

# **Example of a Well-Designed Course in: EDUCATION**

## **1. Context**

- The subject matter: Pre-Service Teacher Education
- The title of the course: Educational Technology
- Typical class size: 24 students
- Level of course: sophomore level course
- Mode of delivery: the course is taught face to face, however there is a large dependence on online components
- Type of institution: 4 year college

## **2. General Description of the Course**

This course provides an introduction to the use technology in educational settings. The official catalog description is as follows:

This course prepares future teachers to effectively utilize technology as a tool for student learning and their own productivity and professional development. Students learn basic computer skills as well as how to use productivity software and Internet tools. Macintosh and Windows computers are used.

## **3. Big Purpose of the Course**

The big purpose of the course in my eyes is to provide a vision for preservice teachers for how technology can be used to impact the learning of all students.

Too many times in schools the computer is a reward for good behavior. Many teachers don't see the potential that technology offers for learning for all students, not just the students who finish first. I have also found along the way that this generation, with all their cell phone and facebook skills, have very few computer skills and are very afraid to try new things.

I want them to learn strategies for learning about new technologies and not be afraid to move beyond their limited experience with technology.

## **4. Important Situational Factors/Special Pedagogical Challenge**

For me there are two challenges for this course; placement in the curriculum and diversity of teaching fields.

First of all this course comes early in the curriculum. Students take this course before they have courses in teaching strategies and planning and classroom management. Most students have never done more than observe in a classroom at the time they take this course.

Secondly every student seeking teacher licensure takes this course, so in one section I have students who want to teach special education, music, art, physical

education, and a large list of other subjects and at all levels, elementary, middle, and secondary.

## 5. [3-Column Table](#)

I have taught this course since 1996. Of course due to the nature of how technology has changed, this course changes almost every semester. Over the years the focus has changed from a focus on “this is how you use a specific software” to “this is how you integrate technology in your teaching.”

**Learning Goals:** I decided to totally redesign this course with the focus on the pedagogy of using technology rather than the technology. After learning about the Taxonomy of Significant Learning, I began my redesign by thinking what it takes for a teacher to use technology in transformative ways to support learning. I developed 6 traits of teachers who use technology effectively. Each of these traits became a goal for the course. The next step was to create a set of objectives to meet each of the goals. I then categorized each objective to the Taxonomy of Significant Learning.

**Graphic Syllabus:** Another technique I used that was very helpful in the creating of course goals, objectives, and structures was to develop a graphic syllabus as described by Linda Nilson in her book, [The Graphic Syllabus and Outcomes Map](#) . I have linked a PDF version of [my graphic syllabus](#) (← click this link) that provides a visual overview of my course.

**Team-Based Learning:** I used the Team Based Learning Strategy. I divided the course into 7 modules plus the final project. Each module begins with a readiness quiz followed by a team application problem and then an individual problem.

**Spreadsheet:** Instead of the 3 column table I am **linking a [spreadsheet](#)** that shows the learning activities, assessments, and calendar organized [by module](#). You will also find the course objectives organized by goals. In addition I must demonstrate how this course meets national standards, so you will find sheets that relate each objective to the related national standard.

## 6. [Weekly Schedule](#)

The **linked [spreadsheet](#)** contains information about the Weekly Schedule of this course. I teach two sections of this course. One on MWF and one on TR. The MWF sections meets 3 times a week for 50 minutes and the TR section meets twice a week for 75 minutes each time. You will find the timing for both days on on the spreadsheet.

## 7. [Evidence of Impact](#) (optional)

I have used parts of this course before and the total redesign of this course is based on these "pilot" groups. This semester I am beginning the semester with some questionnaires and hopefully I will have data after this year.

While not scientific, I do have lots of anecdotal evidence. The following comment on the final self-assessment for the course made all the work worth it for me. After assessing his computer skills, he added this:

"I am a much more self-motivated person when it comes to learning. I have come to appreciate learning during this course, and I have gained respect for teachers who stress the love of learning. I believe collaborating is a great way to learn as long as the lesson is guided well. We often need to provide scaffolds for this learning style, but the results are well worth the work. I am very glad that the class was structured this way. I might have driven myself crazy if it had been a traditional lecture course."

For any teacher, it is this totally unsolicited and unexpected comment that lets you know you made a difference and gives you the passion to continue.

## **8. Most Exciting Aspect of the Re-Designed Course for You (optional)**

This re-design of this course is really a 2 year long project. It began by learning about course design from Dr. Fink. Next I learned about team-based learning. I have spent 3 semesters learning to use this strategy. In addition I have added the use of Web 2.0 tools and an Interactive Whiteboard. I am excited that I have so totally switched the technology skills focus, which is common for an educational technology course, to a course focused on the pedagogy of using technology to support learning.

## **9. Your Contact Information**

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