Note (28 August 2002): For now, office hours will have to be by appointment. (I do not have an office.)
We should arrange a place for you to find me on campus from 6:00-7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays before our class. Email is the best option when you need to reach me. Please contact me in advance--via email--if you are going to be absent from class. In case of emergency, my cell phone number is 734-657-7919.

Course Overview
Welcome to TE 301. This course is a course in questions. Being an effective teacher means becoming adept at asking good questions: questions of our students, of our peers, of our society and community, and questions of ourselves. Listening to the answers to these questions is important to our ongoing growth as educators. Even more important is learning to sort out the varying answers to the questions we ask and coming to an understanding of the multiple approaches to the challenges inherent in our profession. This semester, we will begin to identify significant questions and to develop ways of listening to and reflecting on the potential answers to these questions. In this course, we will develop some very important habits of mind and beginning practices for professional teachers.

To build these habits of thinking and practices, we will engage in readings, discussions, and such other course experiences as tutoring. The course will be most beneficial to you if we work to connect our theoretical discussions to the reality of your work with students. Your active participation in all aspects of the course is necessary for you and your classmates to benefit.

There are several themes that organize this course.

(1.) Learners and Learning
(2.) Content and Contexts
(3.) Connected Learning and the Role of Instruction

(1.) Learners and Learning
This part of the course encourages our students to consider what it is like to be a learner, from the perspective of an adolescent. It also connects our students’ previous experiences as learners to the experiences of their prospective students.

• How do early and later adolescents learn?
• How did you learn to become a successful student, but also how did you struggle along the way?
• Why is it that some kids get to middle school and high school being unable to learn, read, write, or reason?
• Why are some students so motivated? Why are others so unmotivated?
• What can we do to help all kids learn?
• How do we know that they are learning?
• What can we do to keep learning as professionals in the classroom? What does it mean to have a career teaching adolescent learners?
(2.) Classroom as a Context for Learning
This phase of the course considers how the classroom, community, and school function as separate and overlapping contexts for learning. The questions here encourage a careful look at students’ lives and the experiences they bring as learners. Considerable attention is given to better understanding how the classroom provides a challenging yet supportive context for different types of learning.

- What are the implications of new learning Standards and Benchmarks for students’ learning? How do these represent higher expectations for students?
- What makes reading and writing hard or easy for students?
- How do teachers’ assignments increase or decrease the amount of challenge that students experience?
- What are the implications of new learning Standards and Benchmarks for how students are expected to perform on state and local assessments?
- How do we help both traditional and non-traditional students do better?
- What are the roles that families and other adults can play in creating supportive contexts for learning?

(3.) Connected Learning: The Role of Instruction
This phase of the course examines the job of the teacher and instruction in bringing together students, content, and contexts so that students can learn. Our discussions about Learners, Classroom Contexts, and Instruction will give you a solid foundation for your progression to the intern year and your career as a teacher.

- What are the current issues about instruction in your content area?
- How can teachers create a more inclusive classroom where kids have the best opportunities to learn?
- What is a good repertoire of instructional and classroom management strategies?
- What are classroom lesson and unit plans? How do teachers plan? How can you learn to plan?
- What does it mean to be an interactive decision maker while teaching?
- How does instruction go together with assessment?
- How can we reflect on our own teaching to learn from our successes and mistakes?

Course Outcomes
This course aims to help teacher candidates to:

1. Better understand the environment of the secondary classroom and how the teacher manages that environment to promote students’ learning in the content areas;
2. Better understand adolescents as learners in the classroom and how the secondary teacher can identify the needs of different learners and adapt instruction to meet those needs;
3. Understand basic principles and concepts in reading and writing instruction, including matters of vocabulary development, comprehension, critical thinking, and creating assignments as well as responding to students’ writing. We will consider how these principles and concepts apply within the context of teaching and learning in specific content areas.

Course Requirements
There are several requirements for this course above and beyond what is outlined in the programmatic requirements within the teacher preparation program. This course specifically requires that teacher candidates:

- Attend all class and tutoring sessions and be punctual;
- Complete course readings, log entries, and reflections;
- Prepare assignments as required by the course syllabus;
- Participate as a full contributing member of the course;
- Meet course deadlines for assignments.
Textbooks


Attendance and Late Policy

Attendance at every class and every tutoring session in the field is absolutely essential. The course is designed to promote and support learning that relies on individual as well as collaborative work. This means that being absent is not only a loss for you but for the rest of the class as well. Because of this feature of the course, it is often not possible to make up a class. In the spirit of becoming a professional educator, please discuss with me ahead of time if you cannot be in class. We will attempt to accommodate to make your loss a minimal one. Excessive absences from class--more than 3 absences without prior notice--will result in a grade of 0.0. In addition, any unarranged absence from the tutoring field placement is entirely unacceptable and will result in a grade of 0.0. Completing assignments and meeting deadlines is part of your professional responsibility and commitment to this course. If, for some reason, you foresee submitting an assignment late, discuss it with me in advance. Again, excessive abuse of this principle could result in a grade of 0.0.

Programmatic Requirements

These specific content of the Programmatic Standards for the MSU teacher preparation program are listed below. You are held accountable for meeting these standards in order to proceed successfully through the program:

1. **Reliability and Responsibility**
   Teacher candidates must generally have been present and on time for professional commitments, including classes and field experiences. Teacher candidates must have regularly communicated about necessary absences or lateness according to the guidelines in the Professional Conduct Policy. Teacher candidates must have a record of meeting deadlines for course assignments and program requirements. A pattern of repeated absences, lateness, and failure to meet deadlines in courses or fieldwork is not acceptable. Any form of dishonesty (lying, plagiarism, forged signatures, etc.) about these and other requirements is not acceptable.

2. **Communication Skills and Social Relationships**
   Teacher candidates must have demonstrated the ability to express their viewpoints and negotiate difficulties appropriately, without behaving unprofessionally with instructors, peers, or students. Teacher candidates must have shown that they are ready to accept constructive feedback in a professional manner. Teacher candidates must have demonstrated an awareness of appropriate social boundaries between students and teachers and have shown that they are ready and able to observe those boundaries. Extreme forms of behavior (such as outbursts in class, sexual or other harassment, threats of suicide or of harm to others) are not acceptable.

3. **Comfort with and Concern for the Learning of all Children**
   Teacher candidates must be able to engage in informal conversations with children and keep their attention in such conversations. Teacher candidates must interact courteously, fairly, and professionally with people from diverse racial, cultural, and social backgrounds and of different genders or sexual preferences. Racial and other slurs are not acceptable, nor is conduct that violates the University's Anti-Discrimination Policy or that would violate the Anti-Discrimination Policy if it were directed at a member of the University community.
TE 301 Field Experiences

Your field experience will include two components. The first of these is tutoring, learning to help students learn in one-on-one, pairs, or small groups. Your work as a tutor will help you to better understand the needs of adolescents and the challenges and successes that accompany working with them. The second component of your field experience will involve classroom observations focusing on classroom management issues. You will be tutoring for approximately 90 minutes per week for seven weeks from Monday, October 7, through Friday, November 22. The process of arranging your tutoring placement will begin with a questionnaire that you will fill out on the first day of class. Mike Kerner (kjmkerner@aol.com) will be in charge of arranging your tutoring placements. He will visit this class to inform you about the details concerning your tutoring placement.

Course Assignments

There will be four major categories of assignments. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the date they are due.

1. Class Participation 25%
2. Tutoring Log/Reflection Journal 25%
3. Series of Lessons 25%
4. Inquiry Project 25%

(1.) Class Participation

Class participation is defined as being in class promptly each time we have class and completing assignments on time. Successful learning in our class depends on active participation. Due to this basic pedagogical model, full credit for assignments and for the course will only be awarded through regular, timely attendance and full participation. Note that this is a broad category. Everything--from the required course readings to group work, class discussion, and the web forum to attendance and timeliness--is included in this category.

See the weekly schedule for more information. Make sure you follow the weekly schedule carefully.

Due: weekly

(2.) Tutoring Log/Reflection Journal

The idea behind this assignment is to assess and follow the growth of a student over a period of time. We hope that the growth you see will be a result of your efforts. You will receive a list of recommended response questions. Feel free to go in other directions, but stay focused on the issue of how your student is growing and learning. Remember to consider social, emotional, and motivational issues as well as academic concerns.

You MUST keep an annotated list of the dates and hours that you complete during your field placement. Include information as to what was accomplished, how your student responds, your thoughts and insights, etc.

We will give you more information about this assignment on October 2nd. You will begin your tutoring placement during the week of October 7th.

Due: periodically--throughout the seven-week tutoring experience (10/7 to 11/22)

Complete Log/Journal Due: December 4th
(3.) Designing a Series of Lessons

The purpose of this assignment is to help you to think about the careful development of content, process, and motivation outcomes across a series of lessons. It is an opportunity for you to develop and reflect on your own decision making related to subject-matter teaching and the promotion of literacy.

During the semester, you will observe a teacher managing and instructing his or her class. By the end of the semester, you should be able to begin developing your own ideas for lessons that are meaningful and standards-based, that use content literacy, and that engage the students who you will be teaching.

- We will discuss format and specific requirements for this assignment as we learn more about planning. For now, recognize that these lessons will be on one major topic and should cover the span of 135-225 minutes of instructional time (3-5 traditional class periods; 2 block class periods).

- Something that you can do now to prepare for this assignment is to print the Michigan Curriculum Framework’s Standards and Benchmarks for your subject area and grade level. You can access this document at: <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>. Then select the Quick Link for “Curriculum and Standards” and choose the “K-12 Curriculum and Standards” link. Select your content area.

We will give you more information regarding this assignment in October.

Due: November 13th

(4.) Inquiry Project

Complete one the following 5-page (1250-word) assignments:

1) Based on experiences wandering bookstores and searching the library, the idea is to get connected to what people are writing and talking about in your area concerning their best practices. Your goal is to find 4 or 5 good ideas about teaching in your subject area and then bring them to class to share the wealth. You will need to prepare a brief annotated description of each of your ideas. You can base all of your ideas on a single source, or use a number or sources to compile your list and descriptions. Make sure you include enough information so that someone else could pick up your ideas and actually use them. Remember to seek out information from professional organizations in Michigan and across the nation.

2) Education is a hot topic – from newspapers to the legislature, everyone has an opinion on issues in education. From the MEAP to inclusion, technology to student achievement, there are a number of issues surrounding educational professionals. You will focus on one particular issue and become an “expert” on it. You must research the history of the issue through print and non-print sources, including current educational professionals. As a result, you will present both sides of the topic, your standpoint on it, and what you think will happen in the future.

In lieu of a final examination, this research essay is your final project for the course. We will give you additional information in November; however, keep these possibilities in mind. You may come up with an idea as you think about the various aspects of adolescent education this semester.

Due: Exam Week (December 9th - 13th) -- whenever and wherever the course schedule tells us to meet....