**EDUCATION 614: PROFESSIONAL ISSUES SEMINAR, PART I Fall, 2014**

**Faculty Instructors**

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**Course Description & Objectives**

EDUC 614 is the first of a two-part Professional Issues Seminar Series that all M.A.T. students complete in conjunction with their school-based experiences.

The purpose of school-based experiences in the Puget Sound program is to apprentice you to the role of a professional educator. EDUC 614 assists you in reflecting on your experiences, perspectives and school-based practices, within a supportive context and with other beginning teachers. The primary goals of the seminar are:

1. to reflect upon various ways of seeing and experiencing classrooms; to try on distinct lenses, to suspend pre-emptive judgment, and to grapple with the complexity of classroom life
2. to engage the process of forming, and challenging your own personal identity as a teacher
3. to recognize and value teacher learning that occurs at the *intersections* of schools, university, and local community.

In this seminar, your job will be to observe carefully, pose questions, reflect on personal experience, examine teaching & learning, and work collaboratively with peers. Small group seminars meet each Friday to examine a range of issues emanating from your school-based experiences. In addition, this course fulfills specific Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requirements for teacher preparation. Students will hear selected speakers on various education and teaching-related topics, including sexual harassment, substance abuse, school contract law, and child neglect/abuse.

**Core Principles:**

We have designed this seminar around a few distinct principles:

1. Learning at the Intersections. We believe that the ‘two-worlds pitfall’ in teacher education, which assumes deep divisions between universities and schools, is re-framed well by Cochran-Smith (2005), who suggests that “many of the goals of teacher preparation… are best met at the *intersections* of schools, university, and community.” This stance acknowledges differences between school and university but also recognizes that many points of productive connection and mutual investment exist. We believe that school and university contexts have a great deal to learn from each other – that the university does not simply inform what “should” happen in schools – and that school settings do not simply provide the only “real” way to understand teaching and learning. In our program, we seek multiple vantage points; we value work at the intersections and believe such work to be central to teacher development.

2. Classroom as Text. A central focus of seminar will be re-examination of your experience of classroom life in your placement. We consider the classroom itself to be a “text”—that is, something open to interpretation, with multiple potential meanings, depending upon the lenses one brings or adopts. What happens in a classroom is rarely one-dimensional – and a trademark of a Puget Sound MAT student is the ability to see “more” within a given classroom moment than may be apparent on the surface. In this context, we emphasize the following:

\* *self-awareness of our own frames of reference*

*\* “consideration” rather than quick judgment*

\* *shared examination* of scripted moments of classroom life.

One of our goals is to help you learn to be sensitive observers; we hope you learn that curriculum and instruction are not so much a matter of doing things to kids, but involve close observation/interpretation of kids and their worlds and interactions.

3. Attention to Teacher Identity.

Teacher learning is also more than picking up a set of practical or conceptual tools. It includes a shift in one’s core identity. Becoming a teacher is in large part coming to see and experience oneself as a teacher, to commit to being a teacher and all that the profession involves, and it includes being reflective about the ways we make sense of ourselves as teachers. In seminar, we raise questions about the many forces that shape our development as teachers. We examine common tensions that pre-service teachers experience, discuss critical incidents, and otherwise engage in what Alsup (2006) calls “borderland discourse” – talk that addresses the shifts and borders of our professional identity. Our goal is to support not simply the creation of teacher identity but also a reflective stance toward that identity.

**Core Practices**:

A few specific practices also distinguish 614 seminar:

*…relating to campus seminar:*

Mixing of Elementary, Middle and Secondary cohorts. Elementary, Middle, and Secondary candidates have distinct needs in teacher preparation. On Fridays, however, we mix our cohorts to support communication across a K-12 spectrum. Friday is the main opportunity in Fall for secondary candidates to hear about the world of elementary schools, and for elementary candidates to gain a sense of middle or secondary school. This exposure, we believe, can help teachers understand different developmental stages, get a sense of differing school contexts, and gain insight from each other.

Student-Centered Discussion / Interaction: A central instructional method in 614 is discussion of your experiences and of the classroom as a text. We view open discussion as an important means to explore classroom experiences, to encourage curricular and pedagogical decision-making, and to support teacher identity development. Interaction can also take the form of role plays or community-building activities. Instructors provide structure to each class, but also seek to maintain flexibility and allow spontaneity – to leave room for students to forward immediate concerns and issues.

Narrative Writing in Class: We believe that writing about one’s own personal history and experience can help you become aware of your own default assumptions, strengths, biases, and practices in teaching. Students will be given personal narrative prompts occasionally through the semester for in class writing and discussion.

*…relating to placements:*

Classroom scripting: Students take notes and/or script events in the classroom each week per your instructor’s direction. Examples will be given during seminar and a specific assignment will be given each week. These notes often become the center of shared discussion on Friday.

Organization/Management & Diversity Lenses:

To guide your early observations, instructors will provide two semi-structured lenses for thinking about your placement classroom. Students will be asked to view the classroom through an organization/management lens (how is the teacher managing all that is going on? how does the environment work?), and through a diversity lens (what kinds of diversity are you able to see in your classroom? how is diversity experienced by students?). Students will script classroom events during the week that give insight into these broad dimensions of classroom life and will share their notes with peers during seminar.

OWMK: ‘OWMK’ stands for the 4 categories of interaction we ask of you in your placement: Observation, Writing, Mentor Interaction, Kid Interaction. Each week, we will provide you with a sheet that designates tasks for your school placement and any weekly homework for 614. We will provide a copy for you to bring to your mentor teacher as well.

Distinct Placements. We engage candidates in two placements across Fall term to balance the need for *sustained* experience in classrooms with your need for *diverse* experiences. Typically, we place students in schools that differ from one another in socio-economic characteristics. In addition, we envision each placement differently. The first placement we see primarily as *experiencing, wondering, and identifying.* Your focus in this placement is on acclimating to school life, surveying the landscape, identifying *as* a beginning teacher, wondering/questioning, and participating in an initial way. The second placement we emphasize *gradually taking on of teaching roles*. Here, negotiation of curriculum, classroom leadership, and reflection on your own teaching become more prominent. You will continue to carry over practices from your first placement, but we ask mentors to be intentional in giving you teacher-like roles and responsibilities.

*Note: Changing placements in October also entails a change in seminar groups. This is necessary so that the supervisor that sees you in your placement can also be your Friday seminar leader. You will stay with your seminar group for 6 weeks, then a shift in group composition will occur in middle October.*

# Assignments

Participation

Your engaged participation is the central feature of the seminar. Come prepared to discuss, listen, and share in small groups and large. We pay attention both to the content and manner of your contributions as well as to your overall professional disposition. *We also factor in involvement and professionalism in the school setting itself into your final grade*. While circumstances differ in each placement, we look for you to show initiative and to interact with kids and your mentor as appropriate to your situation.

# School-Based Notebook

A primary resource in this class is your school-based notebook. This notebook is a compiled collection of your notes and writing in and from the field. It includes “thick description” of your teaching observations and lessons, detailed accounts of classroom contexts, surroundings, participants and occurrences, as well as wholistic evaluations of “what is going on” in the classroom. School-based notes should include some verbatim transcripts of talk uttered by students and teachers in the classrooms under observation. They should include verbal descriptions and diagrams that depict characteristics of classroom space and the physical plant of the school itself. In addition, notes on the demographics of the student body and teaching faculty, the personal identity characteristics of the teacher, the things the teacher does and says to motivate learning, the things the students say and do in response – these are all relevant material for your notebook. Required observational notes will be designated in the OWMK document each week, and your instructional supervisor will provide specific direction and expectations.

Teacher Identity Papers

In addition to narrative writing in class, students will write two papers that relate to our work on teacher identity development:

* *Writing on Tensions in Pre-service teacher education*
* *Identity Writing (continued writing on Tensions or reflection on your own autobiography and its relation to your teaching)*

More information on each assignment will be provided during the seminar.

# Textbooks

There is no text to purchase for this class. Students will receive occasional short articles to read for Friday seminars as well as materials supplied by various speakers.

**Course Evaluation**

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| --- | --- |
| First Half | Second Half |
| Participation in 614 10  Participation in placement / Notebook 10 ‘Some things about Me’ poster 10  Narrative Writing 10  Tensions in Pre-service Education paper 10  Total 50 points | Participation in 614 10  Participation in placement / Notebook 10  Narrative Writing 10  Case study notes 5  Identity Writing 15    Total 50 points |
|  |  |

EDUC 614 is graded Pass-Fail. Instructors will submit a point total for each half of the term to the Director of School-based Experiences. Aggregate totals from first and second half are calculated and a final score out of 100 is assigned. Grades are determined on the following scale: 93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 88-89 = B+; 83-87 = B; 80-82 = B-; 78-79 = C+; 73-77 = C; 70-72 -= C-; below 70- 60 = D; below 60 = F. Your final grade is determined per Puget Sound policy: B- or above = Pass; Below B- = Fail. MAT students should be advised that a grade of B- in any course is reported to the Dean of the School of Education.

**Professional Behavior**

The School of Education holds students to high standards of professional behavior both on campus and in the schools. Students have obligations to behave in a professional and ethical manner at all times. We have attached an “MAT Candidate as Professional” document to this syllabus, which specifies areas on which we evaluate candidates during the Fall semester and through student teaching. Please review this document (p.5), which was developed by the entire UPS education faculty based on our shared experiences. If issues arise, a faculty member may hold a conversation with you. Be advised that significant difficulty or failure in any of these areas can impact your grade, potentially result in removal from a school placement, or may affect your role in the program. Questions about the MAT Candidate as Professional document can be addressed to any education faculty member.

**State Guidelines Related to this Course: Washington Administrative Code (WAC) topics:**

WAC 180-78A-165 (1997)

1. Teacher candidates will complete a well-planned sequence of courses and/or experiences in which they acquire and apply knowledge about:
2. Different student approaches to learning for creating instructional opportunities adapted to learners from

diverse cultural backgrounds with exceptionalities.

1. Variety of instructional strategies for developing critical thinking and problem solving, and performance

skills.

1. Classroom management and discipline including:

i. Individual and group motivation for encouraging positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.

1. Effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication for fostering active inquire,

collaborations, and supportive interactions in the classroom.

1. Formal and informal assessment strategies for evaluating and ensuring the continuous intellectual, social

and physical development of the learner.

1. Issues related to abuse including the identification of physical, emotional, sexual and substance abuse,

information on the impact of abuse on the behavior and learning abilities of students, discussion of the responsibilities of a teacher to report abuse or provide assistance to students who are victims of abuse, and methods for teaching students about abuse of all types and prevention.

1. The standards, criteria and other requirements for obtaining the professional certificate.
2. School law and education policy.
3. Professional ethics
4. The responsibilities, structure and activities of the profession.
5. Research and experience-based principles of effective practice for encouraging the intellectual, social and

personal development of students.

Relationship of Course to Goals of M.A.T. Program:

Course goals match program goals by facilitating discussions and presentations to help prepare teachers who have:

1. ability to manage and discuss the complexities of teaching and learning of challenging content using the classroom as text
2. the ability to reflect and discuss on one’s own practice, to look for what “work or “does not work”
3. a commitment to teaching everyone’s children and what that means
4. the ability to learn and work in a collaborative fashion

MAT CANDIDATE AS PROFESSIONAL

Name:

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| WORK ETHIC |  |  |  |  |
| Attends consistently and punctually |  |  |  |  |
| Completes work promptly |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrates flexibility |  |  |  |  |
| Accepts individual responsibility |  |  |  |  |
| Displays a positive attitude |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| INTERPERSONAL SKILLS |  |  |  |  |
| Listens to others |  |  |  |  |
| Actively works to build relationships with peers, students, |  |  |  |  |
| building personnel and university communities |  |  |  |  |
| Considers other points of view |  |  |  |  |
| Considers the time and needs of others |  |  |  |  |
| Can recognize capacity as well as need |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| PROBLEM SOLVING |  |
| Considers issues/problems from multiple perspectives |  |  |  |  |
| Asks appropriate and clarifying questions |  |  |  |  |
| Responds positively to feedback |  |  |  |  |
| Anticipates, frames and solves everyday problems |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| INITIATIVE IN CLASSROOMS |  |  |  |  |
| Asks appropriate clarifying questions |  |  |  |  |
| Talks and listens to students |  |  |  |  |
| Makes informed and thoughtful instructional decisions |  |  |  |  |
| Identifies tasks to be done without requiring excessive |  |  |  |  |
| directions from others |  |  |  |  |
| Interacts positively with building personnel |  |  |  |  |
| Gives appropriate notification of absences |  |  |  |  |
| Dresses professionally |  |  |  |  |

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| **Schedule of Friday Meetings**  September 12 10-12: Seminar Groups  **Due: ‘Some things about Me’ Poster**  1-3pm: IEP / 504 students – Laurie Bowler, parent perspective  Kristi Amrine, Stafford Elementary  September 19 10-12: Seminar Groups  1-3pm: Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (**TPEP), Molly Pugh**  **ID Cards, Anna Coy**  September 26 *Race & Pedagogy National Conference*  October 3 10-12: Seminar Groups  **Due: Identity Tensions Paper**  1-3pm: Resume Workshop; Student Teaching Applications  October 10 10-12: Seminar Groups  1-3pm: Safe Relationships with Students: Jim Gasper, Legal Services, WEA    October 17 10-12: Seminar Groups, management case study  **Due: Case Study notes**  1-3pm: Management discussions  October 22 (WED) 9:30am - 10:30: Orientation to 2nd Field Placement  October 24 All Day in Schools (Begin 2nd Field Placement)    October 31 10-12: Seminar Groups (new groups based on 2nd placement)  1-3pm: Human Resources Panel  November 7 10-12: Seminar Groups  1-3pm: Child Abuse: Betsy Gast    November 14 10-12: Seminar Groups  **Due: Identity Writing**  1-3pm: McKinney-Vento Act, Colleen Philbrook, Tacoma School District;  November 21 10-12: Seminar Groups  1-3pm: Teaching Contracts / Law: Cliff Foster  November 28 Thanksgiving Holiday  December 5 10-12: Fall Friday Celebration  1-3pm:Seminar Groups |
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*Schedule may be subject to change to accommodate speakers.*