

The UCDS College for School Culture

Learning experiences in the UCDS College for School Culture connect experiences in classrooms and schools with the existing body of educational research and theory. Each course is anchored by a practicum experience. Instructors offer weekly practicum prompts to link learning in the graduate program with learning inside elementary schools. There are three aspects present in the overall courses: seminar experience, foundational knowledge and workshop experience.

Seminar Experience - Courses are designed to be philosophical and intellectual explorations into theory. They give students a foundational understanding of existing research that guides areas of practice. Seminar experiences promote dialogue, thinking and writing around central ideas and readings. This format will add depth and perspective to the other components of the program.

Foundational Knowledge - Coursework will blend real-time experience in schools with pedagogical and leadership investigations in class. Faculty design experiences focused on methodology, strategies and practice and to facilitate conversations to deepen student understanding of the relationship between theory and practice. Practicum experiences provide the expectation and opportunity for students to immediately apply information about theory.

Workshop Experiences - Courses provide students the opportunity to practice seeking resources, sharing and facilitating learning with others, and promoting reflection and question asking inside the communities they serve. Classes will take form in ways that best facilitate student participation. Workshop experiences require students to take academic risks by applying new knowledge and sharing that experience with their peers.

Practicum Experience - Graduate students will pair the body of coursework with practicum experience. Practicum settings provide students with the opportunity to test the theoretical knowledge gained in class with the practical application of that knowledge when teaching. Coursework will require graduate students to use their practicum as a place to practice, question, refine, and ground their understanding as well as their practices. Students who are teachers may conduct their practicum in their own schools.

Course Rotation - The two year academic program is largely organized in a two year rotation to add to the quality of student discourse and account for the unique goals associated with students in the first and second years of the graduate program. Summer quarter coursework is unique to first- and second-year students. Courses are offered in a two-year rotation during Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters with the exception of Peer Learning and Professional Development Cohort and Capstone courses.

Course of Study

Year A

Fall

All Students

EDU 592 Elements of Assessment	3 credits
EDU 533 Effective Communication	2 credits
EDU 561 Understanding Research Design	2 credits

First Year

EDU 542 Cornerstone I: School Culture & Reflective Practice	1 credit
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Final Year

EDU 701 Capstone I: Proposal & Design	2 credits
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Winter

All Students

EDU 593 Designing Assessment	3 credits
EDU 583 Opportunistic Curriculum Design	2 credits
EDU 584 Design for Critical Thinking	2 credits

First Year

EDU 543 Cornerstone II: Introduction to Action Research I	1 credit
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Final Year

EDU 702 Capstone II: Practicum & Synthesis	2 credits
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Spring

All Students

EDU 595 Designing a Culture of Inquiry	3 credits
EDU 524 Comparative School Cultures	2 credits
EDU 586 Designing for Democracy	2 credits

First Year

EDU 544 Cornerstone III: Introduction to Action Research II	1 credit
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Final Year

EDU 703 Capstone III: Reflection & Presentation	2 credits
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Year B

Fall

All Students

EDU 532 Collaborative Elements 2 credits

EDU 531 Storytelling, Design Thinking, and Connected Curriculum 2 credits

EDU 523 Learning About Learning 2 credits

First Year

EDU 542 Cornerstone I: School Culture & Reflective Practice 1 credit

Final Year

EDU 701 Capstone I: Proposal & Design 2 credits

Winter

All Students

EDU 522 Cultural Competence 2 credits

EDU 581 Individualizing Instruction 2 credits

EDU 591 Learning Communities 2 credits

First Year

EDU 543 Cornerstone II: Introduction to Action Research I 1 credit

Final Year

EDU 702 Capstone II: Practicum & Synthesis 2 credits

Spring

All Students

EDU 564 Leading for Change 2 credits

EDU 582 Semiotics of Schools 2 credits

EDU 563 Ethics in Education 2 credits

First Year

EDU 544 Cornerstone III: Introduction to Action Research II 1 credit

Final Year

EDU 703 Capstone III: Reflection & Presentation 2 credits

Total credits for a degree 48 credits

Course Descriptions

EDU 522 Cultural Competence

2 credits

Diane 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

2 credits

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

2 credits

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 Storytelling, Design Process, and Connected Curriculum

2 credits

This course begins by tapping into two key skill sets for educators and leaders: storytelling and design thinking. They will build and share personal stories as they prepare to engage in collaborative work over the course of the quarter and the year. The Design Thinking Process is introduced to provide a framework for how to work as students consider their role in creating engaging learning experiences in their classrooms.

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 storytelling in creating a context for personal connection to peers, pupils and curriculum
- Use a Design Thinking approach as they collaborate on class projects
- 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
- 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 532 Collaborative Elements

2 credits

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

2 credits

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 542 Cornerstone I: School Culture & Reflective Practice

1 credit

The Cornerstone is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their first year at the College for School Culture. Cornerstone topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. Cornerstone work this quarter focuses on identifying elements of institutional culture and developing skills as reflective practitioners. As students are fully immersed in their practicum settings, they share, compare, and discuss the cultures of their schools and practice reflective skills in school settings.

EDU 543 Cornerstone II: Introduction to Action Research I

1 credit

The Cornerstone is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their first year at the College for School Culture. Cornerstone topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. This quarter builds on the reflective practice framework and introduces students to formal tools that support practitioner inquiry, the action research process. Over the course of this quarter students will become familiar with the stages of action research, identify problems of practice within their practicum settings and conduct a preliminary literature review to support a mini action research project of their design.

EDU 544 Cornerstone III: Introduction to Action Research II

1 credit

The Cornerstone is designed to support students academically and professionally throughout their first year at the College for School Culture. Cornerstone topics and activities serve as both preparatory and responsive to the overall student experience. Students continue to conduct their mini action research projects this quarter as they build an understanding of research methods using their practicum settings. They will practice multiple methods of data collection, discuss the value and effectiveness of various methods, analyze data to find meaning, and communicate about their findings. Building familiarity with the components of action research will help students to take a leadership stance in their professional settings and prepare them to conduct individualized capstone projects in their final year of the program.

EDU 561 Understanding Research Design

2 credits

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 563 Ethics in Education

2 credits

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.

EDU 564 Leading for Change

2 credits

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 Individualizing Instruction

2 credits

This quarter, we will look at instructional practices, curricular design and cultural elements that support individualizing instruction. Students will consider their current beliefs and knowledge about how students learn. They will engage with theoretical, philosophical and empirical foundations of 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 School

2 credits

Students navigate multiple communication systems on a daily basis. As they move from one subject to another, they are taught to communicate using the symbolic language of that subject. As teachers, we should be aware of this circumstance and learn to identify different ways of communicating with our students. While the symbolism of each subject is unique, several practices are consistent between these domains to help students understand and communicate clearly. This course provides several experiences for graduate students to learn about and compare symbol systems from different aspects of school. They will explore several discrete subject areas to identify what is the unique language of each domain as well as to identify the different ways teachers communicate expectations and assess student understanding. They will also learn to create opportunities for students to express their understanding by mixing symbol systems in order to express themselves.

EDU 583 Opportunistic Curriculum Design

2 credits

"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." [Ritchhart] Opportunistic curriculum design challenges educators to use concepts at the core of their curricular structures and to individualize knowledge and skills so that all learners can engage and thrive. About instruction, John Van de Walle says that for teachers to be truly effective, four components must come together:

- an appreciation of the discipline

- an understanding of how students learn and construct ideas
- an ability to design and select tasks so that students learn in a problem-solving environment
- And 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. Building a definition of opportunity in a curricular setting, discussion of pedagogy that supports opportunity, and examining approaches to opportunistic design will anchor participant experiences.

EDU 584 Design for Critical Thinking

2 credits

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 586 Design for Democracy

2 credits

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

2 credits

Learning communities include the people, their perspectives and backgrounds as well as the space in which teaching and learning happen. They involve the relationships that teachers create with students and that students create with one another. They also include how the families of students and adjacent communities feel involved. In vibrant learning communities constituents share a common understanding of how to learn and how to treat each other, the community as a whole and the individual. 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.
- Familiarity with different coaching, questioning, and instructional philosophies.
- Knowledge of culturally sustaining practices that empower sustainable and inclusive learning communities.

EDU 592 Elements of Assessment

2 credits

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 the 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 day-lighting 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 Designing Assessment

2 credits

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 595: Designing a Culture of Inquiry

3 credits

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 I: Proposal & Design

2 credits

This course welcomes students back to school and dedicates time to understanding the capstone process and expectations. Students will begin by identifying their capstone area of focus and recruiting members of their capstone review team. They will define relevant terms and examine 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 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 II: Practicum & Synthesis

2 credits

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 III: Reflection & Presentation

2 credits

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 what they learned and provide feedback to each other.