



**George Mason University**  
**College of Education & Human Development/Graduate School of Education**  
**Secondary Education Program**

**EDUC 522, “Foundations of Secondary Education” (Section N06) (3 credits)**

**Key Information**

Instructor: Kristien Zenkov, PhD, Associate Professor  
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**Class Meetings**

*Mondays/Wednesdays, 4:30-6:45 pm, May 18<sup>th</sup>-Jun 24<sup>th</sup> (face-to-face); Fridays, asynchronous, May 22<sup>nd</sup>-Jun 26<sup>th</sup>*  
Please note that for twelve sessions our class will meet face-to-face on the Fairfax campus (Engineering Building 1103) and for six sessions via asynchronous means (Blackboard and/or other technologies). Small group conferences will be held during the second week of class. Students may request a face-to-face, voice, or chat conference at any time; voice and chat conferences will be conducted via Skype, Google Hangout, or phone. I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe. I look forward to collaborating with each of you as you work toward your goals.

**Course Description**

“Foundations of Secondary Education” (EDUC 522) offers students an analysis of philosophical assumptions, curriculum issues, learning theories, and history associated with current teaching styles. This course further emphasizes applications to all disciplines taught in secondary schools and examines current educational trends and issues in relation to sociology of secondary school settings. *Note: This course requires you to complete 15 hours of field experience; with assistance from the Clinical Practice Office, we will identify a classroom where you can complete this experience.*

**Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

Through course assignments and formal and informal commentary, “Foundations of Secondary Education” emphasizes the basic premise and following standards developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC).

**INTASC Standards*****The Learner and Learning***

Teaching begins with the learner. To ensure that each student learns new knowledge and skills, teachers must understand that learning and developmental patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process, and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive. Effective teachers have high expectations for each and every learner and implement developmentally appropriate, challenging learning experiences within a variety of learning environments that help all learners meet high standards and reach their full potential. Teachers do this by combining a base of professional knowledge, including an understanding of how cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development occurs, with the recognition that learners are individuals who bring differing personal and family backgrounds, skills, abilities, perspectives, talents and interests. Teachers collaborate with learners, colleagues, school leaders, families, members of the learners' communities, and community organizations to better understand their students and maximize their learning. Teachers promote learners' acceptance of responsibility for their own learning and collaborate with them to ensure the effective design and implementation of both self-directed and collaborative learning.

- Standard #1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- Standard #2: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- Standard #3: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

***Content***

Teachers must have a deep and flexible understanding of their content areas and be able to draw upon content knowledge as they work with learners to access information, apply knowledge in real world settings, and address meaningful issues to assure learner mastery of the content. Today's teachers make content knowledge accessible to learners by using multiple means of communication, including digital media and information technology. They integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content to propose solutions, forge new understandings, solve problems, and imagine possibilities. Finally, teachers make content knowledge relevant to learners by connecting it to local, state, national, and global issues.

- Standard #4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- Standard #5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

***Instructional Practice***

Effective instructional practice requires that teachers understand and integrate assessment, planning, and instructional strategies in coordinated and engaging ways. Beginning with their end or goal, teachers first identify student learning objectives and content standards and align assessments to those objectives. Teachers understand how to design, implement and interpret results from a range of formative and summative assessments. This knowledge is integrated into instructional practice so that teachers have access to information that can be used to provide immediate feedback to reinforce student learning and to modify instruction. Planning focuses on using a variety of appropriate and targeted instructional strategies to address diverse ways of learning, to incorporate new technologies to maximize and individualize learning, and to allow learners to take charge of their own learning and do it in creative ways.

- Standard #6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

- Standard #7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- Standard #8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

### ***Professional Responsibility***

Creating and supporting safe, productive learning environments that result in learners achieving at the highest levels is a teacher’s primary responsibility. To do this well, teachers must engage in meaningful and intensive professional learning and self-renewal by regularly examining practice through ongoing study, self-reflection, and collaboration. A cycle of continuous self-improvement is enhanced by leadership, collegial support, and collaboration. Active engagement in professional learning and collaboration results in the discovery and implementation of better practice for the purpose of improved teaching and learning. Teachers also contribute to improving instructional practices that meet learners’ needs and accomplish their school’s mission and goals. Teachers benefit from and participate in collaboration with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members. Teachers demonstrate leadership by modeling ethical behavior, contributing to positive changes in practice, and advancing their profession.

- Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
- Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

### **Course Objectives and CEHD Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. This course supports these values by providing students with learning experiences that necessitate collaboration; providing students opportunities to reflect on their teaching and leadership roles in classroom and school contexts; calling on students to develop and participate in innovative research-based practice; and requiring students to reflect on their pedagogies in light of social justice issues. These Core Values are aligned with course outcomes as described below. See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/> for more information.

Upon completing this course, students will:

- acknowledge and evaluate the varied, competing, and changing purposes of American public education (Social Justice);
- have an introductory knowledge of the foundations of secondary education in the United States, including the history and sociology of schools, philosophical assumptions and learning theories underlying instructional practices, and curricular trends/issues (Research-Based Practice);
- recognize the diversity in American schools, especially as it regards race, ethnicity, gender, social class, language, and ability (Ethical Leadership, Collaboration)
- be aware of the systematic and differing educational opportunities and outcomes available to students, and the forces which alter existing practices in schools (Social Justice, Innovation);
- analyze teaching behaviors and categorize them according to their relationships to research-based practice and major educational philosophies (Social Justice, Collaboration);
- examine the relationships among philosophy, curriculum issues, learning theories, history, and teaching styles (Research-Based Practice)
- take positions on selected issues in education and analyze how those positions relate to teaching style preferences (Collaboration);
- state their own philosophical positions in regard to the following questions:
  - What is the nature of one subject matter area you wish to teach?

- What are the possibilities of that subject matter area for guiding students toward meaningful learning experiences?
- What kinds of teaching behaviors will you exhibit to exemplify your philosophical position?
- What approaches to classroom management do you prefer?

### **Instructor Introduction and Theoretical Framework**

I believe that the best teachers know themselves as literate people in the broadest sense. I will ask you also to know yourselves as professionals with a variety of literacies, including those of photographers, visual sociologists, and community constituents. Teachers and those who work with children and youth must be resilient individuals who are willing to take risks to let school literacies matter to themselves, their students, and the broader community. I will expect you to be your best, brightest, most thoughtful, and most creative selves. I intend that this course will be one you remember, and that you will care passionately about the work we do here. I will have uncompromising professional standards for your behavior, participation, and openness. At the same time, I will do everything possible to ensure that you meet these standards. My hope is that we will experience much intellectual camaraderie, engaging discussions, and laughter as we proceed. I encourage you to take risks and celebrate the risks taken by your colleagues.

I bring the perspectives of a veteran teacher and teacher educator, as well as the points of view of a community activist and artist. I 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—even those of us who are only "testing" out this role—to approach our teaching with a simultaneously critical and creative perspective: when we assess current teaching practices, we also begin to develop new ones. I offer an explicit critique of schooling: as a classroom teacher with more than fifteen years experience, an active scholar, and an advocate for children and youth and schools, playing a critical role is my right and responsibility. It is my hope that you will take on this same role. Perhaps most importantly to you, I have spent my school and university teaching career working across school and university settings with a wide range of children and youth, so I am confident that I will be able to support you in this class. Finally, much as you as university students must be concerned with your own development and others' assessments of your class efforts, I am committed to my growth as a teacher and teacher educator. I will ask for your support in my research as I study your learning and the purposes of school that you recognize.

Finally, I will ask you to think of the teaching strategies we use in class and that you plan for in your own classroom in three categories, which are framed by an assessment-driven, "backwards" design:

- 1) "Ways Out": What is the student's "way out" of the text or activity with which you are asking them to engage? That is, what artifacts and demonstrations will the student complete to exhibit her/his comprehension of the key ideas that they are encountering? How will you assess students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes? How will students demonstrate their retention of and relationship to the material?
- 2) "Ways In": What is the student's "way in" to this text or activity? That is, how are you approaching the student's natural interests in or motivations for this assignment? Think about how you might use the student's existing "literacies" to do this. What specific strategies will you use?
- 3) "Ways Through": What are students' "ways through" this text or activity? That is, what strategies and tools are you giving students to make sense of and understand the sources you are using with this assignment? How will students translate the material into their own terms?

### **GMU/CEHD Policies and Resources for Students**

George Mason University and the College of Education and Human Development expect that all students abide by the following:

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- 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.
- 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/>].
- 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 stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- 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/>].
- Professional Dispositions
  - Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. [http://cehd.gmu.edu/assets/docs/forms/secondary\\_ed/sec\\_ed\\_handbook.pdf](http://cehd.gmu.edu/assets/docs/forms/secondary_ed/sec_ed_handbook.pdf)
- Core Values Commitment
  - The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website: <http://gse.gmu.edu/>.

### **Emergency Procedures**

You are encouraged to sign up for emergency alerts by visiting the website <https://alert.gmu.edu>. There are emergency posters in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises. Further information about emergency procedures exists on <http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert>

### **Important Information for Licensure Completion**

#### ***Student Clinical Practice: Internship Requirements***

##### *Testing*

Beginning with Spring 2015 internships, **all** official and passing test scores must be submitted and in the Mason system (i.e. Banner/PatriotWeb) by the internship application deadline. Allow a minimum of six weeks for official test scores to arrive at Mason. Testing too close to the application deadline means scores will not arrive in time and the internship application will not be accepted.

##### *Required tests*

1. Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators Tests (or qualifying substitute)
2. VCLA
3. Praxis II (Content Knowledge exam in your specific endorsement area)

For details, please check <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/test/>

##### *Endorsements*

Please note that ALL endorsement coursework must be completed, with all transcripts submitted and approved by the CEHD Endorsement Office, prior to the internship application deadline. Since the internship application must be submitted in the semester prior to the actual internship, please make an appointment to meet with the Endorsement Specialist and plan the completion of your Endorsements accordingly.

##### *CPR/AED/First Aid*

Beginning with spring 2015 internships, verification that the Emergency First Aid, CPR, and Use of AED Certification or Training requirement must be submitted and in the Mason system (i.e., Banner/PatriotWeb) by the application deadline. Students must submit one of the "acceptable evidence" documents listed at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/emergency-first-aid> to CEHD Student and Academic Affairs. In order to have the

requirement reflected as met in the Mason system, documents can be scanned/e-mailed to [CEHDacad@gmu.edu](mailto:CEHDacad@gmu.edu) or dropped-off in Thompson Hall, Suite 2300.

#### *Background Checks/Fingerprints*

All local school systems require students to complete a criminal background check through their human resources office (not through George Mason University) **prior to beginning the internship**. Detailed instructions on the process will be sent to the student from either the school system or Mason. Students are **strongly advised** to disclose any/all legal incidents that may appear on their records. The consequence of failing to do so, whether or not such incidents resulted in conviction, is termination of the internship.

#### *Please Note*

Your G-Number must be clearly noted (visible and legible) on the face of the document(s) that you submit.

#### *Application*

The internship application can be downloaded at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/internships-field-experience>

#### *Deadlines*

##### Spring internship application

- Traditional: September 15
- On-the Job: November 1

##### Fall internship application

- Traditional: February 15
- On-the Job: May 1

### **Required Texts**

Cushman, K. and the Students of What Kids Can Do. (2013). *The motivation equation: Designing lessons that set kids minds on fire*. The Next Generation Press.

Gorski, P. & Zenkov, K. (Eds). (2014). *The big lies of school reform: Finding better solutions for the future of public education*. New York: Routledge.

Frosch, M. (2008). *Coming of age in America: A multicultural anthology*. The New Press

Kozol, J. (2006). *The shame of the nation: The restoration of apartheid schooling in America*. Crown Publishing Group.

Articles TBD: Additional readings will be available on-line (via Blackboard and other technology means) and/or in class, providing by me and students in our class.

You will also need access to a digital camera and a computer (with web, email, and printing privileges). Finally, I would make the following recommendations:

- Join your subject area's professional association *now* (e.g., social studies teachers would join the National Council for the Social Studies): the resources to which you have access are generally incredible and the cost now is very reasonable
- Purchase a subscription to *Rethinking Schools* magazine: this may be one of the best resources you will find that offers a broad and progressive perspective on schools and teaching (plus many teaching ideas)
- Buy the two-volume set of *Rethinking Our Classrooms*: these books offer literally dozens of great teaching ideas, shared in very accessible vignettes from veteran teachers

### **Class Routines and Course Delivery**

In general, we will engage in three activities during our time together:

- Mini-lectures, activities, and discussions led by the instructors, co-instructors, area teachers, and students and supported by our readings from our course texts and selected other materials
- Discussions and modeling of teaching strategies
- On-line and face-to-face small and whole group meetings in which we engage around each others' efforts to share what we are learning about schools and teaching

The course will be delivered via a face-to-face and online instructional approaches. On-line sessions will be conducted through an asynchronous format, and you will be expected to post your reflections and assignments and respond to peers' and instructors' postings and feedback by midnight on the given online class session day. Online classes are considered regular instructional time and the assignments given are the equivalent of a full in-class session. GMU's BlackBoard course framework and other online discussion board systems will be used regularly throughout the course. Your GMU email address is required for communication with the course instructor. Please inform me of any accessibility problems the first day of class.



**Course Website**

I anticipate that our Blackboard course website will include information and resources important to your successful completion of the course. These may include the Discussion Board, the course syllabus, an announcement page, a class discussion page, any presentations provided in class, assignment descriptions and rubrics, and a bibliography of course readings and web resources.

**Course Requirements*****General***

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via both paper copy (in class) and email attachment (by midnight, whether or not you are in class that evening). All projects must be typed, in 12-point font, with one inch margins, double-spaced, in Times New Roman font. Please title each assignment with your last name, the name of the assignment, and the date you are submitting it (e.g., the philosophy paper for Adam Smith: (Smith Philosophy Paper 9-1-14). Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. The submission deadline for Discussion Board or other online discussion assignments is midnight of the night of the day of the listed due date. Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, excepting extraordinary circumstances. *Note: I reserve the right to add, alter, or omit any assignment as necessary during the course of the semester.*

***Class and Discussion Board Attendance and Participation (30 points)***

By virtue of agreeing to work together in this course we instantly formed a new community. This community will be rooted in mutual respect and shared responsibility; these foundations translate into consistent and punctual attendance and active participation in all class activities. You are expected to be in class (or at your fieldwork site) every day on time and remain for the duration of the class. My goal is to develop a comfortable classroom community where risk-taking is encouraged; we can only grow through such open-heartedness. Your attendance, thoughtfulness, clarity, and active sharing of responsibility for our classroom community will affect your grade. You are expected to read and keep notes on material each day for class, complete assignments for each class day, and contribute as both a listener and speaker in all discussions. It is your responsibility to come to class with insights, questions, comments, concerns, artifacts, and images from the readings and your field experiences. Absences and tardies—in our campus class sessions, online activities, and your fieldwork experiences—will impact your grade. Two tardies are equal to one absence, and missing 30% or more of class or fieldwork sessions will result in automatic failure of the course. Each student is allowed one absence, no explanation required. For each session you are absent beyond this one session, one point will be deducted from your class participation points. If you must be late to or miss a class or a scheduled fieldwork session, please contact me and/or your mentor teacher prior to class time; it is best to do so via my mobile phone (216.470.2384). Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions despite attendance. Please turn off all mobile phones, computers, and pagers when you enter class or your fieldwork setting.

During our online class sessions participants are expected to log into our Blackboard Discussion Board at least three times. Each member of our class will be responsible for contributing at least one posting to each discussion and responding to at least three peers. Discussion postings should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an "I agree/disagree with your comment" or "I think the same" to someone else's thoughts is not considered adequate. Please orient your responses around youth you know from outside of school, a young person you are coming to know through your fieldwork experience, and/or around a character from *Coming of Age*.

***Purposes of School Photovoice Project (10 points)***

One of the grandest assumptions we will make is that our students can be the richest source for learning how to teach. This assignment will ask you to think about, explore, and document your own and one student's relationships to and experiences with school. You will have to identify and connect with a young person of approximately the same age and demographics as the students you are teaching or you hope to teach. You will answer with photographs and writings five questions:

- What do you and this student believe are the purposes of school? And how and where did you and this student learn about these purposes?

- What supports your own and this student’s ability to attend and be successful in school?
- What impedes your own and this student’s ability to attend and be successful in school?
- What does the word “justice” mean to you—personally and as a future teacher? What does the word “justice” mean to this student—in school and out of school?

Be sure to draw some conclusions about how this student’s experiences with school and notions of justice have given you insight into your own development as a teacher and your approach to teaching. The final project will take the form of an illustrated PowerPoint (or other presentation), Prezi, or other multimedia form that includes ten photographs—two each for the four questions above, one from you and one from your student, plus two related to the conclusions you draw—and a paragraph related to each of these images. Take risks, be creative, and embrace the freedom that this project provides.

***Philosophy-in-Action Concept Map Draft and Updates (20 points)***

For the second day of our class you will consider the questions listed as part of the “Philosophy of Teaching Paper” assignment below and craft a concept map on a piece of chart tablet paper. Your objective is to create a graphic representation to help explain what you believe are the factors contributing to our overall state of education, how they relate to one another, and what you ultimately understand to be at the core of our public schooling/education system challenges. Take some time to consider how your personal experiences have shaped your views. Be prepared to present your pictorial representation to our class during our session and explain the intersections and tensions between the factors you have selected and how you see your personal experience at play in this concept map. Each following week in class you will then complete an update to this map that details how your answers to any of these questions have changed and how your concept map is evolving, based on our daily readings and our class activities. You should also orient your reflections around youth you know from outside of school, a young person you are coming to know through your fieldwork experience, and/or around what you learn about youth from the stories we read from *Coming of Age*. Our hope is that this concept map and its updates will help you to craft your best “Philosophy of Teaching” paper at the end of our course.

***A Philosophy of Teaching Paper (20 points)***

In 5-7 double-spaced pages, describe and illustrate your personal beliefs about teaching based on the issues addressed in class. In your paper, address a minimum of five of the guiding questions listed below. In addition to these questions, you can add your own inquiries—just be sure to identify the specific questions you address. In addition, seek relevant outside sources for additional information and guidance. And, finally, examine the standards of an effective teacher from InTASC as well as standards of learning for your content area (both state and national—please note that national association Websites are listed below) to help guide you in the development of your teaching philosophy. You will be assessed on the aforementioned criteria in addition to general writing quality.

Guiding questions:

- Who are we and our students? What are our capacities and “literacies”?
- How will we help students to be literate, read, and write for school and beyond?
- How will we build a classroom community that honors our students’ cultures and lives?
- How will we manage our teaching and students’ learning?
- How do we organize our schools and classrooms to best serve our students and our profession?
- What are our students’ relationships to school?
- What are the purposes of school?
- How do we build relationships with students?
- What is the nature of the learner in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- What is the nature of one subject matter area you wish to teach?
- What are the possibilities of that subject matter area for guiding students toward meaningful learning experiences?
- What are the assumptions our teaching practices and education policies make about our students and their communities?
- How do we identify teaching objectives and plan lessons?
- What kinds of teaching behaviors will you exhibit to exemplify your philosophical position?



- What approaches to classroom management do you prefer?
- What are the assumptions our teaching practices and education policies make about school organization?
- What learning theories do you most strongly identify with and why?
- What are the most important skills our students need to be empowered citizens, and productive members of society?
- What are your objectives as a teacher?
- How do we teach and organize our classes to best honor all of our students?
- What is the role of the teacher with respect to motivation, instruction, assessment?
- What should teachers do to accommodate diverse learners?
- What teaching methods will you use to work toward your objectives?
- How you intend to measure your effectiveness at reaching your objectives?
- What is the best evidence of our students’ learning?
- What is the best evidence of your success as teacher?
- How will you best be sustained to remain in the teaching profession?
- How will you engage with your “publics” to best serve your students, yourself, and your schools’ constituents?
- How will you continue to grow as a teacher during the first five years of your career? In the years following?
- Who are you now as a teacher? What roles will you and your students play in considering, contributing to, and challenging education policies?

#### National Content Organizations Websites

- Mathematics: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics ([www.nctm.org](http://www.nctm.org))
- Science: National Science Teachers Association ([www.nsta.org](http://www.nsta.org))
- English: National Council of Teachers of English ([www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org))
- Social Studies/History: National Council for the Social Studies ([www.socialstudies.org](http://www.socialstudies.org))

You have the option of choosing/creating an alternative form through which you will share your Philosophy of Teaching. You are not required to write a traditional research paper for this project. You might choose to write the “Story of the Future Perfect School,” through which you write and illustrate a story of the perfect future school—the one in which you would like to teach, organized in the way you believe schools should be organized, with curricula you think schools should address, etc. Please let your brains hurt as you consider what you might create for this project.

#### ***Fieldwork Research Assistant Project (RAP) or “Critical Incident Reflections” (CIRs) (10 points)***

Each student must complete a minimum of 15 hours of field experience for our class. You will pair with a peer in class and you and your partner must co-observe at least half of the required hours. The remaining hours can be scheduled independently of your partner. The purpose of the field experience is to provide you with the opportunity to (1) connect the goals of the course to classroom/school practice, (2) gain exposure to a variety of classroom/school communities, and (3) promote critical self-reflection about the practice of teaching and the culture of schools. You might complete any of the activities listed in Appendix C during your fieldwork hours. Your mentor teacher will complete a log indicating dates, times, subject area, grade levels (see Appendix A). You will complete one of the two following assignments while you are conducting your fieldwork hours:

##### Community Mapping Project

For this project you can choose to spend as much as half of your required 15 fieldwork hours in community contexts around your fieldwork school. All communities have assets and resources that the students bring into the schools, are part of the schools, and can assist the school’s stakeholders (teachers, students, parents). You will collect information from the communities around your fieldwork school. The intent is for you to find community resources that would aid you in your teaching as well as assist your students and your students’ families in the future.

- Identify the community networks and resources available to students and their teachers.

- Identify community assets that students from this school community may bring with them to school and to your classroom.
- Gain a respect for and a knowledge of the people and resources in the community surrounding your school.
- While you are at your fieldwork school, ask questions whenever possible. Find out where students live, work, play, do business, pray and otherwise engage in the community. In effect, which places are essential to their functioning and well-being, their surviving and thriving in their community?
- Make a list of places students, teachers, and other members of the community tell you are important places where students gather and interact.
- Review a map of the community from the Internet. Take some time to drive around the community to get a sense of where places are. What might be interesting places to explore and document? Where might you find students gathering outside of school? And where might community assets be found?
- Thinking about each site you intend to visit, write a list of questions you might ask people at these sites. Write questions that will help you identify assets.
- Tour the community and stop at designated sites and others you determine along the way. Talk to the people you meet about the community and the school. Be sure to capture images that you can use to illustrate what you find.

#### Research Assistant Project

This is a novel fieldwork assignment, but we think this might be one of the richest you could complete and would involve you giving back to your mentor teacher in a very authentic way. For this assignment you would not only complete fieldwork hours with your mentor, but you would ask her/him about a lesson with which s/he could use some assistance—one that needs some updating, one that s/he has long wanted to teach but has not been able to prepare for, one with which s/he really struggles. You would then conduct some research on the best methods to teach this lesson, co-plan the lesson with your partner and mentor, gather all of the materials needed to teach the lesson, and ideally co-teach the lesson.

#### Critical Incidents Reflections

For this assignment you will be required to keep detailed field notes of your observations. On each of the minimum four days you are in your fieldwork site (with or without your partner), you will use the “Critical Incidents Reflections” (or CIR—see Appendix B) to record field notes of what you have observed, detail practices you appreciate, highlight questions you have considered, and identify ways that this experience has altered your “Philosophy-in-Action Reflection” concept map. As a part of each CIR you must include a related artifact that will help us to see what you have experienced.

#### ***“Let’s Live Our Teaching Risks, Yeah!” (LLOTRY) Groups (10 points)***

Early in our course I will form small groups of students who will choose an additional reading and facilitate a discussion for one of our class sessions. The groups will consider the daily guiding questions and identify a contemporary and/or controversial reading. Groups will also identify one activity/discussion strategy that they think represents an important teaching risk—something they anticipate they might do in their own, future classrooms—and engage our class in this activity/discussion strategy to help us make sense of the day’s topics. Write a brief description of this strategy and make copies for everyone in our class and be sure to suggest modifications and extensions of this strategy for use with a variety of secondary subjects and grade levels, student populations, and particular student needs/abilities. Each group must begin by choosing an awesome, cheesy name.

#### ***Performance Based Assessment on Taskstream***

Every student registered for any Secondary Education course with a required performance-based assessment (PBA) is required to submit this assessment to Taskstream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). In this course, the Philosophy of Teaching paper\* (see description above) is your PBA. Evaluation of your performance-based assessment will also be provided using Taskstream. Failure to submit the assessment to Taskstream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required Taskstream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester. For those new to Taskstream, information and tutorials can be found at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/api/taskstream>.

### **Assessment and Mastery Grading**

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system, the general rubric described below, and a specific rubric provided with each assignment. A student must demonstrate "mastery" of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a "B" level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he be assessed with an "A" level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to "go above and beyond" in order to earn "A" level scores.

- 1) "A" level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant component. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers' efforts.
- 2) "B" level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- 3) "C" level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student did not follow all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- 4) "F" level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible.

### **Grading Scale**

A = 95-100%

A- = 90-94%

B+ = 87-89%

B = 83-86%

B- = 80-82%

C = 70-79%

F = Below 70%

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are passing a course but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10th week. Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member.

### **Assignments/Possible Points**

Class and Discussion Board Attendance and Participation = 30 points

Purposes of School Photovoice Project = 10 points

Philosophy of Teaching Paper = 20 points

Philosophy-in-Action Concept Draft and Updates = 20 points

Fieldwork Research Assistant Project/Critical Incidents Reflections = 10 points

"Let's Live Our Teaching Risks, Yeah" (LLOTRY) Group = 10 points

Total = 100 points

### **Recommended Resources and Selected Bibliography**

#### **Articles/Books**

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### **General Websites**

- 1) George Mason University Library: <http://library.gmu.edu/>
- 2) What Kids Can Do: [www.whatkidscando.org](http://www.whatkidscando.org)
- 3) Through Students’ Eyes: [www.throughstudentseyes.org](http://www.throughstudentseyes.org)
- 4) International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA): [www.visualsociology.org](http://www.visualsociology.org)

### **National Reports and Test Reporting Centers**

- A Nation at Risk: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html>
- The Nation's Report Card/National Assessment of Educational Progress: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>
- National Center for Educational Statistics: <http://nces.ed.gov/help/sitemap.asp>
- TIMSS and PIRLS (The International Math and Science Study and International Literacy Study): <http://www.timss.org/>
- Best Evidence/School Reform Reports/School Models (Johns Hopkins University): <http://www.bestevidence.org/index.htm>

### **Virginia State Standards**

- Virginia Department of Education: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/>
- State of Virginia, SOL Resources: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/sol.html>
- State of Virginia Standards of Learning Test Information: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/src/SOLassessments.shtml>



Details	Topics and Guiding Questions	Assignment(s)	Reading(s)	Activities
#1 Mon May 18 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Lies, truths, and education</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Classroom community and notions of "literacy"</li> <li>Guiding question(s): Who are we and our students? What are our capacities and "literacies"? How will we help students to be literate, read, and write for school and beyond?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "Indian Education"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Introduction</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, "Preface"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Introductions</li> <li>Course overview, syllabus, and fieldwork</li> <li>Classroom community and literacy activities</li> </ul>
#2 Weds May 20 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Poverty and class</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Classroom community and classroom management</li> <li>Guiding question(s): Who are our students? How will we build a classroom community that honors our students' cultures and lives? How will we manage our teaching and students' learning? How do we organize our schools and classrooms to best serve our students and our profession?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philosophy-in-Action Concept Map draft</li> <li>Purposes of School Photovoice Project draft</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "The Boy without a Flag"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 1</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, "Introducing the Motivation Equation"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Discussion of "Purposes" project</li> <li>Classroom community and management activities</li> </ul>
#3 Fri May 22 <sup>nd</sup> Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board: Considering this week's reading in <i>Shame</i> and your fieldwork experiences, respond to at least one of this week's guiding questions above. Be sure to relate your response to at least one teaching practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board posting and responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Shame</i>, TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board</li> </ul>
#4 Mon May 25 <sup>th</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memorial Day: No Class!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None!</li> </ul>
#5 Weds May 27 <sup>th</sup> Campus Conferences: 4:00-5:30 pm; Class: 5:45-6:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Purposes of school</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Building teacher/student relationships</li> <li>Guiding question(s): What are our students' relationships to school? What are the purposes of school? How do we build relationships with students?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philosophy-in-Action Concept Map update</li> <li>Purposes of School Photovoice Project final</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "Knuckles"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 2</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, Ch. 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Small group conferences</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Building student/teacher relationship activities</li> <li>Discussion of "Purposes" project</li> </ul>
#6 Fri May 29 <sup>th</sup> Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board: Considering this week's reading in <i>Shame</i> and your fieldwork experiences, respond to at least one of this week's guiding questions above. Be sure to relate your response to at least one teaching practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board posting and responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Shame</i>, TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board</li> </ul>

Details	Topics and Guiding Questions	Assignment(s)	Reading(s)	Activities
#7 Mon Jun 2 <sup>nd</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Curriculum, standards, and instructional models</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Identifying objectives, planning lessons, and engaging instruction</li> <li>Guiding question(s): What are the assumptions our teaching practices and education policies make about our students and their communities? How do we identify teaching objectives and plan lessons?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LLOTRY Group #1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, “How I Learned to Fly”</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 3-4</li> <li>Article TBD by LLOTRY Group #1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Objectives and planning activities</li> <li>LLOTRY Group #1 discussion</li> </ul>
#8 Weds, Jun 4 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Tracking</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Differentiating instruction</li> <li>Guiding question(s): What are the assumptions our teaching practices and education policies make about school organization?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philosophy-in-Action Concept Map update</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, “The Eve of the Spirit Festival”</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 9</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, Ch. 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Differentiating instruction activities</li> </ul>
#9 Fri, Jun 6 <sup>th</sup> Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board: Considering this week’s reading in <i>Shame</i> and your fieldwork experiences, respond to at least one of this week’s guiding questions above. Be sure to relate your response to at least one teaching practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board posting and responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Shame</i>, TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board</li> </ul>
#10 Mon, Jun 8 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: The “public” and private</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Discussion methods</li> <li>Guiding question(s): What are the most important skills our students need to be empowered citizens, and productive members of society?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LLOTRY Group #2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, “How to Date a Browngirl...”</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 11</li> <li>Article TBD by LLOTRY Group #2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Discussion methods activities</li> <li>LLOTRY Group #2 discussion</li> </ul>
#11 Weds, Jun 10 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Diversity in our classrooms</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Grouping mechanisms</li> <li>Guiding question(s): How do we teach and organize our classes to best honor all of our students?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philosophy-in-Action Concept Map update</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, “From <i>Burnt Bread and Chutney</i>”</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 5</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, Ch. 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> </ul>
#12 Fri, Jun 12 <sup>th</sup> Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board: Considering this week’s reading in <i>Shame</i> and your fieldwork experiences, respond to at least one of this week’s guiding questions above. Be sure to relate your response to at least one teaching practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board posting and responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Shame</i>, TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board</li> </ul>

Details	Topics and Guiding Questions	Assignment(s) Due	Reading(s)	Activities
#13 Mon Jun 15 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Assessment</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Formative and summative assessments</li> <li>Guiding question(s): What is the best evidence of our students' learning?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LLOTRY Group #3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "Surrounded by Sleep"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 6</li> <li>Article TBD by LLOTRY Group #3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Formative and summative assessment activities</li> <li>LLOTRY Group #3 discussion</li> </ul>
#14 Weds Jun 17 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Teacher education, teacher development, and the teaching profession</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Teacher assessments and action research</li> <li>Guiding question(s): What is the best evidence of your success as teacher? How will you best be sustained to remain in the teaching profession?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philosophy-in-Action Concept Map update</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "Obituary"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 7-8</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, Ch. 5-6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Teacher assessments and action research activities</li> </ul>
#15 Fri Jun 19 <sup>th</sup> Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board: Considering this week's reading in <i>Shame</i> and your fieldwork experiences, respond to at least one of this week's guiding questions above. Be sure to relate your response to at least one teaching practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board posting and responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Shame</i>, TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Board</li> </ul>
#16 Mon Jun 22 <sup>nd</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: School reform</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Teachers as advocates</li> <li>Guiding question(s): How will you engage with your "publics" to best serve your students, yourself, and your schools' constituents?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LLOTRY Group #4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "Ordinary Pain"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 10</li> <li>Article TBD by LLOTRY Group #4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Teaching advocacy activities</li> <li>LLOTRY Group #4 discussion</li> </ul>
#17 Weds, Jun 24 <sup>th</sup> Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundation of school: Federal policies</li> <li>Foundation of teaching: Teacher identity</li> <li>Guiding question(s): Who are you now as a teacher? What roles will you and your students play in considering, contributing to, and challenging education policies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fieldwork documentation, RAP report and/or CIRs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i>, "Drinking Coffee Elsewhere"</li> <li><i>Big lies</i>, Ch. 12</li> <li><i>Motivation</i>, Ch. 7-8</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coming of age</i> read aloud</li> <li>Reading group discussion</li> <li>Teacher identity activities</li> <li>Course evaluations</li> </ul>
#18 Fri, Jun 26 <sup>th</sup> Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All final projects due by Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None!</li> </ul>

**Appendix A  
Field Experience Hours/Activities Log**

*Deliver this log to your mentor teacher on the 1st day of your field experience. Your mentor will keep the log in her/his classroom and daily track dates, activities, and hours. You must complete a minimum of 15 hours of field experience, all of which must involve interactions with individual students and small and large groups of students. Hours must be spread across a minimum of 4 sessions, with no single session lasting longer than five hours. Submit this signed log at the end of the course to Dr. Zenkov.*

GMU Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Teacher/School: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject Area/Grades: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates	Activities as Observer	Activities as Participant	Hours
			Total:

GMU student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B  
Critical Incidents Reflections Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Describe an artifact/image (related to at least one of the above incidents, highlights, lowlights, student successes or struggles, and burning issues):*

<p><b><u>Critical Incidents</u></b>          What were the highlights and lowlights of your recent work in schools? What student or students can you identify who are having success or struggling in your classes?</p>	
<p><b><u>Burning Issues/Questions</u></b>          What issues or concerns can you identify from your recent work in schools?</p>	
<p><b><u>"Best Practice" Tips</u></b>          What activities, assignments, or strategies from your recent work in schools have you identified as particularly effective?</p>	
<p><b><u>Philosophy-in-Action</u></b>          How has what you've witnessed or done in schools impacted your evolving philosophy of education concept map and the your answers to these philosophy questions?</p>	

### **Appendix C**

#### **Suggested Field Experience Activities**

*The following suggested field experience activities are designed to help you prepare for writing your paper analyzing teaching styles and classroom management preferences.*

- Observe a discussion session for the kinds of student participation that occur. How often are students asked to participate in divergent thinking? How often are students asked to participate in convergent thinking?
- Observe teaching techniques to determine which ones involve students in convergent thinking and which ones involve students in divergent thinking activities.
- Observe a lesson and determine how many academic disciplines the teacher has decided to use in that lesson. How are these various disciplines integrated?
- Observe a "discovery" lesson to determine the nature of the investigation and its outcome.
- Observe an "inquiry" lesson to determine the nature of the investigation and its outcome.
- Observe a lesson in which individualization of instruction is a major focus. How does the instructor plan for helping students at different skill levels improve their expertise?
- Talk with the mentor teacher about the kinds of controversial issues which his/her students may be studying. Ask permission to observe a session in which a controversial issue is being examined so that you can determine what the issue is and its resolution(s).
- Talk with the mentor teacher to find out which method(s) he/she prefers to use and why: "discovery," "inquiry," problem-solving discussion, simulations, lectures, directed reading of primary sources, directed reading of secondary sources, "practice" exercises, learning centers, cooperative learning, individual research, group research/labs, activities using software and/or the internet, etc.
- Observe rules and procedures to determine potential preferences for relationship/listening, confronting/contracting, or rules/consequences approaches to classroom management.

*Notes: Please be sure to speak with your mentor teacher before you engage with individual or small groups of students in particular activities related to our EDUC 522 class. All proper names should be omitted from your reflections and other documentation shared with our class.*



**Appendix D**  
**Field Experience Letter**



College of Education and Human Development  
4400 University Drive, Robinson A 341, MS 4B3  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030  
Phone: 703-993-5413

18 May 2015

Dear educator:

My name is Kristien Zenkov, I'm an associate professor of literacy education at George Mason University, and I write as the instructor for EDUC 522, "Foundations of Secondary Education." This course is taken by future secondary (grades 6-12) teachers, and as a part of the course students are required to complete 15 hours of field experience in grades 6-12. Specifically, students are required to work with you and students in a school setting at a grade level/subject area of their choice. You have been identified as a teacher in a school where the Mason student bearing this letter might complete these 15 hours of field experience. With this letter I hope to provide some information about the expectations for you and this Mason student, and invite you to work with this future teacher.

EDUC 522 focuses on the philosophical assumptions, curriculum issues, learning theories, current educational trends/issues, and history associated with teaching styles and secondary schools. For most of the Mason students in this course, this is one of their first education courses. Thus, they will likely have widely varying levels of experience working with adolescents and young adults. Our expectations for this field experience includes the following:

- Mason students will complete a minimum of 15 hours of tutoring, observation, and general interaction with students in your classroom
- All of these 15 hours must involve direct interaction with adolescents and young adults, with direct and indirect supervision by you or another licensed teacher
- The goal of this experience is for the Mason student to become familiar with the general day-to-day efforts of youth and teachers in secondary settings, including learning styles, curricula, teaching strategies, teaching and learning challenges, management strategies, etc.
- I would hope that the Mason student would be given guidance from you regarding strategies to use with supporting students and their learning, and that you'd allow the Mason student to plan some interventions of her or his own (with input from you)
- In addition, the Mason student might observe your classroom instruction, work with an individual or small group of students, work with an individual student or small groups on assignments or projects, check papers or tests, etc.

Please note that field experiences must occur over a minimum of four visits to your classroom/school, with a maximum length of any one visit of five hours. These schedule requirements are meant to encourage the Mason student to visit your classroom and work with you and your students with some frequency, for meaningful periods of time, over a substantial length of time. Ultimately you will be asked to sign off on the schedule of field experiences this student completed. Please contact me with any questions you might have about this experience and also complete the agreement page attached to this letter. And thank you for your support of this Mason student and her/his development as a future teacher.

Sincerely,  
Kristien Zenkov, PhD  
Associate Professor, College of Education and Human Development  
George Mason University  
216.470.2384 (mobile); 703.993.5413 (office), [kzenkov@gmu.edu](mailto:kzenkov@gmu.edu)

**Appendix E**  
**Field Experience Approval**



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mason Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade Level/Subject Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor Teacher Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor Teacher Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to support \_\_\_\_\_ (Mason Student Name) as she/he completes a minimum 15-hour field experience in my classroom.

I understand that this Mason student will work with me and my students over a minimum of four sessions (each lasting at most five hours), and that all of these hours must involve direct interaction with adolescents/young adults. These experiences may involve working with an individual student, small groups of students, and/or an entire class of students.

I understand that the goal of the Mason student's fieldwork is to gain experience with the day-to-day- workings of a teacher and her/his students. I agree to accurately document the Mason student's tutoring hours and activities on a daily basis.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor Teacher Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mason Student Signature Date

**Tentative Tutoring Schedule (Weeks/Days/Times)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

