

FIELD EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS History 4020 • Section 01 (31188) • Fall 2021

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office: 211 Central Classroom
office hours: T/Th, 12:30-3:00 p.m.,
or by appt. on Teams

This is a field-based course in which you will develop your professional and pedagogical skills in a social studies classroom. You will work with the classroom teacher to design and implement lessons, assess student learning, and modify instruction for students with diverse needs. As you do so, you should expand your pedagogical skills, build upon your content expertise, and learn to approach teaching as a reflective practitioner.

Field placements will be arranged by MSU-Denver faculty in collaboration with partner schools. This field experience will usually follow your completion of both EDS 3140 and EDS 3240. Ideally, you'll take 4010 concurrently with this course. This course is *not* intended to be your beginning field experience. Similarly, this course assumes an advanced level of content expertise in history and/or the social sciences. It is intended for students who have completed most of the requirements for their majors *and* the secondary teacher licensure program at MSU-Denver, and you will be expected to apply content expertise in your teaching and other work in the course of your field experience.

Recommended Readings: There are no required readings for this course, although you will be expected to read as necessary as you prepare lessons in your field placement.

Students should familiarize themselves with the Colorado Academic Standards for Social Studies, available here: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cosocialstudies/statestandards>

In addition, and upon request, I can recommend resource books to help with lesson planning and conceptualizing in various fields (World History, American History, Geography, etc.).

Assignments, Grading, and Course Policies: Everyone is graded on a pass-fail basis in this course, so there is no breakdown of the relative value of each assignment. However, all students will be responsible for the following requirements. *You must complete all of these components in order to pass.*

Field Work: You will log at least 60 hours at your assigned school, either in the classroom or in meetings with your assigned cooperating teacher (this works out to at least two and a half days per week for ten weeks). Some of you may be logging hours for a different field placement at the same site – please be aware that you must log these hours sequentially, *not concurrently* (in other words, if you have two 60-hour field placements, you must log a total of 120 hours). You will complete a log page (included in this syllabus), which your cooperating teacher should sign, to document your hours. Please submit the log sheet by **December 10**. Here are some suggestions for how to use your placement to your best advantage:

- Once you are placed, be in touch with your cooperating teacher as soon as possible to set up a schedule for visiting your assigned classroom.
- It is best to spend two or three days per week at your assigned school than only one day per week, so you might experience more continuity in your visits. *It is best not to make Fridays your primary day for field experience hours, because Fridays are often atypical days for tests and quizzes, assemblies, independent work, and so forth.*

- You should spend most of your time in your assigned classroom(s). Visiting other teachers' classrooms is perfectly fine (and beneficial), but it's a good idea to build continuity in your field experience by spending most of the time in the assigned classroom(s). You may also add to your hours by attending faculty in-service days, faculty meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and similar activities.
- Each day you log hours, plan to arrive at your field experience school early enough to talk to your cooperating teacher about the day: what s/he will be doing in class, what you will be doing, whether there will be any alterations to the usual schedule, etc. Plan to meet again with your cooperating teacher to discuss the events of the day before you leave.
- Once you determine your schedule, forward a copy to me. This schedule should include the days, times, and locations of your visits, along with contact information (phone numbers and e-mail addresses) for you and your cooperating teacher.
- If it is possible, I encourage you to spend more than the required time in your placement site. I understand that it will not be possible in every case, but because your cohort has had little if any time in classrooms, it would be to your benefit to make up for that by adding to your hours voluntarily this semester.

Your role in your assigned classroom will be that of assistant teacher. You and your cooperating teacher should determine together how you will join in classroom activities. When you observe your cooperating teacher, you should take particular note of the specific social studies concepts s/he teaches, his or her specific strategies, and how s/he engages the students.

COVID-related issues to keep in mind: You are expected to observe the mask and vaccination policies of the school and district where you are placed, so find out what those are as soon as possible upon placement. Even if it is optional, I strenuously urge you to wear a mask in your school building, whether or not you are vaccinated. The Delta variant has proven especially infectious among children and young adults, and you cannot know whether your students and colleagues are vaccinated. Even among the vaccinated, it is possible to contract and spread illness (though vaccinated people are less likely to suffer adverse effects). You will be traveling back and forth between your placement site and in-person classes at MSU Denver, and you owe it to your students, colleagues, and professors to exercise safe behavior (and you owe it to yourself, as well, for you can maximize your time in your placement and in-person classes only by staying healthy). If you test positive or need to self-quarantine due to exposure, you should notify your CT and call the Health Center at Auraria (303-615-9999) to self-report and get further guidance. For more information on safety protocols, please see MSU Denver's Safe Return to Campus information here: <https://www.msudenver.edu/safe-return-to-campus/>

Interview with a teacher: For this assignment, you will conduct an interview with a working middle or high school teacher, either in person or via Teams or similar means. *This teacher may be someone who works at your placement site, but s/he cannot be your assigned CT. If you would like to interview someone in a different school, I can help you find an interview subject.* You can pick the topic, but the interview should have a focused theme: it can be about how the pandemic has affected education, race and equity in schools, curriculum, classroom management, pedagogy, or really anything you wish. You should plan to talk for at least 30 minutes, but the conversation can go as long as you and your interview subject wish beyond that. You should transcribe the interview (you can edit out fluff, tangents, etc.). To help in this task, I recommend that you download one of the many quality voice-to-text apps to use during your interview (I have had good luck with Otter, which I've used to help transcribe recorded Zoom or Teams sessions, but there are a number of good apps out there). Along with the transcribed interview, you should write up a 2-3-page analysis of the main points the teacher made and your impressions of the conversation. This assignment is due **Friday, October 22.**

Lesson design and reflection: You will be responsible for designing and teaching at least one entire lesson this semester. You will each be assigned a Torsch account so you can record the lesson, and I can watch it and offer feedback. In addition to making the recording available to me, you will turn in the lesson plan and a two-page reflection on the lesson by **Friday, December 10**. You are also required to meet with me after you teach the lesson to discuss how it went (that meeting can take place before you turn in the written assignment). You should aim to teach the lesson before Thanksgiving break.

You will write the lesson plan yourself, using a formal lesson plan format (you can choose a format that you prefer or develop your own). Your plan should include the following:

- An essential question from the unit, which your lesson plan should address.
- A set of learning objectives for students.
- A sequence of activities that includes introductory and concluding exercises along with the main body of the lesson.
- Some assessment of student learning (which could be a quiz, one-minute essay, or some other quick activity that tells you what students did and did not learn).
- Explanation of instructional modifications and differentiation for ELL students.

After you have taught the lesson, review it with your cooperating teacher to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson and what students learned. Then, write a brief (two-page) reflection on how the lesson went. Note what parts of the lesson succeeded, what you might change, what surprised you, and what the students learned. Finally, arrange a time to meet with me and discuss how the lesson went. *This conference is a required part of the assignment.*

This one lesson is required, but the more you can teach this semester, the better. Take any opportunity you can to design and teach lessons – whether you take over parts of class periods or whole lessons. The more you teach now, the better prepared you'll be for student teaching.

Reflection: You should keep a weekly journal on your field placement experience. Journal entries should respond to the questions listed below, though the order in which you address these questions is up to you. You may substitute some of the questions for topics of your own choosing, especially if an issue arises in your school or during your experience that you would like to address in the journal. The entire journal is due by **Friday, December 10** (it can be in a single Word document). The questions are as follows:

1. Describe the environment and structure that support learning in your class. What unspoken rules do students observe?
2. What student behaviors do you observe in your classroom? Which management strategies are most effective, and why?
3. What kind of planning does the teacher do? What's required by the department, school, and district? How are the state content standards being implemented (give at least one example)?
4. What teaching strategies does your cooperating teacher use? Which strategies seem most effective in engaging or motivating students? How does the teacher use technology?

5. Have your cooperating teacher complete the midterm evaluation and discuss it together. Based on that evaluation, what areas do you want to work on for the remainder of the semester
6. What kinds of assessments does your cooperating teacher use (give at least two examples)? Does your teacher design these assessments, or does s/he use district/department templates (or a combination)? Would you use the same kinds of assessment in your own class? Why or why not?
7. What's the biggest difference between the theory you learned in your MSU-Denver classes and the practice you've encountered in your field experience site? How did your training at Metro prepare you (or fail to prepare you) for the realities of the classroom?
8. Describe at least one of the best experiences you've had in your field experience. What do you think will be the most significant challenges you'll face in the future? What resources are available to help you meet these challenges?
9. Write a brief summary of your experiences. Have your cooperating teacher complete your final evaluation and discuss that evaluation together.

Summary of deadlines: This calendar should help you keep track of field experience due dates.

August 27: Deadline to send me your geographic and other preferences for your field placement, if you have not already done so.

August 23 through September 17: Field placements arranged. Check your e-mail regularly.

Week of September 27: All field placements should be underway by now. By this time, you should have begun your reflective journal and your analysis of district curriculum. You should also have shared your field experience checklist (available on Canvas) with your cooperating teacher.

October 11-22: Schedule a meeting with me to discuss your field placement. I will send a link to a Doodle appointment sign-up poll (and post the link in Canvas). If you start your field experience on the late side, you should schedule your appointment later in this window.

October 22: Interview with teacher (transcript and paper) due (post on Canvas).

Week of October 25-29 (or earlier):

Begin planning with your cooperating teacher to teach a lesson, if you haven't already (this lesson can happen as early as you wish, and you are encouraged to teach more than one).

Complete the midterm evaluation with your cooperating teacher (available on Canvas).

November 29 through December 10: Schedule a meeting with me (in person or over Teams) to discuss your field experience, your lesson design and reflection, and your evaluation. Also, complete the final evaluation form with your cooperating teacher (same as midterm form). I will send out a link for a Doodle appointment sign-up poll and will post that link on Canvas.

December 10: Due date for the following (submit all of these on Canvas):

- Reflective journal (questions and assignment description in this syllabus)

- Lesson design and reflection (lesson design form included in “forms” folder on Canvas; assignment description in this syllabus)
- Log sheet documenting your hours (included in “forms” folder on Canvas)
- The final evaluation of your performance by your CT (this is the same form you used for the midterm evaluation)
- Your written evaluation of your cooperating teacher (in “forms” folder on Canvas)

A few policies:

Special Needs: Students who need accommodations – for disability, religious observance, military service, or any other reason – should let me know within the first two weeks of class. A full statement on accommodations covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act is available on Canvas, in the “*Course Information, Policies, and Resources*” module.

Cheating and plagiarism: Either offense is grounds for a zero on the assignment and failure in the course. If you are unsure of what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, I strongly encourage you to check with me *before* you hand in your assignment. Please also note that any student who cannot or will not produce the notes, outlines, and other preparatory work for his or her paper will be considered guilty of cheating or plagiarism and subject to the same penalties. The policy in this class is quite simple and is as follows. In the first documented instance of academic dishonesty (as described in the University guidelines, linked below), the student will receive a zero on the assignment. In the second instance, the student will fail the class. All code of conduct violations will be reported.

Metro State’s Academic Integrity Statement: “As students, faculty, staff and administrators of Metropolitan State University of Denver, it is our responsibility to uphold and maintain an academic environment that furthers scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge. We will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all activities related to our learning and scholarship. We will not plagiarize, fabricate information or data, cheat on tests or exams, steal academic material, or submit work to more than one class without full disclosure.”

For more information on academic dishonesty, see

<http://www.msudenver.edu/studentengagementandwellness/studentconductandconflictresolutionsservices/studentconductservices/academicintegrity/academicdishonesty/>

Students are responsible for full knowledge of the provisions and regulations pertaining to all aspects of their attendance at MSU Denver, and should familiarize themselves with the policies found in the MSU Denver Catalog: [MSU Denver Catalog](#). For more information and recent updates, go to the CLAS website: <https://msudenver.edu/las/studentinformation/forms/>

The College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences is committed to, and cares about, all students. To help you manage personal challenges and basic needs security, the university offer several resources. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (303-615-0220 or 303-615-0423), the Gender Institute for Teaching and Advocacy (303-615-2052), or our CLAS office (303-615-0995 or 303-615-1301) for support.

For more information, please see the information on LAS policies and deadlines posted in the “Course Information, Policies, and Resources” module on Canvas.