Course Syllabus

Edit

IL 2257: Teaching English Language Learners

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COURSE RATIONALE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to teach you about how to best meet the needs of the K-12 English learners (ELs) in our nation's schools. ELs are a diverse population of individuals who differ in respect to nationality, race, ethnicity, age, ability, socioeconomic status, native language, educational background, and experience with and proficiency in English. The uniting factor among this population is that all ELs are in the process of acquiring and expanding academic language proficiency in English in all content areas. Throughout this course, you will learn about the legal responsibilities of teachers of ELs, models of teaching, cultural issues, ways to involve and support parents and families, and specific language and literacy instructional approaches to best support and assess the ELs in your classroom.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After reading, discussing, and completing assignments during the course, you will be able to meet the following course objectives:

1. Identify different types of ELs and instructional practices that can support them in mainstream classrooms.
2. Identify, discuss, and find ways of dealing with academic and socioemotional factors that may influence ELs' performance in schools.
3. Recognize programming options and instructional models that can meet the needs of students with limited or interrupted formal education.
4. Become familiar with the legal responsibilities of educators towards ELs with respect to federal and state legislation.
5. Build an understanding of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards, the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) English Language Proficiency Standards, and the standards for English Language Development for the state of Pennsylvania (PA ELD standards).

6. Build a general understanding of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model and the research supporting it.
7. Explore how to use the Online ELL Differentiation Tool for incorporating content and language objectives across proficiency levels in lesson design.
8. Use instructional talk and tasks that are effective and necessary for culturally and linguistically diverse students.
9. Explore learning theories and research that support scaffolding learning through group work and language-based strategies.
10. Apprentice ELs to reading and writing the genres they are likely to encounter in specific subject areas.
11. Modify and adapt instruction and assessments for ELs at various levels of English proficiency.
12. Plan and critique lessons with content and language objectives and adaptations that address speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills and incorporate WIDA, TESOL, and PA ELD standards.
13. Observe, discuss, respond to, and reflect upon recorded examples of teachers working with ELs in classrooms.
14. Develop a teaching philosophy that supports culturally and linguistically diverse students.
15. Understand how to advocate for ELs in your classroom.
16. Discuss sociocultural characteristics of different populations of ELs and explore connections between cultural values and practices and school experiences.

COURSE SITE PRESENTATION

- In **Modules**, you will find a link to each week's learning module. Once you select a particular module, you will find an overview of key concepts, and the readings and assignments for that module. Each module begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.
- In **Discussions**, you will find the discussion prompts for each week. Dialogue Journal group discussions will take place between every Wednesday and Sunday.
- In **Assignments**, you will find the instructions for each assignment and the link to submit your work. All assignments are due by Sunday at 11:59 p.m. on their due dates.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Gibbons, P. (2015). *Scaffolding language scaffolding learning: Teaching English language learners in the mainstream classroom* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. (Open source textbook)

Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2016). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Additional required readings will be available digitally within the modules of the course.

COURSE EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENTS

Dialogue Journal: You will be using Dialogue Journal for your weekly online discussions. You will be expected to write posts that respond to the discussion starter prompts or introduce ideas and issues that are related to the weekly readings. Please note that the discussion prompts are meant as a starting point for discussion, not as a limit to what you may discuss. As graduate students, you should engage and interact with your peers consistently and extensively in the discussion. There are many ideas to explore in every reading, and you should feel free to introduce these ideas in the discussion with your group as well as to ask questions that you have. It is important to connect concepts to your own experiences as a preservice teacher or classroom teacher where applicable. In an online course, this dialogue takes the place of discussion that would occur in the classroom. This course design supports a community of practice, so you are also encouraged to share resources in the form of articles, podcasts, TedTalks, blogs, and YouTube videos.

You are expected to communicate ideas with your group through 2–3 exchanges each week. Please make a first post by Wednesday, 11:59PM, each week so that there is ample time for responses within your group by Sunday. Please indicate your name and the post number at the beginning of your post, and make every effort not to wait to post until the weekend. The timing of your initial post is important, so failing to make the weekly initial post by Wednesday at midnight will affect your grade.

Each student will earn full credit weekly by writing 2–3 paragraph-level exchanges that exemplify thoughtful, reflective, critical thinking about each week's readings between Wednesday and Sunday.

Grading Rubric	Points
Posting by Wednesday at midnight and completing 2–3 exchanges by Sunday	5
Posting on Thursday and completing 2–3 exchanges by Sunday	4.5
Posting on Friday and completing 2–3 exchanges by Sunday	4
Posting on Saturday and completing 2–3 exchanges by Sunday	3.5
Posting on Sunday and completing 2–3 exchanges by Sunday OR Posting by Saturday and completing 1 exchange by Sunday	3

Posting on Sunday and completing 1 exchange OR Completing 2–3 exchanges only by Sunday	2.5
Posting by Sunday only OR Completing 1 exchange only by Sunday	2

I will occasionally join in the discussion with each group throughout the course. However, I will definitely read all exchanges!

Video Reflections: You will complete three video reflections throughout the semester. For each reflection, first view the video clips so that you can see different teachers using different instructional techniques to make content accessible to ELs. Please note that each video reflection assignment has a different focus and a different list (with embedded links) of classroom video clips with ELs only and with both ELs and non-ELs organized by age group (Pre-K/Elementary School, Middle School, and High School). For each video reflection, select one video clip from the suggested list, and submit a written reflection in a one-page single-spaced Word document using a 12-point font.

Teaching Philosophy: You will discuss two to three principles or beliefs that guide (or will guide) your work with ELs. In choosing these principles, consider your actual (or an imagined) teaching context, your classroom/social work experiences, and our Dialogue Journals and readings. You are expected to present your principles clearly and discuss them thoroughly. Your ideas should go beyond the simple statement or assertion of beliefs to the support of your beliefs with what you have read in the research or in the course readings and what you have experienced in the classroom. Submit in a two-page, single-spaced Word document using a 12-point font.

Mini-Assignment: There is one individual mini-assignment in Module 1. It is designed to help you to apply what you are learning and to deepen your understanding of key concepts. Submission of this mini-assignment should be a one-page, single-spaced Word document using a 12-point font.

Lesson Plan: Graduate students will *design* a lesson plan while undergraduates will *critique* an existing lesson plan.

- ***Graduate Students:*** Lesson/Meeting Plan Design

As graduate students who aim to be masters of practice in a field, for this course you will practice designing a detailed plan with instructional moves that enable ELs to succeed in your professional context. For example, a teacher might plan a 45-minute lesson for their 2nd period class that is culturally and linguistically diverse, whereas a social worker might plan a 45-minute meeting with ELs who are under their direct guidance.

In this assignment, you will design a lesson for a class that includes four ELs with the following profiles:

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  - a level 2 emerging student from Argentina (Spanish speaker) who has been in the U.S. for four months.
  - a level 2 emerging student from Vietnam (Vietnamese speaker) who has been in the U.S. for six months.
  - a level 3 developing student from Guatemala (Spanish speaker who also speaks an indigenous language) who has been in the U.S. for two years.
  - a level 3 developing student from Somalia (Maay and Arabic speaker) who lived in a refugee camp for four years before arriving in the U.S. two months ago and has had limited formal schooling.

Your lesson will be situated within a theme or topic in a content area of your choice: science, math, social studies, or English language arts. The lesson plan should be based on the ELD PA Standards (Links to an external site.) for your chosen content area and grade level cluster, contain appropriate adaptations and modifications for ELs of emerging level 2 and developing level 3, and incorporate effective teaching strategies for ELs learned from this course. The lesson plan should reflect your ability to design and adapt instruction and assessments for ELs at the emerging and developing levels of English language proficiency.

- *Undergraduate Students:* Lesson Plan Critique

As undergraduate students, you may not yet be prepared to design complete lesson plans, although you'll learn a lot about making lesson plans during this course. Instead, you will choose one lesson plan (links to several lesson plans from different content areas and grade levels will be included in the assignment page) to critique.

Critiquing a lesson plan provides you with the opportunity to identify and explain the way that the lesson plan you choose exemplify an integration of language and content objectives, and include instructional activities and teaching strategies that have been introduced throughout the course. You will also critique the formative assessments that the teacher uses to help determine whether all students understand the concepts introduced in the lesson plan. You are expected to identify and explain both the strengths of the lesson plan as well as to make suggestions for how the lesson plan may be improved.

Assignment Point Values		
ITEM EVALUATED	POINT VALUE	WEIGHTED PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
Dialogue Journal (14)	70	45%
Video Reflection (3)	30	20%

Teaching Philosophy	20	10%
Mini-Assignment	10	5%
Lesson Plan	30	20%
Total	**160**	**100%**

ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Submission deadline and grading of the weekly Dialogue Journal will adhere to its Grading Rubric. All other individual assignments, i.e., Video Reflections, Mini-Assignment, Teaching Philosophy, and Lesson Plan, must be submitted in Canvas before their due dates. 25% of the point value of an assignment will be deducted every day for individual assignments that are turned in after the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted after 3 days past the original due date unless you have obtained written permission from the instructor in advance. Any missed coursework will receive a grade of zero.

GRADING SCALE

Grading Scale	
GRADE	**PERCENTAGE**
A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
F	Less than 70

Below 70 is failing. Working towards "B-" or better is expected in graduate classes.

COURSE POLICIES

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Active participation in this course is essential. Active participation entails logging into your Canvas course site, interacting with instructional materials, and completing and submitting learning activities by specified due dates and times.

PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic IntegrityLinks to an external site.](#). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

The course aligns with the School of Education's mission to ignite learning and deliver a respective, inclusive, and equitable learning experience. We behave professionally, and we communicate respectfully, so we create an inclusive learning environment for all members of the course.

Preferred Names and Pronouns: Please feel free to email me privately if you want me to address you using a name or pronoun that you prefer.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, at 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible, but no later than the fourth week of the term or visit the [Office of Disability Resources websiteLinks to an external site.](#) as early as possible, but no later than the 4th week of the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

ACCESSIBILITY

Ensuring an accessible and pleasant experience to all users, regardless of disability, is a key focus of Canvas. The Canvas platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative and [Section 508 (Links to an external site.)](#) guidelines. Read more about [Accessibility within Canvas (Links to an external site.)](#).

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