

The UCDS College for School Culture Course Descriptions

EDU 521 Constructing Mathematical Thinking

A theme based, hands-on course that focuses on the power of concretizing concepts with physical objects, creating context and collaborative work. The class helps students better understand mathematical concepts found in math curricula. We'll use the theme as a tool for learning ways to embed math with other subject areas in the classroom. Participants will also learn to teach and assess students' math understanding using a variety of approaches.

EDU 522 Cultural Competence

Goodman (2011) defines cultural competence as "the ability to live and work effectively in culturally diverse environments and enact a commitment to social justice." She further defines social justice which, "refers to creating a society (or community, organization, or campus) with an equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. In socially just environments, all people are safe (physically and psychologically), can meet their needs, and can fulfill their potential. Social justice thus entails equity (fairness) and a sense of real inclusion."

We will use these definitions to explore why educators and educational leaders must understand how identity, power and privilege influence the communities they serve. Students will practice strategies to constantly deepen and build the range of awareness, knowledge, and skills they use to build communities of cultural competence. Primary objectives of this course are developing one's self-awareness with regard to identity, understanding and valuing others, building one's knowledge of societal inequities, strengthening one's skills to interact effectively with diverse people in different contexts, and learning to foster equity and inclusion.

EDU 523 Learning About Learning

Our understanding of the human brain and its ability to learn is ever-expanding. Contemporary educators should see themselves as instructional leaders who actively reflect on the art of teaching and study the science of learning with rapt attention. This course will provide an overview of contemporary theories and research about how people learn. Cognitive and social science will provide the lenses for our investigation. The course will examine the roles of brain plasticity, movement, memory and mindset in the development of language, motor and cognitive skills. Students will consider how this knowledge can inform leadership and teaching strategies, curriculum design, student assessment and professional development.

EDU 524 Comparative School Cultures

Ron Ritchhart (2015) states that “culture is foundational (to schools) and determines how any curriculum comes to life.” Classroom culture, school culture and a community’s culture all create the context for learning in our schools. *Comparative School Cultures* will examine education from both historical and organizational lenses.

We’ll investigate the factors that define and influence school culture. We will use practicum experiences in different schools to analyze the roles played by artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions in each community. This study will increase students’ awareness and understanding of cultural forces and their role in shaping them.

EDU 531 Story and Design Thinking

Story and Design Thinking will welcome students to the CSC program. The design of the course is meant to establish and connect with:

- Self - personal understanding of why/who I am at the beginning of the program
- Each other - relationships with the cohort
- Program - expectations/routines/protocols for the work that lies ahead (i.e. collaborating, practicum approaches)

The course initiates students into the culture of the program and gives them a deeper understanding of who they are as they enter. Students begin to develop relationships to build a foundation for future collaborative partnerships. Finally, the course taps into two key skill sets for educators and leaders: storytelling and design thinking. Students will take time to develop personal stories and relationships that will help them focus their intentionality as they proceed through the program. The course grounds the students in the culture and norms for the program and gives them an introduction to design thinking and inquiry-based learning.

EDU 532 Collaborative Teaching & Leading

Through a combination of in-class work and in-school observations, this course will explore and define collaboration. Each class session will be guided by an inquiry-based question regarding collaboration. Each participant’s experiences and professional interests will be taken into account as the course revolves around a framework of relevant readings and experiences. Each participant’s voice will be highly valued and become an integral part of the cohort of students’ experiences. Students will have the opportunity to develop and deepen their network of colleagues to lean on and inform their future professional endeavors. Students will:

- Identify different styles and methods of collaboration.

- Create a working, evolving written and visual description of different approaches to collaboration as well as a working understanding of best practices in collaborative communities.
- Practice and analyze different approaches to collaboration.
- Design collaborative projects utilizing different protocols and strategies.

EDU 533 Effective Communication

Communication is the very life blood of school culture. Needs, values, traditions and a school's ethos rely on the medium of communication. Educators are called upon to be change agents: to explain concepts, motivate people and advocate for a better way of doing something. A successful, dynamic communicator makes their ideas come to life and brings clarity and shared understanding to the audience using effective and reflective listening, speaking, and writing skills, that are grounded in the characteristics/knowledge of the school culture. Intentional communication clarifies understanding and invites the participation of educators, students and the greater community to share in and strengthen the school culture.

This class is designed to support students to build knowledge, skills, strategies, and understanding about the ideas above so students have the ability to make sense of, to identify, to navigate, and to create change in a wide range of communication contexts and relationships. This course focuses on the influences of interpersonal communication and how these interactions shape an environment. Weekly in-class activities center on identifying personal values that characterize interpersonal communications with the expectation of engaging with a school culture. Observations in a variety of settings along with in-class practice (role playing, etc.) will address the intentional focus of the communicators in their attempts to connect authentically with colleagues, students, families, administrators, and the greater school community.

EDU 541 Peer Learning and Professional Development Cohort I

Led by the Student Services Director, the Cohort component of the program is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their career at the College for School Culture. Cohort will keep the pulse of and respond to the dynamics, strengths and needs of the students individually and collectively. Cohort topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. This quarter the course will focus on joining a teaching team and navigating the language and expectations of a new culture.

Throughout the first year, Cohort will focus on navigating and making meaning of students' practicum work in classrooms. Students will identify, synthesize and articulate connections across classes and contexts. Through conversations, written reflections, and goal setting, students will build and strengthen their habits as reflective practitioners. Finally, Cohort will serve as a place for students to curate

their professional artifacts and document their evolving understanding of school culture.

EDU 542 Peer Learning and Professional Development Cohort II

Led by the Student Services Director, the Cohort component of the program is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their career at the College for School Culture. Cohort will keep the pulse of and respond to the dynamics, strengths and needs of the students individually and collectively. Cohort topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. This quarter will focus on the students' first practicum experiences with students. Practicum this quarter will be at UCDS.

Throughout the first year, Cohort will focus on navigating and making meaning of students' practicum work in classrooms. Students will identify, synthesize and articulate connections across classes and contexts. Through conversations, written reflections, and goal setting, students will build and strengthen their habits as reflective practitioners. Finally, Cohort will serve as a place for students to curate their professional artifacts and document their evolving understanding of school culture.

EDU 543 Peer Learning and Professional Development Cohort III

Led by the Student Services Director, the Cohort component of the program is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their career at the College for School Culture. Cohort will keep the pulse of and respond to the dynamics, strengths and needs of the students individually and collectively. Cohort topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. This quarter the course will focus on the practicum experiences outside of UCDS. Students will complete two, five-week practica at different schools. They are expected to compare, contrast, reflect about the cultural strengths of each of these experiences.

Throughout the first year, Cohort will focus on navigating and making meaning of students' practicum work in classrooms. Students will identify, synthesize and articulate connections across classes and contexts. Through conversations, written reflections, and goal setting, students will build and strengthen their habits as reflective practitioners. Finally, Cohort will serve as a place for students to curate their professional artifacts and document their evolving understanding of school culture.

EDU 544 Peer Learning and Professional Development Cohort IV

Led by the Student Services Director, the Cohort component of the program is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their career at the College for School Culture. Cohort will keep the pulse of and respond to the dynamics, strengths and needs of the students individually and collectively.

Cohort topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. This quarter the course will focus on a more thorough examination of school culture. Students will have practica in two schools this quarter, UCDS and a third outside partner school. This course will provide a springboard for reflection about what students will design for their capstone experience in year two.

Throughout the first year, Cohort will focus on navigating and making meaning of students' practicum work in classrooms. Students will identify, synthesize and articulate connections across classes and contexts. Through conversations, written reflections, and goal setting, students will build and strengthen their habits as reflective practitioners. Finally, Cohort will serve as a place for students to curate their professional artifacts and document their evolving understanding of school culture.

EDU 545 Capstone I - Reflection & Proposal

What has the first year of graduate study meant to you? What questions are capturing your curiosity and interest? How will you use your previous learning to guide your second year in the UCDS College for School Culture program? How are you becoming a contributor to the field of education?

This course welcomes students back to school and dedicates time to understanding the capstone process and expectations. Students will be supported to identify their capstone area of focus, to create their capstone research team, to propose members of their capstone review team and to design the initial questions that will guide their investigation. Students will leave the class with a drafted capstone proposal.

EDU 561 Understanding Research Design

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the methods, analyses and evaluation techniques employed in educational action research. Educators and educational leaders face an increasing demand to demonstrate evidence-based solutions for a variety of complex problems. It is crucial they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively gather, evaluate and interpret research on educational topics.

This course provides a foundation for *EDU 562 Interpreting Research for Schools*. Students will use a variety of inquiry-focused approaches to read from and interrogate a range of research studies and summaries.

EDU 562 Interpreting Research for Schools

This course builds on lessons from *EDU 561 Understanding Research Design* to deepen students' understanding and appreciation for the various ways research can influence teaching practices. The emphasis in this course is placed on building

understanding of the foundational areas of research methods and the application of those methods to real school settings.

The main objectives are:

- To develop the skills necessary to evaluate and interpret research studies.
- To learn how to effectively communicate your understanding to key stakeholders.

Students will apply lessons from this course directly to their capstone projects. They will use research to inform their questions and methods.

EDU 563 Ethics

The decision to educate is ethical in nature: the older generation assumes responsibility for initiating the newer generation into valued cultural beliefs, practices and traditions. Educating raises deep questions about purpose, values and responsibilities. Educators are decision makers. They make decisions that are pedagogical, administrative, political and personal. Education is a practice that has the potential to enrich the lives of those who are involved; teachers, students, parents, and institutions.

This course will support students to:

- Become more aware of the ethical dimensions of education.
- Determine how we know when a situation calls for an ethical judgment.
- Determine the nature and scope of ethical responsibilities.
- Consider the possibility of educationally specific virtues/values.

Understand more clearly our individual ethical commitments and what they entail.

EDU 564 Leading for Change

As institutions of learning, schools need to consistently evolve based on new knowledge and analysis of community needs. How will you analyze the effectiveness of your program to determine whether change is warranted? How will you empower your communities and classrooms to embrace change?

In this course, students will examine the concept of change and strategies to manage it. Students will deepen their understanding of human behavior and tendencies as well as organizational structures to help them develop philosophies and design systems to inspire innovation, collaboration and growth.

EDU 581 Individualized Instruction

This quarter, we will look at instructional practices, curricular design and cultural elements that support individualizing instruction through the lense of literacy development. Students will consider their current beliefs and knowledge about how

students learn to read. They will engage with theoretical, philosophical and empirical foundations of reading curriculum and instruction. They will test models discussed in class with observation and reflective practice

This course will use the eight forces of culture described in *Creating Cultures of Thinking* by Ron Ritchhart as a framework for our conversations and observations of school and classroom culture: Expectations, Language, Time, Modeling, Opportunities, Routines, Interactions, Environment.

EDU 582 Semiotics of Schools

Students experience a wide variety of symbol systems throughout each day. They are expected to move seamlessly from domain to domain and to code-switch as they learn about different methods of communication and navigate multiple expectations. Course participants will learn about the different academic and social symbol systems encountered in schools. They will learn from expert practitioners about how they teach and assess these communication skill in different domains. Participants will learn from experts in a wide range of subjects, including art, music, science, physical education, spanish, design and technology, and others. They will learn about the different contexts of unique domains and examine common patterns for teaching and learning that are evident across domains.

EDU 583 Opportunistic Curriculum Design

Powerful learning opportunities invite all students to the learning, having a low threshold for entry and a high ceiling so that learners can take themselves as far as they wish. Opportunistic curriculum design challenges educators to use concepts at the core of their curricular structures and to individualize knowledge and skills supports so that all learners can engage and thrive. About mathematics instruction, John Van de Walle says that for math teachers to be truly effective, four components must come together:

- an appreciation of the discipline of mathematics itself
- an understanding of how students learn and construct ideas
- an ability to design and select tasks so that students learn mathematics in a problem-solving environment
- the ability to integrate assessment with the teaching process in order to enhance learning and improve daily instruction.

This course will focus on the universal concept of opportunistic design while using mathematics as a lense for focusing the practice of curriculum design. Conceptual deep dives, problem-solving design experiences and the integration of assessment into daily instruction will anchor participant experiences.

EDU 584 Designing for Critical Thinking

Social studies and science offer excellent lenses through which to teach and reinforce critical thinking skills. Successful teachers of these subjects appreciate and understand the complexities of the content, the necessity for real-world applications for learning and the need for the explicit instruction of thinking skills. Curriculum designed in this way creates a classroom culture of inquiry, engagement, student ownership and voice, and the development of thinkers that can transfer skills to different domains.

Using a skills-focused approach, students in this course will learn how to design meaningful science and social studies experiences for students that reinforce critical thinking skills, align with standards and draw connections to other curricular study.

Students will investigate the following elements:

- Purpose: intention and questions of the social studies investigations
- Knowledge: what learners need to understand
- Processes: what learners will be capable of doing
- Products: how learners demonstrate understanding
- Science and engineering practices: skills necessary to conduct investigations
- Disciplinary core ideas: key ideas in each domain
- Crosscutting concepts: connections across different scientific domains

EDU 585 Classroom Cultures

Classroom culture embodies the physical environment, traditions, routines, expectations and relationships through which learning occurs. It includes the people, their perspectives and backgrounds as well as the space in which teaching and learning happen. It involves the relationships that teachers create with students and that students create with one another. It also includes how the families of students feel welcomed and involved in their child's classroom.

A classroom culture is informed by values, beliefs, action and evidence. Our values, beliefs and objectives affect the intentions and actions we take as educators. Our actions are reflected in how we spend our time, use language and teach. Evidence lies with the students. In vibrant classroom communities, teachers and students share a common understanding for how to learn and how to treat each other, the community as a whole and oneself. This class investigates each of these aspects and gives students meaningful experiences developing their approach. Students will:

- Begin to identify elements of classroom culture they will cultivate as teachers.
- Explore the values and beliefs they hold as beginning educators to better understand the intentions they bring to a classroom.
- Investigate different coaching, question asking and instructional strategies to inform how to most effectively act inside a classroom.

- Create evidence of their values and beliefs by curating an educational philosophy and designing a classroom environment.
- Explore culturally sustaining practices that empower the establishment of welcoming classroom culture-- to build and foster relationships with others and share identities through respectful practices.

EDU 586 Designing for Democracy

How do social-emotional learning and confidence intersect with academic learning? This course will examine strategies to increase student voice and create thriving learning communities marked by shared understanding, ownership and respect.

Participants will take a deep dive into *student voice*, exploring questions that surround this centerpiece of our students' experience: How does a strong sense of voice deepen a student's learning experience? How do we design a school and classroom culture that cultivates and responds to student voice? How can students develop stewardship of their own learning experiences and communities? How can teachers facilitate growth in areas of agency and advocacy?

Participants will be invited to grapple with these and other questions through lively discussions, current readings, school observations, and hands-on projects. Participants will help shape our exploration of student voice, and will come away with understandings and strategies for deepening student engagement that are applicable in every educational community.

EDU 591 Learning Communities

Learning Communities is a two-week course with both seminar classes and practicum experiences. Students will discuss the elements of culture, identify learning experiences in and out of classrooms, and read and reflect upon works from a variety of educational thinkers. Students will also spend time in classrooms and initial team planning meetings with teachers and administrators preparing for the start of the school year. Topics will include curriculum planning, classroom setup and design, and the creation of collaboration and dialogue. A goal of this course is for students to become familiar with the interplay between seminar learning and practicum experiences. The course will provide background knowledge and educational theory while also experiencing the start of a new school year from teachers' and administrators' perspectives.

This course aims to increase:

- Understanding of the elements of culture, including both school culture and classroom culture.
- Understanding of a variety of components that influence learning.
- Experience with a variety of writing and reading assignments at the outset of the program to provide a starting point for future classes and quarters.

- A seminar and practicum experience; time for in-school experiences and group discussions as well as formal observations and on-site experiences.

EDU 592 Assessment I : Elements of Assessment

Assessment is the often complex and controversial process of measuring what students know and can do. When used for authentic purposes, assessment can also be understood as the “why” of teaching (curriculum representing the “what” and instruction the “how”). Most importantly, meaningful assessment builds confidence, spurs action, and helps students, teachers and school leaders improve their work.

Students will examine their current understanding of and experiences with assessment; explore the purposes of assessing (diagnostic, formative, summative, interim); identify the types of assessments typically used inside formal learning environments (selected- and constructed-responses, performance tasks, authentic, portfolio and self-/peer-assessment); and learn to analyze and apply five elements of effective assessment design (alignment, rigor, precision, bias and scoring) through the creation of their own assessments. We will also investigate controversial ideas about assessment, such as daylighting student thinking instead of sorting and ranking (assessment as a window as well as a ladder), using assessments for growing teaching practice, and accepting that we may never really know what students have learned.

This course will introduce students to lesson/unit design frameworks to root their understanding of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment design process. It will also focus on specific brain research and human development theories as they apply to what, how, and why we teach literacy in the primary grades.

The following questions, and students’ own inquiry, will lead our work together:

- What is assessment and why do we do it?
- What are the different ways we can assess in the classroom?
- What are the five elements of effective assessment design and how can they be applied to various assessments?
- How is assessment influenced by and how does assessment influence school culture?
- What role does human development theory play in assessment design?

EDU 593 Assessment II: Designing a Culture of Assessment

If everyone gets an “A,” is that a sign of successful or unsuccessful teaching? What do grades and grade distribution communicate about what we value? Once we’ve designed meaningful assessments, how do we make sure we administer and use them effectively? Is the time teachers spend on scoring and giving feedback worth it?

Continuing our exploration into the five key elements of successful assessment design, this class will hone in on the scoring component of assessment. Students will examine assessment practices at multiple schools and compare them with what they see at UCDS.

Topics for this quarter's seminar will include: scoring frequency, bell curves, report cards, norm-referenced and standardized tests, qualitative and quantitative methods, calibration protocols, rubrics, weighting, portfolios, peer-and self-evaluation and tuning protocols.

We will discuss implications of certain scoring routines with a focus on *time management* and previewing the *meaningful use* of assessments. Throughout the quarter, students will administer, score and deeply analyze their assessments through Student Work Protocols.

EDU 594 Designing Connected Curriculum

Building curricular frameworks that facilitate learning by connecting different subject areas (math, science, literature, art, social studies, social emotional learning, physical education, and more) offers a dynamic, engaging classroom approach. In contrast to a single-subject, unconnected curriculum, a combined curricular approach taught with inquiry-based methods gives the student more voice and ownership as they explore a topic through the lens of multiple subject areas. Current curriculums that offer this integration include Project Based Learning, Thematic Curriculum, Integrated Curriculum Model, and backwards design, or Understanding by Design (UbD) approaches. These differing frameworks anchor the child's work in motivating, authentic, and relevant experiences. Through this approach, children build a deeper understanding of concepts, as well as skill practice in communicating, critical thinking, and creativity.

Students in this course will:

- Consider the role of integrating curricular areas to deepen understanding and meaning
- Research, examine and compare strategies to plan and integrate subjects and approaches to contextualize learning
- Plan and present in small group collaboration an integrated curricular study
- Formally observe curricular planning through the lens of thematic curriculum
- Explore the process of researching and selecting a conceptual theme as a group

- Investigate the role of literature to connect subjects

EDU 595: Designing a Culture of Inquiry

What is inquiry-based learning? How can you integrate inquiry in the classroom to spark curiosity and engage students in deeper learning? *Designing a Culture of Inquiry* will examine the definitions, theories and impacts of inquiry and identify strategies for enacting inquiry in planning, instruction and assessment. We will highlight inquiry tools and methods that can be transferred across diverse early childhood through middle school contexts and domains.

Instructors and participants will share and discuss classroom experiences and create plans to integrate new inquiry tools into our work. Additionally, ongoing opportunities to understand inquiry as it relates to the reflective practitioner will be woven throughout the course. Participants will actively engage in the inquiry cycle and investigate how it can provide a guide for continuous professional growth and deeper student learning.

EDU 701 Capstone II - Introduction, Organization, and Implementation

This course focuses attention on identifying terms for definition and scouring current research. A full literature review will be an essential aspect of the course and will help students plan their questions and approaches for the winter. By the end of this quarter, students should be answer these questions:

- What is the gap between what is known and the issue being examined?
- How will your study address this gap?

Students will also make arrangements with practicum partners to conduct their field work. It is expected that most action research will be conducted during winter quarter, however exceptions may be made to best support individual proposals.

EDU 702 Capstone III: Data Collection, Methods & Measures

With a capstone project well-designed and a thoughtful grasp of the literature in their area of study, students will use practicum environments for field study to conduct action research, test ideas, and address their capstone questions. Students will keep track of learnings through data collection reflection and meetings with their advisory team. Students will synthesize information and begin to organize their findings in meaningful ways. Students will share progress and problem solve using their advisory team and cohort for peer review. Assignments will support students' progress toward completing action research and reconciling information from their research with that from their field work.

EDU 703 Capstone IV: Reflection and Presentation

So what does your research mean? How does it affect your understanding? What does it add to the broader educational community? How can you share it in a digestible and meaningful way? This course will guide students through the process

of completing and presenting their capstone projects. Students will apply technology and communication skills gathered throughout the program. Full research presentations will be presented to faculty and peers with a following question and answer session. Each student will provide a written account of their work which will be reviewed by their advisory team. Advisory teams will meet with students to discuss their learnings and provide feedback.