



## Making a PK-12 Teaching Methods Course More Student-Centered and Interactive

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# I) Introduction

## ▶ A) Reasons for revamping my teaching methods course

▶ 1) Too much time dedicated to theory-based lectures (in a Monday evening class)

▶ 2) Not enough time allotted to the following:

▶ a) small-group discussions on how to apply the theory to real-life classrooms

▶ b) micro-teaching sessions to practice new teaching techniques

▶ 3) Not enough structure to peer feedback activities during the micro-teaching presentations where students present a sample teaching activity to classmates and receive comments on how to improve the activity for the future

## ▶ B) Reflection/Discussion Question

▶ 1) Have you been in a recent situation where you asked yourself how you could change or revamp a class? If so, what have you thought about changing? Or if you were, what did you change?



# II) Revamping My PK-12 Teaching Methods Course

## ▶ A) Inspiration for change

- ▶ 1) Attending the WAC Institute in May 2023 gave me new perspectives on making my teaching more interactive and student centered
  
- ▶ 2) SMALL CHANGES that can be made while still accomplishing the learning outcomes for the course
  - ▶ A) More student-centered discussions and reflection activities
  - ▶ B) More time specifically dedicated to practical applications of theories (i.e., micro-teaching sessions)
  - ▶ C) More structure to peer-feedback activities
  - ▶ D) Don't try to change your whole course before the start of classes next week



## ▶ B) Reflection/Discussion Questions

- ▶ 1) How do you get inspired (or find inspiration) to make some small changes to classes you're teaching?
- ▶ 2) What kinds of changes have you thought about making to a class you teach?

# III) Small Changes I'm Making to My Class



## ▶ A) Change #1: Re-structuring the course calendar

- ▶ 1) The class only meets once a week for 13 weeks in fall 2023
- ▶ 2) Combining some weekly topics into one week to allow for more class periods to be allotted to practical applications of the material (i.e., more periods dedicated specifically to micro-teaching)
- ▶ 3) Following a week of presenting the topics and small group discussions of how to present the topic in class, students will then use the subsequent class period to present sample materials and receive feedback
- ▶ 4) In the past, micro-teaching occurred in a rushed way at the end of a class discussion and adequate time for feedback wasn't built into the schedule
- ▶ 5) Reflection/Discussion Question:
  - ▶ How can you change your class calendar to provide more time for student presentations and/or discussions?

# III) Small Changes I'm Making to My Class (Cont'd)

## ▶ B) Change #2: More detailed guidelines for peer-feedback

### ▶ 1) Sample peer-review questions for micro-teaching sessions

- ▶ Were the objectives of the lesson (activity) clear/apparent to you?
- ▶ If you were a student in this class, what activity (or activities) did you really enjoy? Why?
- ▶ If you were a student in this class, what other things (like materials, directions, examples, resources, etc.), in addition to what was presented, would need to be included to help you achieve the learning objectives?
- ▶ If you were going to present these same learning objectives to your own class, what types of activities would you use? Why?
- ▶ If you were going to do the same types of activities with your class, how would you arrange the seating? Why?
- ▶ Have you been in a class where this type of activity was done before? What made it successful (or not)? Why?



### ▶ 2) Reflection/Discussion Questions

- ▶ What kinds of questions do you give to your students to consider when you want them to be critical thinkers about a certain topic or activity in class?
- ▶ How do you ensure that the students remain objective and not rude or unprofessional when offering peer-feedback?



# III) Small Changes I'm Making to My Class (Cont'd)

## ▶ C) Change #3: More student-centered activities

- ▶ 1) Following lecture and discussion of the weekly topic(s), I plan on introducing small group reflection activities (that will last 20-30 minutes)
- ▶ 2) Students will “brainstorm” about possible scenarios or situations where they would like to develop an activity or lesson based on the weekly topic
- ▶ 3) The textbooks have reflection questions to help students think about how they can create activities and lessons based on the methods/approaches discussed in class
- ▶ 4) Students will answer the reflection questions in the book and then use Google Slides, Jamboard, or PPT to present their ideas to their classmates
- ▶ 5) These reflection activities can be the blueprints to activities they will develop more and present during the micro-teaching sessions the following week



## ▶ 6) Reflection/Discussion Question:

- ▶ What kinds of simple/quick things can you do in your own classroom to make it more interactive and student-centered?



## IV) Conclusion

- ▶ **A) What types of things are you going to consider when making changes to your own class(es)?**
- ▶ 1) Have you been in a recent situation where you asked yourself how you could change or revamp a class? If so, what have you thought about changing? Or if you were, what did you change?
- ▶ 2) How do you get inspired (or find inspiration) to make some small changes to classes you're teaching? What kinds of changes have you thought about making to a class you teach?
- ▶ 3) How can you change your class calendar to provide more time for student presentations and/or discussions?
- ▶ 4) What kinds of questions do you give to your students to consider when you want them to be critical thinkers about a certain topic or activity in class? How do you ensure that the students remain objective and not rude or unprofessional when offering peer-feedback?
- ▶ 5) What kinds of simple/quick things can you do in your own classroom to make it more interactive and student-centered?
- ▶ **B) One Final Reminder**
- ▶ 1) Remember: keep your changes simple and easy for the first time. Don't be afraid to try new things! Please reach out to colleagues or other programs on campus for help and suggestions!