



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

TLSC 300 & TLSC 400: Professional Learning Communities

Teaching, Learning, and Leading with Schools and Communities

School of Education, Loyola University Chicago

Academic Year: 2014 – 2015

Instructor Information

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Session Information

Fall Semester Dates:

- Monday, Nov 17th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
(*SOE International Fair, 6:00 – 7:00pm*)
- Monday, Nov 24th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
- Monday, Dec 1st, 4:15 – 6:15pm

Spring Semester Dates:

- Monday, April 6th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
- Monday, April 13th, 4:15 – 6:15pm
- Monday, April 20th, 4:15 – 6:15pm

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

- Hess, D. & McAvoy, P. (2014). *The political classroom: Evidence and ethics on democratic education*. New York: Routledge.
 - Other 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 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.
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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.

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 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.

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).

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 professionalism in service of social justice. 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.

Electronic Communication Policies and Guidelines

The School of Education faculty, students and staff respect each other's rights, privacy and access to electronic resources, services, and communications while in the pursuit of academic and

professional growth, networking and research. All members of the university community are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, communication, and responsibility while accessing and utilizing technology, information resources, and computing facilities. A link to the Loyola University Chicago and School of Education official policies and guidelines can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/education/pdfs/SOE_Cyberbullying_Policy.pdf

University Policies and Information

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. The School of Education's Policy on Academic Integrity can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml. For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml

Accessibility

Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>

Harassment (Bias Reporting)

It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies these incidents as incidents of bias.

In order to uphold our mission of being Chicago's Jesuit Catholic University-- a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith, any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed. Therefore, the Bias Response (BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: <http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/>

General Schedule for TLSC 300 Fall 2014

Session	Fall Date	Agenda Overview
1	April 6	<p>PLC Big Idea - <i>Engagement in controversy in the classroom provides an effective medium in which students can become critically thinking citizens of not only the nation, but also the world.</i></p> <p>PLC Enduring Understanding for the Unit - <i>Students will understand that the teacher’s role in a modern social studies classroom is to provide an environment that uncovers bias and perspective, and discusses opposing viewpoints. Teachers will utilize contemporary yet historically relevant issues as a guide, in order to eliminate political polarization and build trust. This paves the way for a cooperative democratic system.</i></p> <p>Discussion of <i>The Political Classroom</i></p>
2	April 13	Meet with Diana Hess & Paula McAvoy
3	April 20	Meet with Nisan Chavkin, Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago
Final	April 24	<i>Sequence Summative Assessments Due</i>