

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Secondary Education Program



EDCI 791  
Seminar In Secondary Teaching  
Spring Semester, 2014

Instructor: Dr. Erin Peters-Burton, PhD, NBCT  
Date and Time: January 21 – May 5 (Wednesdays 5-7pm)  
Class Location: Thompson 1010  
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Office Hours: By appointment

**Course Catalog Description:** Provides opportunities for interns to develop and apply the skills and knowledge they have accumulated during their preceding education courses and fieldwork experiences.

**Number of Credits:** 2 Semester Hours

**Course Prerequisites:** Admission to professional semester

**Co-requisites:** EDCI 790

**Course Description:**

The primary aim of this seminar is to address INTASC Standard #9: The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

## **GOALS:**

Students will demonstrate the following:

- an understanding of content knowledge and content pedagogy,
- knowledge of learners,
- an ability to plan and assess student learning,
- an ability to effectively and meaningfully incorporate student-centered technology into instruction,
- an ability to reflect and communicate effectively,
- effective involvement in professional and school communities, and
- an ability to measure student learning gains and modify instruction based on data.

## **Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

The course focuses on using technology in science teaching and learning and meeting the diverse needs of learners as called for by the Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools and National Science Education Standards and as outlined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the content SPAs, and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC).

## ***Course Overview***

Student teaching is a structured field experience stressing the planning, implementation and evaluation of instructional experiences. Interns spend five full days a week during the fall or spring semester in a middle and/or high school observing and teaching under the direction of a mentor teacher/mentor teacher and a university supervisor. Interns will take on the full responsibilities of the mentor teacher/mentor teacher for five weeks of this semester. The student teaching experience is viewed as a critical professional step as individuals mature into the role of independent classroom teacher. The experience is designed to be consequential, formidable, demanding, and satisfying.

The student teaching internship seminar is one way that interns are able to benefit from the expertise and experiences of others involved in the internship experience at the same time. The bi-weekly seminar is like the regular meeting of a response or lab group. Some weeks we may discuss learning theory and best practice, while during other weeks we will discuss the nuts and bolts of the internship experience and requirements, and still others we'll troubleshoot issues that come up during your student teaching. The internship seminar is designed to support and further the internship experience. Interns will accomplish the following general goals:

- develop a deeper understanding of teaching and become more proficient practitioners by reflecting on and discussing aspects of the internship experience with others,
- have a more rewarding experience through interaction with a community of interns in diverse disciplines, and
- participate in ongoing teaching and learning professional development activities which will complement the student teaching internship experience.

This seminar is an on-going interaction in which interns are both participants and developers, in which they are expected to share their own experiences as we discuss what it means to be involved in an on-going process of personal professional development around teaching and

learning. While there are scheduled discussion topics on the syllabus, this is a fluid document and as such will be subject to change based on interns' interests, needs, and the requirements of the seminar as we work through the semester. Interns are not only encouraged but expected to provide feedback that makes the seminar more useful for their own and each others' development as teachers and as professionals.

## **Objectives**

The student teaching internship provides opportunities for interns to develop and apply the skills and knowledge they have accumulated during their preceding education courses and fieldwork experiences. Each intern enrolled in the student teaching internship will focus on the following behavioral objectives:

1. create lessons, activities, and assessments which align with learning objectives
2. demonstrate evidence of student learning
3. demonstrate an ability to critically reflect upon teaching episodes and a willingness to propose and/or accept alternative approaches
4. elicit student background (e.g., interests, needs, culture) and make sensitive use of this information as part of instructional planning
5. implement a variety of instructional approaches including cooperative learning to accomplish instructional goals
6. investigate innovative curriculum resources and teaching strategies by judiciously implementing select materials within lessons
7. maintain a journal as a means for reflecting upon particular aspects of the student teaching experience, (e.g., teaching strategies, management techniques, individual students)
8. select, modify, and adapt commercially available information to make subject matter more meaningful and relevant to students
9. implement effective behavior management skills

## **Instructor Introduction**

We believe that the best teachers of any subject area know themselves as people who are literate in—and have a positive relationship to—this content. Your knowledge of and relationship to your content could be considered a “literacy.” We will ask you also to know yourselves as professionals with a variety of literacies, including those of photographers, visual sociologists, and community constituents. Teachers must be resilient individuals who are willing to take risks to let school literacies (e.g., knowledge of your course content) matter to themselves, their students, and the broader community. We will expect you to be your best, brightest, most thoughtful, and most creative selves. We intend that this course will be one you remember, and that you'll care passionately about the work we do here. We will have uncompromising professional standards for your behavior, participation, and openness. At the same time, we will do everything possible to ensure that you meet these standards. Our hope is that we'll experience much intellectual camaraderie, engaging discussion, and laughter as we proceed. We encourage you to take risks and celebrate the risks taken by your colleagues.

We bring the perspectives of veteran teachers and teacher educators, and we approach all educational experiences with the goal of helping students to learn to be active, creative, “real

world” members of a just society. It is important for us as educators to approach our teaching with a simultaneously critical and creative perspective: when we assess current teaching practices, we also begin to develop new ones. We offer an explicit critique of schooling: as classroom teachers, as active scholars, and as advocates for youth and public schools, playing a critical role is our right and responsibility. It is our hope that you will take on this same role. Perhaps most importantly to you, we have spent many years as classroom teachers, teacher educators, supervisors of pre-service teachers, and faculty members, so we are hopeful that we’ll be able to support you with your own efforts to grow as a pre-service teacher. We will ask for your support in our research as we study your process of learning to teach to document your own growth across this semester.

### **Textbook and Resource Materials Required:**

No Textbook required. Access to the Internet is required

### Online Resources

- Commonwealth of Virginia (2003). *Science Standards of Curriculum Framework Guides*. [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/science/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/science/index.shtml)
- Commonwealth of Virginia (2010). *Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools*. <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml>
- Access to professional standards documents as specified by content area.

Other articles/handouts will be distributed in class or posted on-line at the course website. (Your GMU email address is required for communication with the course instructor and for using Blackboard!)

### **Course Materials Online**

The Blackboard site can be found at

<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Use the same login as your GMU email.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Attendance in the course is mandatory. If you cannot come to a specific class session due to a schedule conflict, notify the instructor at least one week in advance for an excused absence. Attendance is tied into your participation grade. If you are not in class, you are not participating.

### **Late Work:**

Work is due on the announced due date. All late work will incur a penalty of 10 percent for each day late. The only exception to this is for those students with excused absences (see Attendance Policy above).

## **College Expectations and University honor Code**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:  
Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions.

### **Commitment to the profession**

- Promoting exemplary practice
- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Advancing the profession
- Engagement in partnerships

### **Commitment to honoring professional ethical standards**

- Fairness
- Honesty
- Integrity

### **Trustworthiness**

- Confidentiality
- Respect for colleagues and students

### **Commitment to key elements of professional practice**

- Belief that all individuals have the potential for growth and learning
- Persistence in helping individuals succeed
- High standards
- Safe and supportive learning environments
- Systematic planning
- Intrinsic motivation
- Reciprocal, active learning
- Continuous, integrated assessment
- Critical thinking
- Thoughtful, responsive listening

### **Active, supportive interactions**

- Technology-supported learning
- Research-based practice

### **Respect for diverse talents, abilities, and perspectives**

### **Authentic and relevant learning**

### **Commitment to being a member of a learning community**

- Professional dialogue

### **Self-improvement**

### **Collective improvement**

- Reflective practice
- Responsibility
- Flexibility
- Collaboration

### **Continuous, lifelong learning**

### **Commitment to democratic values and social justice**

- Understanding systemic issues that prevent full participation
- Awareness of practices that sustain unequal treatment or unequal voice

Advocate for practices that promote equity and access  
Respects the opinion and dignity of others  
Sensitive to community and cultural norms  
Appreciates and integrates multiple perspectives

## **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:**

All students must abide by the following:

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Please note that:

Plagiarism encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
2. "Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment." (from Mason Honor Code online at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>)

Paraphrasing involves taking someone else's ideas and putting them in your own words. When you paraphrase, you need to cite the source.

When material is copied word for word from a source, it is a direct quotation. You must use quotation marks (or block indent the text) and cite the source.

Electronic tools (e.g., SafeAssign) may be used to detect plagiarism if necessary.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are treated seriously and may result in disciplinary actions.

- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>. Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the

beginning of the semester. See <http://www2.gmu.edu/dpt/unilife/ods/> or call 703-993-2474 to access the ODS.

· The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].

· The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

### **Teaching and Observation Procedures**

It is expected that interns will gradually assume greater responsibility for the teaching in their classrooms throughout the first 10-11 weeks of the internship. The intern should take responsibility for all or nearly all of the courses for the 4-5 week period following the co-teaching experience during the first 10-11 weeks of the experience. After the first week of internship experience, the intern should complete the following tasks:

- 1) Provide a period-by-period schedule for your university supervisor: This schedule should indicate your teaching periods, subjects being taught, room numbers, the time each period begins and ends, your non-teaching periods, your mentor teacher's periods, and the time you and your mentor teacher confer about your daily progress.
- 2) Arrange your first triad: Speak with your mentor teacher and university supervisor to find a time for the three of you to meet.

During the first few days in your student teaching:

- 1) Get acquainted with the classroom, its personnel, and its policies;
- 2) Become accustomed to handling routine matters;
- 3) Assist your mentor teacher by helping with daily activities, working with small groups of students, making reports, reading announcements, helping students who have been absent, arranging bulletin boards, etc.;
- 4) Become familiar with a wide variety of instructional materials;
- 5) Begin to plan the first units of work you will teach;
- 6) Learn as much as you can about the students in the classes you will teach;
- 7) Set aside a definite time each day for conferring with your mentor teacher about progress and for suggestions for improvement;
- 8) Develop skill in management routines;
- 9) Identify and use effective techniques for maintaining a good climate for learning;
- 10) Become familiar with policies related to writing unit and daily lesson plans, as well as routines for submitting these materials to your mentor teacher, administrator, and/or other personnel.

At the end of each week, interns should review their hours log with their mentor teacher (using the form in the Internship Handbook). These logs must be kept in your classroom for your mentor teacher, and university supervisor to review. By the end of each week interns should also submit their reflection forms as designated by their university supervisor. You will be taking in lots of information, and this assignment is designed to help you process pertinent information for use in your classroom.

The university supervisor will have a minimum of seven meetings throughout the semester with each intern, including start-of-the-semester, mid-semester, and final triads (meetings of the intern, mentor teacher, and university supervisor) and conferences following each of four observations by both your mentor teacher and your university supervisor. This is a learning experience, so please accept your supervisors into your classroom as an extra pair of eyes, rather than an evaluator. Supervisors are there to provide feedback so that interns can improve their instruction. **Note: Lesson plans for instruction must be submitted to mentor teachers at least two days in advance of teaching; final lesson plans must be emailed to your university supervisor at least one day in advance of an observation.** In general, university supervisors will schedule a post-observation conference with an intern and her/his mentor. During the student teaching semester, your university supervisor may conduct one observation completely unannounced, in order to best gauge your teaching performance. As well, your supervisors and clinical faculty may choose to “trade” one observation (your mentor teacher/supervisor observing another intern), to give you the widest range of feedback.

### **Graduation and Licensure**

Contact the GMU Licensure Specialist, Travis Holder (tholder@gmu.edu), with any questions you have about licensure. You will likely apply for your license *immediately* after you have completed all required coursework.

Review the GMU Registrar guidelines for graduation. You must file an “Intent To Graduate” form several months prior to the end of your certificate or master’s program. See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/qif/index.html> for more information. Students may apply for January and May graduation at the beginning of our fall semester.

### **Course Requirements and Grading Scale**

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via email attachment (by midnight) to epeters1@gmu.edu. All projects must be typed, in 12-point font, with one inch margins, double-spaced, in Times New Roman font. Professional writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is expected in each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances. Please see me with questions and concerns about assignments, expectations, or seminar activities. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on assignments and the expectations for your internship, but please come to us within a reasonable timeframe.

### ***Weekly Attendance and Participation***

**Your attendance and participation at your school and seminar sessions is critical not only to your own success, but to that of your colleagues.** Attendance and participation are expected in both your classroom and in seminars, but emergencies do arise. Please notify your mentor teacher and your supervisor if you will be tardy or absent from your internship or seminar. Excessive late arrivals, lack of preparation, and any unsatisfactory absence—one that is not pre-arranged and/or approved by an instructor—will severely and negatively impact your grade. All projects are due at the start of class; projects late due to unsatisfactory absences will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor. Seminar attendance and completion of seminar assignments can affect whether or not you successfully complete your internship. Please turn off all mobile phones, pagers, and laptops when you enter class.

### ***Becoming a Reflective Practitioner***

It is your responsibility to come to class with insights, questions, comments, and concerns based on your internship experience. The quality of our conversations and your growth will be largely based on your commitment to engaging deeply with your student teaching experience. In order to reflect on your own learning and to be ready to discuss your insights, questions, etc., you will need to keep a daily journal of your experience. This will be a private place for you to keep track of best practices, big ideas, and burning issues. Please bring your journal to our seminars and conferences. In conjunction with your working portfolio, maintain a notebook in which you make substantive entries every day you are in the field. Entries may consist of a description of a particular experience that day, questions and concerns about the incident, and thoughts about how you will respond to this experience in the future. In addition, we will ask you to complete a reflection form (available at the end of this syllabus) each week. Please also post it on our Blackboard discussion site.

### ***Weekly Blackboard Discussion Board Participation***

Our Blackboard site can be found at <http://blackboard.gmu.edu>. You are expected to log on at least once a day to check for assignments, post, and/or participate in online discussions. Your online commitment includes the following tasks:

- Posting of your weekly reflection (using Appendix A) on the PDS Reflective Response Discussion Board
- Minimum of two weekly responses/posts to fellow students' posts on the Discussion Board

### ***Teaching Notebook/Portfolio***

Required Items:

- Teaching schedule including course title, level, room assignment and class times, lunch time and IP assignments, plus any other relevant information that will make it easier to find you
- Teaching philosophy from your methods class
- Resume
- Unit/Lesson Plans

- Observations and Evaluations—of your mentor teacher and other teachers, and of your teaching by your mentor teacher and university supervisor

Optional Items:

- Handouts, tests, quizzes or other items you create for student use
- Photographs (be careful about honoring student privacy rights)
- Copies of student work (remove names and other identifying characteristics)

### ***Lesson Plans***

For each lesson you teach during your internship, you are to prepare a lesson plan using the lesson plan format provided in your Internship Handbook. In addition, you must describe how you will engage the students in the lesson, the provisions you will make to ensure the pace is appropriate, the types of questioning strategies you will practice, and the approaches you will use to provide the students with clear and timely feedback on their work. On the date selected by you in the first few weeks of class, bring to seminar one complete lesson plan that you used in a lesson you've taught, as well as any teaching tools you used and a sample of student work produced in this lesson.

### ***Resume***

Draft a complete, updated resume that you would use in a teaching job search. Bring enough copies of this resume for everyone in our seminar (including your instructor) so that we can CASE (copy and steal everything) from each other.

### ***Student Feedback on Your Teaching***

Towards the end of your internship you will formally gather feedback from your students on your teaching. You must administer a questionnaire (see end of syllabus for sample form) to at least two classes of students, compile data you gather via these completed surveys, and submit a typed, maximum two-page summary of your findings—including a description of how you will adjust your teaching practices in the future to consider feedback from students.

### ***Evidence of Student Learning***

Each content area (science, mathematics, English, History/SS) has an assignment for Evidence of Student Learning, which is the capstone assignment for this course. In this assignment you will follow your content area's guidelines to demonstrate the impact that you had on student learning during your time implementing direct teaching. Generally, this means that you will either conduct a pre-and post-test on the content instruction during a unit of study or conduct case studies for multiple students over this period of time, and analyze and present your results in a paper. Please see your content area's guidelines for details (available in this class and from your university supervisor) and make your mentor teacher aware of this assignment.

**Course Assessment:**

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade</b>
<b>Lesson Plan Discussion</b>	Selected date	<b>25</b>
<b>Participation/Reflections/ Blackboard Postings</b>	Each week	<b>25</b>
<b>Mock Interview</b>	April 16	<b>10</b>
<b>Evidence of Student Learning/Student Feedback</b>	April 23	<b>40</b>

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Jan 22	Intro to Course/Blackboard/Licensure/Portfolio Reflective Practice
Jan 29	[readings from <i>Reflective Practice to Improve Practice</i> - Chapter 3] Reflective Practice – Higher order thinking
Feb 5	Classroom Management - classroom set up and policies
Feb 12	Creating meaningful assignments – depth of knowledge
Feb 19	Student Work sample - introduction of expectations
Feb 26	Formative Assessments – depth of knowledge
March 5	Time Management - Utilizing classroom time
March 19	Student Work Sample - pre-assessment
March 26	Students with Diverse Learning Needs
April 2 online	Working in a professional learning community (PLC)
April 9	Classroom Management - student interactions - difficult situations
April 16	Mock interviews
April 23	Evidence of Student Learning
April 30	Complete Surveys and Course Evaluation Summarizing your experience for incoming interns and plans for the future

**Grading Scale****A = 93-100%****A- = 90-92%****B+ = 88-89%****B = 82-86%****B- = 80-82 %****C = 70-79%****F = Below 70%**

Appendix A  
**Weekly Reflection Form**

**Week of :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Content Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. As you reflect on the week, were the students in the class you taught or observed cognitively engaged in the work? How do you know?
2. Did the students learn what they were expected to learn? How do you know? If you don't know at this point, when will you know, and what will be evidence of their learning?
3. How did the instructional strategies you chose or observed support student learning? How do you know?
4. What have you or your mentor teacher done to promote a culture for learning in your classroom?
5. Were lesson plans altered or were outcomes adjusted over the week as lessons were taught? If so, how and for what reason?
6. If you had the opportunity to teach the lesson (or teach it again) to the same group of students, what would you do differently?
7. Share any additional comments about you week here.

Appendix B  
Student Feedback Survey

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1 = Never; 5 = Always

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I am usually well-prepared for class.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | I understand what is expected of me in preparation and participation.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | The assignments make sense to me; I understand their purpose.                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | I feel encouraged to participate and respond to others.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | I get clear responses to what I say in class; I find out how to improve.          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | The writing assignments are clear to me; I know what the task is.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 | The instructor treats students with respect.                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | The instructor effectively directs and stimulates discussion.                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | The instructor effectively encourages students to ask questions and give answers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

What do you like best about this class?

What would you like to change about this class?

What do you think the teachers' greatest strengths are?