TE 801-803

ONLY THE BRAVE SHOULD TEACH

Only the brave. Only the brave should teach. Only those who love the young should teach. Teaching is a vocation. It is as sacred as the priesthood; as innate a desire as inescapable as the genius which compels a great artist. If he has not the concern for humanity, the love of living creatures, the vision of the priest and the artist, he must not teach.

Pearl Buck

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Meeting Times: TE 801-803 classes will meet on Tuesday from 4:10 to 6 P.M. in Bessey 222 on the following dates:

Fall Term
August 27,
Sept 3, 10, 17, 24
Oct 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Nov 5, 12, 19, 26
Dec 3, 10
Introduction

Welcome to TE 801-803. This full year course has been designed to complement your fifth-year intern experience and will focus not only on issues of immediate interest and utility to you, but also on other issues of importance to the teacher’s role which need to be considered as you begin your professional careers.

The course is intended to afford a professional’s perspective upon the daily pressures and emotions of the classroom. Meeting weekly in a small discussion and problem-solving forum you will be expected to model best practices and to critique your successes or disappointments with encounters in the field. While the companion sequence TE 802-804 focuses on issues related to curriculum subject areas, TE 801-803 classes promote habits of mind that will inform you of the social, political, legal, and professional contexts that both hinder and enable teaching and learning in classrooms, schools, and communities.

You will learn about relationships with colleagues and about the effects of these relationships in the day to day experience of teaching. As a novice teacher you will explore and develop professional support networks of colleagues to whom you can turn to learn about the culture, history, and traditions of your school. You will also learn about the importance of relationships with experienced practitioners who can serve as guides and mentors to you in your early years of teaching. In keeping with the intent to have a seamless relationship with the practicum experience, the course will remain flexible in order to address issues that will emerge in the course of your teaching experience.

Goal of the TE 801-803 Sequence

The goal of “Professional Roles and Teaching Practice I and II” is to acquaint interns with practical knowledge about the complex roles they may assume as educational leaders in the classroom and in the larger school community. This course addresses the questions: “What does the beginning educator need to know?”

“What does it mean to be a professional educator?”

In its broadest interpretation TE 801-803 examines the roles of the teacher in a political context. The word “political” here is intended to connote the way members of a society organize and manage their mutual interests and duties, including public education. It implies also the sharing or allocation of power and responsibility.
It does not matter whether the teacher is addressing issues of diversity in the classroom which bear upon management style and instructional strategies or matters of ethics connected to confidentiality and legal liability, or problems of accountability to parents and administrative supervisors, or stresses related to the search for employment. All of these challenges and their successful resolution depend on the teacher’s exercise of that most valuable and professional asset, good judgment, which is the foundation of ethical conduct.

Folded into this overarching goal are the four important 
**MSU Teacher Preparation Program Standards** for interns:

- Knowing Subject Matters and How to Teach Them
- Working with Students
- Creating and Managing a Classroom Learning Community
- Working and Learning in a School and Profession

Each of these four standards should be kept in mind in the development of any lesson plan.

Expanded description of these Standards may be found in the *Handbook for Interns and Mentor Teachers* published by the Department of Teacher Education.

**Six Strands**

Interwoven through the TE 801-803 sequence are six strands:

- **Classroom Teaching**: Management and Instruction
- **Professionalism** in and Beyond the Classroom; Law and Liability
- **Establishing Positive Relationships** with Parents and Community
- **Diversity**: Making Knowledge Accessible to All Students
- **Emergent Issues**: Pleasant and Unpleasant Surprises
- **Preparation for Employment**

**Classroom Teaching**: Management and Instruction

This strand pays particular attention to issues of developing an effective instructional classroom environment in which all students feel supported and valued. Many questions surface during this process. How does a teacher establish an orderly, humane teaching and learning environment? How does a teacher connect and communicate with all of the students in a class, especially those who are chronically late, who sleep in the back of the room, or who learn reluctantly? Should a teacher wait until all students understand a concept? What skills are desirable for a proactive, rather than reactive teacher, who hopes to sidestep potential problems in the teaching/learning process? These
questions do not comprise an exhaustive list; rather, they represent issues that interns will confront in their classrooms and in this course during the year.

Interns will also analyze and share insights into management strategies, laying a foundation for a repertoire of effective responses to address situations studied through role-playing, readings, and case studies. The value of setting goals and expectations for oneself and for students will receive special attention.

**Professionalism in and Beyond the Classroom; Law and Liability**

What does it mean to be a professional educator? What do others, such as colleagues, parents, and community members, expect of educators? How can a perceptive teacher grasp the particular culture and history of a school and its community, and incorporate this knowledge in daily teaching strategies? This strand will focus on developing collegial relationships, and on sharpening survival skills necessary to negotiate the politics of the workplace. Additionally, interns will generate a file of professional resources, organizations, and related social agencies whose interest often complement the efforts of the classroom teacher. By creating model community case studies, interns will gain an understanding of ways in which they can adapt their subject matter knowledge base to meet the needs of students with whom they work. Finally interns must cultivate a working knowledge of legal issues that impact school and pupils—matters concerning child abuse, legal liability, confidentiality, and appropriate disciplinary responses for infractions of school rules or community laws.

**Establishing Positive Relationships with Parents and Community**

Schools that encourage community and parental involvement experience markedly different successes from those of other schools. In these schools, teachers and parents share common expectations for student growth and achievement. How are these common expectations transmitted? What is the distinct role of the teacher, of the parent, and of the community, in this pooling of efforts? How can interns improve their expertise about issues confronting the school, the community, and educators? How can interns best prepare for a productive session of conferences with their students’ parents? Accountability is also a powerful issue in these considerations.

**Diversity: Making Knowledge Accessible to All Students**

Students in most classrooms come from diverse backgrounds, with differing ideas about the purposes of their education and their lifetime plans after high school. They appear in class with varying abilities, tastes, skills, and interests. Some have special needs. Minority students, whether African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, or others representing various ethnic or cultural groups, have concerns that must be respected and addressed. All young men and women expect to be educated in an atmosphere of fairness, free from the
The intrusion of bias or stereotyping. The teacher’s responsibility is to make knowledge accessible to all students, and to encourage each student to put forth the best possible effort. But how does a teacher meet the needs of all students when everyone seems to need something different? In this course interns will consider their obligations to students in a diverse culture and examine ways to meet this responsibility.

**Emergent Issues:** Pleasant and Unpleasant Surprise

The diversity of a school population often gives rise to unexpected behaviors and unforeseeable outcomes. Unprecedented issues emerge. A student becomes ill in class, where should she be directed to go? Another student, whose performance has been indifferent for weeks, suddenly scores 100% on the latest unit test…Has he cheated, or has he found new motivation to study? A teacher is fairly sure he smells marijuana smoke on a student’s clothing…Should he give the students a warning, or tell a counselor, or do nothing? How can a teacher construct a test that truly measures the material taught, yet doesn’t take twenty hours to grade? Interns will share, and discuss, and write about these kinds of emergent issues.

**Preparation for Employment**

Interns will fashion a strategic plan for obtaining a job. Included in the plan will be creation of a resume, the writing of a philosophy statement, the securing of references, and the accumulation of pertinent artifacts—all as part of a professional portfolio. Practice interviews will be scheduled, and interns will have opportunities to attend job fairs on campus and in other locations. Familiarity with electronic media sites and faxed application blanks will aid individuals in their search for employment.

**Sample Class Activities and Required Papers**

Class activities may vary, depending on current and emerging issues. The class will include assigned readings relevant to the issue at hand, weekly writings, extensive discussions, frequent oral presentations, role playing, and peer interaction. Guest speakers and mentor teachers may be invited to participate in class. Interns may expect to encounter a degree of intellectual rigor appropriate for graduate level students. It is expected that written and oral assignments are completed in a like manner.

The following are examples of the types of topics which may be raised in the written and oral presentations:
• Analysis of teenagers’ behavior and factors which motivate these students
• Interns development of a Professional Development Plan
• Development of a “Philosophy of Teaching” Statement
• Maintenance of a professional log
• A discussion of the formal vs. informal power structures within a school
• Issue Analysis papers and presentations
• Intern’s review of the proceedings in a Board of Education meeting
• Reports on interview with school counselors or special education teachers
• Summaries of the roles teacher unions play in the daily function of school
• Designing rubrics for essays and tests

**Interns MUST craft a minimum of one** significant paper on a case study during the course of TE 801, exclusive of weekly reflections or class essays. Preparations should be made for an ongoing collaborative work with a team of other interns for a School/Community/Parent Problem report spanning both semesters.

Finally, presentation of a satisfactory **professional portfolio** in April is a course requirement. Other research, projects or papers, may be assigned, at the discretion of the instructor.

The following are proposed as the essential papers to be produced by interns.

• A Case Study of an individual or small group of students within a class
• Weekly reflective writings on emerging issues.
• Professional Portfolio prepared for final presentation at the Spring Convocation. A possible byproduct of the full portfolio, a concise Interview Packet, may be recommended for the Teacher Job Fair in the spring. Complete guidelines and expectations for the professional portfolio will be included as a separate handout.
• Summary of a meeting of the Board of Education
• An interview with school officials

**Assessment and Evaluation**

For each written assignment, rubrics or guidelines that form the basis for grading will be issued as a separate handout.
The Intent of TE 801/803

Student teaching is an exciting period of learning and growth. It is important to view your work this semester as a form of inquiry rather than a culminating effort to demonstrate what you have learned. Teacher candidate assignments have been devised in order to foster your ability to pose questions about teaching and learning, to reflect upon and learn from your teaching experience, and thus, further your own professional development. MSU is committed to fostering your development as a knowledgeable, caring professional who is at once reflective and able to make decisions in the best interests of all children in this culturally diverse society.

A Collaborative Community

Collaborative conversations which occur during seminars, peer observations, and post-teaching conferences are central to our development as educators. Conversations in which we pose questions, offer tentative beliefs, provide critical feedback, argue about the wisdom of various teaching decisions, and listen thoughtfully to one another have the potential to help us develop our practice, confront tacit assumptions, and deepen our understanding of teaching and learning.

Reflection

Many of the assignments require thoughtful and in-depth self-evaluation. It is important to analyze our own efforts and decisions as they affect the responses of individual children, the quality of their engagement, and their achievement. We have tried to explicitly encourage observation and analysis regarding the nature of the learner's experience. After completing a teaching segment, you will want to ask “What did you notice about the students' interactions”; “How did individual children respond?”

It is natural to reflect on ourselves as we seek to improve our practice, but these reflections must be joined with consideration of the experience of the learners in our classroom. It is critical to reflect upon how our classrooms incorporate aspects of children's experience outside the classroom, and how we can better attend to the individual voices of each of our students. Seminars, articles, and classroom experiences encourage discussion and reflection on how our schools can serve children equitably and how our own teaching can become more inclusive and responsive.

Documenting Growth

Finally, the development of a teaching portfolio is a means of authentically documenting and assessing your development as a teacher. We are asking you to utilize the criteria established by the National Board For Professional Teaching
Standards outlining performance based standards and the College of Education's content standards to organize your portfolio. These should serve to guide your selection and development of learning experiences for the children in your classroom. The content standards, based on the College of Education's knowledge base, portray the teacher as a professional who not only implements the curriculum but develops it. Teachers are reflective inquirers and instructional decision-makers who create learner-centered, problem-oriented, educational experiences for students. Teaching is characterized as a complex, creative activity which requires a high level of expertise and knowledge.

In closing, this semester will provide rich and varied learning opportunities for you as you make the transition from student to teacher. We hope that you reach your goals as you continue on this journey which promises a lifetime of learning.

Assignments and Requirements

1. Department of Education Handbook for Interns
Read the handbook and the following list of assignments carefully. Record important due dates as well.

2. Seminar Meetings
Tuesday, 4:10 – 6 P.M. – Bessey 222
Seminars are scheduled regularly throughout the semester and offer you an opportunity to share information with peers, problem solve, and collaborate on the development of the portfolio. Attendance at seminars is mandatory.

3. Reflective Report: Due October 15th
During the student teaching semester, use the format below to analyze at least one lesson that you create and implement. The purpose for this self-assessment is to promote systematic reflection on the lesson and to closely connect an examination of one's own actions with an awareness of student response and engagement. Please type responses and answer all questions in the reflective report you submit.

1. Describe the strengths of the lesson you just taught (Be specific about particular aspects of your teaching performance and attempt to link your actions to observations of student engagement and response).
2. Describe one dilemma or unforeseen challenge that occurred. In your view, what was the source of this dilemma? How did individual learners respond? What did you notice about the students' interactions?
3. What do you think students learned as a result of this lesson? How do you know?
4. How might you modify this lesson as a result of your experience? What aspects of your practice do you intend to examine more closely as a result of this lesson?
4. Peer Coaching or Videotape Assessment: Due November 12

Why? Peer coaching, like videotaping, can be a great source of insight into our own teaching. By observing others we are able to become more critically reflective of our own practice. Conversations with peers regarding instruction also support increased collaboration and an inquiry stance towards our teaching. A description of the peer coaching experience which includes a rationale for using the strategy, a description of your inquiry focus, and an assessment of results may be included in your portfolio.

One full round of peer observation requires reciprocal observations and reciprocal follow-up conferences between two partners.

The Process:
1. Determine the focus of your inquiry. What perplexes you about your teaching?
   Brief your observer on your questions and area of inquiry.
   Example:
   I am having problems with students not being attentive during the lesson. When I ask a question the same few students raise their hand every time. A couple of students are always lost. I have started trying different ways of asking questions so that the whole class can respond, and I have begun using think-pair-share when I ask a more challenging question. But I am not sure if this is effective. I am not sure if I am engaging everyone.

2. Next, provide specific explanations regarding how your partner can help you. Provide your partner with some focus questions.
   Example:
   Could you observe the lesson and give me feedback regarding the following information:
   - How many students are tuned in to instruction?
   - Am I addressing everyone in the class or do I tend to talk to a select group?
   - Do I make eye-contact?
   - Does my voice convey interest, change dynamics, etc.?
   - Anything you notice I am not doing but could be doing?

3. Schedule a time for the observation and a 20-30 minute feedback session.
4. At the feedback session it will be most helpful if observer information is concrete, specific, and non-judgmental. The observer can be supportive by first discussing teaching strengths and positive teacher behaviors observed. Include examples from the lesson. Provide feedback which is non-judgmental and based on observation.
   Example:
   Not: The child was bored
   But: The child yawned and looked out the window for the first two minutes of the discussion.
   Not: You ignore a lot of the kids.
But: For the first two minutes you held eye-contact with five children in the front row and you stood close to their desks.

5. Finally, you will submit a written report of your experience being observed and gaining feedback from a peer. Please use the following format to type your report:

1. A written description of the observation focus with accompanying questions that were developed to help your observer.

2. A final written reflection regarding the feedback session. Address the following questions in your reflection. Please do not feel limited to these questions:
   a. What areas of strength were noted by the observer?
   b. What concrete behaviors were noted by the observer? (These should pertain to your focus questions)
   c. Based on these observations what actions have you determined to take in order to support positive change?

5. Report from Board of Education meeting. Attend a Board of Education meeting and submit a written report.

   Report should give date, location, name of school district. It should briefly discuss the major agenda items of the meeting. Relevant comments should be made in regard to the meeting. These might include such things as the overall atmosphere of the meeting, the perceived effectiveness of the group, hostile groups, long range plans of the Board, or other significant elements.

6. Interview of school personnel: principal, counselor, disciplinarian, custodian, etc.

7. Produce a professional portfolio. This will be discussed in great length throughout the semester. It should be completed before beginning job interviews in the spring.

8. Attendance at Convocation in May

   Complete all assignments and submit them, as well as any necessary revisions, on time.

GRADING SCALE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 - 100%</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>88 - 92</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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The class will meet 16 times during the semester. Absences must have prior approval or exceptional circumstances. Any other absences will result in loss of participation credit for that meeting. (10 points)

Assignments are to be submitted on time. Any late assignment will receive half credit. Assignments that are unsatisfactory will be returned with instructions as to how they are to be redone, as well as a due date.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Maximum points possible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/participation</td>
<td>10 points each week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board of Education meeting</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drafts of Case Study</td>
<td>10 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel Interview</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>5 points per week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy of Education</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments</td>
<td>10 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance at Convocation in May</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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Additional assignments may be made as warranted

Your contribution of creative solutions to the problems of education may earn you the eternal gratitude of the educational community and the chance to be incredibly wealthy as the most sought-after individual on the planet.