

Building Communication and Teamwork in the Classroom®

Course Description

Compelling research across a broad spectrum of educational arenas clearly indicates that students learn and achieve better in a positive and inviting learning environment that emphasizes mutual respect and caring. *Building Communication and Teamwork in the Classroom*® is a PLS 3rd Learning course that equips experienced and beginner educators with the essential knowledge and skills necessary to foster an emotionally engaging classroom. The selected strategies participants will learn and practice are designed to improve teacher expertise in five specific areas: leadership, communication and listening, positive thinking, student support, and team building. Collectively, these skills are at the center of what makes excellent teachers successful and what allows students of all abilities and backgrounds to thrive.

Digital vs. Printed Course Materials

Please note:

- There is a **required** \$10 material fee that provides access to digital course materials.* (The digital materials are identical to the printed materials.)
- You have the **option** to purchase a printed manual (and other printed corresponding materials) for an additional \$30.

**After you register and your class is confirmed, you will receive a confirmation letter outlining how to access digital materials. If you choose digital materials (no printed materials), there may be a small file of pages you will need to print and bring to class. You will also need to access these digital materials during the course, so be prepared to bring your own device (B.Y.O.D.) to each class. If you pre-ordered a printed manual, it will be provided to you on the first day of class.*

Course Alignments

This PLS 3rd Learning course is aligned to Charlotte Danielson's **Framework for Teaching**:

Domain 1 – 1B and 1D

Domain 2 – 2A, 2B, and 2D

Domain 3 – 3A, 3B, 3C, and 3E

Domain 4 – 4A, 4E, and 4F

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this class, the learner will be able to:

1. Discuss and apply current, validated research underlying the theories, principles, and practices of building teamwork and communication.
2. Analyze and apply the roles of an effective relational leader in the classroom.
3. Evaluate and apply strategies to make meaningful connections with students.
4. Demonstrate appropriate nonverbal-communication skills and listening strategies (SOFTEN).
5. Evaluate and demonstrate appropriate communication skills for uncovering student agendas (Open-Ended Questions, Closed-Ended Questions, Confirmatory Paraphrases, Leading Paraphrases, Summary Statements).
6. Identify and apply the elements of a positive environment (finding positive attributes in negative situations, reframing negative thinking, Positive Phrasing).
7. Evaluate and demonstrate the four types of support strategies (Positive Phrasing, Empathy Statements, Supporting Statements, Approval Statements).
8. Identify and model leadership skills to build team unity and connectedness (provide emotional support, enhance communication skills, use conventions, develop group goals, tap satisfactions, validate contributions).
9. Explain and demonstrate skills for nonconfrontation (Detachment, "I" Messages, Humor).
10. Explain and demonstrate Problem-Solving Inquiry, Contingent Action Proposal, Disapproval Statement, and Authority Statement.
11. Implement team-building strategies to create a unified, supportive classroom environment.
12. Explore Web sites that support professional development and extend knowledge of course concepts.
13. Generalize course content to reflect how diverse populations within classrooms have their needs met by the application of the skills, strategies, and knowledge gained in this course.
14. Reflect on and continuously evaluate personal practice to realign and actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally using the knowledge and skills learned in this course.
15. Work collaboratively to share knowledge, skills, and experiences, refine understanding of content, give and receive feedback, and improve expertise.

Institutional Outcomes

(To be listed here)

Required Text

Selected research articles, research summaries, and topical articles drawn from educational literature and the course manual.

Topical Outline

List of Concepts

Role of the Teacher/Leader

Differences among students, emotions and leadership in the classroom, emotional requirements all students crave, the influence of the teacher, roles of effective rational leaders in the classroom, connecting through self-disclosure, ways to show students that a teacher cares

Strategies for Connecting With Students

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Listening | Roadblocks to communication, the compelling why of listening, listening skills (nonverbal communication, SOFTEN, minimal encouragers) |
| Uncovering Student Agendas | Open- and closed-ended questions, intonation, body language, summary statements, and coding for open- and closed-ended questions |
| Confirmatory Paraphrases | Models of confirmatory paraphrases; beginning words; feelings list; the challenge of connecting |
| Leading Paraphrases | Two steps for developing a leading paraphrase; leading-paraphrase strength continuum; distinguishing between leading and confirmatory phrases |
| Developing Understanding | Using comfort phrases that minimize feelings; responding to facts, feelings, and opinions |
| Empathy | Defining "empathy"; empathy statements; steps in creating an empathy statement; emotional conflict between teacher and student; skills tracking |

Skill Development Through Role-Playing Listening skills and role plays at all grade levels for both teacher and student

Elements of a Positive Environment Positive thinking, finding positive attributes in negative situations, reframing one's thinking, discerning positive qualities, positive phrasing

Supporting Statements Supporting viewpoints and dealing with resistance, supporting-statements continuum

Approval Statements Guidelines for using approval statements

Skill Development Through Role-Playing Supportive-skills role-plays at all grade levels for both teacher and student roles

Team Building Desert Island simulation, leadership and natural groups, key influentials, forms of team building in the classroom, benefits of team building, leadership skills to build team unity (provide emotional support, enhance communication skills, use conventions, develop group goals, tap interests and talents, validate contributions)

Solution-Seeking Strategies

Nonconfrontation Strategies (1) Detachment; (2) using "I" messages, teaching students to use "I" messages; and (3) humor: dealing with tense situations, the benefits of humor, handling volatile situations, humiliation-free humor, the developmental sequence of humor

Problem-Solving Inquiry Steps in the process; keeping, sharing, or giving power via the type of decision-making (student, shared, teacher)

| | |
|--|---|
| Contingent Action Proposal | Proposing an act of cooperation or compromise, and specifying reciprocation during shared decision-making |
| Disapproval Statements | "You" messages and slob words |
| Summary Statements | Guidelines for forming summary statements, types of summary statements |
| Skill Development Through Role-Playing | Problem-solving role-plays at all grade levels for both teacher and student roles |

Course Assessments and Links to Institutional Outcomes and Course Outcomes (75% of final grade)

Throughout the course, the learner will be assessed and evaluated on the completion of the following assessments. There are 13 assessments in this course. All are required for a total of 95 points. The participant will select between No. 8 and No. 9, for a total of 5 additional points and a cumulative total of 100 points for the course.

| | | Points | Correlations With Institutional Outcomes | Correlations With Course Outcomes |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---|--|
| Assessment No. 1: | Research Review | 20 | | 1 |
| Assessment No. 2: | Article Review | 10 | | 1 |
| Assessment No. 3: | SOFTEN | 6 | | 5, 11, 14 |
| Assessment No. 4: | Confirmatory and Leading Paraphrases | 6 | | 5 |
| Assessment No. 5: | Positive Phrasing and Empathy | 6 | | 6, 7 |
| Assessment No. 6: | Supporting and Approval Statements | 6 | | 7 |
| Assessment No. 7: | Key Influentials | 10 | | 8, 14 |
| Assessment No. 8: | The Web Connection* | 5 | | 1, 15 |
| Assessment No. 9: | Humor* | 5 | | 9 |
| Assessment No. 10: | Problem-Solving Skills | 6 | | 10, 11 |
| Assessment No. 11: | Connecting Strategies | 10 | | 3, 4, 12 |
| Assessment No. 12: | Action Plan | 10 | | 1, 3, 11, 13 |
| Assessment No. 13: | Reflection Journal | 5 | | 2, 3, 6, 8, 14, 16 |
| Total | | 100 | | |

Criteria specific to each assessment will be explained in conjunction with the instructional activities.

Course Project (25% of final grade)

As a requirement of this course, participants will complete a course project designed to strengthen professional practice and extend knowledge related to the specific content of the course. This project is divided into multiple grade activities to be completed throughout the term:

- topic identification and approval;
- topic research and article review;
- topic presentation and feedback survey development;
- presentation and feedback review; and
- project reflection.

Instructional Materials

Instructors and learners will use instructor-generated materials, learner-generated materials, print resources, and Web-based resources to facilitate learning.

Instructional Methodology

The instructional methodology of this course focuses on developing, enhancing, and improving the instructional expertise and pedagogical knowledge base of practicing educators. Strategies include instructor presentation of new content through short lecturebursts, active construction of knowledge during hands-on practice and problem solving, collaborative group work, personal reflection, in-class presentations and demonstrations, ad hoc and structured small-group or whole class discussion, analysis of assigned reading, and application of course content and skills to each participant's individual grade level, subject area, and classroom.

Evaluation

The evaluation of learner work will be based on the defined criteria for learner assessments, which will be processed with learners prior to their instructional activities and engagement with the student learning targets (outcomes). Grading is based solely on the evaluation of student learning targets and defined criteria for learner assessments.

Formative assessment of learning outcomes is conducted throughout the course, using a variety of means that include the following: completion of assessments; constructive contributions to class discussions (whole-class as well as small-group); sharing of valuable, pertinent, and/or applicable ideas and experiences; involvement in the inductive process; interactive journal entries with written instructor feedback; critical or reflective responses to assigned readings; oral discussions in a whole-class or small-group setting; active participation and general attentiveness to the instructor and others. It is expected that each student will contribute to the academic quality of the course.

Summative assessment includes the completion of a culminating assignment that requires the participant to synthesize class content, apply it to his or her specific teaching situation, and complete a reflective action plan for implementing the major components of content and skill acquired during the course.

Grading Policy

(To be listed here)

Absence and Tardy Policy

(To be listed)

PLS 3rd Learning's Academic Integrity Policy

PLS 3rd Learning expects absolute academic honesty and integrity from every course participant. The specific Academic Integrity and Honor Code Policies of our

partner colleges and universities are embraced and enforced by PLS 3rd Learning instructors. The following are considered to be serious violations:

- Plagiarism: the use of another's ideas, data, or words without proper acknowledgement.
- Fabrication: the use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.
- Collusion: improper collaboration with another in preparing assignments or projects.
- Cheating: an act of deception by which a student misrepresents that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered.
- Academic Misconduct: tampering with grades, or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of student work that is not his or her own.

Violation or suspected violation will be investigated and pursued according to specific college/university procedures.

Identity Authentication

The college/university, PLS 3rd Learning, and students share a joint responsibility to ensure that each student's contribution in an online course activity comes from that student alone. For the student, this responsibility has two parts:

1. Students are responsible for positively ensuring that every contribution to an online course created with the students' computer account is made by the student alone. Contributions covered under this policy include: written assignments; quiz and exam submissions; discussion forum postings; live participation in text-based chat sessions, phone conferences, and videoconferences. If a student allows another person to write or make any kind of submission to an online activity in the student's name, then this constitutes cheating and will be treated as a violation of academic honesty.
2. Students are responsible for ensuring the integrity of their computer account security by following the actions required of them by the PLS 3rd Learning Acceptable Use Policy. These actions include keeping passcodes private, updating passcodes when required by PLS 3rd Learning, and reporting breaches of the security policy to the IT Helpdesk.

Participant Professionalism Policy

As a courtesy to other participants and to your instructor, please refrain from text messaging, checking e-mail, or answering your cell phone during class time. Breaks are provided throughout the course so you can attend to personal matters. Using your personal electronic devices during class time is distracting and disrupts instruction and participant communication and collaboration. If you have an emergency or justifiable reason to leave your cell phone turned on during class time, please make arrangements with the instructor prior to the beginning of class.

Alignments to Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*

Each PLS 3rd Learning course is aligned to the components in Charlotte Danielson's ***Framework for Teaching***. The alignments for this course are listed below.

DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- 1B. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
- 1D. Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

- 2A. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- 2B. Establishing a Culture for Learning
- 2D. Managing Student Behavior

DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION

- 3A. Communicating with Students
- 3B. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- 3C. Engaging Students in Learning
- 3E. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4A. Reflecting on Teaching
- 4E. Growing and Developing Professionally
- 4F. Showing Professionalism

Course Outcome Correlations With Model Core Teaching Standards (InTASC)

Course Outcomes

Standard 1: Learner Development

The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,
8, 9, 10, 11, 12,
13, 14, 15**

Standard 2: Learning Differences

The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

**3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,
11, 12, 13**

Standard 3: Learning Environments

The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

**1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 11,
12, 13, 14**

Standard 4: Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

**1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13,
14, 15**

Standard 5: Application of Content

The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

**1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12,
13**

Standard 6: Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

Standard 7: Planning for Instruction

The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

11, 14**Standard 8: Instructional Strategies**

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

10**Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice**

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

**1, 3, 11, 12, 13,
14, 15****Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration**

The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

**1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 12,
13, 14, 15**

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards were developed by the Council of the Chief State School Officers and member states. Copies may be downloaded from the Council's website at <http://www.ccsso.org/intasc>

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2011, April). Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards: A Resource for State Dialogue. Washington, DC: Author.

http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2011/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_2011.pdf

Course Outcome Correlations With National Board for Professional Teaching (NBPTS) Five Core Propositions

| Proposition 1: Teachers are Committed to Students and Their Learning. | Course Outcomes |
|--|--|
| NBCTs are dedicated to making knowledge accessible to all students. They believe all students can learn. | 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13 |
| They treat students equitably. They recognize the individual differences that distinguish their students from one another and they take account for these differences in their practice. | 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 |
| NBCTs understand how students develop and learn. | 2, 6, 11, 13 |
| They respect the cultural and family differences students bring to their classroom. | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 |
| They are concerned with their students' self-concept, their motivation and the effects of learning on peer relationships. | 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 |
| NBCTs are also concerned with the development of character and civic responsibility. | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 |
| | |
| Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students. | |
| NBCTs have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history, structure and real-world applications of the subject. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 |
| They have skill and experience in teaching it, and they are very familiar with the skills gaps and preconceptions students may bring to the subject. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 |
| They are able to use diverse instructional strategies to teach for understanding. | 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| | |
| Proposition 3: Teachers are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning. | |
| NBCTs deliver effective instruction. They move fluently through a range of instructional techniques, keeping students motivated, engaged and focused. | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 |
| They know how to engage students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to meet instructional goals. | 4, 6 |

NBCTs know how to assess the progress of individual students as well as the class as a whole. **1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15**

They use multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding, and they can clearly explain student performance to parents. **1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15**

Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically about Their Practice and Learn from Experience.

NBCTs model what it means to be an educated person – they read, they question, they create and they are willing to try new things. **1, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15**

They are familiar with learning theories and instructional strategies and stay abreast of current issues in American education. **1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15**

They critically examine their practice on a regular basis to deepen knowledge, expand their repertoire of skills, and incorporate new findings into their practice. **2, 3, 12, 14,**

Proposition 5: Teachers are Members of Learning Communities.

NBCTs collaborate with others to improve student learning. **1, 2, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15**

They are leaders and actively know how to seek and build partnerships with community groups and businesses. **15**

They work with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development. **1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15**

They can evaluate school progress and the allocation of resources in order to meet state and local education objectives. **2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15**

They know how to work collaboratively with parents to engage them productively in the work of the school. **4**

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