



**EDUC 2200: MAT Disciplined Inquiry
Authoring the self as a teacher
Spring 2021**

Instructor information

Instructor: Professor Richard Donato

Email: donato@pitt.edu

Course information

ZOOM meeting held every other Monday 4:30-7:10

Jan. 25
Feb. 8
Feb. 22
March 8
March 22
April 5
April 19

Course Materials

- All course materials will be found in weekly Modules on CANVAS.
 - Please set your notifications/announcements to notify immediately.
 - Course announcements will be available in CANVAS and sent to your e-mail addresses.
 - There are no textbooks for this course. If readings on particular topics are needed, we will determine this as a class.
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Goals and Purpose of the course

EDUC 2200 has been developed to fulfill several goals. The course is intended to (a) prepare you to apply for and find a teaching position, (b) to fulfill your MAT comprehensive examination university requirement, and (c) to deepen your understanding of particular aspects of your own teaching practice. Goals are presented in more detail below:

- 1) To satisfy the MAT comprehensive examination requirement.
- 2) To learn FROM your teaching rather than ABOUT teaching. Specifically, the course is intended to consolidate your knowledge of teaching that has been learned up to this point.
- 3) To learn how to analyze your teaching, explain it clearly, and justify what you do.
- 4) To prepare you to discuss teaching in ways that communicate to other professionals in the field and, in this way, prepare you for interviews.
- 5) To make explicit claims about your practice and support these claims with concrete illustrations (evidence) rather than anecdote or personal opinion.
- 6) To develop one or more ideas for your teaching project for next semester in the Research Seminar. Leave the course with the a few research questions you will ask and the kinds of information you might collect to answer these questions.
- 7) To form a supportive community of professional practice where mutual concerns are discussed, explored, and compared without unproductive complaint or simplistic thinking about teaching and learning.

What do students say about the course?

The course helps to pull together what we learned in the fall.

Good preparation for job interviews. Dress rehearsal.

Time to really think about what we have been doing last semester.

Share and learn new ideas about teaching.

Increase my ability to talk about teaching.

Motivates at a time when feeling motivated may be difficult.

So, what will we do in this class?

The **primary outcome** of Educ 2200 is to create a portfolio document of 4 essays (4-5 paragraphs each) on a specific teaching practice with illustration to support your claims. A **secondary outcome** is to identify topics and questions from these essays for your teaching project in the Research Seminar next semester.

What is the MAT portfolio?

1. The MAT portfolio is a document that contains a) *4 essays* (entries) on a specific teaching practice with b) *illustrations as evidence* of assertions about the specific practice in the form of teaching artifacts, such as sample student work, visuals, teacher created materials, assessment data, student comments, narratives of interactions, etc. We will discuss how to use evidence in the text during class discussion, for example, captioning, coding, annotating, reference in text, etc.
2. The topics of the 4 essays are:
 - a) **Formative Assessment** and how formative assessment is arguably a tool that teachers should use to ensure instructional equity in their classroom.
 - b) **Classroom Talk (Discourse)** and how classroom talk, e.g., creates participation, manages the class, develops critical thinking about important social issues, makes student thinking public, ensures inclusive classrooms, meets individual student learning needs, among other important issues associated with classroom talk.
 - c) Providing a **Variety of Instruction Practices** to engage student interest, curiosity, attention, etc. and to create equitable learning opportunities for *all* students.
 - d) **Praxis: Theoretical Practice and Practical Theory.** Praxis involves thinking, making, and doing. Paulo Freire defines praxis in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as "reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed." Praxis may be described as a form of critical thinking and comprises the simultaneous combination of reflection and action.

*All essays may/should address the topic for the perspective of *current on-line instructional practices* due to the pandemic.

What is the hope?

It is hoped that by exploring these four overarching topics in essays you will create and *autobiography* of your personal and professional development as a teacher over time.

It is also hoped that you will develop the ability to gain a *critical distance* on your own work as a teacher. This critical distance requires you to see aspect of teaching from alternate perspectives. Assuming an alternate perspective often results in changing what you *do* (practice), in changing how you *think* (beliefs), and in changing how you *feel* (dispositions).

How will the essays be introduced and completed?

- 1) For each essay topic, you will receive a *prompt* that will explain clearly the topic of the essay. Essay topics apply across *all* subject areas.
- 2) You will also receive *writing directions* indicating (a) the stages of the essays (paragraph by paragraph) and the (b) purpose and content of each stage.
- 3) Each essay should be accompanied by an authentic *illustration* (evidence) of the point you are trying to make. We will spend some of our class time discussing possible ways of providing evidence for a particular topic and what constitutes strong and weak evidence. That is, is the illustration actually a proof of your claims?
- 4) Essays should be uploaded to CANVAS by the due dates (details later)
- 5) *Feedback* on essays, if needed, will be in the form of questions that I pose to you for clarification. Your final grade on the essay will be determined by the essay , how carefully you followed the guidelines for the essay, and your responses to my follow-up questions. I will *not* require revised essay. You will only be asked to revise in cases where your essay was not acceptable by any standards.

What about writing?

- 1) Try your best to write *as clearly as possible* while responding to the requirements of the essay and while infusing the essay with your own creativity and ideas. Re-read what you have written a few times and self-edit.
- 2) Do *not* preach, complain, or blame students in your essay.
- 3) Give a *personal title* to your entry. Carefully consider illustrations/evidence to support your claims and ways to display and refer to it in the essay (Figure 1 shows, See Appendix A, etc.).
- 4) Think of your portfolio as an Autobiography of Professional Practice in 4 chapters.

What about preparing for the Research Seminar in this course?

In preparation for the research seminar with Dr. Emily Rainey in Summer I, you will identify a possible area for investigation based on what you analyzed and wrote in each essay. I will give more directions for this in class. The goal here (see Goal #6) is to develop one or more ideas for your teaching research project for next semester in the Research Seminar. You should leave the course with the a few research questions you will ask and the kinds of information you might collect to answer these questions. We will spend some of our class time discussing your ideas in large or small group. On April 19, you will submit a brief summary of your thinking on your research project .

What will we do in class and what are the due dates (Please respect deadlines)?

January 25	Orientation to the course
February 8	Discussion of Essay 1: Formative Assessment Writing evidence-based essays What counts as evidence? How to incorporate it into your essays.
February 22	Formative Assessment Essay due (20 points) Discussion of Essay 2: Classroom Talk
March 8	Classroom Talk Essay due (25 points) Discussion of Essay 3: Instructional Practices Essay
March 22	Instructional Practices Essay due (20 points) Discussion of Essay 4: Theory and Practice
April 5	Theory and Practice Essay due (25 points) Discussion of teaching project ideas
April 19	Looking toward the Research Seminar Written summary on your teaching project ideas due (10 points)

What should I do when we are not meeting on zoom?

When we do not meet, this is your time to:

- Think and plan for writing,
- Brainstorm ideas with classmates or with me (donato@pitt.edu),
- Decide on and/or collect evidence for the essay,
- Write the essay,
- Edit the essay, and/or
- Identify ideas, questions, needed information for the Research Seminar.

I will give you one or more assignments in preparation for the following class meeting to help you with the essay topic. **At the end of each of the 7 class meetings, specific directions or suggestions will be given for the week that we do not meet.**

I'm available during off weeks if you need to talk with me.

I may also request a 'check-in conference' with you during the course of the semester to discuss your thinking to date about your research seminar project.

How will I earn a grade for this course?

This is a LETTER GRADE COURSE.

Essays 1 and 3 are worth 20 points each.

Essay 2 and 4 are worth 25 points each.

Your report on ideas for Research Seminar projects is worth 10 points.

Letter Grade	Percent Grade
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
D+	67-69
D	65-66
E/F	Below 65

ATTENDANCE

This course is an opportunity for you to become part of a community of learners who are committed to learning through reading, writing, discussing, and collaborating. To be a part of that community, you need to attend all 7 class meetings and participate thoughtfully in all activities. If for some reason, you need to miss class, please inform me before the absence and provide a valid reason. I realize these are challenging times but if we make the effort to attend and be attentive, including myself, we can have a positive experience and leave the course at a point beyond where we started.

RECORDING THE CLASS

Recording this class is not permitted under any circumstances.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT:

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and nonvisible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

All students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other acts of academic dishonesty would be subject to disciplinary action. 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 the University Policy.

DISABILITY SERVICES:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 216 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890 or (412) 383-7355 (TTY), as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.