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ELEM 401

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Fayetteville State University
Impact of Integrated course Design
Report Completed After Course Completion

Name: Teresa Reynolds **Semester (revised course was taught): Spring 2011**

Course Title and Description: ELEM 401: Science and Math in K-6

1) **Explain the impact your "In-Depth Analysis of Situational Factors" had on your approach to the course.**

The "In-depth analysis of situational factors", in essence, provided the guidance for the approach to the course. This course is a four hundred level methods course that assumes students have a strong foundational knowledge in their chosen field (education). However, the approach varies based on the students' experience and maturity level. When implementing the revised course this spring, the following issues were strong factors to consider.

a) *90% of the students were already employed or part-time as paraprofessionals in a school setting. This allowed us to have a greater level of "real world" conversation. They were already engaged in working with the teaching and learning aspects of schooling and in working with school age children.*
b) *The "curriculum" and standards are changing at the state level. The students will use the old standards when they student teach next semester but will need to understand how to use the new as they take their place as professional educators the same year the new curriculum is implemented (2012). While this was somewhat confusing to the students, it was not as difficult to present.*
c) *This course is part of the new "re-visioning" efforts of the School of Education. The course is an integrated course and requires the students to think about the standards for two disciplines (math and science), with an emphasis on science as inquiry. Materials and activities were focused on the early teaching of problem based learning and not so much a textbook approach to instruction.*

2) **Explain the impact of the Taxonomy of Significant Learning (foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring or valuing, and learning to learn) on your development of learning goals.**

Again, there is an assumption that students come to this course with (1) content knowledge – since they have passed the PRAXIS I exam and (2) foundational knowledge of the psychology and planning for teaching and learning. However, students may learn things in an earlier course, but the transfer of information is more difficult for some more than others. We had to "focus and review" the how to plan and apply it in specific science and math terms. This was a "raising of the bar" for the application level of the taxonomy. The human dimension level was more easily addressed since these students were used to planning together and working with other teachers- they enjoyed talking and sharing and were very open with each other. The students were enthusiastic in their work and they displayed positive and thoughtful dispositions toward the work. The expressed through our discussions personal ideas for valuing their education, but also for their mission as educators to teach the value of education to the children they are charged to teach. I found this group to be curious and willing to explore the how part of teaching – that learning to learn level of the taxonomy.

With those things in mind, I found the learning goals to be more easily attained due to the level of student maturity, motivation and experience in their chosen field. Still, there is so much more we need to accomplish before the end of the semester. It is my goal to provide experiences for my students- as students- which they can transfer to a classroom of children. I am striving to model the best practices I expect them to do as classroom teachers.

3) **Explain the impact of ICD on your assessment/feedback activities in the course, including the FIDeLity criteria.**

a) *My assessment /feedback activities are dialogical – in other words, students write, discuss with me and peers in a variety of ways their thinking, rewrite and present the comparison and their reflections. A rubric is used from the beginning as the guiding document to meet the standards. Every discussion is based around that rubric with a growing understanding of self critique. I start as the evaluator and become more of a guide as students learn to do self critique.*

4) **Explain how ICD influenced your teaching and learning activities.**

a) *The ICD experience has forced me to look at my own practices in a discipline where I teach instructional design. I believe it has caused me to address areas that I intended to focus on for improvement, but have not taken the time to really address.*

5) Explain how you sought to integrate teaching and learning activities with learning goals.

Purposeful thinking that helps students meet the learning goals set forth at the beginning of the course is the key to having strong teaching and learning activities. A clear look at the goal (what do I want the students to know and be able to do with this concept?) determines the type of activity needed to help students attain that goal. I must think about the knowledge – terms, concepts and other primary ideas that are required for success. I must present those ideas in a manner that ensures understanding and retention (more than just a test or quiz). The activities that ensure students are able to apply the skills required to meet the learning goals must be set up in a way that exploration and practice are not evaluated. Students must be given many opportunities to grow in their skills while feedback from the instructor and peers provide a higher level of efficacy in the process. With each practice or application, I provide a time of meta-cognitive reflection – either in written format or through discussion with the group.

6) Explain whether ICD had an impact on your own satisfaction in teaching the course.

a) *The ICD process has definitely had an impact on my personal satisfaction in teaching this course. It is a new course rather than a redesigned course and having the ICD process to guide the development of the course will make it easier to "fix" the areas that perhaps didn't work and need to be adjusted. The ICD process forced me to address the course in advance, rather than waiting to plan and work week- to – week. However, the process has raised my level of concern…. As I moved through the course, I realized immediately areas that still need to be changed – where my initial thoughts did not bring an effective end and where there needs to be some rearranging of activities, plans and events within the course.*

7) Summarize any evidence you have on the impact of the re-designed course on student learning.

While there is no comparison to how the course was taught in its previous existence, I do have a sense that student satisfaction with this course design is greater than similar courses I have previously taught. There is a greater alignment between anticipated student outcomes and assessment of student performance. I think the taxonomy and the focus on the greater purpose for the course have caused me to plan and present the course material in a broader manner – allowing students a greater capacity for self assessment and reflection.

8) Other comments

I truly appreciate the opportunity to engage in this process. Dr. Young was engaging and open, receiving us as individuals and professionals within our own right and indeed modeled the very ideas and concepts he was presenting to us – not just as subordinates, but colleagues in the field of education.