EDTE J777: ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE
University of South Carolina

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I. Descriptive Information
   A. Course Number and Title: EDTE 777 - Analysis of Effective Instructional Practices
   B. Catalog Description: Critical analysis and in-depth study of a wide range of instructional techniques and strategies that have been shown to be effective in fostering student achievement at many levels of schooling.
   C. Course Credit: 3 graduate hours
   D. Prerequisites: A Master's degree
   E. Intended Audience: Designed for post-masters students seeking advanced training in instructional effectiveness.
   F. On-Campus meetings:
   On-line meetings on Blackboard:

II. Statement of Learning Outcomes
Goals:
1. To expand the teacher's expertise in planning effective instruction.
2. To increase the teacher's expertise in presenting and managing effective instruction.
3. To provide teachers techniques for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and instruction and to reflect upon their own practice.

Objectives:
Participants in the course should:
1. Identify and reflect on cultural and other factors that influence development of effective instructional practices recognizing the varying strengths supported by different cultures.
2. Characterize "effective teaching": in terms of variables suggested by research on teaching.
3. Critically analyze purposes and aims of instruction with regard to effective principles of teacher planning as it relates to one's own practice.
4. Identify alternative approaches for meeting student needs within the classroom environment and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches such as instructional technology and new literacies.
5. Work with and accommodate needs of diverse learners including English language learners, students of different races/cultures, and students with exceptionalities.
6. Create positive school environments for student learning that include school, family, and community contexts.
7. Identify characteristics of "effective schools" as described in current research, including the identification of the roles of teachers, master's teachers, and principals in effective schools.
III. Required Textbooks:

Further reading:
Articles on Blackboard
See Bibliography, Section IX

IV. Academic Course Requirements:

**A. Participation: 40 points (10% of final grade).** Participation includes (a) completing all assignments in a timely manner, and (b) being prepared to contribute to on-line discussions. In addition, I believe that participation positions learners to be ultimately responsible for their own learning and that professional educators learn for a lifetime. Thus, this course requires participants to commit to reading, interacting, experiencing and reflecting for the purpose of fostering their growth as an educator. (c) To that end, there will be space for you to reflect on your questions, concerns, “a-has” and learning several times during the semester in a monthly exit slip.

**B. Reading Assignments: 60 points (15% of final grade).** I believe that reading in this course is CRITICAL. In order to stretch our understandings and take into account the perspective of colleagues, we will use a designated space on Blackboard for that purpose. I will divide you into groups and one week you will be responding to the readings, and the next week you will be responding to a classmate’s writing about the readings.

In summary, there are two roles that you will take with our readings.

1. You will either be posting your written responses to the readings or
2. You will be posting your response to an individual classmate’s writing

Each week, I will provide the format for the response to the readings. For example, one week I may ask you to respond by writing an essay, and another week I will ask you to write a letter to a colleague or another week, I may ask you to find some quotes from the readings that you want every teacher you know to read. The formats will vary, and I will carefully explain my expectations for each format.

Each week, I will also provide the format for your response to another student's writing. It will mirror the format that the writer used, and you will respond by explaining your reaction to what s/he wrote and to his/her ideas plus any questions that you have about the writing. I will explain my expectations for your response for each format.

Each student will write a total of 3 responses to the readings and each student will respond to an individual student in their small group 3 times.

Note on due dates: If you are writing a response to the readings you will need to have that completed by midnight Saturday. This will give time for your co-respondent to craft his/her response to your writing by midnight on Monday.
In addition, for your reading of Peter Johnston’s *Choice Words*, you will create an electronic journal to track and reflect on the social, moral, and personal aspects of your language and to think about how your language can affect the learning of your students. This will be a very informal journal constructed by you in a format with which you are comfortable. For example, it could be a chart, double-sided journal, a list, or written as short paragraphs. Whatever your form, the important part will be including a space where you have reflected on your language and the things you say, helping you become more aware of your language and the impact it has on others, especially your students. I am very interested in the ways you are learning about language. It helps me learn, too. I will ask you to submit your journal twice during the semester on September 29 and November 20.

C. Syntheses of Readings - 60 points (15% of final grade). You will synthesize your readings two times during the semester. In this synthesis you will analyze and bring together ideas and concepts that you have been reading about during the previous month. Synthesizing gives you the opportunity to see how or if ideas and concepts relate to each other, and in the process form new and more complex understandings about theory and practice. You will have a space on Blackboard to tease out these understandings in the company of your small group. However, you will each write your own syntheses individually. These will be due on September 29 and November 3. (Articles/chapters to include in your syntheses are in bold print in the course calendar in the “Readings” column. Those that have (1) next to them will be included in the first synthesis due on September 29th, and those with a (2) next to them will be included in the second synthesis and due on November 3.)

Reflection on Teaching - 60 points (15% of final grade): Based on our reading of the Fenstermacher and Soltis book, *Approaches to Teaching*, you will write a three to four page essay due on November 10. This essay will describe:

- your own philosophical position on teaching (which approach/approaches do you value?)
- where you are in your quest to become this kind of teacher
- what you need to do to reach your goals to be the teacher you want to be
- what would this approach look like in your classroom, (for example, “What are the “MAKER” frameworks of the approach you choose for yourself?”)

E. Critical Perspectives on Characteristics of Effective Instruction - 100 points (25% of final grade) (See attached rubric.) This assignment has three parts: Collaborative research, an individually written paper, and a collaborative presentation. In order to look critically at our teaching worlds, each week we will be creating a list of “critical questions” that arise from readings and on-line discussions, asking questions about how effective instructional practice is characterized and who is well-served by particular instructional practices and who is not. As the semester unfolds, you will determine those question/s that are significant and immediate to you, and they will serve as a basis for this final project.

Collaborative Research: To explore instructional practices from a critical perspective, you will work collaboratively with a small group of other students who share a common interest in a topic about effective instructional strategies, incorporating on-line dialogue that grapples with how students are served (or not) by the instructional decisions we make. The topic of the inquiry will be a critical exploration as you carefully interrogate how students are served (or not) by the instructional decisions we make.

Individually written paper: While you will research this topic together with your small group, sharing your ideas, questions, concerns, tensions, and interpretations, you will write this paper individually. Your paper should include a description of:
• How your question/topic evolved (and why it was important to you)
• The theory and research that guided you (whose ideas and concepts you used)
• What you learned from your inquiry (what's the “so what” for your teaching?)
• Implications for creating democratic classroom practices (because of what you learned from your inquiry, how does this change/alter the way you will teach?)
• Other questions that you found along the way (research always uncovers more questions than it ever answers. What were some of yours? What would you like to research next?)

Your written paper (5-7 pages) will be due on December 5. Please attend to APA 6th edition as you write. Readings, in-class discussions, and Blackboard discussions must be integrated into the paper.

**Presentation:** You will share your explorations with the rest of the class at our December 5 on-campus meeting. You and your small group will decide on the kind of presentation you want to provide to your classmates. For example, you may choose a power point presentation, a poster presentation, a dramatic enactment, etc. etc. You are only limited by your own imagination. However, your presentation should be limited to no more than 15-20 minutes and should also be interactive. Make this fun for everyone by involving your audience in some aspect of your presentation/exploration. See rubric at the end of syllabus for further details.

**F. Processes of Collaboration and Inquiry – 80 points (20% of final grade).** (See attached rubric.) While parts of the Critical Perspectives on Characteristics of Effective Instruction project will be collaborative, the Processes of Collaboration and Inquiry project will be individual and will demonstrate and describe the insight you have gained from working collaboratively within a group. This paper should be two to three pages long and will be due on December 8, and will be a reflection that focuses on the process of collaborative inquiry, for example generating themes, locating appropriate materials, negotiating your presentation, etc., and it should include descriptions of: (See rubric at end of syllabus for further details.)

• The collaborative process of inquiry within your research community (e.g. how did your group generate questions, locate materials, negotiate the writing requirement, and determine the format of your presentation).
• The methods used in your research community to facilitate the growth and learning of others in group
• The strategies and perspectives that worked well for your research community
• Question and concerns that you have about working in collaborative research communities
• Possibilities for collaborative work in your own classrooms.

**Conceptual Framework: Essential Professional Tools, Collaborative Educational Leader**

**Essential Professional Tools 7: Skills in Collaborating, Teaching, and/or Mentoring – Advanced program candidates demonstrate the flexible, varied skills needed to work collaboratively and effectively with other adults in professional roles.**
Collaborative Educational Leader and Advocate Standards: Facilitating Learning (includes creating appropriate environments and managing people, activities, technology, and resources in partnership with others) (P).

V. Administrative course requirements.

A. Participation and Preparation: While participation styles will vary, preparation for and active participation in class and small group discussions are essential to the learning process. Full participation will require careful reading of the articles and book chapters for group discussions and children’s and young adult books for small group literature studies. You need to be prepared to share your thoughts and reflections on our readings, actively offering your ideas and encouraging responses from others.

B. Attendance:
Students are expected to attend all regular class meetings. We will have two on-campus meetings, and unsatisfactory class attendance will have an impact on your final grade.

C. Utilizing Blackboard:
Utilizing Blackboard is a required component of the course. If you are unfamiliar with this medium please refer to this website for assistance (http://blackboard.sc.edu/). All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard within the “Assignments” link on our course site.

D. Late Assignments
Students are expected to meet assignment deadlines, and I will accept assignments up through midnight of the day they are due. Any work submitted after its due date will be considered late. Late assignments will be reduced by a full grade, except in extreme cases.

Note on due dates: Our on-line classes are scheduled for Tuesday afternoons, however, that is just so that we can “chunk” our work into weekly segments. With the exception of the two on-campus meetings, our work will be on-line. With that in mind, all assignments will be due by midnight Monday before our class is scheduled – WITH ONE EXCEPTION. If you are writing a response to the readings you will need to have that completed by midnight Saturday. This will give time for your respondent to craft his/her response to your writing by midnight on Monday.

E. Academic Honesty
University policy regarding academic responsibility (Student Affairs Policy STAF 6.25) states “It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this rule or who knowingly assists another to violate this rule shall be subject to discipline.” Students who commit an act of academic dishonesty may receive a 0.0 on the assignment or in the course. More information regarding this policy can be found in the Carolina Community: USC Student Handbook and Policy Guide at: http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm#Academic%20Responsibility

F. Policies relating to students with disabilities
Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor to discuss any accommodations needed to fulfill course requirements. In order to receive reasonable accommodations from the instructor, students must have certified eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services. Any student with a documented disability should contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 777-6142 to make arrangements for appropriate accommodations.
G. APA Guidelines
All written work must follow APA 6th edition guidelines (particularly focusing on page numbers, double-spacing, in-text citations, and references). Please edit your work carefully and check for spelling/typographical and grammar errors before turning it in.

VI. Evaluation and Grading

Course guidelines for grading: This course is a graded course using A, B, C, D, F. 94-100% is considered an A; 86-93% is considered a B; 78-85% is considered a C; 70-77% is considered a D; below 70% is considered an F. Students are required to complete all assignments thoroughly, professionally, and on time.

There are six categories of engagement in this course evaluation:

- Class participation 40 points (10%)
- Readings 60 points (15%)
- Syntheses of readings 60 points (15%)
- Teaching reflection 60 points (15%)
- Critical Perspectives Paper/Presentation 100 points (25%)
- Processes of Collaboration Paper 80 points (20%)

- TOTAL POINTS 400 points (100%)

376 – 400 = A
344 – 375 = B
304 – 343 = C
280 – 303 = D
> 280 = F

VII. Major Topics

- Community Building
- Challenges of teaching
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Language of teaching
- Ethics of teaching
- Power of caring
- Naming
- Communication
- Identity

  Scaffolding learning
  Roles of teachers (who owns the knowledge)
  Pedagogical praxis: Putting beliefs in action
  Making home/school connections
  Agency (student and teacher)
  Developing approaches to teaching
  Knowing in a democratic community
  Diverse classrooms
  Concepts of on-line collaboration vs. parallel play

VIII. Modes of Instruction – This is a hybrid course. We will be meeting on campus two times and on line thirteen times on Blackboard. The following describes instructional modes in both settings:

- Mini-lessons (on-campus and on-line)
- Demonstration lessons (on-campus)
- Exploration of Issues and Content /Lecture (on-campus and on-line)
- Small group and whole group discussions (on-campus and on-line)
- Analysis of shared readings (on-line)
- Collaborative presentations (on-campus presentation with on-line work)
IX. Bibliography


