



**EDCI 545.41E: Issues in the Development of the Elementary Curriculum
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2013**

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COURSE INFORMATION

Meeting Times:

This course meets 4 times during the semester. The remaining time will be spent within the eCollege course. Class meetings:

January 30, February 20, April 16 and May 8 – 4:00-7:00 – Professional Development Center

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbook(s) Required:

Best Practice, Fourth Edition: Bringing Standards to Life in America's Classrooms.

Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., & Hyde, A. (ISBN No. 978-0325043548).

The Fundamental 5: The formula for Quality Instruction

Cain, S & Laird, M.

ISBN 13-97814564910311

Students should purchase books prior to the first class meeting.

Course Description:

ELED 545: The purpose of this course is to note how various philosophies have influenced the development of the elementary curriculum in order to meet the changing social and economic trends. Research articles will be studied in order to evaluate selection of procedures and materials. Practical experiences will be provided in the construction of course of study units for the elementary grades.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Overall Objective: The primary objective of this class is for students to: (1) become more fully aware of best practices in teaching the primary subject areas in elementary schools; (2) employ best practices in their classrooms not previously used; (3) document results of employing best practices; (4) develop an in-depth awareness of one curriculum area in support of the primary curriculum; (5) contrast currently used teaching practices with those recognized as best practices; and (6) adjust instructional practices accordingly

By the conclusion of the term, the student will be able to:

1. Be knowledgeable of the TEKS/curriculum in all major subjects taught in elementary schools, where they come from, and how they align with state and national curriculum initiatives.
2. Become acquainted with best practices in the major subjects taught in elementary schools.
3. Develop expertise in one of the curriculums that is considered secondary to the core curriculums – and often optional depending on the school system.
4. Be familiar with some of the important literature on curriculum development.
5. Develop competencies in planning and presenting results of research to larger bodies.
6. Implement teaching and learning strategies in one's own classroom based on the learning acquired in this course and/or other courses taken in the cohort program.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

1. **Adhere to the Code of Conduct.** "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures).
2. **Attend Class** – Students who miss scheduled class meetings are subject to a reduction in their final grade. Excused absences include (a) verified illness, (b) participation in a required/authorized university activity, (c) death in the student's immediate family, (d) obligation at legal proceedings, and (e) other absence determined by individual faculty members to be excusable. One unexcused absence will reduce the final grade by one letter. Two unexcused absences will reduce the final grade by two letters. At the discretion of the faculty, a student who misses more than two sessions, regardless of the reasons, may fail the course or be required to take an incomplete and/or repeat the course. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the faculty. When missing classes, students are responsible for obtaining class materials, assignments, and notes from eCollege.
3. **Participate.** A noticeable trait of master teachers is the way in which they actively pursue and interact with their own learning journey. You should commit yourself to active learning by demonstrating the attributes of inquisitiveness, questioning, searching, struggling, contributing, and modifying according to your goals and dreams as a developing master teacher. Your participation, both quantity and quality should be evidence both during our class meetings and through your interactions with the online portion of the courses, e.g., threaded discussions, journaling, etc. Your faculty will make a subjective judgment as to the overall quantity and quality of class participation.

Specific Requirements (Related Student Learning Objective)

4. **Read Assigned Textbooks (Objectives: 2, 3, 4).** The assigned texts are shared on the first page of the syllabus. Both texts are required reading.
5. **Reaction Papers and Threaded Discussions (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4).** Each chapter you read is followed by one of two types of response assignments: (1) reaction papers which are completed and submitted to eCollege and (2) threaded discussions which require you to interact online with a small group of your colleagues. Reaction papers are evaluated based on the quality of the written work. Threaded discussions are graded on the quality of your contributions to your colleagues.

6. Instructional Logs (Objectives 1, 2, 4). Three instructional logs will be submitted. This semester the emphasis is on learning about innovative and creative instructional strategies that are supported by research on best practices. Instructional logs this semester will document what you did and how well your students responded. Specific details on how to select your teaching strategy and report results are available by clicking on the appropriate links in eCollege. The seven components of the instructional log include: (a) strategy I used, (b) why I used it, (c) research base for the strategy, (d) target population, (e) plan of action, (f) results, and (g) what I learned.

7. Explore Innovative Curriculums (Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5). Our textbook focuses primarily on the core content taught in elementary schools. To supplement the text, we will explore some of the other areas for which teachers are responsible. Teachers will form small groups of 2-3, select one area listed below (or propose one), and spend the semester learning about that topic.

Suggested Areas of Study

1. Cooperative Learning
2. Formative Assessments
3. Ability Grouping
4. Direct Vocabulary Instruction
5. Effective Questioning Techniques
6. Using Protocols for Small Group Discussion
7. Student Reflection
9. Summarizing and Notetaking
10. Learning Walks
11. Lesson Planning and Lesson Cycle
12. Student Engagement

On the final night of class, your team will set up a show-n-tell table to display what you have collected and make a short presentation to the other teachers who visit your display. Specific instructions for studying your topic and presenting it to your peers will be found in the appropriate links in eCollege.

8. Visit A Creative Teacher or Program (Objective 1, 2). In exchange for submitting a fourth instructional log, students are given the option of arranging a visit to the classroom or a teacher or specialists who has a reputation for being a model teacher in the specific areas in which you are interested. You will spend one hour or more during the semester visiting a teacher, a classroom, or a special program in which you will, hopefully, observe students and instruction that will meet a special objective you have established. You could visit, for example:

- A teacher on your campus or in your district that is known to be especially creative/effective in one of the subjects that you teach in your classroom. This allows you to get out of your own confines and see something that might inspire you.
- A program on your campus or in the district that provides instruction in the special curriculum area that you or your team are studying this semester, e.g., character education, gifted and talented, etc.

You may already have that teacher or program in mind. If not, you are to speak with your building principal or other professionals on your campus to get ideas. You could also contact the subject area coordinator for the subject area in which you are interested to see what ideas

he/she might have. Once you have completed your visit, write a reflection paper on (a) who you visited and for what purpose, (b) what you observed and learned, and (c) how it helped you in your own teaching or understanding of what others do. More specific guidelines are provided in the appropriate links in eCollege.

Grading: Evaluating Work Products.

Individual assignments are evaluated on the following factors:

1. Depth of thought behind the writing
2. Language structure
3. Quality of word choice that may be unusually striking, vivid, or creative
4. Organization
5. Thoroughness in the understanding and assimilation of concepts
6. Appropriateness of the content presented
7. Sense of unity in the product, i.e., polished
8. Transitions between concepts or thoughts
9. Frequency of sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper
10. Number of errors

Grading Assignments:

Using the grading factors outlined above, you will receive one of the following grades on your work:

- 5 (A) = Exceptional – Exceeds expectations in all areas addressed with exceptional quality.** Typically only a few students will earn a “5” on any one assignment. Students earning a 3, 4, or 5 may not resubmit an assignment for additional evaluation unless directed to do so by the instructor.
- 4 (B) = Above Average – Exceeds minimum expectations in the majority of areas addressed.** The majority of students will earn a “4” or “3” on most assignments. Students earning a 4 may not resubmit assignments for additional evaluation unless directed to do so by the instructor.
- 3 (C) = Average. The product is adequate in most areas and the minimum expectations are addressed.** The majority of students tend to earn a “4” or “3” on most assignments. Assignment earning a “3” may not be resubmitted for additional credit.
- 2 (D) = Below Average. Below average performance in most of the areas addressed.** An assignment earning a “2” may be resubmitted for review; however, the highest grade on resubmit is a “3.”
- 1 (D) = Inadequate. A poorly done product.** An assignment earning a “1” may be redone and resubmitted for review; however, the highest grade on resubmit is a “2.”
- 0 (F) = Not Turned In Or Unacceptable Work.** A grade of “0” is generally associated with the letter grade of F.

Late Work

All work turned in through eCollege is timed. Late work is considered any work turned in after the due time stated in the *Schedule of Assignments*. Work turned in during class is considered late if it is not ready at the beginning of class. All late work is subject to a reduction in grade as follows:

- Up to 24 hours late – reduction of one numerical grade, e.g., from 5 to 4
- Up to one week late - reduction of two numerical grades, e.g., from 5 to 3.
- Up to two weeks late – reduction of three numerical grades, e.g., from 5 to 2.
- More than two weeks late – Grade of “0”

Determination of Final Grade.

Grades on individual assignments are numerical and based on the table below. Grades are recorded in the eCollege grade book.

Course Component	Points Per Assignment	Total Possible Points
Class Participation	5	5
Instructional Logs (3 assignments)	10	30
Reaction Papers (4)	5	20
Threaded Discussion Topics (2) & Responses (at least 4 per each topic)	5	10
Reflection Paper on Classroom Visit	10	10
Team Presentation	10	10
Total Possible Points		85

Numerical grades are recorded in eCollege and available to you when you click on “Gradebook.” ECollege also calculates a “percentage score” based on the assignments completed to date and also based on the total number of assignments for the semester. The most important percentage is the one based on assignments completed to date.

At the end of the semester, numerical scores are converted to percentage based on the total assignments for the semester. Instructors use percentage scores to calculate a preliminary final grade on a scale of 91-100% (A), 81-90% (B), 71-80% (C), 61-70% (D), etc.

Once the grade is determined based on the criteria above, it is then adjusted upward for participation, enthusiasm, cooperation, and general code of conduct; adjusted downward for attendance, lack of participation, lack of withitness, and other factors that might apply.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Internet Connection. An internet connected is necessary. Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

Word Processor. MS Word is the recommended word processor for eCollege

Operating Systems. Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Browser Testing. It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, log into eCollege, click on the ‘my Courses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu->

commerce.edu/login.aspx. You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu.]

How is Course Organized?

This course is organized around three face-to-face class meetings and three eCollege units of study. If you look on the left side of screen when you go to the course, you will see links labeled **Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3**. If you click on **Unit 1**, several “**assignment**” links will appear below it. Each assignment link contains instructions for the assignment. You can click on any of the links and you will be able to read all of the details for each assignment.

What is the Schedule of Assignments?

At the beginning of each assignment link you will see the following: “**Due Date: See Schedule of Assignments.**” The Schedule of Assignments is a link located under “**Course Home.**” If you click on *Schedule of Assignments*, you will find the due date for every assignment.

How Should Students Proceed Through each Unit of Study?

As you proceed through each unit in the class, please keep in mind the following important principles:

1. Assignments. All assignments for each unit are explained in the links on the left navigation bar. Everything you need to know about each assignment can be found within the assignment.

2. Needed Documents Are Provided. When documents are required, they are embedded within the assignment. Look for the blue links. Click on the blue link and the document should appear. You may download these documents to your computer. In the event a link does not respond correctly, contact your instructor as soon as possible.

3. Asynchronous discussions. This course includes Asynchronous discussions (not live) using the Threaded Discussion feature of eCollege. In Threaded Discussions, you are usually placed into a small group of students and assigned a group designation, e.g., Group A, Group B, etc. The size of the small group is determined by the total number of students in the class. When you click on a Threaded Discussion link, you will be given instructions on how to use this feature. In a typical case you will be asked to respond to a topic or question. You will enter your initial response to that question and everyone else in the group will do the same. A few days later you will be asked to return to the discussion, read over what your group has written about, and then begin to respond to their initial entries and they will respond to yours as well. When someone responds to you and it needs or deserves a reaction, you continue that dialog. Grading for threaded discussion is usually based on (1) how many you dialog with, (2) how much you say, and (3) the quality of your entries.

4. The DropBox. Unless specified, you will submit your assignments electronically using the eCollege dropbox tool.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Questions about the course, assignments, syllabus, etc.

Contact me via email any time 24/7. If you have not received a response within 48 hours, or if you have a more urgent need to contact me, please call me.

Submitting Assignments:

All assignments are submitted through the eCollege Dropbox. All assignments have due dates and penalties are assessed for late work. I use a document called "Schedule of Assignments" to record every assignment along with the date and time each is due.

Announcements:

Announcements are posted often during the semester on the course home page. In some cases I will also send the same announcement to you via the eCollege email system.

Email Correspondence

From me to you: All emails from me will be sent to your University email account, not your work or home email. Therefore, it is important to go to Leo Mail often.

From you to me: You may send emails through the eCollege email system or directly to me at my university email address provided on the first page. Both addresses are the same.

Emergencies:

Call me at home. Phone number will be announced via Cohort Meeting.

eCollege Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chat Support: Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures/Policies:**Late Work.**

Specific dates and times are established for every assignment. Grades on work not turned in when due are automatically reduced beginning immediately upon exceeding the deadline. For example, assignments typically have a midnight deadline. If you exceed that midnight deadline, your work is automatically reduced by one numerical grade. For the next 24 hour period, the grade is reduced again by one. Work cannot be made up and extra work is not allowed to compensate for missing or later work. The final authority on time is the time recorded on your assignment by the eCollege clock. Refer to the earlier section on grading for more details.

University Specific Procedures:

Appeal of the Final Grade (13.99.99.R0.05 Student's Appeal of Instructor's Evaluation, Effective September 1, 1996. Revised December 15, 1999, Revised February 8, 2007)

1. The final grades awarded by faculty members are their expert judgment concerning student performance. Students challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was unfair based on:
 - a) Some basis other than performance, or
 - b) standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section,
 - c) a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus.
2. Students who believe their grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor.
3. If no satisfactory resolution is reached with the instructor, or if the instructor is unavailable, the student shall appeal to the department head. A grade appeal must be initiated in writing with the department head (or dean if the department head is the instructor) within six months of the last day of the semester in which the grade was awarded. The department head will examine the student's appeal to determine whether the student has established an apparent case of unfair academic evaluation as described in section 1. If the student has not established a case that appears to have merit, the department head will so inform the student and the instructor without delay.
4. If the case has merit, the department head will secure, from all parties, written statements and other such information as he or she deems helpful and will issue his or her findings and remedies, if any. In so doing, the department head will be guided by the principal the burden of proof lies with the student.

For additional information regarding the appeal of a final grade above that of the department head, please consult the latest version of the graduate catalog or contact the Head of the Department, Curriculum and Instruction, at 903-886-5537.

Academic Integrity/Honesty Statement

This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course, or brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university.

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)