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Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

TLSC 300: Professional Learning Communities
Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities
School of Education, Loyola University Chicago
Academic Year: 2016 – 2017

Instructor Information

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Office hours: By appointment
Class location: **Fall 2016 Mundelein, Room 206**
Spring 2017 Mundelein, Room 303

Session Information

Fall Semester Dates:

- Monday, November 21st, 4:15 – 6:15pm *** WE WILL MEET IN CUNEO 109***
- Monday, November 28th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
- Monday, December 5th, 4:15-6:15pm

Spring Semester Dates:

- Monday, April 10th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
 - Monday, April 17th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
 - Monday, April 24th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
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Session Description

Professional learning communities (PLCs) serve as the touchstone of teaching and learning in the Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities (TLLSC) teacher preparation program, bringing together teacher candidates within specialty areas to share and co-construct knowledge, skills, and dispositions applied to their classroom contexts. By working in small groups of colleagues and peers, learning is emergent, targeted, and collaborative. Facilitated by faculty members with expertise in the specialty area, the PLCs serve as communities of practice where candidates come together to (a) share learning from various school- and community-based experiences, (b) synthesize learning through reflection and discussion, and (c) apply learning through completion of sequence summative assessments. In this way, candidates come together to make meaning of the learning in modules and sequences to apply learning within their chosen specialty areas in order to increase their content and pedagogical expertise.

Required Readings

- Required readings and resources will be posted on the Sakai site for the course
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Session Goals

Essential Questions:

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

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

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

As a part of this experience, candidates will:

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

As a part of this experience, candidates will be assessed on the following dispositions:

- Demonstrate professionalism and reflective practice in collaborating with teachers, students, administrators, families, and communities to improve achievement for all students.
- Participate in ongoing professional development, reading, and research in order to deepen their knowledge and expand their repertoire of skills.

- Maintain one's own intellectual, emotional and physical well-being to effectively fulfill one's professional responsibilities.
- Demonstrate professionalism through personal responsibility and accountability related to attendance, participation and communication.

*Please see LiveText for rubric identifying the specific evaluation criteria for each disposition.

IDEA Objectives:

Each course you take in the School of Education is evaluated through the IDEA Campus Labs system. We ask that when you receive an email alerting you that the evaluation is available that you promptly complete it. To learn more about IDEA or to access the website directly to complete your course evaluation go to: <http://luc.edu/idea/> and click on **STUDENT IDEA LOGIN** on the left hand side of the page.

As a part of this experience, candidates will:

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

Grading and Assessment

- **Grading:** This course will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis.
- **Attendance:** PLCs, a 1-credit-hour experience across the academic year, meet only six total sessions – 3 sessions at the end of fall semester, and 3 at the end of spring semester. Because of the limited time of the experience, candidates are expected to attend every session. With a pertinent reason, the instructor may choose to allow the candidate to participate virtually for 1 of the 6 sessions – using Skype or other technology to engage with the PLC while not physically present. If an emergency arises, faculty always have the option of making accommodations. Attendance is mandatory and failing to be present will result in a grade of No Pass for TLSC 300: Professional Learning Communities.
- **Participation:** In addition to the importance of attendance, active participation is central to PLCs. To receive a passing grade, candidates must come ready to actively participate in PLC dialogue. This implies having read any assigned readings and completed any assigned tasks determined by the instructor or by the PLC as a whole.
- **Assessment:** At the close of each semester, following the completion of the PLCs and submission of sequence summative assessments, candidates will reflect upon personal and professional learning during that semester.

PLC Unexcused Absence(s) Policy

- Candidates who have had unexcused absences without notification and who have not worked with the instructor to make up the work within the semester will receive an NP

for that semester. Students should be aware that transcript credit for PLC is awarded in spring semester, AND that grades in fall PLCs impact PLC grades in spring semester.

- In order to address the absences, the PLC faculty member who awarded the NP will develop a dispositions contract to be reviewed and signed by the candidate. This disposition contract will include the completion of an approved independent inquiry due no later than the end of the sixth week of the following term (spring or fall). This inquiry would not be a formal independent study, but is an independent inquiry project that the faculty member determines as sufficient to make up for the unexcused absence(s). The candidate will take full responsibility for completing the project and meeting the requirements of the disposition contract.
- If a candidate satisfactorily completes the approved independent inquiry before the end of the sixth week of the following term, and meets the other obligations of the disposition contract the faculty member will change the NP to a P.
- If the candidate does not submit a satisfactory independent inquiry before the end of the sixth week of the following term, or does not meet other obligations of the disposition contract the NP will remain on the students' record and the candidate will be dismissed from the School of Education.

PLC Theme: Individual Education Plan (IEP)

The focus for 2016-17 PLC sessions is Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Candidates will reflect on experiences they've had reviewing, utilizing, and constructing IEPs in preparation for presentations by two entities essential in the development and implementation of IEPs: Teachers and Parents. Candidates will also engage in small group inquiry projects to enhance their understanding of the IEP process.

Session Experiences

- PLCs, by nature, are flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of the participants. Whereas the introductory session of the academic year will be used to inform candidates about the pertinent PLC structure and relation to the overall TLLSC program, ongoing sessions are flexible based on candidates' needs.
- Within the larger PLC section, candidates will engage in *Teacher Candidate Inquiry Groups* (TCIGs). These smaller groups will be organized by program area (e.g., bilingual/bicultural, elementary) and interest and will span program years and developmental stages in teacher development (e.g., freshman, sophomore). This year, our inquiry will begin
- Whereas each session will open and close with whole-group dialogue and learning in the PLC, the TCIGs will serve as the primary locale for candidates to set goals for learning, ask questions about their practice, seek out resources to mediate discussion, and work through problems and solutions together. The instructor will participate and facilitate

these TCIG discussions, but they are meant to be emergent from candidates' interests, questions, and ideas as they apply learning from the semester to areas of expertise.

- In addition to whole-group PLC and small-group TCIG dialogue, each TLSC 300 session will close with sequence-based small groups to support one another in working on the summative assessments for the specific sequences.

School of Education Policies and Information

Conceptual Framework Standards

The School of Education at Loyola University Chicago, a Jesuit and Catholic urban university, supports the Jesuit ideal of knowledge in the service of humanity. We endeavor to advance professional education in the service of social justice, engaged with Chicago, the nation, and the world. To achieve this vision the School of Education (SOE) participates in the discovery, development, demonstration, and dissemination of professional knowledge and practice within a context of ethics, service to others, and social justice. We fulfill this mission by preparing professionals to serve as teachers, administrators, psychologists, and researchers; by conducting research on issues of professional practice and social justice; and by partnering with schools and community agencies to enhance life-long learning in the Chicago area. Specifically, PLCs bring together teacher candidates to have them make meaning of their learning and experiences in schools, as well as apply that learning to future practice and behaviors in teaching practice. The SOE's Conceptual Framework (CF) and Mission is *Social Action through Education*. Although not assessed directly, candidates will explore all four CF Standards outlined below. An in-depth description of the SOE's Mission can be found at www.luc.edu/education/mission/

SOE Conceptual Framework Standards (CFS)

- CFS1: Candidates critically evaluate current bodies of knowledge in their field.
- CFS2: Candidates apply culturally responsive practices that engage diverse communities.
- CFS3: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of ethics and social justice.
- CFS4: Candidates engage with local and/or global communities in ethical and socially just practices.

Technology

Whereas PLCs focus on the in-person dialogue and collaborative learning, technology will be integrated in various forms to mediate and support the professional development of teacher candidates, including but not limited to: (1) video clips of PLCs and/or classroom practice, (2) video or audio clips of teacher candidates working in classrooms, (3) online blogs, articles, and other information, and (4) Web 2.0 collaborative technologies (Adobe connect, Google sites). Additional relevant policies and information related to Electronic Communication can be found at www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/

LiveText

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

Diversity

PLCs provide candidates with the opportunity to engage in collaboration with a community of learners – discussing and making meaning of all learning and experiences in schools and communities. Additionally, teacher candidates will engage in reflection and response in relation to social action through education. With this in mind, teacher candidates will consistently engage in dialogue around the diverse students (including those with special education needs and those who are English language learners), classrooms, schools, families, and communities with which they engaged in the prior sequence, as well as connect and reflect upon those experiences in relation to their own professional practice as a future urban teacher.

University Policies and Information

Additional policies and information related to Academic Honesty, Accessibility, and the EthicsLine Reporting Hotline can be found at www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/

Tentative Schedule for TLSC 300 (Fall 2016)

Session	Fall Date	Agenda Overview
1	November 21 st	Welcome (10 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intro to PLC structure and expectations Community Building Activity (15 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What three words describe you as an educator? PLC Whole-Group Sharing & Discussion (75 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The IEP experience told by practicing teachers TCIG Small-Group Discussions (20 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inquiry task explanation & discussion
2	November 28 th	Welcome & Housekeeping (10 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates & checking in• Community building activity TCIG Small-Group Discussions (60 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IEP resource share out

		<p>PLC Whole-Group Sharing & Discussion (40 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share out per inquiry topic • Question prep for parents <p>Summative Assessment Support (10 mins)</p>
3	December 5 th	<p>Welcome & Housekeeping (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates & checking in • Dispositions self-assessment <p>PLC Whole-Group Sharing & Discussion (90 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IEP experience told by parents! <p>Closing (20m)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using your new IEP knowledge in your next sequence <p>**BE SURE TO COMPLETE YOUR SEQUENCE SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT. IF YOU ARE UNSURE OF THE DUE DATE, PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR FELLOW SEQ COLLEAGUES AND/OR SEQUENCE INSTRUCTOR**</p>