



# LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

*Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives*

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## **TLSC 300A/400A: Professional Learning Communities**

*Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities*

School of Education, Loyola University Chicago

Fall 2016

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### **Instructor Information**

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### **Session Information**

**Dates:** 11/21/16, 11/28/16, & 12/5/16

**Meeting times:** 4:15-6:15 pm

**Location:** Mundelein 307, Lake Shore Campus

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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 (TLSC) teacher preparation program, bringing together teacher candidates within specialty areas to share and co-construct knowledge, skills, and dispositions applied to their classroom contexts. Facilitated by faculty members with expertise in the specialty area, the PLCs serve as communities of practice where candidates come together to (a) learn about timely topics in ELA instruction through guest lectures by practicing teachers and active questioning (b) share learning from various school- and community-based experiences with each other and (b) synthesize learning through reflection and discussion. In this way, candidates work together to increase their content and pedagogical expertise.

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### **Required Readings**

- Readings and resources will be posted on the Sakai site for the course

- There are no readings for the first night of class
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### Required Assignments

- For the first class teacher candidates must come to class ready to discuss how to meet the needs of diverse learners, specifically English language learners, in English classrooms.
  - Subsequent assignments will be based on teacher candidate interest and themes that emerge in our PLC discussions.
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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 dialog and make connections between sequence learning and experiences with pertinent theories and principles and specialty area teaching and learning.
- Complete the sequence summative assessments for their particular sequence related to the specialty area with individualized support from faculty facilitators.

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

- Develop awareness that teaching is a complex practice with inherently political and ethical implications.
- 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.
  - Reflect on how one's actions affects others and as a result demonstrate respect, fair-mindedness, empathy, and ethical behavior toward all learners, including respect for students' right to privacy.
  - Demonstrate resiliency when confronted with challenges and recognize when the support of colleagues and others is needed.
  - Recognize the critical importance and need for teacher leadership in and across classrooms, schools, districts, communities, and in local, national and international educational organizations.
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### **IDEA Objectives:**

As a part of this experience, candidates will:

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

At the end of the module, you will be prompted to complete the module evaluation. Please go to <http://luc.edu/idea/> and click on the **Student IDEA Log In**. Your feedback is important to the continual development and improvement of the module. Please complete the course evaluation by the posted deadline.

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### **Grading and Assessment**

- **Grading:** This course will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis.
  - **Attendance:** PLCs, a 1-credit-hour experience across the academic year, meet only six total sessions – 3 sessions at the end of fall semester, and 3 at the end of spring semester. Because of the limited time of the experience, candidates are expected to attend every session. 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 dialog. This implies having read any assigned readings and completed any assigned tasks determined by the instructor or by the PLC as a whole.
  - **Assessment:** At the close of each semester, following the completion of the PLCs and submission of sequence summative assessments, candidates will reflect upon personal and professional learning during that semester, specifically on Conceptual Framework Standards 1 (synthesizing their learning about teaching, learning, and leading with schools and communities) and 6 (collaborating with peers and making decisions about practice to model professionalism in service of social justice).
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### **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., secondary, elementary) and interest and will span program years and developmental stages in teacher development (e.g., freshman, sophomore).
- 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. .

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## School of Education Policies and Information

Please find additional information at [www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/](http://www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/)

### Conceptual Framework Standards

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

Specifically grounded in the overarching principles of *Social Action through Education*, this module focuses on the individualized learning needs of diverse students in urban schools, emphasizing the role of the teacher in making educational decisions and advocating for students. Candidates must utilize current literature in bilingual, special, and literacy education to critically evaluate practices and apply knowledge and skills with diverse students. Our conceptual framework is described here: [www.luc.edu/education/mission/](http://www.luc.edu/education/mission/)

### Dispositions

All students are assessed on one or more dispositional areas of growth across our programs: ***Professionalism, Fairness, and the Belief that All Students Can Learn.*** The instructor in your course will identify the dispositions assessed in this course and you can find the rubrics related to these dispositions in LiveText. Disposition data is reviewed by program faculty on a regular basis. This allows faculty to work with students to develop throughout their program and address any issues as they arise.

## Technology

Candidates will be responsible for regularly accessing their Sakai accounts at <http://sakai.luc.edu>. Sakai will be used to post the syllabus, course documents, and other relevant information.

Candidates will also be responsible for activating their LiveText accounts. Candidates MUST use their Loyola University Chicago email address with LiveText. This course requires the use of LiveText in order for candidates to submit all course assessments. Find more information at <http://www.luc.edu/education/admission/tuition/course-management-fee/>

## Diversity

By focusing on individual, diverse students in urban classrooms, this module addresses multiple perspectives on diversity, including but not limited to the diversity in students' backgrounds (i.e., culture, language, ability) and classroom and school contexts (e.g., bilingual education, instructional contexts for students with special needs).

Dialogue is expected to be open and honest while remaining respectful and appropriate at all times in order to foster deeper understanding of issues pertaining to diversity. Diversity will be defined to include issues of race, gender, religion, orientation, income, and abilities. As part of Loyola's commitment to social justice, issues of diversity will be discussed in relation to equity, sensitivity, and prosocial practices. In our class discussions and your writing, please adhere to the recommendations made by TASH regarding the use of "People First" language. If interested, an article outlining those recommendations will be provided to you by your instructor.

## **Syllabus Addendum Link**

- [www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/](http://www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/)

This link directs students to statements on essential policies regarding *academic honesty*, *accessibility*, *ethics line reporting* and *electronic communication policies and guidelines*. We ask that you read each policy carefully.

This link will also bring you to the full text of our conceptual framework that guides the work of the School of Education – ***Social Action through Education***.