Teachers are charged with the responsibility of teaching. Just exactly, what does it mean to teach? Is teaching simply a matter of following a script written by someone else? Or, is teaching more like playing a role in a serious drama? Maybe teaching is just doing what comes naturally. Then again, maybe it is simply a reconstruction of prior experiences with teachers.

Students who enter teacher education programs come with a long "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975), with strongly held judgments about education that may or may not have been reasonably derived or consciously determined. Thus, a fundamental goal of teacher education, in addition to guiding novices to acquire both the technical (how-to) and the practical (what to), must be to lead neophytes to temper their judgments, to replace their unsubstantiated opinion with what Dewey (1910) called "grounded belief".

Reflective Teaching offers those preparing to teach a community in which to reflect on the initial conceptions and experiences of teaching. Dewey (1910) described reflection as the "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends" (p. 6). By reflecting, preservice teachers can examine their commitment to children in classrooms, employing a "pedagogical thoughtfulness," according to van Manen (1991, p. 9). They can confront teaching as a problem to solve, as "a process of seeking and making meaning from personal, practical, and professional experiences" (Vacca, Vacca, & Bruneau, 1997, p. 446). They can become "conscious every day that they are coming to school to learn and not just to teach" (Paolo Freire cited in Burton, 1991, pp. 16-17).

Reflective Teaching offers students in the teacher education program resources and guidance for gathering knowledge of and discussing the issues of teaching. Students select the issues, systematically gather data, assess the relevance of the data, evaluate data sources, and present informative seminars.... under the watchful guidance of two faculty members from the Department of Education, who offer frequent feedback as students examine their assumptions about teaching and develop professional judgment.


**Course Goals**

Students will be able to

1. select, research, and collect authoritative information on issues that reflect on what it means to teach;
2. collaboratively construct, deliver, and evaluate Socratic seminars on selected issues;
3. reach and defend reasonable positions on critical issues in education;
4. discuss current and future trends in education, demonstrating growth in teaching
5. defend in a professional manner, reasonable solutions to open-ended problems
6. select and defend a quotation that expresses significant insight about teaching developed during the course (in writing)
7. develop and support with credible evidence gained from the experience of the class what it means to teach (in writing)

**Course Expectations:**

1. Students will come to class regularly and on time.
2. Students will participate generously in class and online because they are serious in their commitment to inform reflective teaching practices.
3. Students will construct seminar topics seriously and reflectively.
4. Students will achieve course objectives
5. Students will work "Vygotsky style" and ASK*.

Students are strongly urged to attend A.I.R. (Authors, Readers, and Illustrators). Author Matthew Gollub will discuss his books on Oct. 7, and author Mary Langford will discuss her books on Oct. 9. Both events are from 9:30-11:00 a.m. in the Gorman Faculty Lounge.

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The Education Department complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request to me, or the ADA Coordinator, before the 4th class day.
**Student Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tasks</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Seminar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear focus (objectives)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Assessment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial/Authoritative Data</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Organizer</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Strategy (includes environment)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End Assessment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. ASK* (Reflections turned in / participation in Seminars)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Midterm (Quotation)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Final Exam (Reflection)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assignments:** See course website.

**Course Resources:**

There is no required text; however, the Department of Education maintains a reserved collection of texts and handouts for this class. Students will be free to use these resources during class times. In addition, they may be checked out overnight as well. Because of the nature of this course, materials must be returned regularly in order to be available as resources during class research/collaborative practice.

Many of the resources that students will need are online and connected to the course website. We have made every effort to provide up-to-date, working links; however, Internet features, protocols and resources change and grow by the minute. For this reason, students may discover that some of the resource links are outdated and/or no longer working. Students may need to search for alternative URL's or even new resources to satisfy course requirements. Please notify Mrs. Khirallah in the case of links that no longer work.

Lab facilities will be available for students to practice procedures covered in class. Such "extra" lab work will be necessary. The University is perpetually in the process of installing, experimenting with, and field-testing new network tools and procedures. Some of the tools described in this syllabus may or may not be available for on-line demonstration during the semester. Use of the printers in general University labs is available at a minimal charge. Students may purchase printing cards in the library. In addition, there is a printer in the Media Center, which student may use without charge for up to 50 pages of printing.
*Assessing Student Knowledge [ASK]: An Explanation*

The major theme of Vygotsky's theoretical framework is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) states: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals." (p. 57).

- In this course, students are expected to engage in social interaction within the classroom as a fundamental tool in the development of understanding.

Research in education reveals the promise of intertwined active and collaborative learning approaches. “Collaborative learning … emphasizes the virtues of active involvement. It requires students to take the initiative in the classroom, to become active creators rather than passive recipients of knowledge, and to rely on each other as much or more than on the teacher's authority.” (Hansen & Stephens, 2000).

- In this course, students are expected to show evidence that they learn from each other as well as from the teacher.

Education studies show that “the difficult abilities of decision-making and problem-solving are best taught through learning groups.” (Michaelson, Fink & Knight, 1997). “Drawing analogies from everyday learning, researchers argue that knowledge is contextualized; that is, learners construct knowledge by solving complex problems in situations in which they use cognitive tools, multiple sources of information, and other individuals as resources. (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Resnick, 1987). Moreover, because learning occurs in a social context, learners interact with and internalize models of knowing and thinking represented and practiced in a community (Toulmin, 1972).”

- In this course, students are expected to show evidence that they have “constructed” knowledge and solved problems by proposing, carrying out, and reporting research that examines a significant question in child growth and development.

Assessment, as explained by Salvia and Yseldyke (1998), is "a process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about individuals and groups, and this decision-making role is why it touches people's lives."

- Students are expected to take seriously the value of the “social context” of the classroom. Thus, they will be present to contribute to and benefit from the interaction in the classroom and, when appropriate, submit data, which will provide evidence of progress.

What will I collect, and when will I collect it? I cannot answer these questions as precisely as you might prefer. I can only say that just as I feel a responsibility to come to class prepared to engage in “learning”, so too should you feel that same responsibility. The ASK data that I collect will be more important because you were in class to participate fully in its construction than because you got something “right” or “wrong”. The function of the ASK data is to collect evidence of your thinking, evidence of the “formation” of concepts in Child Growth and Development during the semester.

ASK data is authored by you, the student, in the classroom…. with the assistance of your peers in most cases….for the purpose of examining concepts as they emerge from “instructional conversation”** (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988).

ASK emerges naturally from the flow of the course. Each time ASK data is offered, it will have value with regard to your course grade. It cannot be made up.
According to Tharp and Gallimore (1988), the "instructional conversation is the medium, the occasion, the instrument for rousing the mind to life….The concept itself contains a paradox: 'Instruction' and 'conversation' appear contrary, the one implying authority and planning, the other equality and responsiveness. The task of teaching is to resolve this paradox. To most truly teach, one must converse; to truly converse is to teach" (p. 109 Rousing Minds to Life).


Important Note:

Because the use of technology and computer networks has become commonplace for competitive professional work in education, this course will utilize the World Wide Web ("WWW" or "the Web") for research and for the design and administration of selected materials in multimedia environments. Students should regard Web exploration as part of the research that would support any course. In addition to reading from the Web, more traditional reading will also be used to frame course work and discussion. No prior knowledge of the WWW is presumed, but experienced students should support their less experienced peers in learning the Internet basics.