

FIELD EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS History 4020 • Section 01 (32397) • Spring 2020

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office: 211 Central Classroom
office hours: T/Th, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.,
2:00-3:00 p.m., or by appt.

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 should 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. The following book is *recommended* for all students:

Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, expanded second edition (2005)

Students should also 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 May 8. 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 in 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.

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.

Analysis of district curriculum: For this assignment, you will write a three-page analysis of one unit in your assigned classroom by comparing it to the district curriculum and the state social studies standards (choose a unit that is taught early in the semester, so you can actually observe some of the lessons involved). This reflection is due by **Friday, March 20**. This date is negotiable for students whose field experiences start particularly late, but you should plan to turn it in by the time you've completed about half of your hours. You should post these analyses on Blackboard.

You will need a copy of your district curriculum, or the district's Pacing Guide or Scope and Sequence Guide for your social studies discipline. If nothing like that is available, you should interview your cooperating teacher and maybe one or two others in the building to ask how they determine how different teachers will teach sections of the same class. You will analyze this curriculum (or lack thereof) in light of state social studies standards (this project should draw upon work you've done or are doing in HIS 4010). Then, review the Colorado Social Studies Standards in your discipline (see the link on p. 1 of this syllabus).

To prepare to write your analysis, it might help to talk with your cooperating teacher about how s/he uses the curriculum and the state standards to design his or her class. Do these documents help in planning? Does s/he design lessons that depart from the suggestions in these documents or augment them by fulfilling additional standards? Then, review the unit in light of district and state standards. How does the district guide help develop the state standard? Did the district create an "essential question" for the unit (see our recommended book, *Understanding By Design* for more on essential questions)? Does the essential question make sense in light of the state standard?

Write your three-page report in answer to the questions above. Be sure to note clearly which unit you are analyzing, and in which course. Note, too, which lessons you have observed. As you evaluate your district guide, consider how useful it is in facilitating course planning. Would you be happy to use it in planning your own course? What changes would you propose, if any? Why?

Lesson design and reflection: You will be responsible for designing and teaching at least one entire lesson this semester. You will turn in the lesson plan, a video of the lesson (if possible), and a two-page reflection on the lesson by **Friday, May 8**. In addition, you are 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 (see *Understanding By Design* or this website: <http://worldhistoryforall.sdsu.edu/shared/themes.php>.)

- 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).

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, May 8** (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.

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

January 21 through February 14: Field placements arranged. Check your e-mail regularly.

Week of March 9: 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 Blackboard) with your cooperating teacher.

February 18 - March 1: 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 Blackboard). If you start your field experience on the late side, you should schedule your appointment later in this window.

March 20: Analysis of district curriculum due (post on Blackboard).

Week of March 16-20: 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 Blackboard).

April 27 through May 8: Schedule a meeting with me 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 Blackboard.

May 8: Due date for the following (submit all of these on Blackboard):

- Reflective journal (questions and assignment description in this syllabus)
- Lesson design and reflection (lesson design form included in "forms" folder on Blackboard; assignment description in this syllabus)
- Log sheet documenting your hours (included in "forms" folder on Blackboard)
- Written evaluation of your cooperating teacher (in "forms" folder on Blackboard)

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 Blackboard, in the “Syllabus and Policies” folder.

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 “Syllabus and Policies” folder on Blackboard.