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TEP 128A/TEP 139
Winter 2006
Tuesdays, 3:30-4:50
WLH 2204

SYLLABUS

TEP 128A: INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING AND LEARNING (ELEMENTARY)

TEP 139: PRACTICUM IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

<http://tepservers.ucsd.edu/courses/tep128a>

TEP 128A and TEP 139 provide you with a number of learning opportunities. You will examine the social and community contexts of elementary school life, implement theories of learning and classroom interaction in a practical educational environment, and provide educational assistance to teachers and students in the San Diego community. This quarter TEP 128A/139 students will serve as classroom teaching assistants (CTAs) in schools in school districts throughout San Diego County.

Course Organization and Expectations

TEP 128A (four units, letter grade only) includes both in-class presentations and activities, and discussion sections, in which you analyze and reflect on your CTA field experiences. The grade for TEP 128A will be based on the quality of the following four expectations:

1. attend and participate actively in weekly class meetings **and** discussion sections
2. complete weekly writing activities
3. complete two learning projects
4. complete a final assignment

TEP 139 (two units, pass/no pass only) is the field component in which you serve as a volunteer classroom teaching assistant at a participating elementary school. To pass TEP 139, all students must complete and document in the weekly journal a minimum of 40 hours of classroom assistance.

For TEP 139, you are expected to:

1. participate regularly in field experience for a minimum of 40 hours in assigned classroom
2. hold regular conferences with your cooperating teacher, either in person or through a dialog journal, **and be evaluated by your cooperating teacher** (see form)
3. complete weekly journal entries documenting your field experiences

Required Readings

At the University Bookstore:

Meier, *Learning in Small Moments: Life in an Urban Classroom* (also on reserve at the Social Sciences and Humanities Library in Geisel Library)

TEP 128A Course Reader (available from University Readers at

<http://www.universityreaders.com>)

Online readings as specified in the syllabus

Teaching Assistants:

Pam Long (pam@thewritingnet.org)
Kathy Melanese (kmelanese@ucsd.edu)
Rick Smith (rjsmith@ucsd.edu)

Discussion Sections:

Tuesdays, 5:00-5:50
A01 CENTR 207
A02 CENTR 220
A03 CENTR 205

Elementary Classroom Responsibilities

As a classroom teaching assistant, you have a number of responsibilities to your cooperating teacher and elementary school class. You are expected to provide regular assistance to the class for 4-6 hours per week, with a minimum of 40 hours for the quarter. In setting up your schedule, and in providing assistance, you must be responsive to the classroom teacher's needs. The most successful CTA experiences are based on **clear and frequent communication** with cooperating teachers. You need to determine which classroom duties the classroom teacher wishes performed, and to negotiate any changes in these duties over the quarter. Observation, individual tutoring and providing small group instruction are all appropriate activities for CTAs. As you acquire more experience and confidence in the classroom, you may wish to discuss with your cooperating teacher ways to increase your level of responsibility for providing instructional assistance in the classroom, moving from tutoring individuals to organizing small group instruction. **You will need to establish the opportunity to provide instruction to a group of students for one of your course projects by the end of the quarter.** Keep in mind that the cooperating teacher is responsible for students' learning, and that s/he will base the opportunities you have for teaching on the reliability and quality of your overall performance in the classroom.

General Description of Written Assignments

My Life as a Learner: An Introduction Due January 17, in lecture

Provide a personal introduction, focusing on "your life as a learner." On a single (8.5 X 11) piece of paper, describe/present features of how/what/why/where/with whom you learn. Some prompts might be: How do you like to learn? What would you like to learn more about? What is the best setting for your learning? What have you learned a lot about? From whom did you learn well/not at all, and why? Feel free to use a combination of text, images, and/or graphic representations. These introductions will be read and discussed in class, and handed in afterwards.

Learning Projects Due week 6 (Feb 14) and week 10 (March 14), in lecture

For the two course projects, you will gather information about your students in your placement classroom and the school context. More detailed descriptions of each assignment are attached.

Final Assignment Due Monday, March 20, in the TEP Office (U 517A), by 3:30 PM.

For your final assignment, you will have the opportunity to practice planning, implementing, and evaluating learning opportunities in your classroom. In addition, you will be expected to combine new writing with reflections upon previously written pieces for the course. A detailed description of this final assignment will be distributed in class.

Classroom Journal Due weekly beginning January 17, in section

Your journal is a place for you to record your experiences in the classroom in which you are serving as a classroom teaching assistant. You will also engage in dialogue via e-mail with a colleague. Each week a copy of the journal entry including e-mail dialogue will be collected by your teaching assistant at section meetings. The first journal entry is due on **January 17**. Details on format and content of the journal can be found in the section that follows.

Weekly Journal Format and Content

Introductory Journal (due January 17 in section)

Section 1: Orienting Data

The first part of any entry must include **orienting data**. These include the date, place (grade level, teacher, school) and time (hours that day and cumulative hours) of each classroom visit every week. **All hours must be documented** in order for you to receive credit.

Categories

name

date

grade level; teacher, school

hours that day; cumulative hours

Example

Ima Student

01-23-06

4th grade; Ms. Salcedo; ABC Elementary

9:00-11:30 (2.5 hours; total=9.5 hours)

Section 2: Introduction

Introduce yourself to your journal partner. Tell why you are taking this class. Discuss questions you have about teaching and working in schools. Describe goals you have for your TEP 128A/139 experience and beyond. For example, you may wish to write about plans for entering a teacher education program and future teaching interests. Share any other interesting or relevant information.

Section 3: Dialogue

Ask your journal partner some questions.

Section 4: Reading response

Respond to the following guiding questions: How do the experiences recounted by Meier compare to recommendations made by Denton & Kriete? You may also wish to reflect on memorable school beginnings and/or what you might do as a teacher to launch the school year.

Weekly Summary (due weeks 3 - 10)

Section 1: Orienting Data

Include all details described above.

Section 2: Partner Response

Respond to your journal partner's previous entry (be sure to include your partner's name in this section).

Section 3: Fieldwork

This section has two parts. First, give a **brief summary or sequence of events** of what it is you and the students actually did in the classroom **each day** you spent at the school site. Here is a sample sequence of events:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 9:00-9:45 | Worked with Alicia, Fred and Sammy at a center on fractions. For the most part I asked them questions to help them figure out equivalent fractions. |
| 9:45-10:15 | Recess: While watching students on the playground, I talked with Ms. Salcedo about this morning's math centers, and about the various schools she has taught in. Then I walked Gina, Paul, and Brittany to Room 12, where they read to Mr. Wilson's first graders. |
| 10:15-11:30 | Writing Workshop. I listened to seven students read the stories they had written about life during the Gold Rush. When they each finished writing their stories, they came to me to read their story. Then we talked over their plans for revising their writing. |
| 11:30: | Students went to lunch. After helping to clean up the math centers, I left for the day. |

Next, pick **one particular event, activity or episode** from the week that had an impact on you, your teacher or your students. Describe this incident in detail and tell about your reactions.

Section 4: Reading Response and Connections

Please do not summarize the readings. The goal is for you to think deeply about the content, analyze, and synthesize. Specific **guiding questions** have been provided each week in the syllabus to help you connect the readings to each other as well as to your field experience. You may find it helpful to use these questions to **guide but not limit** your reading responses and connections.

In addition to considering these guiding questions, be sure to analyze each of the week's readings in your response. You may find it useful to connect the readings to one or more of the following:

- your field experience
- your role as a CTA and/or prospective teacher
- your cooperating teacher's situation
- a personal experience
- another reading
- a counter-example

What in particular does the author say that connects to your experience? How does the reading help to explain or highlight the experience?

Submitting journals: Email your entire journal to your journal partner each week. Bring a hard copy of your journal to class each week. This hard copy will be submitted to your TA in section.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, GUIDING QUESTIONS AND READINGS

1. January 10 *COURSE INTRODUCTION; FIELD PLACEMENT*
2. January 17 *BUILDING A CLASSROOM COMMUNITY*
Text:
 Meier: Preface, Prologue and chapters 1-4
Online:
 Denton & Kriete, The first six weeks of school. Available:
http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/newsletter/12_2NL_1.asp
DUE: My Life as a Learner (see syllabus page 2); Journal 1 (Note: journal entries are due at each of the remaining class meetings); Orientation handout (due as soon as completed; at latest, by week 3)
Guiding questions: How do the experiences recounted by Meier compare to recommendations made by Denton & Kriete? You may also wish to reflect on memorable school beginnings and/or what you might do as a teacher.
3. January 24 *SEEING THE STUDENT*
Course reader:
 Mosle: Writing down secrets
 Graves: Learn from the children
 Ayres: Seeing the student
Guiding questions: How will you get to know all the students in your placement classroom? What are the benefits and constraints of each of the approaches taken by these authors? The writing for this week's journal should help you organize your ideas for Project 1, and you may also wish to raise questions about that assignment.
4. January 31 *UNDERSTANDING – BY DESIGN*
Course reader:
 Perkins: Teaching for understanding
 Collins, Brown & Holum: Cognitive apprenticeship
 Leinhardt: What research on learning tells us about teaching
On-line:
 National Science Education Standards: An Overview (pp. 1-10). Available at
<http://www.nap.edu/books/0309053269/html/index.html>

Read over the California Academic Content Standards in Science for your grade level(s). Available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/scmain.asp>

Guiding questions: What do these articles and documents imply for planning lessons, particularly in the area of science? You may wish to consider examples and/or counter-examples from your own experience as a both learner and teacher.

5. February 7

LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND SCHOOLING – 1

Text:

Meier, chapters 5-7

On-line:

The education of Amina. San Diego Union, Dec. 19, 2004

Available:

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/features/20041219-1124-amina.html>

Guiding questions: What do these teachers do to help all children feel included in the classroom? What is the role of reflection for each teacher? What does “culture” mean in these examples, and in what ways do language and culture provide resources for learning?

6. February 14

LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND SCHOOLING – 2

Course reader:

Tucker: A global perspective on bilingualism and bilingual education

Fillmore: When learning a second language means losing the first

Haas: An interview with Lily Wong Fillmore

DUE: Project 1

Guiding questions: What is your own language learning history? How can teachers use a student’s native language as a resource for learning? What does it mean to be “bilingual”?

7. February 21

DEVELOPING A TEACHING IDENTITY

Text:

Meier – ch 8

Online:

Select an article of interest to you at one of the following sites:

The Responsive Classroom Newsletter – available at:

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/newsletter/index.html>

Rethinking Schools Online – available at:

<http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/index.shtml>

Guiding questions: In this week’s chapter, Meier reflects on the power of change, “freeing teachers and students...to be more like they want to be.” Websites and publications for educators, such as the online journals we are looking at this week, are one resource. In addition to reflecting on your own response to this chapter, write about the on-line article that you chose. Provide a brief synopsis, including the title, author, and source. Then tell why you chose the article. What does your choice suggest about what’s important to you, and about the teacher you want to become?

8. February 28

LESSONS FROM A CHILD

Text:

Meier, ch 9

On-line:

Including students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

ERIC Digest (ED 358677). Available:

<http://www.ericdigests.org/1993/general.htm>

Peterson, Tracking and the project method. Available:

http://rethinkingschools.org/archive/13_02/track.shtml

Guiding questions: What have you learned so far in gathering information for Project 2? What challenges have you encountered, and how have you resolved them? How do the ideas in this week's readings support your understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion at your school site?

9. March 7

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Text:

Meier, ch 10

On-line:

Peruse the information available about implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in San Diego City Schools. Available at:

<http://sandi.net/nclb/index.htm>

Guiding questions: How is progress monitored under NCLB? What is the impact on schools? How does this compare with Meier's experience? With what you have observed or been told at your own site or in previous experiences?

10. March 14

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Text:

Meier, ch 11-12 & Afterward

Course reader:

González, et al: Teacher research on funds of knowledge

DUE: Project 2

Guiding questions: Compare the school/community connections in these two readings. In what ways are they similar? In what ways are they unique? What questions or ideas do you have about connecting to children's families and community when you have your own classroom?

NOTE: Please note that the Evaluation of Classroom Teaching Assistant (CTA) Performance is due by March 17. Your cooperating teacher may give you the evaluation to return to your TA, or s/he may mail or fax the evaluation directly to the instructor (see contact information provided on the form).

Learning Project #1:
“In order to teach you, I must know you.”
Due February 14 in lecture

Introduction

This first project gives you the opportunity to learn more about the students with whom you are working this quarter. For this project you have the chance to practice some inquiry skills that will help you as a teacher be able to develop a well-rounded understanding of your students--what they know and can do, what they like, what experiences they have had, and, as Ayers puts it, “what are their interests and areas of wonder.”

Graves argues that it is essential to know your students in order to teach them effectively. You will find that getting to know your students will be useful to you as a teacher in several ways. First of all, you can “ground” your teaching in the students’ experiences and interests, since effective teaching and learning activities build on what learners already know and what they value. As well, your interest in learning about your students’ lives, interests and experiences conveys respect to them, their families, and community.

General strategies for getting to know your students

There are numerous ways to learn about your students. Be adventuresome in trying out a variety of strategies for becoming more knowledgeable about your students. According to several of the authors in the course readings, the best way to learn about your students is to learn from them. Using the ideas presented in Graves and Ayers (as well as other ideas from any relevant readings and from discussions in class and section), try out some specific strategies to get to know better the students in your TEP 128A classroom.

Observation is a key strategy for knowing more about students.

- At school, you can observe in the classroom: while students are listening to the teacher present lessons, doing individual work, or working with other students.
- Also, you can watch students while on the playground, in the lunchroom, or during school-wide activities. Remember Ayers’ advice to “observe children in motion.”

Talking with students will be the most powerful source of information.

Learn to “invite children’s conversations,” as Graves says, by letting them speak of what they know. You might refer to the range of activities described in Graves and Ayers for children to tell you about themselves.

- Talk informally with students to find out more about them: their ideas, experiences, and interests. These conversations should not disrupt ongoing class activities. You might talk with students as you observe or participate in their activities in the classroom, at recess, or when eating lunch together in the cafeteria.
- You may want to talk while you are engaged with students in a learning activity in class. You can talk together about that activity to get a sense of it from their point of view. Another possibility is to have them explain the activity to you, or to explain more generally what’s going on in the classroom (see Graves’ action example).

•If appropriate, you might try a more specific activity with students in which you invite them to talk about themselves (some examples include Ayers' autobiographical poem, or the "myself as a learner" activity).

Specific instructions for the write-up:

- ✍ **Describe** the strategies you used to get to know the students in your class. **Evaluate** the usefulness of the strategies you tried. How effective have they been? What will be your **next steps** in getting to know ALL the students in the class better?
- ✍ Write a concise **summary** of what you have learned about **all the students** in your classroom, from using the strategies you chose.
- **Discuss** what you have learned through this project, and how it might affect **your teaching** and the **students' learning**.

General notes on content and format:

- Aim for a paper about 3-4 pages in length, typed double-spaced.
- Be sure to make explicit reference to course readings. You may also wish to reference lecture and/or discussion. Cite readings by author (include page number if quoting directly) and lecture/section by date.
- Provide evidence for any assertions you make and avoid evaluative judgments.
- Please avoid including identifying information about children or teachers. You may use initials, first name only, or pseudonyms.
- Your paper will be evaluated for overall legibility and organization.

<p style="text-align: center;">Learning Project #2: Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity Due March 14 in lecture</p>
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Much attention has been focused in recent years on multi-cultural education and on national or state standards. The school and the teacher are responsible for providing an education that includes rather than overlooks or misrepresents women, people of varied cultural, ethnic, and racial groups, and people with disabilities to mention a few, and which provides appropriate instruction for English learners. You will examine policy and school life as experienced by students in an analysis of inclusion, equity, and diversity in your classroom and at the school site.

Throughout this paper, you should strive to contextualize your discussion about the school site with comparison to examples from your own classroom as appropriate. You may find it helpful to build explicitly upon what you learned about the children in your classroom for Project 1 as you extend your observations and inquiry to the school as a whole.

While this is an individual project, you should also plan to collaborate with others at your site when gathering information related to the school as a whole so as to reduce intrusion on the staff. For example, one TEP student (or group of students) at a site might find out about the identification and placement process for English learners by talking to a site administrator or resource teacher, another might gather information about special education, and a third inquire about the school mission.

Section 1: Overview of classroom and school demographics, policies and mission

Discover what you can and write a description of your school's demographics as well as its policies and mission related to inclusion and diversity. Start by finding out about the demographics of the school and the surrounding community. Do students who attend the school come from the neighborhoods nearby, or do some of them live in other areas? Each school's Report Card is a good place to begin this investigation.

You might also ask for policy or mission statements and interview those who were involved in their development, in addition to observing for yourself what seems to be going on. Then discuss any unofficial policies which you might have encountered or observed at the school. Ask about the processes the school has in place for involving parents and others in the community in the bringing of cultural, ethnic, and language diversity into the school. Does what goes on in the school seem to be an extension of the community, based on what you have learned about community demographics and features?

Section 2: Specific services for students with special needs

Next find out about your school's official policies regarding appropriate education for **English language learners (ELL)** and **inclusion of special needs students**.

What is the percentage of English learners in the total population at your school, and what services exist for English learners (e.g. Structured English Immersion, Bilingual Education, English Language Development [ELD])? How are English learners placed in these services, and on what criteria do they exit from them?

What services does the school offer students with disabilities? This might include students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) as well as students on what is called a “504 plan” (Note: you may find the first few sections of this article useful in understanding these categories – “Section 504 and IDEA: Basic Similarities and Differences” available at http://www.idonline.org/ld_indepth/legal_legislative/edlaw504.html)

Are services provided for Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students? If so, describe how they are organized (e.g., self-contained classroom, clusters, pull-out classes, and so forth). How are students identified for these services?

Finally, for all of the above factors, does the official policy or story seem to match what you see? Are there school-wide issues of any kind that you observe related to diversity and inclusion/exclusion?

Section 3: School governance

How are the school’s mission and policies regarding equity and inclusion enacted? In this section, you should bring together the information you collected for the first two sections and explore institutional practices that shape opportunities for the learning of all students. How is your school governed? Is there community participation involved in the governance of your school? How are decisions made regarding the development and implementation of the school’s policies? What issues are of current concern regarding equity and inclusion at your school, and which groups are charged with acting on these concerns? Throughout this section, pay particular attention to the roles that classroom teachers play in various aspects of school governance, as well as to their concerns and perspectives. You may find it useful to draw upon some of the following activities and resources:

- Attend a meeting of the Board of Education for your District (you might also acquire a board meeting agenda, or watch a board meeting on TV if your school is in the San Diego Unified School District)
- Consult District websites
- Ask about attending site meetings, such as the School Site Council or parent advisory committees
- Interview key site personnel
- Gather newspaper articles relevant to issues of equity and inclusion as they affect your school site and/or District

General notes on format

- Your project, as described above, is due Tuesday, March 14, in lecture. The paper should be about 10-12 pages, typed, double-spaced.

- The questions provided above are intended to guide you in writing a paper that summarizes your findings and presents your synthesis of course readings and/or discussion in lecture or section with the features of your classroom, school site and the surrounding community. **You are expected to explicitly cite course readings by author, lecture or section by date, and provide bibliographic information for any additional sources that you consult.**
- In addition to citing readings and/or discussion, be sure to indicate the source of all information presented (e.g., the names and titles of people you interviewed, titles of documents, etc.).
- As always, strive for professionalism in your writing. Provide evidence for any assertions or evaluative comments that you make, and please use pseudonyms, initials, or first name to avoid including any identifying information about children.
- You are encouraged to include graphic displays of information, such as maps, graphs, or photographs, to help present your ideas effectively. If you decide to attach documents such as School Report Cards in an appendix, be sure that these are analyzed and explained within the body of your paper.