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Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

TLSC 300A: Professional Learning Communities

Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities

School of Education, Loyola University Chicago

Fall Semester 2016

Instructor Information

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Office hours: By appointment

TLSC 300A Information

Dates: 11/21/16 to 12/5/16

Days: Mondays

Times: 4:15 – 6:15pm

Campus Location: Dumbach Hall, Room 233, Lakeshore Campus (LSC)

PLC Overview:

Professional learning communities (PLCs) provide the opportunity to engage in collaboration with a community of learners discussing and making meaning of all learning and experiences in schools and communities. At the close of each semester, following the completion of the PLCs by specialty area and submission of the summative assessments for other sequences, teacher candidates will reflect upon their personal and professional learning during that semester. Teacher candidates will (a) share learning from various school-based experiences, (b) apply learning through completion of summative assessments, and (c) synthesize learning through reflection and discussion related to EUs and dispositions.

Session Description

Professional learning communities (PLCs) serve as the touchstone of teaching and learning in the Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities (TLLSC) teacher preparation program, bringing together teacher candidates within specialty areas to share and co-construct knowledge, skills, and dispositions applied to their classroom contexts. By working in small groups of colleagues and peers, learning is emergent, targeted, and

collaborative. Facilitated by faculty members with expertise in the specialty area, the PLCs serve as communities of practice where candidates come together to (a) share learning from various school- and community-based experiences, (b) synthesize learning through reflection and discussion, and (c) apply learning through completion of sequence summative assessments. In this way, candidates come together to make meaning of the learning in modules and sequences to apply learning within their chosen specialty areas in order to increase their content and pedagogical expertise.

Session Goals

Essential Questions:

- What are pertinent factors of teaching, learning, and leading with schools and communities?
- How does theory connect with your learning and experiences in this sequence?
- How do sequence learning and experiences connect with past learning and experiences?
- How will you use your learning to guide subsequent problem-solving in education?
- What are the connections between your learning and experiences across this sequence and professionalism in service of social justice?
- What goals do you have for future learning in the area of literacy to increase your content and pedagogical expertise?

As a part of this experience, candidates will understand that effective educators:

- Enact principles of social justice in the school and community by focusing on the intellectual, social and emotional development of all students, promoting human rights, reducing inequalities, and increasing the empowerment of society's most vulnerable groups (EU1).
- Engage and promote reflection and collaboration among teachers, students, administrators, families and communities to improve achievement for all students (EU2).
- Utilize information from theories and related research-based practices when making decisions and taking action in their professional practice (EU10).

As a part of this experience, candidates will:

- Use goals and procedures to guide PLC dialogue and to synthesize and make meaning of the learning and experiences across sequences.
- Engage in collaborative discussion and learning related to teaching, learning, and leading, as well as professionalism in service of social justice.
- Engage in dialog and make connections between sequence learning and experiences with pertinent theories and principles and specialty area teaching and learning.
- Complete the sequence summative assessments for their particular sequence related to the specialty area with individualized support from faculty facilitators.

IDEA Objectives:

As a part of this experience, candidates will:

- Learn to apply course material to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions.
 - Acquire skills in working with others as a member of a team.
 - Acquire an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers.
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Grading and Assessment

- **Grading:** This course will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

Attendance: PLCs, a 1-credit-hour experience across the academic year, meet only six total sessions – 3 sessions at the end of fall semester, and 3 at the end of spring semester.

Because of the limited time of the experience, candidates are expected to attend *every* session. Candidates who have had an absence without notification and who have not worked with the instructor to make up the work within the semester will receive an NP. In order to receive the PLC credit required for graduation, candidates must complete an approved independent inquiry at the discretion of the PLC instructor. Note: If the candidate does satisfactory work, then the instructor can offer a P in the spring or submit a change of grade for the previous spring and the candidate can be awarded full credit for the PLC.

Participation: In addition to the importance of attendance, active participation is central to PLCs. To receive a passing grade, candidates must come ready to actively participate in PLC dialog. This implies having read any assigned readings and completed any assigned tasks determined by the instructor or by the PLC as a whole.

Assessment: At the close of each semester, following the completion of the PLCs and submission of sequence summative assessments, candidates will reflect upon personal and professional learning during that semester, specifically on Conceptual Framework Standards 1 (synthesizing their learning about teaching, learning, and leading with schools and communities) and 6 (collaborating with peers and making decisions about practice to model professionalism in service of social justice).

Session Experiences

- PLCs, by nature, are flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of the participants. Whereas the introductory session of the academic year will be used to inform candidates about the pertinent PLC structure and relation to the overall TLLSC program, ongoing sessions are flexible based on candidates' needs.
- Within the larger PLC section, candidates will engage in *Teacher Candidate Inquiry Groups* (TCIGs). These smaller groups will be organized by program area (e.g., elementary, math, science) and interest and will span program years and developmental stages in teacher development (e.g., freshman, sophomore).

· Whereas each session will open and close with whole-group dialog and learning in the PLC, the TCIGs will serve as the primary locale for candidates to set goals for learning, ask questions about their practice, seek out resources to mediate discussion, and work through problems and solutions together. The instructor will participate and facilitate these TCIG discussions, but they are meant to be emergent from candidates' interests, questions, and ideas as they apply learning from the semester to areas of expertise.

Currently Assessed Dispositions:

- Demonstrating professionalism through personal responsibility and accountability related to attendance, participation and communication.
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- Demonstrating professionalism and reflective practice in collaborating with teachers, students, administrators, families, and communities to improve achievement for all students.
- Participating in ongoing professional development, reading, and research in order to deepen their knowledge and expand their repertoire of skills.
- Maintaining one's own intellectual, emotional and physical well-being to effectively fulfill one's professional responsibilities

School of Education Policies and Information

Conceptual Framework Standards

The School of Education at Loyola University Chicago, a Jesuit and Catholic urban university, supports the Jesuit ideal of knowledge in the service of humanity. We endeavor to advance professional education in the service of social justice, engaged with Chicago, the nation, and the world. To achieve this vision the School of Education participates in the discovery, development, demonstration, and dissemination of professional knowledge and practice within a context of ethics, service to others, and social justice. We fulfill this mission by preparing professionals to serve as teachers, administrators, psychologists, and researchers; by conducting research on issues of professional practice and social justice; and by partnering with schools and community agencies to enhance life-long learning in the Chicago area. Specifically, PLCs bring together teacher candidates to have them make meaning of their learning and experiences in schools, as well as apply that learning to future practice and behaviors in teaching practice.

IDEA Course Evaluation Link for Students

The following is a link to the IDEA Campus Labs website: <http://luc.edu/idea/> Please go to ***Student IDEA Log In*** to complete the course evaluation at the end of the course.

LiveText

All students, except those who are non-degree, must have access to LiveText to complete the benchmark assessments aligned to the Conceptual Framework Standards and all other accreditation, school-wide and/or program-wide related assessments. You can find additional information about [LiveText](#).

Syllabus Addendum Link

www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/

This link directs you to the following required statements: academic honesty, accessibility, School of Education conceptual framework, EthicsLine reporting hotline, and the electronic communication policies and guidelines. You are responsible for reading and understanding the content of these statements.

PLC Final Project

The Images of Teaching for Social Justice- *The final project*

“[T]eaching for social justice is teaching for the sake of arousing the kinds of vivid, reflective, experiential responses that might move students to come together in serious efforts to understand what social justice actually means and it might demand” (Greene, 1998, pp. xxix-xxx)[1].

Teaching for social justice is the theme of TLSC 300A in the fall of 2016. As Greene articulates, teaching for social justice is a reflective, ethical action taken in order to respond to urgent social issues. When teaching for social justice, teachers must advocate for the educational rights of all children, regardless of their positions in society. In the final project, teacher candidates are required to present a small group project that represents the image of teaching for social justice.

Protocols of the project

- As a group of 3-4, comprised of all years, discuss the meaning of social justice and its embodiment of teaching for social justice (On Week 2, time will be given to work as a small group).
- Take a couple of photos as a small group representing your group’s images/metaphors of teaching for social justice. Select one final image.
- Write 3-4 sentences explaining your group’s philosophy of teaching for social justice and the significance of the image.

- On Week 3, you will present your selected image in 5 minutes as a group. You will introduce the image and explicate the ways in which your image is related to our enduring inquiry in teaching for social justice.
- Upload your presentation material to Sakai.

[1] Greene, M. (1998). Introduction: Teaching for social justice. In W. Ayers, J. A. Hung, & T. Quinn (Eds.), *Teaching for social justice* (pp. xxvii-xlvi). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

	Reading	In-Class Activities	Preparation/Homework
Week 1	Text: <i>Worth Striking For</i> -by Isabel Nunez, Gregory Michie, and Pamela Konkol Foreword by Pedro Noguera Chapter 1: Introduction: Keep a Place for Policy Chapter 2: Chicago Teachers United	*Introductions; *Overview of syllabus and course expectations; *Introduction to photovoice/electronic collage project; *Small group discussion of reading and preparation of questions for guest speaker; *Exit slip related to issues of social justice, implications of the presidential election, and classroom teaching.	Read foreword and chapters 1 & 2 of <i>Worth striking for</i>
Week 2	Text: <i>City Kids City Schools</i> --Chapter 2: from <i>Holler If You Hear Me</i> -by Greg Michie --Chapter 20: "What Teachers Need to Know About Poverty"-by Sue Book --Chapter 17: from <i>The Shame of a Nation</i> -by Jonathon Kozol	Guest Speaker presentation: Professor Isabel Nuñez; Small group discussion related to exit slip comments/questions; Time to work in small groups on project	Read listed chapters Work on social justice media project

Week 3	Beyond the Knapsack Responding to Hate and Bias at School Let's Talk Guide	Panel presentation Small group scenario discussions; Social justice media presentations	Read listed chapters Finalize social justice media project
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