Curriculum and Teaching 100 Introduction to the Education Profession:

KU Core Goal 1, Learning Outcome 1 Build Core Skills of Critical Thinking and

Quantitative Literacy

Background

This first-year course was initially developed several years ago as a career exploration experience. Successful completion of the course is one of the required prerequisites for admission to the undergraduate teacher preparation program. Redesign commenced in the fall of 2015. The course now emphasizes introducing prospective teachers to threshold concepts and content through critical thinking and problem solving. The current plan is to evaluate course structures and student learning each semester, and to incorporate pertinent features into the ongoing teacher education program redesign. At the end of the Spring 2016 semester, the course was approved to meet Learning Outcome 1 of KU Core Goal 1, Build Core Skills of Critical Thinking and Quantitative Literacy. Learning Outcome 1 is described as follows: *Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to analyze and evaluate assumptions, claims, evidence, arguments, and forms of expression; select and apply appropriate interpretive tools (*http://kucore.ku.edu/goal1*).*

Course Design

Course features and learning activities are designed to promote active student engagement with content, concepts, and related issues pertinent to education as a profession. KU Core Learning Outcome 1 is foundational to the course.

Innovative course design. Innovation is embedded in the course through its structure (three modules), active learning and problem solving, and guided reflections.

Structure. Two sections are offered each semester. Each section meets twice per week - lecture followed by discussion sections (total fall enrollment is approximately 170; total spring enrollment is approximately 90). Students are assigned to teams during the first class meeting. Teams sit together in all class meetings to facilitate active learning. To emphasize key concepts pertaining to that topic, class meetings feature advance organizers, followed by teams analyzing information, using evidence to support judgments, and sharing thinking with other teams, with simulates the types of experiences they are likely to encounter in future professional contexts. The course is divided into three content modules. Each of the course modules, described in the syllabus, focuses on

content and related concepts that define teachers' roles: Module 1, curriculum and instruction; Module 2, teaching diverse learners; Module 3, working in professional contexts. Each module features guiding questions and learning outcomes.

Active learning and problem solving. These two attributes are combined in C&T 100: they permeate course design and learning experiences. For example, the course features team-based problem solving (a hybrid of problem-based learning, team-based learning, and creative problem solving), which also familiarizes students with the concept of professional learning communities. Problem solving is scaffolded throughout each module to prepare students for that module's culminating problem solving challenge. There is an example included in the section on active learning below. Each module culminates with an authentic challenge, based on core issues that impact practicing teachers. Working in teams, students apply the content and concepts addressed in that module to develop solutions to the challenge. They gather, analyze, and evaluate information, identify assumptions and use specific strategies to frame questions that lead to synthesizing ideas, test hypotheses based on analyzing evidence, and make evidence-based arguments to support conclusions.

Guided reflections. Each module challenge concludes with two reflections: first, there is a personal reflection in which students are prompted to share insights about their learning pertinent to module content and concepts. There is a second individual reflection on the team-based problem solving process. A sample of each type of reflection is included with this document.

Student engagement and active learning strategies. The course design features, described above, develop students' capacities for critical reasoning through inductive activities incorporated into each class meeting. For example, in the first week of the course (Module 1, Curriculum and Teaching), teams of students complete an informal formative assessment about teachers they experienced. Attributes are condensed into a metaphor (words and images) of effective teachers and shared on an electronic bulletin board (Padlet). These bulletin boards are referred to throughout the course, as students learn about effective teaching, working with diverse learners, and the historical and social forces that have shaped the profession. Content is revisited during the Module 3 Challenge, described below.

During class meetings, teams apply pertinent content to smaller scale (scaffolded) team-based problem solving such as viewing a video of a teacher in action and developing a guide based on key content/concepts of effective teaching to analyze the instructional episode. For example, after identifying qualities of effective and ineffective teachers, teams viewed two video clips from the film, *Mr. Holland's Opus*. Teams practiced using evidence (specific behaviors) to support their conclusions about the teacher's initial effectiveness and subsequent growth.

In the Module 3 Challenge (Teachers), students articulate their current understanding about effective teaching as they analyze the primary essay prompt (see documentation) on the School of Education application. To stimulate students' critical reasoning, we use essays submitted by **unsuccessful** applicants to KU's teacher education program (Note: essays are NOT current, and all identifiers were removed). We are collaborating with a key academic advisor in the School of Education to develop the activity. She is listed in the Key Teaching and Assessment Personnel section). A copy of the activity is included in the attached documents.

Documenting and sharing achievement of learning outcomes

Achievement of learning outcomes is assessed through use of rubrics based on the example for Learning Outcome 1, posted on the KU Core site. The rubric for the course final is included as an example. As of Fall 2016, quantitative data are being compiled for all key critical thinking activities, listed in an attachment. The current plan is to share data yearly with pertinent colleagues in the department (for course improvement) as well as the Teacher Education Committee in the School of Education (for input into program redesign).

Feedback loop for improving the course. The Associate Dean for Teacher Education, Kelli Thomas, and Chair of Curriculum and Teaching, Steve White provide feedback on course content and suggestions for refining critical reasoning and problem solving activities. We are collecting quantitative data on all critical thinking activities and will analyze these data for trends and to identify possible refinements - of the associated learning activities as well as the specific assignments.

Plan for, or evidence of, sharing results with faculty colleagues who teach KU Core courses meeting the same learning outcome or courses that build on

foundational skills and knowledge taught in the course. I have discussed with Andrea Greenhoot and Doug Ward the possibility of involving CTE as the initiator of a meeting of faculty whose courses meet KU Core Learning Outcome 1 for purposes of networking, exchanging ideas relative to learning activities and assessments, and feedback leading to course improvement.

Collaborating with Colleagues

  Aligning learning: Applying to the School of Education. In the Module 3 Challenge, as described above, C&T 100 students analyze one of the School of Education essays ("Why I want to be a teacher"), for several unsuccessful applicants. Based on the strong, positive response to the activity, the activity has been expanded to include a letter C&T 100 students write to themselves. These letters incorporate content relative to the profession, concepts associated with effective teaching, and a reflection on the application essays. Students write specific advice about content to include and exclude in their application essays. I have agreed to email these letters to all C&T 100 students on August 15th 2017. School of Education applications are due in mid-September. Associate Dean Kelli Thomas and I plan to interview willing applicants relative to their perceptions of their self-generated advice.

  We are compiling data for student scores on this application essay to explore trends. To date we have noticed a slight upward trend in scores since this activity was implemented. We will continue to collect and analyze these data.

  Aligning learning: Providing an authentic experience for advanced students. In the fall of 2015, a colleague in Curriculum and Teaching, Heidi Hallman (English Education coordinator), and I piloted collaboration between C&T 100 and her advanced course in Language Arts methods. I identified approximately 60 high scoring "This I Believe" (course final) essays (after removing identifiers and obtaining permission from C&T 100 students to participate in this additional screening). Her students used the exam rubric to select ten essays they considered to demonstrate particularly high quality. Dr. Hallman and I are continuing our collaboration and hope to identify a group of exemplary essays (written fall 2016). Our hope is to identify a KU-based publication outlet. Her students would coach the former C&T 100 students, thereby providing her students with an authentic pre-professional experience.

Relevant teaching and assessment personnel

C&T department faculty

Reva C. Friedman, C&T 100 Instructor. Responsible for redesigning course, co-nominator of course to KU Core Goal 1A. Developed feedback mechanisms. Analyzes and uses student learning data to update course organization, instructional and learning activities, and assessments.

Heidi Hallman, English Education Coordinator. Instructor for C&T 533, Curriculum and Instruction, Middle and Secondary English and Language Arts, advanced methods course that focuses on curriculum development and instructional strategies appropriate for teaching English/Language Arts. Students apply course rubrics to review C&T 100 students' teaching beliefs essays for possible (internal) publication.

Kelli Thomas, Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Steven H. White, C&T Department Chair. Serve as collaborators regarding course redesign, analyzing and applying feedback for continuous course improvement, and alignment with KU Core goal. Integrating course into ongoing redesign of teaching preparation program.

School of Education Staff members

Paula Naughtin, Academic Advisor, School of Education. Responsible for developing and implementing feedback to continuously improve one of the course's essential critical thinking activities.

Tiffany Edmonds. Assistant to Associate Deans, School of Education. Coordinates faculty evaluations of applications for admission to the undergraduate teacher education program. Compiles post-course assessment data.

Additional Documentation

Items 1 and 2 are included in this document.

All other supporting documents are submitted separately.

1. Chart of critical thinking activities by module. Includes types of thinking and percentage of total grade.

2. Brief descriptions of course modules

3. Course syllabus

4. Sample reflection prompts

5. Module 3 Challenge

6. Course final and associated rubric

1. Critical thinking activities. Listed by module. Includes thinking skills and percent of total course grade.

Module 1 Curriculum and Teaching	Thinking Skills	Percent of Grade
Mindset self assessment and analysis	Understanding, analyzing, evaluating, creating	10%
Learning Styles self assessment and analysis		
Multiple Intelligences self assessment and analysis		
Curriculum Orientation self assessment and analysis		
Module 1 Challenge – What Do Effective Teachers Do? Peer Teaching	Applying, analyzing, creating	5%
Module 1 Challenge – Identifying Effective Teaching (Classroom observations, interviews, analyses) – Team Based Problem Solving	Applying, analyzing, evaluating	10%
Module 1 Challenge - Reflections		
Module 2 Teaching Diverse Learners		
Implicit Bias self assessment and reflection	Understanding, analyzing, evaluating, creating	5%
"Who Are My People" self assessment and reflection on inheritance of cultural values based on analysis of family ancestry		
Module 2 Challenge – What Does This Student Need?	Applying, analyzing, evaluating	10%
Module 2 Challenge - Reflections		
Module 3 Teachers – Working in Professional Contexts		
Module 3 Challenge – Who Has Potential to Become an Effective Teacher? Team Based Problem Solving	Applying, analyzing, evaluating	10%
Module 3 Challenge – Who Has Potential to Become an Effective Teacher? Individual Reflection	Creating	
Final Exam - This I Believe (Philosophy Statement and reflection)	Applying, analyzing, evaluating, creating	20%
Final Exam – Portfolio of Self-Assessments and culminating reflection	Applying, analyzing, evaluating, creating	5%
Critical Thinking activities – percent of total grade (based on 1000 points)		75%

2. Brief Descriptions of Course Modules

Module 1 – teaching and learning
        In this module, students create a short lesson and teach it to a group of peers. Readings include writing goals and objectives (Bloom's taxonomy), high leverage teaching practices, teaching practices such as questioning and checking for understanding, conceptions of curriculum, learning styles, and multiple intelligences. For the module challenge, teams observe classrooms in action (virtually) to compare and contrast recommended and actual practices, and interview the teacher about instructional planning. They also compare their peer teaching experiences with the lessons they observe.

Module 2 – learners
        In this module, students investigate learner qualities that affect teaching and learning as well as their personal histories and inheritance of values and biases. The module challenge consists of analyzing simulated learner profiles. Teams use course resources as they analyze learner data and hypothesize accommodations each learner needs. Each team member will take the lesson they developed previously and modify it for learners with different needs (ELL, disabilities, high intellectual potential, gender, poverty, homelessness).

Module 3 – teachers
        In this module, students explore why people select teaching as a career, how teacher roles have changed, and their own strengths and fit to the profession. Using recommendations from readings and videos, they identify qualities that make schools more effective, and create a guide to evaluating a school's climate (for use during future field experiences). For the module challenge, teams analyze application essays and apply their learning to a personal letter of advice for their future application essays.