school challenges.

Partnership schools will receive continual flow of motivated volunteers. In addition, teachers will be able to work with future colleagues.

**Preliminary Evidence:**

Although this innovative course has not been piloted, aspects of this synthesized course design are grounded in research. Design considerations and research foundations of the course components below:

**Hybrid Courses:**

Hybrid courses contain both elements of face-to-face and online course structures (Leh, 2002). Hybrid course design has been shown to be effective across a wide variety of disciplines including teacher education (Duhaney, 2012; Hmelo-Silver, Derry, Bitterman, and Hatrak, 2009; O'Brien, Harshorne, Beattie, and Jordan, 2011).

**Project Based Learning:**

Support for project-based learning is ongoing. Blumenfeld et.al. (1991) indicate that student projects are the motivation students need to become engaged in learning

and find real application of the things they learn. Traditional thoughts about project-based learning suggest that it is only good for students who are self regulated. However, Helle, Tynjälä, Olkinuora & Lonka (2007) found project based learning to be successful especially for students who lack self-regulation. More important was that students were grouped in peer groups that are supportive and allow individual contribution.

Community Engaged Learning (service learning):

Service learning has had a positive impact on both faculty/teacher behavior and student outcomes. Teachers who implement service learning regularly are more apt to implement standards based instructional practices (Seitsinger, 2005), and motivate students helping them make meaning of experiences (Stewart, 2008). Students engaged in service learning are influenced positively in many areas including social development, behavior, civic engagement, and academic outcomes (Billig, 2000). In addition, service learning has been effective in promoting pre-service teachers' commitment to work with diverse student populations.

Learning Communities

While the advantages of small learning or research communities, to accomplish a variety of purposes in large urban high schools is well established, research regarding their impact in post-secondary settings is relatively sparse. Price (2005) references a few quasi-experimental and correlative studies that link participation in learning communities at the post-secondary level with better grades and increased likelihood of re-enrollment in subsequent semesters

### **Implementation:**

Fall 2014

4 of 5 on-campus sections go live with the new framework and pedagogy.

### **Assessment Plan:**

#### **Course Outcomes –**

Student Perception Questionnaire on course components

Completed midterm and semester end

Pre & Post test content knowledge comparisons

(Sp 2014) pre-implementation sections VS (Fall 2014) post-implementation sections

Fall 2014 experimental sections VS control section.

Student course evaluations

Fall 2014 experimental sections VS control section.

## **Student learning objectives -**

Final project/presentation—research findings

Final exam based on IQCs & student presentations

## **Sustainability:**

Adjustments to the course will be made based on student feedback and assessment data for spring 2015. Migration plans for concurrent enrollment courses will be developed after spring semester 2015.

\*(Narrative 1730 words)

## **Budget:**

In order for this project to be a success a substantial amount of time, beyond faculty work load, will need to be spent in developing the components of this course. One of the key items of this project is developing a working relationship with partner schools in the OSD a partnership of this sort will benefit both WSU and OSD and can build a long-term relationship where WSU students can find future employment and help fill the needs of the OSD.

In addition, course materials relevant to a wide variety of IQCs will need to be identified and created. The online component of this course will include a series of reusable learning objects and reusable information objects. These will be open source materials, this means that individuals outside of the Weber State Community will have access to these materials and will have a positive impact on the awareness of WSU as an innovative leader in education based open source materials.

Course Development Stipend:	3 faculty X 3500 =	10,500
Travel (Innovative Teaching Conf.):	3 faculty X 1500 =	4,500
Reserve Materials		1,000
Ogden District Faculty Stipends	3 X 500	1,500
Tech Support/training		1,000

TOTAL **18,500.00**