

# **SYLLABUS**

## **SEU 390/391 CLINICAL EXPERIENCE & PRACTICUM**

### **Spring 2012**

### **Mr. Schaeffer**

#### **I. CREDITS & HOURS**

Six semester hours; two clock hours for seminar [practicum]; required of all Secondary Education Mathematics majors.

#### **II. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Two full-time student teaching situations at different levels and in different settings provide a full semester teaching experience. Students teach under a mentor in the schools and meet weekly with their university supervisor in a student teaching seminar [practicum]. Content includes dealing with classroom issues, developing planning skills, organizing the classroom for instruction, seeking professional employment, developing classroom management skills and relating previously learned material to the day-to-day teaching experience. Student teachers prepare for making the transition from undergraduate student to professional teacher. The field experience provides an opportunity for students to synthesize their undergraduate learning experience. Students are encouraged to reflect upon the field experiences in ways that lead them towards viewing themselves as lifelong learners.

#### **III. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of the student teaching experience, the student will be able to:

- A. Plan, teach and evaluate daily lesson plans based on research on effective teaching.
- B. Plan and carry out plans for longer units for teaching secondary mathematics.
- C. Select intelligently and wisely a variety of appropriate methods in the classroom, including lecture, discovery methods, cooperative learning and individualized instruction.
- D. Select appropriate media, including concrete materials, calculators and computer software.
- E. Use correct mathematical terminology and correct pronunciation.
- F. Use the *Standards* of the NCTM to help make decisions about what is to be taught and how the material is to be taught.
- G. Explain topics in mathematics clearly and concisely.
- H. Lead their students through a logical development of mathematics so that performance in the subject is based on understanding and not just memorization of a sequence of steps.
- I. Diagnose their students' errors and prescribe remedial work.
- J. List agencies and professional organizations that determine goals for mathematics instruction.
- K. Find and use resource materials in professional books and magazines.
- L. Inspire their students to appreciate the place of mathematics in today's world and its beauty and usefulness as well as its limitations.

#### **IV. COURSE OUTLINE (General Topics covered)**

- A. Organizing for teaching.
- B. Implementation of plans in the classroom.
- C. Self-evaluation of that implementation.
- D. Importance of planning and of reflection on goals.
- E. Importance of prerequisites.
- F. Sequencing of instruction.
- G. The teaching of concepts, of generalizations by expository and discovery methods, of skills, of proofs and of problem solving.
- H. Introducing students to resources available.
- I. Diagnosis and remediation.
- J. Development of a philosophy of Mathematics Education.
- K. Development of a philosophy of Motivation and Management.
- L. Planning and preparing for a career in teaching secondary mathematics.
- M. Lifelong Learner Model

#### **V. COURSE PROCEDURES**

The seminar [practicum] is designed for students to share their experiences in the classrooms for their various assignments. From this sharing, students should receive a more realistic view of teaching than can be found in one, two or even three different settings. Most sessions will be informal discussions of experiences, problems, techniques, etc. or possibly discussions of readings from a text, a reference or periodicals. The cooperative learning format may be used for these discussions or for presentation of lesson segments. Attention will be given to sample activities that exemplify use of the NCTM *Standards*—both the *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards* and the *Professional Teaching Standards*.

In addition, visitors from the local school districts may be invited to speak on topics of current interest. Career Services may be asked to discuss such topics as interviewing techniques, writing résumés and cover letters, etc. Mock interviews may be held. Students are expected to prepare a portfolio to be used in the search for a teaching position.

#### **VI. GRADING**

Your grades—a separate one for each placement—will be determined by the following criteria:

- A. Student Teaching Field Experience (60%)
- B. Practicum (20%)
- C. Portfolio Preparation (20%)

## VII. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Although you will not be graded on the following requirements, your letter grade for student teaching will be lowered by one letter grade for each one not completed.

- A. A Journal of your experiences.
- B. An Interactive Bulletin Board.
- C. Attendance at a Professional Meeting.
- D. Demonstration of a Special Manipulative or Technique (during practicum).
- E. A Videotape of Your Teaching a Lesson (if permissible).

## VIII. REFERENCES

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- Campbell, D.M., Cignetti, P.B., Melenyzer, B.J., Nettles, D.H., & Wyman, R.M. (1997). *How to develop a professional portfolio*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Churma, M. (1999). *A guide to integrating technology standards into the curriculum*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill
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- George, P.S., McEwin, C.K., & Jenkins, J.M. (2000). *The exemplary high school*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.
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Posamentier, A.S., Jaye, D., & Krulik, S. (2007). *Exemplary practices for secondary math teachers*. Washington, DC: ASCD.

Posner, G.J. (2000). *Field experience: A guide to reflective teaching*. New York: Longman.

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Roe, E.P., & Ross, B.D. (2001). *Student teaching and field experiences handbook* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Stull, A.T., & Ryder, R.J. (1999). *Education on the internet: A student's guide*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Wales, C.E., A.H. Nardi and R.A. Stager. (1987) *Thinking skills: Making a choice*. Morgantown, WV: Center for Guided Design, West Virginia University.

Wiseman, D.L., Cooner, D.D., & Knight, S.L. (1999). *Becoming a teacher in a field-based setting: An introduction to education and classrooms*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

The *NCTM Yearbooks*, *Mathematics Teacher* and *Arithmetic Teacher* and the *Addenda Series* to the *Standards* may also be used as references.



# **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

## **SEU 390/391 CLINICAL EXPERIENCE & PRACTICUM**

### **Spring 2012**

#### **Mr. Schaeffer**

### **OVERVIEW**

For nearly four years you have been preparing for your student teaching experience. You may not believe it now as you begin the semester, but all those seemingly unrelated classes, those upper level mathematics classes and those theory of education courses have helped shape you into what you are today. You are a product of all your experiences. How you think, analyze and react depend in no small part on these past three and a half years.

We hope that through your classroom observations and your professional semester, you have formed a good idea of what makes an effective teacher. Since the 1950s, research has consistently shown that good teachers are made, not born, as had previously been believed. Student teaching is part of that “making” process. You will have many successes, but some failures as well. Mistakes are part of the learning and growing process. Your cooperating teacher and I are here to help you when you stumble. Please don’t hesitate to share your problems, concerns and fears with us. We may not have the answers readily available, but we probably know where to get them.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Possibly unlike some of your past semesters, your number one priority this semester must be school. Missing a day is not like cutting a class. Although you are still a student, you are also now a quasi-professional, unpaid to be sure, but a professional nonetheless. Your cooperating teacher, the school district, your students and I expect you to fulfill your professional obligations. You cannot afford to miss a single day of school.

The first thing almost all student teachers experience is that they are more tired than they’ve been at almost any time in the past three and a half years. Unless you are extremely unusual, you have not had to put in an eight hour plus day, five days a week, dressed up, on your best behavior, on guard, always prepared, ever vigilant. Your mental and physical energies will be “stressed to the max.” Undoubtedly, there will be days when you have the urge to stay in bed and not go to school. Fight that urge—it’s part of your developing sense of professional discipline.

For at least this semester, your life is not your own. You can’t come and go as you please. Everything else you do must take a back seat to student teaching. While teachers have “personal days” to attend to doctor and dentist appointments, family matters, financial dealings and other personal business, you have no such luxury. Any such things must be scheduled before or after school hours. If you have a part-time job, eliminate it or at least minimize it as much as possible. You simply won’t have the energy or time to split your devotion.

If you must miss a day of school for some extraordinary reason, you must notify your cooperating teacher, your school and me as soon as possible. You can call me at home anytime—and I do mean anytime—and leave a message if I’m not there. Obviously your cooperating teacher will be the most inconvenienced by your absence. He/she will not be fully prepared to teach your classes. If I planned to observe you that day, I too will be inconvenienced, and I don’t like to be inconvenienced.

### **DEMEANOR**

As a representative of Kutztown University, our teaching preparation program and our mathematics department, you are expected to deport yourself in a professional manner at all times. You should dress and wear your hair conservatively. You are not one of the kids—you don’t have to show them how “cool” you can look. It is better to overdo this conservative bit at first. You can always loosen up after you see how the other teachers dress.

While you should have opinions about politics, religion, education, etc.—after all, thinking for yourself is one of the things a college education is supposed to give you—you should keep them to yourself, at least until you get the lay of the land, so to speak. There is a big difference between having opinions and being opinionated.

All the above applies not only to those times when you're in the classroom, but throughout the entire day as well. You never know who's watching and listening. Principals and teachers who may one day take part in your interview process may form an impression of you based not on your classroom performance, but instead on your actions in the faculty room for example.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

I am required to observe you three times. I will do my best to observe you more than that. If sometime during the semester you have a particular class that you would like me to observe, please let me know, and I will try to accommodate your request.

When I visit, I will need a seat/desk in the back of the room. I would also like a copy of any texts and handouts that you will use during the period. Although I prefer anonymity, I will leave it to your discretion whether to acknowledge my presence to your students. I want to affect you and your class as little as possible.

After an observation, expect a conference at least equal in length to the class itself. As you might expect, I will be very “picky.” Please do not take anything I say or write too personally. Since our time together during this semester will be very short, I don't feel that I have time to pussyfoot around. Remember that I am here to help you learn and improve. If I come on too strong at times, it is merely a manifestation of my enthusiasm and desire for your well-being. Your success is a validation of my very existence and worth.

Although each green observation form with its rating numbers does count, remember that it reflects my observations for one specific individual class (which partially explains why I try for more than three such observations). What counts most is your overall performance and growth. I expect that you will continue to improve throughout the semester. The final white evaluation form (one for each semester) is the only one that goes into your permanent file.

## **PLANNING**

As a student teacher you are expected to continue the kind of planning that you began in methods class. While your cooperating teacher may merely list a topic and the homework exercises in the little blocks in the planning book that so many districts provide, you can and will not get away with this. As methods class should have shown you, you can never plan too much. As you gain experience, your lesson plans may get shorter and shorter. However, you will not get enough such experience in just one semester.

I will ask to see your lesson plan for each class that I observe. Be sure to have it with you for our post-observation conference. I also need a copy to attach to your observation form in my file on you.

## **PRACTICUM**

While I do have some specific topics I would like to cover, the practicum is your chance to set the agenda. It will be tailored to your needs and wants. It is a time for you to share your successes and failures. Your classmates may be able to benefit from your triumphs and offer solutions to your problems. You may find that the grass is indeed greener on the other side, but just as often it is browner. Use practicum to blow off steam—the catharsis will do you and your classmates good. Use practicum to brag—not only will it make you feel better, but it may inspire the rest. Ask questions, answers those of others, share. Practicum will be what you collectively make it.

As conditions warrant, I will prepare handouts and lectures based on your needs. I may bring in outside resource people to help. I will make assignments from the text. I may ask you to share your time with other student teachers or methods students. And finally, we will begin work on your portfolio.

## GRADES

You will receive two grades for student teaching: a separate grade for each six-credit assignment. Make no mistake: as the professor of record, I am responsible for assigning your grades. Naturally, I will consult with your cooperating teacher who has observed you on a day-to-day basis and has seen all of your highs and lows. However, I have a broader basis and probably more experience with student teachers than does your cooperating teacher. Then too your grade has two other components in addition to your actual student teaching: your attendance and participation in practicum and your assembling of a portfolio.

I understand and appreciate your desire to want to get an "A." As previously explained, it is your continuing improvement that is paramount to your success. If you still think of teaching as something you just get up there and do, we will not get along very well. However, if you regard teaching as a profession that requires extensive planning and preparation; thoughtful and careful execution; and contemplative and sincere reflection, then we'll get along just fine, thank you.

## FINAL WORD

Good luck as we embark together on the true beginning of your professional career!

