Syllabus

Course Overview

This course, required in the master's-level specializations of Curriculum and Instruction, Early Childhood Education, K-12 Studies in Education, Leadership in Educational Administration, and Reading and Literacy, develops skills in planning, analyzing, and reflecting on teaching that will lead to improvement in instruction. The course focuses on research-based professional teaching standards and on strategies to improve instruction, including collaborative feedback processes. Learners will practice observing and assessing the educational practices of other instructors as well as their own educational practices.

In this course, you will have the opportunity to learn by doing, as well as by reading and discussing. The backbone of this course is the course project and its associated assignments, which are designed to engage you in a variety of strategies that support improvement of instruction. The assignments will allow a hands-on introduction to coaching and peer observation. You are not expected to master coaching skills or become an expert at providing feedback to peers. The hope is that you will continue to use and refine what you learn in this course and encourage others in your educational environment to collaborate with you as you practice new skills.

In Unit 1, you will be introduced to the course, the course resources, and to one another. We will begin with readings about the knowledge base of the profession in your required texts. In addition, you will examine standards and research that support current definitions of effective teaching, consider why more than one instructional leader is needed in an educational environment.

Unit 2 will address specific ways to focus efforts to improve instruction. In Unit 2, you will review a video of a teaching performance and develop a Professional Growth Plan that will serve as your blueprint for education-based activities in the course. Units 3 and 4 will focus on the many ways instructors and administrators can work collaboratively to raise the quality of instruction in the educational environment.

During the second half of the course, in Units 5–10, you will be increasingly engaged in observations of other instructors, in inviting instructors to observe you, in conducting a coaching session with a colleague, and in teaching and refining your own lessons. The teaching cases will allow you to practice observing an instructor in action and discussing feedback formats and strategies.

Please read the course project description carefully at the outset of the course and take time to carefully plan the activities that will take place in your educational environment during the course. Note that although the study assignments may seem numerous, many are short in length, and some study assignments repeat in each unit and are reminders of work to be accomplished at some other point during the course.

Also note that you will be videotaping a lesson as part of the peer feedback on your teaching. If you require special accommodations to complete the peer feedback activity, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

Essential questions in this course:

1. What is good teaching and how do we know it?
2. What are keys to the improvement of instruction?
3. Why are instructors responsible for improvement of instruction?
4. How do colleagues support one another in improving instruction?

Course Background

The assessment and improvement of instruction has become an increasingly high-profile focus in schools over the last decade and particularly during the last several years. Educational reform has been in constant motion since the 1983 federal report *A Nation at Risk*. More recently, the No Child Left Behind Act, the Race to the Top program, and the Common Core initiative have reflected a growing concern over students' learning outcomes and the accountability of educators and educational leaders.

Improvement of instruction has become a key topic in the political arena; in teacher promotion, pay, and retention; and in measures of teacher and administrator effectiveness. Many districts have implemented incentive pay for teachers and have developed methods for removing educators and educational administrators who are not performing effectively. This course addresses practices related to professional learning that work alone or together to support continuous improvement of instruction, with the goal of increased learner achievement.

As Orlich and his colleagues (2013) stated, U.S. schools are a social service agency tasked with improving the lives and outcomes for their students. Unfortunately, not all students are able to benefit equally. Educator evaluation has traditionally sought to evaluate what could be seen in a teacher's classroom using a rubric or measured by examining the achievement of the educator's students. In this course, we will take observation and data collection not as a method of punishment for struggling teachers but as a way to examine how instruction can be improved.

The course will mainly focus on learning to make formative assessments and self-directed professional growth plans. These effective paths lead to improved practice and increased learner achievement. The topic of summative evaluation will be addressed. Research supports a connection between instructor learning and learner improvement, whether it be formal coursework or more informal collaborative feedback structures among peers. We will examine the benefits of professional learning communities, 360 evaluation and peer coaching, and feedback. It is thus important that teachers develop reciprocal professional relationships with their colleagues.

Attention has shifted in the past few years, in response to the growing demand for improved learner outcomes, from ensuring minimal instructor competence to providing more opportunities for all teaching professionals to learn and improve their practice (Sullivan and Glanz, 2013). The current interest in building professional learning communities (PLCs) in schools applies to adult learning as well as learner understanding.

The 360 evaluation was developed in the business field as a method to examine performance from all sides, in part to determine if a worker, in this case an educator, is meeting the needs of all of his or her stakeholders. The professional development component of instructor evaluation programs has been revised in many districts to include greater emphasis on instructor-centered and collaborative strategies that respect what is known about adult learners. In addition, rather than focusing exclusively on how instructors instruct, best practice in professional development today centers on improving learner understanding. The primary goal of professional development, then, is the improvement of instruction to improve learner achievement. This course offers learners several opportunities to practice these important skills.

The knowledge base necessary for improving instruction includes familiarity with teaching standards and what is known about effective teaching. A skills base includes the ability to self-assess, give and receive peer feedback, and demonstrate coaching skills. To accomplish this, instructors need to observe other professionals in their classrooms, observe learners in their own and other educational environments, and be observed while practicing their craft. Instructor collaboration should replace instructor isolation.

What are considered appropriate supervision skills may vary depending on the situation and on whether you are an instructional leader, a department head, a team leader, or an administrator. However, knowledge of how to coach and assist instructors in the improvement process is relevant for all educators, including instructors. The bottom line is that instructors as well as administrators have leadership responsibility for improvement of instruction and improved learner outcomes. Some of the responsibilities for administrative oversight of instruction have shifted to classroom educators and their colleagues (Sullivan and Glanz, 2013).

References

Orlich, D. C. (2013). *Teaching strategies: A guide to effective instruction*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.

Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2013). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning: Strategies and techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Program Outcomes: K-12 Master's

Learners in the K-12 Master's in Education Specializations in Curriculum and Instruction, Early Childhood Education, K-12 Studies in Education, Leadership in Educational Administration, and Reading and Literacy will demonstrate their ability to increase learner understanding by documenting mastery of the following program outcomes.

Graduates of Capella's K-12 master's program will have demonstrated:

1. Subject matter expertise. They possess a deep understanding of subject matter, its place within the discipline, and its connection to other disciplines.
2. Teaching and learning strategies for diverse learners and classrooms. They utilize multiple instructional models, resources, and management and pedagogical strategies to meet the needs of and to engage diverse learners.
3. Knowledge and skills in equitable learning environments. They apply knowledge, skills, and attributes needed to provide equitable, inclusive environments in which all students have the opportunity and encouragement to reach their potential.
4. Understanding of assessment-driven curriculum and instruction. They understand assessment-driven, standards-based curriculum and instruction that is age- and developmentally appropriate.
5. Practitioner-scholar expertise. They work as practitioner-scholars by applying current research and theory on content, pedagogy, child development, and other education-related topics to the improvement of instructional and leadership practices.
6. Research proficiency. They conduct classroom and environment-based research to improve practice, programs, and student outcomes.
7. Data-driven decision making. They employ informed thinking, planning, and teaching with appropriate data and data-driven strategies.
8. Ethical leadership. They apply standards of ethical leadership and management, including knowledge, dispositions, and performances, in classrooms, schools, districts, and communities.
9. Systems thinking. They understand the attributes and skills necessary to lead and manage educational environments as complex, adaptive systems.
10. Reflective practice. They engage in reflective practice for continuous professional growth and improvement of instructional and leadership practices.
11. Effective communications skills. They write clearly and communicate effectively with educational constituents in a variety of ways appropriate to purpose and context.
12. Critical thinking skills. They engage in thinking, analysis, and problem-solving that reflect scholarly intellectual standards, incorporates sound reasoning, and strives for equity and fairness.
13. Effective application of technology. They use technology effectively to improve instruction, student learning, productivity, and professional practice.
14. Collaborative leadership. They initiate and participate in communities of practice and other collaborations with education professionals, parents, and community members to mobilize resources to best meet student needs and to enhance professional growth.

In addition, through their work in the specialization courses, graduates in Leadership in Educational Administration will have demonstrated:

1. Understanding of the principles of K-12 school law.
2. Understanding of the principles of K-12 school finance.

For more information about the program outcomes and the K-12 master program, please see the Program Guide.

Your Online ePortfolio

Online ePortfolios serve two key purposes: 1) to support learning and reflection, and 2) to be used as a showcase tool. Your learning journey can be documented, and ePortfolios contribute to lifelong learning and growth through reflection and sharing. Online ePortfolios can also be shared with employers and peers to present artifacts that demonstrate your accomplishments at Capella.

Using ePortfolio to Prepare for Your Capstone

Your program may culminate in a capstone course. At that time you may be required to show evidence of your learning throughout the program by referring to multiple assessments that you have created. You will be telling a story about your learning throughout the program using artifacts you have collected during many of these courses.

Using ePortfolio to Build Your Career

As you are preparing to tell your story in the professional world, leverage your ePortfolio artifacts to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies you have gained through your program in professional conversations, performance reviews, and interviews.

To do that, reflect on the knowledge and skills you have gained from your courses and the elements you have put in your portfolio, along with how you have already applied these things to your professional life or how you might apply them in the future.

Next, create your story or talking points to tell your professional story.

Saving Your Documents to ePortfolio

You will need a place to store your documents in an organized fashion so that you can access them at a later date. Do not rely on the courseroom to store your assignments for you as you will lose access to the courseroom after you have completed the course. Capella uses a cloud-based portfolio platform to facilitate your organization of the artifacts you create throughout your program.

To make an online portfolio useful, it is essential that it is organized clearly and that important files of any format are accessible. Read the Online ePortfolio Guidelines [PDF] to ensure you set up your online portfolio correctly. For more information on ePortfolio visit the Campus ePortfolio page.

Privacy Statement

Capella complies with privacy laws designed to protect the privacy of personal information. While you may voluntarily share your own information publicly, you are obligated to protect the personal information of others that may be associated with your academic or professional development. Before sharing information and material in any ePortfolio that is set up to be shared externally to your program at Capella, please consider privacy obligations in relation to protected populations who may be included or referenced in your academic or clinical work. Refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and/or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) if you have specific questions or concerns about your choices.

Course Competencies   **(Read Only)**

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

1   Evaluate instruction for professional development.

2   Improve instruction and professional learning.

3   Demonstrate the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.

4   Collaborate with other professionals and the family for the purpose of improving instruction.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Syllabus ❯❯ Course Materials

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Integrated Materials

Once the Capella University Bookstore opens for the quarter, as a registered learner you will receive an e-mail containing a direct link you can use to obtain your materials. Please follow the instructions provided to you by the bookstore to download digital materials. Some materials are available only in hard-copy format and will be shipped to you. The bookstore will indicate any materials that may involve shipping.

Book

Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2015). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning* [Custom text]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin. ISBN: 9781483372815.

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use Journal and Book Locator. Refer to the Journal and Book Locator library guide to learn how to use this tool.

- Allen, D. W., & LeBlanc, A. C. (2005). 2 + 2 for teachers: Frequently asked questions. In *Collaborative peer coaching that improves instruction: The 2 + 2 performance appraisal mode*l (pp. 105–113). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Burke, B. M. (2013). Experiential professional development: A model for meaningful and long-lasting change in classrooms. *Journal of Experiential Education, 36*(3), 247–263.
- Chong, W. H., & Kong, C. A. (2012). Teacher collaborative learning and teacher self-efficacy: The case of lesson study. *Journal of Experimental Education, 80*(3), 263–283.
- Clem, S. (2013). Eloquent mirrors: Creating a school culture of professional feedback. *Independent School, 73*(1), 22–28.
- Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Danielson, C., & McGreal, T. L. (2000). *Teacher evaluation to enhance professional practice.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Donaldson, G. A., Jr. (2007). What do teachers bring to leadership? *Educational Leadership, 65*(1), 26–29.
- Fletcher, S., & Mullen, C. A. (2012). *The Sage handbook of mentoring and coaching in education.* London, UK: Sage.
- Grossman, P., & Davis, E. (2012). Mentoring that fits. *Educational Leadership, 69*(8), 54–57.
- Helsing, D., & Lemons, R. W. (2008). Leadership practice communities: Improving teaching and learning. *Leadership, 38*(1), 14–38.
- Jewett, P., & MacPhee, D. (2012). Adding collaborative peer coaching to our teaching identities. *Reading Teacher, 66*(2), 105–110.
- Jones, N. D., Youngs, P., & Frank, K. A. (2013). The role of school-based colleagues in shaping the commitment of novice special and general education teachers. *Exceptional Children, 79*(3), 365–383.
- Mahar, J., & Strobert, B. (2010). The use of 360-degree feedback compared to traditional evaluative feedback for the professional growth of teachers in K-12 education. *Planning and Changing, 41*(3/4), 147–160.
- Massey, S. L. (2014). Leadership in reading. *Illinois Reading Council Journal, 42*(2), 65–69.
- Murray, S., Ma, X., & Mazur, J. (2009). Effects of peer coaching on teachers' collaborative interactions and students' mathematics achievement. *Journal of Educational Research, 102*(3), 203–212.
- Partee, G. L. (2012). *Using multiple evaluation measures to improve teacher effectiveness: State strategies from round 2 of No Child Left Behind Act waivers.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
- Poekert, P. E. (2012). Examining the impact of collaborative professional development on teacher practice. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 39*(4), 97–118.
- Reason, C., & Reason, L. (2007). Asking the right questions. *Educational Leadership, 65*(1), 36–40.
- Sartain, L., Stoelinga, S. R., & Brown, E. (2011). *Rethinking teacher evaluation in Chicago: Lessons learned from classroom observations, principal-teacher conferences, and district implementation.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.
- Schuck, S., Aubusson, P., & Buchanan, J. (2008). Enhancing teacher education practice through professional learning conversations. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 31*(2), 215–227.
- Slagter van Tryon, P. J., & Schwartz, C. S. (2012). A pre-service teacher training model with instructional technology graduate students as peer coaches to elementary pre-service teachers. *TechTrends, 56*(6), 31–36.
- St. George, C. A., & Robinson, S. B. (2011). Making mentoring matter: Perspectives from veteran mentor teachers. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 78*(1), 24–28.
- Stearns, L. M., Morgan, J., Capraro, M. M., & Capraro, R. M. (2012). A teacher observation instrument for the PBL classroom. *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research, 13*(3), 7–16.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- Gates Foundation, MET Project. (2013). Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching [PDF]. Available from https://www.gatesfoundation.org/media-center/press-releases/2013/01/measures-of-effective-teaching-project-releases-final-research-report
- Massachusetts ESE. (2015). *1st grade ELA* [Video]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsJXcaF6vHo&feature=youtu.be
- Massachusetts ESE. (2015). *8th grade reading* [Video]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-sAFxAt5wM&feature=youtu.be
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (2002). What teachers should know and be able to do. Retrieved from http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/documents/certificates/what_teachers_should_know.pdf
- Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. (n.d.). Teaching statements. Retrieved from https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-statements/

Suggested

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

Library

The following optional readings may be available in the Capella University Library. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use Journal and Book Locator. Refer to the Journal and Book Locator library guide to learn how to use this tool. If the full text is not available, you may be able to request a copy through the Interlibrary Loan service.

- Barker, J., & Conley, M. (2014). Teacher performance assessments in Chicago and beyond. *Language Arts, 91*(3), 197–205.
- Bernstein, E. (2004). What teacher evaluation should know and be able to do: A commentary. *NASSP Bulletin, 88*(639), 80–88.
- Brookhart, S. M. (2013). Develop a student-centered mind-set for formative assessment. *Voices from the Middle, 21*(2), 21–25.
- Hiebert, J., Gallimore, R., & Stigler, J. W. (2002). A knowledge base for the teaching profession: What would it look like and how can we get one? *Educational Researcher, 31*(5), 3–15.
- Lapp, D., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2013). Feed-forward: Linking instruction with assessment. *Voices from the Middle, 21*(2), 7–9.
- Rush, L. S., & Scherff, L. (2014). Teacher evaluations that improve teacher practice. *English Education, 46*(2), 87–89.
- Ryser, G. R., & Rambo-Hernandez, K. E. (2014). Using growth models to measure school performance: Implications for gifted learners. *Gifted Child Today, 37*(1), 17–23.
- Spellings, M. (2014). Assessments are vital for healthy schools. *Education Next, 14*(1), 70–77.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- American Association of School Administrators (AASA). (2020). Retrieved from https://www.aasa.org/home/
- Association of Supervision/Curriculum Development (ASCD). null
- Fullan, M. (2004). *Leading in a culture of change personal action guide and workbook*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Institute of Education Sciences, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). null
- Isenberg, J. P. (2003). Using National Board standards to redesign master's degrees for teachers: A guide for institutions of higher education. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED475774
- Learning Forward. null
- Martinez, M. C. (2004). *Teachers working together for school success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). null
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). null
- National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (NCRTL). null
- National School Boards Association, Council of School Attorneys (COSA). null
- Phi Delta Kappa International (PDK). null
- Reeves, D. B. (2004). *Accountability for learning: How teachers and school leaders can take charge*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Projects

Project ≫ Professional Growth Plan

Project Overview

The overarching objective of the course project for ED5501 is to provide an authentic way for you to focus on the improvement of your classroom instruction by utilizing the skills, concepts, and processes acquired in the course.

You will do this by completing the Professional Growth Plan, the Lesson Plan, Peer Feedback on Your Teaching, and Coaching Conference Feedback to discuss your observation and notes.

To set the stage for the final project, you will develop your own eight-week Professional Growth Plan Template by the end of Unit 2. The plan will have one or more specific goals, determined by you, and related to the improvement of classroom instruction. Professional development goals are very important and may include concepts and skills that you want to learn informally as well as formal professional development opportunities that you want to attend.

For each component, you will use the corresponding forms, templates, or guidelines located in the assignment Resources. You will submit these documents at designated times throughout the course. A final analysis of the results of the plan and lessons learned—the Professional Development Plan Synthesis—is due at the end of the course.

Note: If you are an administrator or serve in a non-teaching capacity in your school, your course project requirements will vary somewhat from those of the classroom teacher. Be sure to contact your instructor during the first week of the course. You and your instructor will consult on a plan that will fit your own professional needs while meeting the objectives of the course. Some ideas for this include using a hypothetical class, working with a class in your school (administrators), or working with a group of other learners (for example, in the capacity of a corporate trainer or other non-school educators).

- Your synthesis paper should be 3–5 pages, double-spaced. Read the Guidelines for Writing a Course Synthesis for more information.
- References and in-text citations should be formatted according to APA (6th edition) style and formatting.

Unit 1 ≫ Knowledge Base of the Teaching Profession

Introduction

Much of this course will involve active learning outside of the online courseroom and will revolve around planning, analyzing, reflecting, observing, and coaching. Before embarking on professional growth plans, observations, and lesson plans, we must gain a common understanding about how effective teaching can be defined and why an accepted common definition is important.

In the article *Systemic Reform in the Professionalism of Educators* (1995), Swanson cites researchers Darling-Hammond and Goodwin, noting that::

> Darling-Hammond and Goodwin (1993) identified common beliefs or behaviors associated with the notion of professionalism. Members of a profession share a common body of knowledge and use shared standards of practice in exercising their knowledge on behalf of clients. In addition, they found that professionals strive to: "improve practice and enhance accountability by creating means for ensuring that practitioners will be competent and committed. Professionals undergo rigorous preparation and socialization so that the public can have high levels of confidence that professionals will behave in knowledgeable and ethical ways" (p. 21).

Darling-Hammond and Goodwin point to "a common body of knowledge" and "shared standards of practice" as hallmarks of professionalism. In this course, we will explore what these are in the teaching profession.

The contemporary movement toward standards for teaching began with the 1983 federal report about the state of American schools, *A Nation at Risk*. The Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession responded to the concerns raised in *A Nation at Risk* by producing its report *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* in 1986. In its report, the Carnegie Task Force recommended that a national board promoting professional teaching standards be established. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) subsequently came into being in 1987, and in 1989 developed its landmark policy statement, *What Teachers Should Know And Be Able To Do*. This policy statement was the board's "critical first task, the development of a policy that would spell out the National Board's vision of accomplished practice" which "has served as a basis for all of the standards development work NBPTS has conducted" (NBPTS, 2002).

Since that time, the NBPTS's policy statement and the teaching standards contained within each area of teacher certification offered by the NBPTS have served as guides for subsequent sets of standards. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) created the Interstate New Teacher Assessment And Support Consortium (INTASC), which has developed the standards for licensing and assessing of beginning teachers. Increasingly, states have developed their own sets of professional teaching standards, including California, Maine, North Carolina, Delaware, and many others. The state standards are often developed together with teachers, and they are cross-referenced with the NBPTS policy statement, the INTASC standards for beginning teachers, and standards from professional teaching organizations, such as the International Society for Technology in Education.

In addition to the state teaching standards, the Framework for Teaching developed by Charlotte Danielson (1996) draws on the five core propositions of the NBPTS and on other research.

The history of standards for teaching is only a few decades old and the original thinking of the NBPTS has demonstrated staying power. Fortunately, a greater consistency in defined qualities of effective teachers has emerged as newly developed sets of state standards continue to reference the NBPTS policy statement.

For teachers and administrators, this means that discussion of improvement of instruction is no longer (or no longer should be!) simply a matter of personal opinion or individual belief system. There now exist ways to focus efforts on improving instruction that are consistent and based on current research.

According to Danielson (2007), as our culture increases in complexity and diversity among students grows:

> [d]ecisions that teachers make in designing and executing instructional plans are far from trivial. Professional educators must assume responsibility for understanding content, the cultural environments from which their students come and the design of coherent instruction. Teaching is a profession—we must have no doubt about that. But if it is to be treated as a profession, then the responsibilities as well as the benefits deriving from that status must apply (p. 19).

Essential questions:

- How can effective teaching be defined?
- Where do teaching standards come from?
- Are teaching standards necessary?

Reminder: As you progress through the course, make note of the ways you find the course concepts and skills applicable to your professional practice. At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a brief survey about the application of course concepts and skills. The feedback you provide will be used to help guide the continuous improvement of the K-12 Master's Program courses.

References

Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (2002). *What teachers should know and be able to do*. Retrieved from http://www.nbpts.org/UserFiles/File/what_teachers.pdf

Swanson, J. (1995). *Systemic reform in the professionalism of educators* (Contract No. RR91172009). Andover, MA: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://www.ed.gov/PDFDocs/Voli.pdf

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Studies

Readings

In your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning* custom text, read the following:

- Chapter 1, pages 3–23. In Chapter 1, Sullivan and Glanz explore the history of supervision and the methods of supervision used in an educational context. The reading concludes with a discussion of supervision in the era of standards-based education.

Use the Internet to complete the following:

- Read Ensuring Fair and Reliable Measures of Effective Teaching [PDF]. This brief from the Gates Foundation's MET Project discusses the methods used to assess teacher effectiveness and the importance of instructional improvement.

Multimedia

Listen to the following audio presentations by Charlotte Danielson:

- View Understanding the Framework for Teaching. In this introduction to the Framework for Teaching model of teaching standards, Danielson explains the nature and organization of the framework and why teachers have found it so helpful.
- View A Comparison of Professional Teaching Standards. Danielson discusses the framework in relation to other professional teaching standards, noting underlying commonalities and crucial differences. Different standards documents are appropriate for different purposes, and certain assumptions about the Framework for Teaching model set it apart from other sets of standards.

u01s2 - Project Preparation

Read the Professional Growth Plan course project description to learn the requirements for your course project.

u01d1 - Welcome

To become part of a collegial learning community, it is imperative that we all know something about one another. Use this discussion to tell your peers about yourself. Share what you are hoping to get from this course, how you will use what you learn here in your career, and whether you are presently teaching, aspiring to teach, or if you work in another field entirely. Also please share about your setting and experiences.

Response Guidelines

Read your peers' posts, looking for ways that your situations are similar. Then respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u01d2 - Effective Teaching

What are the components of effective teaching? Using your resources (the course materials, textbook, materials from the Internet and other research-based items), identify the components of effective teaching and discuss the following:

- **Components of effective teaching:** How will a teacher know if he or she is effective? What impact will the use of research-based teaching have on learning? Support your points with the literature.
- **Personal connection:** Share the impact that an effective teacher has had on your education. What, in your opinion, made that teacher effective? Connect the strategies that you discuss to the available educational literature.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 2 ❯❯ Focus for Improvement of Instruction

Introduction

Professional Growth Plan Template: In this unit, we will begin the work of examining practice by developing a Professional Growth Plan that will help map your path for the remainder of this course. We will also examine the importance of focus and of an agreed upon set of evaluative criteria when observing instructors teach, regardless of whether the observation serves formative or summative purposes.

Teacher Observation: You will also observe a video of a teacher in action, document the teacher's performance using the Framework for Teaching, and practice giving feedback using 2+2. This observation will help prepare you for observing of one of your colleagues.

Teaching Frameworks: The Framework for Teaching is one of several frameworks for teaching, but it is relatively unique in that it provides a description of different levels of competence for each component and element. We will also discuss other data sources such as learner work and learner achievement in their role as points of focus for improvement of instruction (Sullivan and Glanz, 2013).

Giving and Receiving Feedback: Finally, we will consider the role of feedback in the observation process by engaging with the 2+2 model of balanced and frequent feedback (Zhao, 2009).

Essential questions:

1. Why is a focus needed for effective educational observations?
2. How can a focus for observations facilitate improvement of practice?
3. What should an observer look for when visiting an educational environment?

A focus is necessary or we run the risk that no substantial professional dialogue will follow and that feedback will be of the least helpful kind—general or diffuse.

- What should you look for in your 2+2 visit, peer review observation, or supervisory observation visit?
- What is the purpose of your observation?
- What is the focus? What or who determines what the observer looks for?
- Would a set of evaluative criteria help, such as that provided by the Framework for Teaching?
- What are the elements of the classroom and teaching process to which you will attend?

These same questions apply whether you are the administrator, an instructional leader, or a peer instructor.

Course Project Reminder: You should have begun thinking about the Professional Development Plan Synthesis final component of the course project, due in Unit 10. Please review the course project description for complete information.

Your Professional Growth Plan Template is due in this unit. In addition, you should be working on your Lesson Plan, which is due in Unit 4.

References

Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2013). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning: Strategies and techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Zhao, S. (2009). *2+2 Program for Teachers' Performance Appraisal in China. English Language Teaching, 2 (2)*. Available online at: www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/download/2366/2230

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your custom text and your e-books to read the following:

- Chapter 3, pages 56–117, in your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning* text. The reading discusses the observation tools and techniques that are used to assess teacher effectiveness and instruction. Multiple charts, forms and worksheets are included in the chapter as well as discussions of several major educational theories and researchers.
- "2+2 for Teachers: Frequently Asked Questions" in Allen and LeBlanc's *Collaborative Peer Coaching That Improves Instruction.* Although peer observation is a structure that can be used to help instructors improve practice, the specific 2 + 2 format can also be thought of as a way to focus an observation on what is working and what might be improved. That the compliments and suggestions are limited to two each is not an accident. The focus is on finding the two most important (and specific) areas of strength demonstrated during the observation and the two most helpful (and specific) suggestions. A focus on no more than two areas creates a way for the instructor being observed to focus on potential improvements and reinforce strengths. Global feedback and too much feedback at once are less effective.

Use the Internet to read the following:

- The University of Minnesota's Center for Educational Innovation's "Writing a Teaching Philosophy" page.
- Vanderbilt University's Center for Teaching "Teaching Statements" page.

These resources are designed to help learners in the development of their personal philosophies of teaching.

Multimedia

Listen to the following audio presentations by Dwight Allen:

- Click **Launch Presentation** for *Teacher Isolation: Problems and Solutions*. Allen addresses the problems and opportunities posed by the culture of isolation within the classroom teaching environment. He argues that giving and receiving feedback can combat instructor isolation and be rewarding to both instructors and observers.
- Click **Launch Presentation** for *2+2 Approach to Feedback*. Allen, the co-developer of the 2+2 Approach to Feedback, explains essential factors that contribute to the strength of this approach to instructor feedback. Balance, focus, specificity, timeliness, and follow-up are some of these factors. Beyond these factors, he stresses the importance of having a variety of sources for feedback. 2+2 is instructor-driven, and the instructor is empowered to accept or reject any or all of the feedback.

Course Resources

Teacher Isolation: Problems and Solutions

2+2 Approach to Feedback

u02a1 - Professional Growth Plan Template

Overview

This assignment is the first step you will take in the course to use self-direction as a tool for professional development. The purpose of a personal Professional Growth Plan Template is to develop a tool to evaluate your instructional practices, improve the instruction that you provide to your students, and increase your professional development. This plan will benefit you by providing you a personalized guide to meaningful professional development and self-directed learning.

Use the Professional Growth Template from the Resources to develop a Goals Statement and Rationale to complete your plan. Discuss the strategies you will employ to reach your goal and identify the evidence that indicates success. Develop a timeline you can follow to reach your goals, and remember to include a discussion of the materials and resources that you will need to be successful.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 2: Improve instruction and professional learning.
  - Create a professional goal statement that guides the Professional Growth Plan.
  - Support the Professional Growth Plan with a rationale designed to improve performance.

- Competency 1: Evaluate instruction for professional development.
  - Align the goal statement to the framework of teaching.
  - Apply multiple measures of evidence to indicate progress toward professional goals.

- Competency 3: Demonstrate the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.
  - Identify opportunities for learning the skills laid out in the goal statement.

Assignment Description

Submit your Professional Growth Plan Template in the assignment area. Be sure to use the Professional Growth Plan Template in the Resources to complete this assignment. For further information, refer to the course project description.

Components of the plan include:

- Goal Statement and Rationale.
- Evidence of Progress.
- Strategies.
- Materials and Resources.
- Timeline.

Note: As stated in the course project description, if you are an administrator or serve in a non-teaching capacity in your school, your course project requirements will vary somewhat from those of the classroom teacher. Be sure to contact your instructor during the first week of the course or as soon as

possible, if you have not already done so. You and your instructor will consult on a plan that will fit your own professional needs while meeting the objectives of the course. Guidelines for administrators can be found in the Professional Growth Plan Template.

Refer to the Personal Growth Plan Template Scoring Guide to ensure that you meet the grading criteria for this assignment.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio.

Course Resources

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ePortfolio

Professional Growth Plan Template

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u02d1 - Classroom Observation

The purpose of this and other observation exercises is to practice observation skills, gain familiarity with observation criteria, practice giving feedback, and learn from one another.

View one of the following lessons linked in the Resources area:

- If you have an elementary school orientation, view *1st Grade ELA*.
- If you have a middle school or high school orientation, view *8th Grade Reading*.

Observation

Answer the following question: What did you find as evidence of effective teaching? Be sure to reference the case you analyzed in the subject line of your post.

- Use the Classroom Observation Form to focus your observations. Add advice for observation from the Sullivan and Glanz text.
- Record evidence of performance as you observe the instructor in the first part of the template. The template lists components and elements of Domains 2 and 3 of the framework.

You will need to decide, as you view one of the videos, which components and elements are observable in the case you are viewing. Consult the framework to establish a level of proficiency (rating) for each component you observed, and note it on your form next to the appropriate component element.

Give Feedback

Write your 2+2 feedback in the second part of the template—two compliments and two suggestions. The suggestions may also be framed as questions or as alternative instructional strategies for the instructor's consideration. There are no right or wrong answers. (This observation exercise should be helpful as preparation for an observation of a colleague at your organization.)

Post Classroom Observation Form

Post your form to the discussion by Friday noon. Please note the case to which you are referring. Your instructors will collect your forms, compile the results in a combined form, and post to the discussion once again.

The compiled data will allow you to view your results side-by-side with those of other learners.

Discussion Instructions

Respond to this question:

- Using the language of the framework (refer to specific components or elements), what did you find as evidence of effective teaching? Cite examples.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 5 or 12.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Classroom Observation Form

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ePortfolio

8th Grade Reading

1st Grade ELA

Unit 3 ›› Structures for Improvement, Part 1

Introduction

Unit 3 is designed to allow the learner the opportunity to examine the types of feedback that can be used with teacher-learners with the goal of improving instructional practices.

Essential questions:

- How do educators think about instruction?
- What does it mean to be a self-directed instructor?
- What are the benefits of instructor collaboration?
- Why are multiple sources of information and frequent feedback important to improvement of instruction?

This unit and Unit 4 focus on the structures that help instructors improve practice. Ways to structure support for instructor learning include:

- Peer observation and coaching.
- Action research.
- Portfolios.
- Self-assessment.
- Clinical supervision.

A corollary to a commitment to these types of professional growth activities is that multiple structures require multiple leaders. One leader, especially the principal, cannot accomplish the assisting, providing of feedback, or focusing necessary to support continuous improvement. These structures are most often implemented in formative evaluation cycles or as part of ongoing professional development practices.

One of the principal's roles is to design and facilitate the development of a culture of learning. A culture of learning is characterized by collaboration, acceptance of risk and mistakes, and a focus on school goals, continuous improvement of teaching, and learner performance. In a school with a strong focus on adult and learner understanding, a variety of structures focused on helping instructors improve practice in collaborative ways will be available and utilized.

Finally, the 2+2 model presents a complete peer observation model that can work in conjunction with other structures for assistance and areas of focus. The 2+2 model can serve both formative (professional development) and summative evaluation purposes. Both purposes engage peers, but also administrators, learners, parents, and others, in the process of giving and receiving frequent, balanced feedback to improve teaching and learning.

A 2+2 program that serves the purpose of formal evaluation includes a quality assurance-driven component that contains provisions that can be invoked in the event of unsatisfactory teaching performance. Such provisions include specific steps to follow for remediation and possible termination. We will examine instructor evaluation in more detail in Unit 9.

Course project reminder: Continue to plan for your Professional Development Plan Synthesis, due in Unit 10. Reviewing the Professional Growth Plan course project description for complete information. You should also be working on your Lesson Plan, which is due in the next unit.

References

Allen, D. W., & LeBlanc, A. C. (2005). *Collaborative peer coaching that improves instruction: The 2 + 2 performance appraisal model*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Cheliotes, L. G., & Reilly, M. F. (2010). *Coaching conversations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Course Resources

Allen, D. W., & LeBlanc, A. C. (2005). 2 + 2 for teachers: Frequently asked questions. In *Collaborative peer coaching that improves instruction: The 2 + 2 performance appraisal mode*l (pp. 105–113). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Studies

Readings

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- In your *Enhancing Professional Practice* text, read Chapter 4, "The Framework for Professional Practice," pages 42–91.
- In your *Collaborative Peer Coaching That Improves Instruction* text, review "2+2 for Teachers: Frequently Asked Questions," pages 105–113.
- In your *Sage Handbook of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, read Chapter 3, "Improving Coaching By and For School Teachers," pages 43–59.
- Read Jones, Youngs, and Frank's 2013 article "The Role of School-Based Colleagues in Shaping the Commitment of Novice Special and General Education Teachers" in *Exceptional Children*, volume 79, issue 3, pages 365–383.

The above readings will help you further develop a concept of instructional feedback and collaboration among teachers as well as self-directed learning among professional learners.

u03d1 - Peer Feedback Using Two Plus Two

In the 1997 article *Designing Teacher Evaluation Systems That Support Professional Growth*, McColskey and Egleson assert that "implementing a system that allows for peer review and feedback builds on the knowledge and skills of other teachers in the school. This knowledge may be perhaps the most valuable and the most underutilized resource that any school has available to help teachers improve" (pp. 2–3).

The 2+2 model allows for frequent peer feedback from a variety of sources and speaks to the claim made in the above quote. The 2 + 2 model is based on the premise that instructor isolation is one of the most detrimental factors in the teaching profession today, effectively preventing learning, improvement, or growth.

For this discussion, critique the 2+2 model of professional development and alternative instructor performance appraisal using the 2+2 format:

- Could 2+2 be implemented in your educational setting as a professional development program?
- Could it be implemented as an alternative instructor performance appraisal program?

Analyze the factors that would be favorable for such an implementation and the factors that would act as forces against such an implementation.

Would you be in favor of such a peer observation program? Keep in mind that 2+2 is not strictly a peer observation model, but a feedback approach that involves administrators, as well as, potentially, learners and parents. In a 2+2 alternative performance appraisal program, steps for working with instructors who are not performing as expected are clearly defined.

Reference

McColskey, W., & Egleson, P. (1997). Designing teacher evaluation systems that support professional growth. Retrieved from http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED367662

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 4.

Course Resources
Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide
[ePortfolio](#)

u03d2 - Evidence and Feedback

For this discussion, respond to the following:

- How is collecting or documenting evidence of performance related to but different than interpreting evidence or assessing a performance?
- How is collecting or documenting evidence related to but different than the process of giving feedback? Use examples to illustrate your response.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 4.

Course Resources
Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide
[ePortfolio](#)

Unit 4 ⟩⟩ Structures for Improvement, Part 2

Introduction

This unit continues the discussion about structures for improvement of instruction.

Several well-known, but less well-practiced, structures for improvement are discussed in this unit. Readings will introduce the concepts of professional learning communities, examining learner work, lesson study, walkthroughs, and peer coaching. Some of you may already know about these structures and may have participated in an implementation in your own setting.

Please share your insights and experiences in this unit's discussion on assistance structures.

This unit also addresses the planning stage of instruction. Planning may be evident but is not usually entirely observable in a visitation.

Your lesson plan, which you will teach in the next two weeks or so, is due this week. The assignment asks that you plan the lesson using a backwards design. You may choose to use Understanding by Design, a curriculum framework that is covered in depth in *ED5500 Standards-Based Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment*. You will encounter it in other courses as well.

If you are not familiar with this type of planning, you may find it helpful to adapt an existing plan to the stages described. As you do so, focus on Domain 1 of the Framework for Teaching, including the components for selecting instructional goals, assessing learner understanding, and designing coherent instruction. These components map to the three stages of the Understanding by Design framework.

To become familiar with Understanding by Design, optional readings are included in the studies this week. However, you are not expected to master this approach in this assignment, and you will not be graded on your expertise in using this model.

The grading criteria for this unit's assignment are based on the Framework for Teaching, Domain 1, in particular those mentioned above, selecting instructional goals, assessing learner understanding, and designing coherent instruction.

Essential questions:

- Why are collaborative structures essential for ongoing improvement of instruction?
- How can the collective level of expertise in instruction be raised?
- How important is the planning part of instruction in contributing to the overall success of learner understanding?

An environment with a high level of trust makes success more likely when leaders initiate collaborative structures and alleviate barriers to instructor learning.

Instructors may also play a role in initiating structures for improving instruction, as related in Allen and LeBlanc's 2005 *Collaborative Peer Coaching That Improves Instruction*. If both instructors and administrators are accountable for learner performance, both instructors and administrators should be empowered to propose and initiate the actions needed to raise learner achievement.

This is a broader conceptual model than many are accustomed to. Definitions of professional development have, in the past, been quite narrow. Workshops that take place at the school, away at a district level meeting, or at professional conferences have been the training model of choice. Professional development, or in-service, days are often an afterthought, planned at the last minute, with little attention paid to how the day's activities will relate to other training.

Action research (individual and collaborative), professional learning communities, peer observation, lesson study, and informal administrator observations such as walkthroughs or 2+2's that may involve a supervisory function all describe common ground among structures for educational assistance, formative evaluation processes, and professional development.

This is a broader conceptual model than many are accustomed to. Definitions of professional development have, in the past, been quite narrow. Workshops that take place at the school, away at a district level meeting, or at professional conferences have been the training model of choice. Professional development, or in-service days, are often an afterthought, planned at the last minute, with little attention paid to how the day's activities will relate to other training days, to school goals, or to learner understanding. Effective professional development is an ongoing, integral part of school life focused on school priorities and learner understanding.

References

Allen, D. W., & LeBlanc, A. C. (2005). *Collaborative peer coaching that improves instruction: The 2+2 performance appraisal model*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Learning Activities

u04s1 - Studies

Readings

Use the Capella library to read the following:

- Helsing, and Lemons's 2008 article "Leadership Practice Communities: Improving Teaching and Learning" in *Leadership*, volume 38, issue 1, pages 14–38.
- Chong and Kong's 2012 article "Teacher Collaborative Learning and Teacher Self-Efficacy: The Case of Lesson Study" in the *Journal of Experimental Education*, volume 80, issue 3, pages 263–283.
- St. George and Robinson's 2011 article "Making Mentoring Matter: Perspectives from Veteran Mentor Teachers" in *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, volume 78, issue 1, pages 24–28.
- Massey's 2014 article "Leadership in Reading" in the *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, volume 42, issue 2, pages 65–69.
- Grossman and Davis's 2012 article "Mentoring That Fits" in *Educational Leadership*, volume 69, issue 8, pages 54–57.

u04a1 - Lesson Plan

Overview

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a lesson plan based on the Professional Growth Plan that you developed in Unit 2. Your plan should balance learning activities, instructional materials, and resources to meet the needs of diverse learners. You should include an assessment to measure learning.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Evaluate instruction for professional development.
  - Develop a lesson plan that scaffolds through skill levels and meets the needs of all of your learners based on the Danielson rubric of instructional outcomes.
  - Design formative assessments based on the Danielson rubric for using assessments as a tool to evaluate instruction.
  - Develop research based learning activities, instructional materials, and resources as needed to meet the basic or above level of expectations on the Danielson rubric on designing coherent instruction.
- Competency 12: Demonstrate the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.
  - Identify how technology may or may not enhance learning activities in this lesson.

Assignment Description

Your focus on the development of an effective lesson plan allows you to work on an aspect of your Professional Growth Plan goal. If you have no prior experience with Understanding by Design, consider the backwards design process another opportunity to learn. The lesson plan serves several purposes:

- It helps you identify the factors you should consider as you plan an engaging lesson.
- It provides you with an opportunity to incorporate and articulate a wide variety of materials and technology resources into your teaching.
- It serves as a reference point for reflecting on the lesson after it has been taught.

Submit your lesson plan, following the guidelines in the Professional Growth Plan course project description and as detailed in this summary:

- Ask yourself after teaching the lesson, "How did what I planned compare to what actually happened?"

Refer to the Lesson Plan Scoring Guide to ensure that you meet the grading criteria for this assignment.

Portfolio Prompt: After this assignment has been graded, you may choose to save it to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 2.

Course Resources

Understanding by Design (extended version)

Understanding by Design (1-page version)

ePortfolio

Lesson Plan Guidelines

u04d1 - Assistance Structures

For this discussion, choose a type of assistance that you believe has the greatest potential for helping instructors improve education and explain why.

Cite at least one resource in your response, and answer the following:

- What does assistance for improvement of instruction look like in your educational setting?
- What are ways you can get help improving your lesson plans?

- What assistance structures are in place? What would you like to see added or changed? Why?

Refer to Unit 4 assignment Lesson Plan Guidelines and the scoring guide as a resource for this discussion.

- How does the leadership at your organization approach assistance for improvement of instruction?
- What do you believe would make efforts to improve instruction and learner achievement in your organization more effective?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 2 or 8.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

ePortfolio

Unit 5 ≫ Reflection

Introduction

The focus of this unit is on even more types of educator collaboration for instructional improvement. We will delve more deeply into some of the items we have already studied as well as looking at other types of professional collaboration.

The use of 360 evaluation feedback allows the teacher to understand the views of their educational leadership as well as that of their students and colleagues (Mahar and Strobert, 2010). In 360 evaluation feedback, different groups of stakeholders are asked for their input using specific instruments or questionnaires. The views of each of the groups are taken into consideration.

Professional learning communities, or PLCs, enable teacher collaboration for instructional improvement. PLCs create professional community where teachers are encouraged to share their ideas, successes, and challenges. There are various forms of PLCs. Some are formal in nature with scheduled meetings to coincide with faculty or departmental meetings. Others are simply a group of teachers or other educators who come together informally to share ideas and improve their professional practice.

Collaborative practice with a model such as 2+2 enables a common language to be used when feedback is desired. Among the premises of 2+2 is that, typically, feedback for instructors is so infrequent as to be nearly nonexistent. An implicit assumption of 2+2 is that instructors have expertise that is worth sharing with colleagues.

The language of 2+2 and shared expectations of frequent observations, a balance of feedback, and the discretionary power of the receiver of feedback to accept or reject the feedback make it an extremely versatile tool. Learners can provide 2+2 compliments and suggestions, with a focus on instructional practice and materials. With a focus on learning, learners quickly understand that 2+2 is not about personalizing feedback with a focus on the instructor. Instructors can give learners 2 +2 feedback. Learners can conduct peer review with 2+2, and learners in online courses can offer 2+2 feedback to peers as well.

- What is your reaction to 2+2?

A variety of structures for improvement of instruction have been introduced, as well as a method for communicating with colleagues in reflective and planning conversations. Reflect on the structures, focus possibilities, and approaches to communication that may contribute to improvement of practice. Your Professional Growth Plan is another structure that you may have linked to your own professional development cycle in your organization's evaluation program.

Essential questions:

- With so many ways to approach improvement of instruction, what do you find most effective?
- Which already exist in your setting?
- Which would be most difficult to introduce into your setting?

Reference

Mahar, J., & Strobert, B. (2010). The use of 360-degree feedback compared to traditional evaluative feedback for the professional growth of teachers in K-12 education." *Planning and Changing*, *41*(3-4), 147–160.

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning* custom text to read the following:

- Chapter 4, pages 118–133. This section of the text serves as a formal introduction to the methods of clinical supervision. The focus is on the reflective clinical cycle of planning, observation, and analysis of performance.

Use the Capella library to read the following:

- Poekert's 2012 article "Examining the Impact of Collaborative Professional Development on Teacher Practice" in the *Teacher Education Quarterly*, volume 39, issue 4, pages 97–118.
- Mahar and Strobert's 2010 article "The Use of 360-Degree Feedback Compared to Traditional Evaluative Feedback for the Professional Growth of Teachers in K-12 Education" in *Planning and Changing*, volume 41, issue 3/4, pages 147–160.

Multimedia

- Click **Launch Presentation** for *Teaching as a Profession* to hear Danielson discuss the development of the framework, the need to incorporate new understandings as they become available, and the role the framework plays in enhancing the view of teaching as a profession.

Course Resources

Teaching as a Profession

u05d1 - Professional Learning Communities

As you have learned in this unit, PLCs are groups of professionals who come together to improve their instructional practice. Please share your experience with a PLC. Ideally, this is an experience you have had in the field of education; however, you may use any professional group that you are or have been a part of.

Please share your thoughts and experiences in 1–2 paragraphs.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u05d2 - 360 Evaluation

In our second discussion in this unit, we will look at the 360 evaluation. As we have explored the 360 evaluation, we have learned that the goal of this assessment is to allow teachers and others to evaluate their professional practice from all angles.

In this discussion, please share your experience with 360 evaluations as well as what you perceive to be the benefits and challenges of this instrument.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 6 ≫ Working with Data, Working with People

Introduction

Evidence and data are critical components of any endeavor that results in a decision. Upon what do we base decisions related to instruction, if not evidence? Just as evidence of learner comprehension is necessary to assess learner progress and make instructional decisions, evidence of instructor performance is necessary for instructor learning.

Without evidence, it is impossible to make informed decisions about improvements and adjustments to practice. In your Professional Growth Plan, you are asked to plan the evidence that you will need to show progress toward your goal.

Using evidence to inform instruction is much like using data in a more formal action research study. Both inform future actions and change. In this unit, we will read about and discuss the role of evidence in the improvement of instruction. Evidence is subtly different than data, but sources of data are also sources of evidence and information.

What exactly is meant by sources of data will become clearer in this unit.

Working with people is equally important for the many reasons already studied in the course. Removing the barriers of instructor isolation and improving the very limited flow of feedback and information among instructors mean that more contact and better communication needs to be developed. Trust is important.

Essential questions:

- What is evidence?
- What is the role of evidence in observation and improvement of instruction?
- What is the role of facilitative communication in improvement of instruction?

Evidence comes in many forms:

- Evidence of learning.
- Evidence of instructional effectiveness.
- Evidence of improvement.
- Evidence that shows one strategy is more effective than another.
- Evidence that learners are engaged.
- Evidence that leads an instructor to believe that he or she is on the right track or needs to make adjustments.

Evidence can be direct or indirect; it can confirm or disconfirm beliefs; it can be a snapshot in time or cumulative over time. Data can provide evidence, and evidence can be termed *data* in many cases, but the terms are not quite interchangeable. The term *evidence* is somewhat broader: evidence can include data but also more subtle behaviors and perceptions. Critical thinking is necessary when determining when evidence is acceptable to establish that a goal has been reached or that learning has occurred. Using the term *evidence* can sometimes help us imagine a broader range and combinations of performance tasks, products or artifacts, and information or knowledge to serve as assessment of understanding and expertise.

The term *data* inspires mistrust for some because of the way data can be misused. It is not always clear that data has measured what it purports to measure. Data often reaches instructors in a form that is unusable or too late to be useful for educational practice. Different data have different purposes, and uncertainty about how data are used or what the data actually tells us may create distrust (NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 2003).

At the level of instruction, standardized tests can be helpful, especially if analyzed collaboratively at grade-level or within content areas. However, much useful evidence can and should be collected internally, within the educational environment, on an ongoing, daily basis. The readings in this unit will provide further information about use of evidence and data to improve practice.

For your assignment this week, you will be inviting one or more colleagues into your educational environment to observe you providing instruction and to provide feedback. You will record the results on the Summary of Peer Feedback, which you will submit that to your Instructor for feedback.

Reference

NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education. (2003). Using data about classroom practice and student work to improve professional development for educators. Retrieved from http://www.neafoundation.org/resources.htm

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning* custom text to read the following:

- In Chapter 5, pages 145–148. This section of the text addresses peer coaching.

Use the Capella library to read the following:

- Sartain, Stoelinga, and Brown's 2011 report "Rethinking Teacher Evaluation in Chicago: Lessons Learned from Classroom Observations." The report summarizes findings from a two-year study of Chicago's Excellence in Teaching Pilot. The pilot was designed to provide evidence-based feedback to teachers to drive instructional improvement. The pilot consisted of training and support for principals and teachers, principal observations of teaching practice using the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching, and principal-teacher conferences to discuss evaluation results and teaching practice.

u06a1 - Peer Feedback on Your Teaching

Overview

The purpose of this assignment is for the learners to see how their peers view their teaching proficiency. Colleagues can be a valuable source of information in terms of a learner's ability to receive feedback on what is actually happening in his or her classroom. The student will be observed on at least two occasions. One of these will be a videotaped lesson. The learner's partner in this assignment will complete the observation form. Learners should use the Classroom Observation Form as well as the Summary of Peer Feedback Form. Once the assignment has been completed, the learner should submit the Peer Feedback Form to the course. This assignment will allow the learner to receive feedback on his or her work in a personal manner from someone who understands the environment in which the learner is teaching.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Evaluate instruction for professional development.
    - Evaluate feedback received from professional colleagues.
- Competency 2: Improve instruction and professional learning.
    - Integrate feedback received from professional colleagues into the development of actions steps for improving instructional skills.
- Competency 3: Demonstrate the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.
    - Reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of the peer observation as a tool to collaborate with other professionals to improve instruction.

Assignment Description

Use the Summary of Peer Feedback Form before the first peer visit so you know what will be expected as documentation of the observations by your peers.

In preparation for the visit, explain the feedback process and its context to your peer observer. Share your improvement goal and what you would like your observer to pay particular attention to throughout the lesson. Be sure your colleague understands that you will be asking for written feedback using the Classroom Observation Form. You do not need to submit a copy of the forms, but you will need to refer to them when you prepare your summary.

Step One

To complete this assignment, follow the instructions on the following forms:

- Classroom Observation Form.
- Summary of Peer Feedback Form.

Step Two

- Submit the Peer Feedback Form to your instructor.

Refer to the Peer Feedback on Your Teaching Scoring Guide to ensure that you meet the grading criteria for this assignment.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio along with instructor feedback in the Professional Showcase binder for Program Outcome 4 after it has been graded. Note that artifacts that demonstrate the application of knowledge and understanding are more valuable to your portfolio than those which simply evidence the understanding of a concept.

Course Resources

ePortfolio

Summary of Peer Feedback

Classroom Observation Form

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u06d1 - Working with Data

The readings in this unit relate to the importance of evidence and data as basic building blocks in the implementation of any improvement endeavor. For this discussion, you might want to review:

- Chapter 6, "Using the Framework" in Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice*.
- "2+2 for Teachers: Frequently Asked Questions" in *Collaborative Peer Coaching That Improves Instruction*.

Discuss the use of data in the improvement of instruction. In your discussion, respond to the following:

- How are data and artifacts useful in the improvement of instruction?
- Why are multiple sources of data important?
- Suggest some good sources of evidence to use when planning and implementing instruction. Would you consider using learner 2+2 feedback as a source of evidence? Why or why not?
- Discuss sources of data in relation to your Professional Growth Plan. What evidence and artifacts are you collecting to help you make progress on your Professional Growth Plan goals? How are you using them to plan, implement, or assess instruction? Have you felt the need to make adjustments to your original plan based on the evidence you are collecting? Have you made adjustments to the types and sources of data you are collecting?
- Limit your post to 300 words or less.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 7.

Unit 7 ❯❯ Feedback and Coaching, Part 1

Introduction

This unit and Unit 8 address the feedback and coaching aspects of assistance for improvement of instruction. These units on coaching and providing feedback are a continuation of the themes in Unit 6, working with data and people.

Coaching conversations are based on evidence and data and involve knowledge of people, their states of mind, and their skills level. The value of feedback has already been discussed in the course; feedback itself becomes another form of data that the receiver may consult and incorporate into practice along with reflection on other evidence.

You will have an opportunity in this unit to apply some of these approaches after viewing video case studies.

Additionally, Sullivan and Glanz (2013) offer us many methods of observation and data collection as well as a number of scenarios for offering feedback to our colleagues. Chapter 4 offers the reader an excellent opportunity for the development of feedback conversations. Examples in this chapter should be most helpful to learners.

Essential questions:

  • Why are communication skills important in feedback and coaching?
  • Why are different approaches to assistance and conferencing important?

The principles of coaching are useful in many situations where two people interact to make progress and solve problems. Many of these principles mirror adult learning theory and learning theory in general.

A conscious decision can then be made to put aside the style that may be most comfortable and make use of a different approach when it is most appropriate to do so, given the situation. The leader or leader peer will use different conferencing strategies and behaviors depending on the approach used, as well. These behaviors are on a continuum parallel to the instructional leadership approach that is used. That is, if the instructional leader takes a nondirective approach, a primary behavior will be to listen. If the approach is directive-control, the instructional leader will primarily direct the instructor, and determine the standard the instructor should meet, based on the evidence.

Why is this important to instructors? The discussions and attention focused on coaching and feedback go back to the issue of instructor isolation. Collaboration may begin when an instructor is able to view a colleague's teaching, but it only becomes a professional collaboration when instructors communicate about practice.

There are at least two ways to communicate about practice. One is to observe instruction, provide feedback, and engage in coaching related to instructor behaviors and strategies based on observation data and feedback.

A second way is to observe educational environments, focusing on lesson content, learners, and learner work, and engage in professional communication about the learner work and lesson development. Both types of communication require commitment and trust, and both can lead to improvement of instruction and learner outcomes. Ideally, with frequent opportunities for professional communication and a clear focus for collaboration, improvement becomes a continuous, collective cycle of learning.

Reference

Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2013). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning: Strategies and techniques* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Learning Activities

u07s1 - Studies

Readings

Use the Capella library to read the following:

- Clem's 2013 article "Eloquent Mirrors: Creating a School Culture of Professional Feedback in *Independent School*, volume 73, issue 1, pages 22–28.
- Stearns, Morgan, Capraro, and Capraro's 2012 article "A Teacher Observation Instrument for the PBL Classroom" in the *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research*, volume 13, issue 3, pages 7–16.
- Schuck, Aubusson, and Buchanan's 2008 article "Enhancing Teacher Education Practice Through Professional Learning Conversations" in the *European Journal of Teacher Education*, volume 31, issue 2, pages 215–227.

u07s2 - Project - Coaching Conference Preparation

Video Case Studies

View a case of a classroom teacher for the purpose of conducting a hypothetical coaching conference with that teacher after the lesson. The post-conference is usually held to provide feedback and assist with improvement of instruction. The discussion in this unit relates to the viewing of the video.

Using the Classroom Observation Form, note components of the framework that you observe.

- Elementary teachers: View *1st Grade ELA*.
- Secondary teachers: View *8th Grade Reading*.

Learners who are not presently teaching may view either case.

Follow the directions on the Coaching Conference Feedback Form to conduct a post-observation conference with the teacher in the case you viewed. The coaching conference will give you an opportunity to practice coaching skills such as paraphrasing, pausing and silence, and asking clarifying and mediational questions.

This is a practice session, and you are not expected to demonstrate mastery of the process. How well you are able to analyze what went well and what can be improved is more important than the degree of expertise you demonstrate during the coaching session.

The Coaching Conference Feedback Form project component, from a conference with one of your colleagues, will be submitted in Unit 9. Refer to the Coaching Conference Scoring Guide to learn how the instructor will evaluate this component. Refer also to the Professional Growth Plan course project description.

u07a1 - Lesson Analysis, Reflection, and Revision

Overview

In this exercise, you will make revisions to your lesson plan and teaching based on peer feedback, self-reflection, and analysis. Recording your classroom (either an audio or a video recording) is helpful as part of the reflective process.

These activities are designed to help you targets areas where improvement is needed in professional practice.

Lesson plans should be constructed applying research-based practices to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners. When appropriate, technology should be incorporated but only for the betterment of instruction and to benefit the students.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Evaluate instruction for professional development.
    - Analyze the lesson plan with respect to the key elements that resulted in improved learning for K-12 students.

- Competency 2: Improve instruction and professional learning.
    - Revise the lesson plan according to the feedback, analysis, and reflection.

- Competency 3: Demonstrate the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.
  - Describe the impact that periodic analysis, self- reflection, and lesson plan revision can have on instructional practice.

Assignment Description

Submit the Lesson Analysis, Reflection, and Revision Form and your revised lesson plan to the assignment area. Refer to the Lesson Analysis, Reflection, and Revision Form for more details on completing this assignment.

Individual Option: View your videotape. Based on the videotape, your self-assessment, and the feedback from at least one colleague, you will revise the lesson that you taught for future re-teaching, part of the Plan-Analyze-Reflect process. You are not required to re-teach the revised lesson during this course but are encouraged to do so independently.

Collaborative Team Option: Based on the self-assessment and the feedback from your colleagues, the team will collaboratively revise the lesson for future re-teaching. You are not required to re-teach the revised lesson during this course but are encouraged to do so independently. (The pilot lesson should be videotaped.)

Portfolio Prompt: After this assignment has been graded, you may choose to save it to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 4.

Course Resources

Lesson Analysis, Reflection, and Revision Form

ePortfolio

u07d1 - Coaching Conversation

This discussion asks you to reflect on what you observed in the videos from this unit's studies. Choose one of the two threads:

- The first thread is for learners who are presently teaching in their classrooms.
- The second thread is for learners who are aspiring to become teachers or those who work in other areas and do not have access to classrooms.

Using your Sullivan and Glanz custom text, reflect on what you saw in the video case analysis. Share your thoughts and feelings in 1–2 paragraphs and make at least one substantial response to your classmates.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 14.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

ePortfolio

1st Grade ELA

8th Grade Reading

Unit 8 ≫ Feedback and Coaching, Part 2

Introduction

In this unit, we continue the discussion about working collaboratively to improve instruction. The focus this week is on the integration of the assistive strategies, focus formats, and coaching approaches that may be used in conjunction with one another.

We will utilize the *Enhancing Professional Practice* text as well as your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning* custom text to further explore peer coaching and professional development. Several current articles are incorporated to give learners a real-world feel for the possibilities associated with collaborative coaching and the improvement of instruction.

Learners should use Resource D from *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning* to practice their observation skills. Learners may choose to use the forms that they feel meets their needs. To preserve the master copies for later use, learners are encouraged to make copies of the forms for the exercise in this unit.

In your *Enhancing Professional Practice* text, review Chapter 4, "The Framework for Professional Practice," pages 43–108. You may want to refer to the scoring rubric for the Unit 8 assignment and have it available during your coaching conversation.

Learning Activities

u08s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks, your custom text, and the Capella library to read the following:

- Resource D, pages 193–214, in *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning*. Located at the end of the text, Resource D provides learners with various formats to use while observing their colleagues.
- Pages 201–227 in <u>The Sage Handbook of Mentoring and Coaching in Education</u>.
- Jewett and MacPhee's 2012 article "<u>Adding Collaborative Peer Coaching to Our Teaching Identities</u>" in *Reading Teacher*, volume 66, issue 2, pages 105–110.
- Slagter van Tryon and Schwartz's 2012 article "<u>A Pre-service Teacher Training Model with Instructional Technology Graduate Students as Peer Coaches to Elementary Pre-service Teachers</u>" in *TechTrends*, volume 56, issue 6, pages 31–36.
- Burke's 2013 article "<u>Experiential Professional Development: A Model for Meaningful and Long-Lasting Change in Classrooms</u>" in the *Journal of Experiential Education*, volume 36, issue 3, pages 247–263.
- Murray, Ma, and Mazur's "<u>Effects of Peer Coaching on Teachers' Collaborative Interactions and Students' Mathematics Achievement</u>" in the *Journal of Educational Research*, volume 102, issue 3, pages 203–212.

u08s2 - Project - Coaching Conference Preparation

This week, you will complete your Observations of Instructors assignment. You will be involved in the next weeks in a coaching conversation with another instructor.

Although you will be using a reflection conversation format, an understanding of instructional leadership approaches, support services, and the levels of proficiency suggested by the Framework for Teaching provides a substantial context for collaborative work necessary to improve instruction.

Essential questions:

- What role does coaching play in the improvement of instruction?
- How can different assistive strategies, focus formats, and coaching approaches work together for improvement of instruction?

In the past several units, you have examined multiple models for working with others to improve instruction. The Framework for Teaching offers expanded descriptions of 22 components of professional practice that are each broken down further into elements. Each element is described with a four-level rubric that facilitates discussions, coaching, or self-assessment on instruction.

u08a1 - Observations of Instructors

Overview

In this assignment, learners will be collaborating with other professionals on professional development for the betterment of both of the professionals involved. Learners will be observed by and observe a colleague. For one of the observations, the learner and a colleague will conduct a post-observation coaching conference.

By collaborating to improve instruction, the learner and his or her colleague will work to improve instruction for their students. Use the Summary of Instructor Observation Form to record observations and ultimately submit the form for instructor evaluation.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 4: Collaborate with other professionals and the family for the purpose of improving instruction.
  - Observe other professionals in the classroom for the purpose of improving instruction for both instructors.
  - Summarize information related to improvement on instruction from observations of colleagues.

- Competency 3: Demonstrate the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.
  - Reflect on the observation process as a tool to evaluate instruction for professional development.

Assignment Description

To complete this assignment, follow the instructions on the Summary of Instructor Observation Form and submit it in the assignment area. **Note:** You do not need to submit the Classroom Observation Forms that you completed for the individual visits.

- You will need to plan ahead with colleagues to make arrangements for visits, making sure that the purpose and outcome of the visits are clear.
- Before your visit, explain the feedback process and its context. Share your improvement goal and ask the instructor what she or he would like you to focus on during the visit.

Be sure your colleague understands that you will be providing written feedback using the Classroom Observation Form.

- Conduct a post-conference coaching session for at least one observation (learner or colleague).
- Submit the Summary of Instructor Observation Form to instructor for evaluation.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 2.

Course Resources

Summary of Instructor Observation

ePortfolio

Classroom Observation Form

u08d1 - Synthesis

The increase in learner comprehension is the goal of improvement of instruction. Working collaboratively with other instructors as adults is different than working with learners of various ages. At the same time, using some of the same strategies with learners can help them learn through experience, and with the help of instructor guidance, how to improve their own ability to direct and control their learning.

Considering what you have learned, which of the models you have explored do you believe would be the most effective in your situation. Please consider the following:

- Implementation.
- Collaboration.
- Instructional improvement.

Please share your discussion in 1–2 paragraphs.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 12.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

ePortfolio

Unit 9 ❯❯ Context for Improvement and Evaluation

Introduction

Not all instructor evaluation systems are equally successful in serving the two primary goals of such systems: supporting adult professional learning and providing quality assurances. In many evaluation systems, both purposes are clearly articulated. In practice, the quality assurance aspects of the system often receive most of the attention.

Creating an educational culture that supports appropriate assistive structures and maintains a clear focus on goals to improve learner understanding is an important aspect of effective professional development. Successful and effective instructional leadership also involves enlarging the number of leadership roles that can be shared with others, including instructors. Instructional leadership, as we have seen, is about helping instructors succeed and providing the opportunities for instructors to help one another to succeed.

Issues central to new thinking about evaluation, both summative and formative, will be examined in this unit. We will consider the issues involved in designing evaluation programs that address both the professional growth of instructors and quality assurance purposes of evaluation.

The readings in this unit include an important discussion of why and how the two purposes of evaluation, professional development and quality assurance, should be separated. The focus of this unit is on integrating the principles of best practice in instructional leadership, supervision, and evaluation, within the context of continuous organization renewal and learner comprehension.

Essential questions:

- What is instructor evaluation?
- What are the characteristics of an effective instructor evaluation system?
- How does an instructional leader create a context for instructor learning and provide the support that will lead to improvement of learner understanding?
- How can a program promote instructor learning and growth and ensure that instruction quality meets expectations?
- How can a system be avoided that is designed primarily to identify the "two percent" of substandard instructors and that imposes those criteria on the remaining competent 98 percent?

What has become evident is that, regardless of the exact nature of instructional leadership and the instructor evaluation system that is developed, some consistency is desirable. If a school or district believes in and promotes learner-centered educational environments, then a top-down process of supervision and evaluation is not in alignment with that belief. If frequent feedback to learners is valued, then twice-a-year observations for instructors with limited feedback are not enough.

If instructors are expected to develop cooperative learning techniques in their educational setting, then the current state of instructor isolation and lack of collaboration is a contradiction. If instructors are encouraged to develop assessment strategies that are also purposeful tools for learning, then instructor supervision and evaluation activities and strategies should serve as valuable learning tools for instructors.

A corollary to these statements is that what is valued in an educational system is not always evident. Vision and mission statements may have receded into the distance and no longer serve as focal points for improvement efforts. School renewal priorities may be unclear, and a commitment to increasing learner understanding may lack the focus needed for progress to be made. The process of discovering what is valued and determining what a school's priorities for improvement should be can itself be a learning experience.

Like any other type of evaluation and assessment, the supervision and evaluation of instruction and learning should begin with reflection on the desired outcomes. Evaluation program design committees that begin with these issues may find the discussions to be a catalyst for new understanding about common goals and beliefs. The discussions sometimes evolve into an ongoing process of reflection about educational goals and progress toward them, even after a particular instructor evaluation program has been developed (Danielson and McGreal, 2000).

Resource

Danielson, C., & McGreal, T.L. (2000). *Teacher evaluation to enhance professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Studies

Readings

In your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning: Strategies and Techniques* custom text, read the following:

- Chapter 5, pages 145–148. This short excerpt of Chapter 5 details peer coaching.

Use the Capella library to read the following:

- Chapter 3, pages 21–31, in your <u>Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice</u> text. This chapter clearly defines the dual purposes of teacher evaluation systems: "to 1) encourage professional learning and, at the same time, 2) ensure the quality of teaching" (p. 21). Not unlike learner assessments that serve instructional purposes, a merging of the two evaluation system purposes is also not only possible, but desirable.
- Partee's 2012 article "<u>Using Multiple Evaluation Measures to Improve Teacher Effectiveness</u>." This Center for American Progress article addresses the need for various measures of teacher effectiveness in the age of standards.

Multimedia

Listen to one of the following:

- Click **Launch Presentation** for *The Framework and Professional Growth*. Charlotte Danielson brings clarity to questions practitioners often raise about the compatibility of using the Framework for multiple purposes, such as evaluation and coaching. She also elaborates on new approaches to instructor evaluation.
- Click **Launch Presentation** for *Designing an Appraisal System*. Danielson, who has a wide range of experience working with educators in designing appraisal systems, takes on the question of how to design an appraisal system that provides for both quality assurance and professional growth.
- Click **Launch Presentation** for *Differences Between Evaluation and Performance Appraisal*. In this presentation, Dwight Allen discusses the distinction between performance evaluation and appraisal and the benefits of appraisal using 2+2—including its efficiency in terms of observation time, documentation, and nature of focus.

Course Resources

The Framework and Professional Growth

Designing an Appraisal System

Differences Between Evaluation and Performance Appraisal

u09a1 - Coaching Conference

Overview

This course project component will give you an opportunity to practice coaching skills such as paraphrasing, pausing, silence, and asking clarifying and mediational questions. Learners will participate in a coaching conference with the goal of improving their professional skills. The practice the learner will get in this context will benefit him or her in real-world professional situations. As this is a practice session, learners are not expected to be perfect, but they are expected to show growth and to develop their skills in the area of peer coaching. The goal of this exercise is to allow the learner an opportunity for professional dialogue with his or her professional colleagues.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Evaluate instruction for professional development.
  - Provide observations on colleague's ability to meet the framework of teaching in the area requested by the instructor with the goal of improving instruction.

- Competency 2: Improve instruction and professional learning.
  - Summarize feedback from an observed teacher in relation to collaboration with the goal of improving instruction as part of a coaching conference.

- Competency 4: Collaborate with other professionals and the family for the purpose of improving instruction.
  - Analyze coaching collaboration skill set in meeting the purpose of improving instruction.
  - Reflect on collaboration of utilizing a coaching conference process as a tool to improve instruction and professional learning.

Assignment Description

Follow the directions on the Coaching Conference and Feedback Form to conduct a reflecting post-observation conference, and submit to the assignment area.

- This course project component will give you an opportunity to practice coaching skills such as paraphrasing, pausing, silence, and asking clarifying and mediational questions.
- This is a practice session, and you are not expected to demonstrate mastery of the process. How well you are able to analyze what went well and what can be improved upon is more important than the degree of expertise you demonstrate during the coaching session.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio for Program Outcome 3.

Course Resources

Coaching Conference and Feedback Form

ePortfolio

u09d1 - Instructor Evaluation Systems

Briefly, critique your own instructor evaluation system. Consider the following questions in your response. You do not need to respond separately to each question, but use them to guide your thinking.

- What does instructor supervision look like?
- Are summative and formative evaluation processes clearly delineated? Are they carried out in a spirit of collegiality and trust?
- What structures are available to help instructors improve and succeed? How does your administrator exercise instructional leadership?
- How are professional development opportunities planned and by whom? What is the range of opportunities that are available?

From your understanding of the readings in this and other units, what recommendations would you make for changes in your own instructor evaluation system in order for it to better align with the need to support both professional development and address quality assurance issues? Explain.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner. In your response:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point with an example.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Introduction

The course comes to a close this week, and the course project synthesis is a way to summarize and synthesize the learning that has occurred. You will have the option to share your course synthesis with other learners or to post just Section 4 of the paper. Section 4 is the discussion of five concepts you found important in the course and one question that the course generated for you.

Your implementation of the course project components allowed you to apply and practice concepts from the course. Study assignments and discussions enabled consideration and application of additional concepts. These concepts include:

- Standards for instructors.
- Self-directed professional development.
- The 2+2 performance appraisal model.
- Structures for assistance (including learner work, observations, lesson study, and peer coaching).
- Instructional leadership approaches.
- Instructor developmental characteristics.
- Use of data and evidence in improvement of instruction.
- Elements of cognitive coaching.
- Formative assessments, professional development, and instructor evaluation.
- Critical self-reflection.

The new content in this unit is a final audio segment by Charlotte Danielson. In this segment, Danielson discusses new roles for instructors as leaders and the challenges facing instructors. There seems to be little disagreement that instructors face a greater challenge than ever before due the increasing diversity and complexity of society in general and learners in particular. Danielson states that multiple leaders are needed because a principal cannot be everywhere at once. As leaders, instructors also have unique insights into how to work with learners and other stakeholders using informal ways of getting things done. One discussion in this unit is about this theme.

Additional discussions give you the opportunity self-assess your progress in this course, and to provide feedback about the course itself. The feedback you provide can be used by instructors and course designers to help improve instruction.

Beyond this course, you are encouraged to continue reflecting on your own professional development, and to maintain an ongoing cycle of planning, acting, and reflecting.

Learning Activities

u10s1 - Studies

Readings

In your *Supervision That Improves Teaching and Learning: Strategies and Techniques* custom text, read the following:

- Chapter 7, pages 175–185.

Use the Capella library to read the following:

- Donaldson's 2007 article "<u>What Do Teachers Bring to Leadership?</u>" in *Educational Leadership*, volume 65, issue 1, pages 26–29. This article explores the many components of teacher leadership. Teachers are viewed as academic and professional leaders in their fields.
- Reason and Reason's 2007 article "<u>Asking the Right Questions</u>" in *Educational Leadership*, volume 65, issue 1, pages 36–40. The authors closely link teacher leadership to systems of inquiry and assert that educators should work within their school's agenda to accomplish more effective practices.

u10a1 - Professional Development Plan Synthesis

Overview

This project is the final product that you have been developing since the beginning of this course. You will use this assignment to bring together all of the components of the Professional Growth Plan. The goal of this project is to allow you to develop an authentic way to improve your professional practice.

The remaining components of the course project will support your progress in reaching the goals you set for yourself.

Project components include:

- Professional Growth Plan Template.
- Lesson Plan.
- Peer Feedback on Your Teaching.
- Coaching Conference.

By successfully completing this assessment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competency and assessment criteria:

- Competency 1: Evaluates instruction for professional development.
    - Assess instructional skills to determine strengths and weaknesses.

- Competency 2: Improves instruction and professional learning.
    - Develop meaningful lesson plans designed to meet the needs of a diverse population of learners.

- Competency 3: Demonstrates the dispositions expected of a professional educator and self-directed learner.
    - Identify learning opportunities with a specific goal of improving instruction.

- Competency 4: Collaborates with other professionals and the family for the purpose of improving instruction.
    - Collaborate with other professionals for professional growth opportunities and seek their feedback on practice.

Assignment Description

Review the Guidelines for Writing a Course Synthesis. Follow the instructions in the guidelines and submit your Professional Growth Plan to the assignment area by the end of the unit.

Portfolio Prompt: You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio.

Course Resources

ePortfolio

Guidelines for Writing a Course Synthesis

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u10d1 - Course Synthesis

You may post your Professional Growth Plan in this discussion to share with your colleagues. Many learners find it beneficial to read about the learning process of others, including the insights they have gained.

Discuss three concepts, ideas, or skills you have learned in the course readings and discussions that are of significance for you. Why do you find them of value? Which will you pursue further?

Use 2+2 feedback to share your thoughts about the course. Share aspects of the course that you found to be of value and suggestions that you feel would help improve the course.

Discuss at least one question the course has raised for you. If new knowledge does not generate questions, the learning process has come to a halt!

Response Guidelines

Responding to other learners is optional for this discussion.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Guidelines for Writing a Course Synthesis

u10d2 - Instruction Improvement

Throughout the course, the readings have directly or indirectly communicated that improvement of instruction is related to skills of self-reflection, observation, collaboration, communication, use of data, and shared leadership. Improvement of instruction is facilitated through use of a cycle of planning, acting, and reflecting, and through analysis and reflection on frequent feedback from multiple sources. A sustained focus on learner comprehension is assumed.

Now that we are near the end of the course, how has your view of assessment and improvement of instruction—the course topic—changed based on the course readings, the course assignments and discussions, and the interaction with your peers and the instructor?

In what ways have you translated the concepts and skills learned in this course to practical, everyday, useful ideas?

Response Guidelines

You are not required to respond to another learner, but you may do so if you wish.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide