Instructional Techniques for Effective Teaching  
EDCI 5340  
Spring 2013  
A. Hernandez

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COURSE INFORMATION

I. Course Description: This course will emphasize research-based strategies for increasing student achievement, models of successful instruction to help teachers/administrators plan, and techniques for implementation of effective teaching.

II. Rationale: The successful practice of Education is founded on theories and techniques of effective teaching which lead to significant (measureable) learning which is greater than that which students might accomplish without instruction. Public education has been the target of extreme criticism from multiple political and ideological perspectives. While the basis of some of this criticism may be argued, particular aspects are undeniable. This course will support pre-service and in-service teachers and administrators as they acquire key professional knowledge and skill which will serve as the basis for their practice as instructional leaders and practitioners recognizing among other things that individual practitioners are most often the basis for generalization about the profession at large and professionals in general.

Goal: This course is intended to provide students with familiarization with both theory and practice related to instruction (both teaching and learning).

III. State Adopted Proficiencies for Teachers and/or Administrators/Counselors: Not applicable

IV. TExES Competencies: Not applicable

V. Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Apply approaches to inquiry appropriate for problem solving and decision making in classrooms and schools.
2. Articulate the role of assessment as a technique for instruction as well as accountability.
3. Describe approaches to classroom management that have empirical or theoretical validity.
4. Evaluate various models, strategies, and techniques appropriate for instruction and the needs of various student populations.
5. Discuss current issues and trends affecting today’s classrooms from the perspective of recent theory and empirical findings.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of their field through the application of theories of curriculum and instruction.

VI. Major Course Topics:

1. Philosophical Underpinnings – philosophy of education, teaching and learning (as a student).
2. Approaches for measuring student learning and teaching effectiveness at the individual and aggregate levels (student to district and beyond) and implication for practice
3. Psychological bases for pedagogy
4. Creating the Environment for Learning
5. Helping Students Develop Understanding
6. Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge
7. Putting Instructional Strategies to Work

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities

Methods and activities for instruction include but are not limited to:

Whole class and group discussions
Direct instruction
Modeling
Student and teacher presentations
Research

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment

The methods of evaluation and the criteria for grade assignment are:

A. Methods and Percentage of Final Course Grade Each Assessment

Assignments:

Students will have the opportunity to develop plans for demonstrations of mastery and evaluation. Assignments and evaluation will be determined on the first class day.

Written/Presented Reports: Students will have multiple opportunities to prepare reports of their own inquiry concerning topics addressed in class. These can be short “research” type papers, annotated bibliographies, professional reflection papers, etc.

Class Assignments: Students will be responsible for periodically assigned “homework” and class-based assignments.

Instructional Plan: Students will develop an instructional plan applicable to their particular discipline and preferred grade level which highlights the rationale for a particular instructional approach.
**Service Learning:** “Educators facilitate learning by creating opportunities for students to understand and analyze their service experience in the context of their coursework.

Service learning is a method by which students improve academic learning and develop personal skills through structured service projects that meet community needs. Service learning builds upon students’ service activities by providing them with opportunities to learn and reflecting upon their experience.”

 Volunteers are needed for the Coastal Bend Regional Science Fair to take place at the American Bank Center on March 8 & 9, 2013. Volunteers are needed for shifts on Friday, and judges with a STEM background are needed on Saturday morning or afternoon. Register as a volunteer or a judge @ [http://cbsf.tamucc.edu/](http://cbsf.tamucc.edu/)

This is an opportunity to gain experience working with students and to earn Assignment credit in my course. A reflection paper is required after the event. Please contact me should you wish to participate for details.

**Examinations:** There will be a final exam in this course. There may also be unannounced quizzes during the semester over assigned reading material in addition to the text. Quizzes and examinations may be of any type and often will be of mixed type. Students should be prepared for multiple-choice, essay, short answer, etc. formats. *Students are responsible for material in the text, class “handouts” and assigned outside readings whether or not presented in class as well as material presented in class whether or not in the text or assigned readings, class handouts etc.*

**B. Grading Scale**

92-100% =A  
83-91% =B  
74-82% =C  
65-73% =D  
below 64% =F

**Evaluation:** Final grade will be the average of weighted grades (as determined in class) assigned for assignments, quizzes, and examinations during the semester. Assignments must be turned in on time to receive credit unless special arrangements have been made in advance. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Absences (>3) for any reason are grounds for reduction of grade. Grade of “IN” (incomplete) will not be routinely assigned to students who fail to meet the assignment deadlines or otherwise fail to complete the course. These grades are reserved for special extenuating circumstances. Students unable to complete the course are responsible for either dropping it or contacting the instructor to determine whether an IN is warranted. Students will be expected to be self-directed learners, participate in class discussions, and complete assignments in a timely fashion.
IX. Course Schedule and Policies

A. A tentative course schedule:

Class Outline:

Many of the concepts and skills presented and practiced in class will naturally and practically overlap and be inclusive of ideas and practices that may be scheduled for presentation and consideration later in the semester. Therefore, the presented schedule offers an overview of all of the content to be presented and should be considered a general guide to the progression of the course, but does not necessarily limit in any way the topics or content to be considered during any particular week of the semester. Students should be prepared to read ahead, review and re-read and ask questions as necessary over the course of the semester. In addition, the text should be considered only one reference for course material and not the only source to which students should refer.

Week 1: Course Introduction (January 23)
Review of Philosophical Foundations – Ethics, Epistemology, Aesthetics, Rationalism, Idealism, Realism, Scholasticism, Axiology, Metaphysics, etc. and the purpose of education.

Week 2: Modes of Inquiry: Identifying and evaluating multiple ways of discovering and knowing – critically looking at theory and research

Week 3: Learning Assessments including instructional assessments, course and subject areas assessments and accountability assessment – issues of validity and reliability including test bias and value-added assessment.

Week 4: Psychological Bases for Instruction – Theories related to:
- Intelligence
- Motivation
- Child Development
- Learning

Week 5: Class Reports/Examination (February 20)

Week 6: Exam Feedback/Class Reports

Week 7: Creating the Environment for Learning
Objectives and Feedback (Ch. 1)
Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition (Ch. 2)
Cooperative Learning (Ch. 3)

Week 8: Helping Students Develop Understanding
Cues, Questions and Advance Organizers (Ch. 4)
Nonlinguistic Representations (Ch. 5)
Week 9: Helping Student Develop Understanding
Summarizing and Note Taking (Ch. 6)
Assigning Homework and Providing Practice (Ch. 7)

Week 10: Inclusion and the management of diversity in the classroom

Week 11: Class Report/Examination (April 10)

Week 12: Exam Feedback/Class Reports

Week 13: Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge
Identifying Similarities and Differences (Ch. 8)
Generating and Testing Hypotheses (Ch. 9)

Week 14: Putting Instructional Practices to Use
Instructional Planning Using the Nine Categories of Strategies (Ch. 10)

Week 15: Reflections, Perspectives and Approaches -- Review and Evaluation of presented approaches, presentation of instructional plans, other work

Final Examination - May 15, 2013

Semester Calendar:

January 21, Monday            Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
January 23, Wednesday         Classes begin
January 30, Thursday          Last day to register or add a class
March 11-15, Monday-Friday    Spring Break
April 12, Friday              Last day to drop a class
May 6, Monday                 Last day to withdraw from the University
May 7, Tuesday                Last day of classes
                               Last day to apply for August 2013 graduation
May 8, Wednesday              Reading Day
May 9-10, Thursday-Friday     Final examinations
May 13-15, Monday-Wednesday   Grading days
May 16-17, Thursday-Friday    Spring Commencement
May 18, Saturday              Faculty End Date
May 19, Sunday

B. Class Policies

**Communication:** E-mail is the preferred means of communication. Students will be expected to provide and monitor an email account for information about the class, handouts and other information. Students will also be encouraged to submit some assignments electronically.

**Instructor’s Philosophy:** Students are assumed to be in preparation for professional roles and as such will be held to the highest standards of scholarship. This assumption implies students never demonstrate anything less than their best efforts, those efforts motivated by a desire to learn rather than to obtain a "high" or "good" grade. In addition, that they fully recognize and accept personal responsibility for their own learning and, most importantly, that no matter how successful, they are never satisfied with their own performance.

Recognizing the inherent limitations of traditional college classroom approaches, student/scholars are expected to ask questions when they don't understand, ask the instructor to slow down, repeat, etc., as necessary, work collaboratively, and mutually encourage and support each other. There is little competition between student/scholars, who understand that, the only meaningful competition the constant pursuit of excellence.

Good teaching and learning is hard work. However, the student/scholar enjoys this work and looks forward to the resulting personal and professional gains that result because she/he realizes that these gains are for the benefit of others. Personal/professional development is constantly pursued because of its implication in the service of others. It is this, which makes the practice of any profession satisfying and rewarding.

Finally, it is obvious that this one course cannot or does not prepare a student/scholar for his/her profession. However, it is hoped that in addition to specific content skills and knowledge, certain habits of mind will develop which will serve the student/scholar throughout her/his career. These include:

1. Persistence in the face of obstacles

2. Flexibility and a willingness to consider alternative perspectives, approaches, strategies, opinions, etc. This habit of the mind includes respect and appreciation for diversity.

3. Reflection, self-scrutiny, a habit of examining thoughts and behavior for accuracy, relevance, effectiveness, currency, and congruence with personal beliefs and values.

4. Inquisitiveness, a sense of wonder and a desire to learn more, understand better.

5. Professionalism, a striving for and an expectation of excellence, the recognition that lifelong learning is a dynamic and necessary trait for a teacher/scholar.

6. Awareness and acceptance of the fact that it is impossible to ever "know it all".

7. Self-expectation of the highest quality of interaction and practice.
X. Textbook:


Recommended or Supplemental Reading:


XI. Bibliography

The knowledge bases that support course content and procedures include but are not limited to:


XII. Grade Appeals*:

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus,
equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Website at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs. (other info at: http://www.tamucc.edu/marcom/complaints/compendium.html)

XIII. Disabilities Accommodations*

Inclusion: Persons with disabilities will be fully included in this course. Please let me know as soon in the semester as is possible, if you need any special accommodations to the curriculum instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate. I will try to maintain the confidentiality of the information you share with me. However, I must contact Disabilities Services to alert their office so that they can share with me the services that I can use to assist you. You can obtain information concerning services at: http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/; by email at: disability.services@tamucc.edu or by phone at: 361-825-2536. There are links on the webpage to an online registration for services as well as an application for your convenience.

XIV. Student Standards of Conduct: Students are expected to adhere to TAMUCC’s principles of academic integrity. Graduate students in some disciplines must demonstrate fitness to practice. Please be aware that classroom behavior, discussion, professionalism, and coursework will be used to evaluate your fitness to practice. Be aware that your course paper may be scanned for text copied/plagiarized from online info, papers, and other resources. Further information concerning this matter may be found at: http://www.judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html

XV. Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

*Required by SACS