

Education 15:255:534 Classroom Organization (1 Credit)

Fall 2011
Class: Mondays, 4:30 – 7:30pm
9/12, 9/26, 10/10, 10/24 & 11/7
Location: Scott Hall 105

Instructor: Jessica Hunsdon
e-mail:
Office Hours: by appointment only

Catalog Description: Examination of research on classroom organization and management. Emphasis on strategies for effective learning environments and prevention of behavior problems

Course Description

This course is based on two premises: (1) that most problems of classroom order can be prevented through the use of good classroom management strategies, positive teacher-student relationships, and engaging instruction; and (2) that the goal of classroom management is not obedience, but the development of students' ability to regulate their own behavior. Given these premises, the course focuses not on disciplinary interventions designed to control students, but on ways of preventing disruptive behavior, creating a peaceful, caring community, resolving conflicts, and meeting students' needs. As such, we will distinguish between low-profile desists for minor classroom disruptions and disciplinary action for significant student misbehavior.

Pre-requisites: Admission to the GSE Teacher Education Programs

Co-Requisites: 15:255:533; 15:255:535; 15:255:536

Mode of Instruction: Lecture & Seminar

TEAC Learning Goals:

Standard Two: Teachers shall understand how children and adolescents develop and learn in a variety of school, family and community contexts and provide opportunities that support their intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.

Teachers know and understand:

- **2.3** How to identify and teach to the developmental abilities of students, which may include learning differences, visual and perceptual differences, cultural and socio-emotional differences, special physical or emotional challenges and gifted and talented exceptionalities.

Teachers value and are committed to:

- **2.4** The educability of all children and adolescents.

Standard Six: Teachers shall understand individual and group motivation and behavior and shall create a supportive, safe and respectful learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.

Teachers know and understand:

- **6.1** The principles and strategies of effective classroom management that promote positive relationships, cooperation and purposeful learning activities in the classroom;
- **6.2** How the classroom environment influences learning and promotes positive behavior for all students; and
- **6.3** How classroom participation supports student commitment.

Teachers value and are committed to:

- **6.4** The role of students in promoting each other's learning and recognize the importance of peer relationships in creating a climate of learning;
- **6.5** Taking responsibility for establishing a positive climate in the classroom and participation in maintaining such a climate in the school as a whole; and
- **6.6** The expression and use of democratic values in the classroom.

TEAC Learning Goals (continued):

Teachers engage in activities to:

- **6.7** Maintain a learning community in which students assume responsibility for themselves and one another, participate in decision-making and work collaboratively and independently;
- **6.8** Create a safe and secure classroom climate for all students, by practicing effective listening and group facilitation skills;
- **6.9** Create a positive classroom climate which is socially, emotionally and physically safe;
- **6.10** Establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior;
- **6.11** Use instructional time effectively; and
- **6.12** Prepare students for and monitor independent and group work that allows for full and varied participation of all individuals.

Text

Weinstein, C. S., & Mignano, A. J. (2003). Elementary Classroom Management: Lessons from Research and Practice (3rd edition). NY: McGraw-Hill.

This book is available from the Rutgers Bookstore (One Penn Plaza, Ferren Mall). Hopefully, you have already purchased it and have read the first four chapters. In some cases, this book will also be used for the internship seminar. **BRING THE BOOK TO EACH CLASS SESSION.**

Written Requirements

1. One-minute papers: These will be done at the beginning of most classes and will follow varying formats. For example, we might ask you to write for one minute about something you learned from the reading; something you didn't agree with; something you found relevant to your own classroom; or something you didn't understand. Other times we might ask you to reflect on a specific issue discussed in the chapter. These will sometimes be handed in.

2. Reflections on reading and observations: Each class session you will be expected to reflect on the assigned reading and to relate what you are reading to what you have seen in your practicum placements. These two-page reflections (typed, double-spaced) should adhere to the following format: (a) a one-page summary of the reading, focusing on those points that you found most significant, compelling, confusing, or wrongheaded (or, you can intersperse material from the chapter all the way through the reflection paper; (b) a description of your cooperating teachers' practices with regard to the issue under consideration; and (c) the lessons you have derived from the reading and observations (e.g., what you will try to do in your own classroom; what you think is most important to remember, etc.). If your reflection paper does not include a summary of the key points, you will be asked to re-do it.

3. Classroom Organization and Management Plan (GSE e-Portfolio Requirement)

Part 1:

Create a classroom management plan for your own classroom (approximate length 6-8 pages, typed, double-spaced). Reflect on what you have read and learned in your courses and on your experiences during your internship. Then develop a plan that addresses the following questions:

- What are the goal(s) of your classroom management plan? (This goal statement should serve as an introduction to your plan and should be approximately 1-2 paragraphs. The rest of the plan should be consistent with this statement.)
- What will you do, starting on the very first day, to create a sense of community and caring?
- What specific rules will guide classroom behavior? Describe the process you will use to develop and teach these rules to your students (e.g., Will you develop and distribute them or will you generate them with the students?)
- What will you do if students violate classroom rules? Be sure to discuss strategies for minor misbehavior (e.g., chatting, staring into space, and calling out) as well as strategies for more serious misbehavior. What principles underlie your choice of strategies?
- What procedures or routines will you establish for (1) collecting homework, (2) going to the restroom, (3) taking attendance, and (4) keeping track of work for absent students?

Part 2:

Since definitions and expectations of appropriate behavior are culturally influenced, managing today’s diverse classrooms requires teachers to be “culturally responsive classroom managers.” Demonstrate your understanding of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) by completing the following tasks (approximately 2 pages):

- Draw upon readings and class discussions to discuss two specific examples of the kinds of conflicts that can occur in classrooms when there is a “cultural gap” between teachers and students and when teachers ignore students’ cultural backgrounds. (1 page)
- Discuss three ways you can work to enact culturally responsive classroom management in your classroom. For example, you might discuss how you would be culturally responsive when working with parents, communicating with students, establishing your expectations, and/or designing the physical environment of the classroom. (1 page)

Note: Your management plan should demonstrate your understanding of sound, generally accepted management goals, principles, concepts, and strategies. (In other words, you should avoid adopting strategies that cause public humiliation to students, that erode positive student-teacher relationships, or that foster compliance rather than self-regulation.)

Grading Rubric

GSE criterion to be assessed	0 Absent or very incomplete	1 Does not meet GSE expectations	2 Meets GSE expectations	3 Exceeds GSE expectations
Part I				
Writing is clear, well-organized, and well-edited.				
Assignment shows an understanding of sound management goals, principles, concepts, and strategies				
Answers provide specific, appropriate detail and examples				
Assignment is thorough and complete				
Assignment shows evidence of reading, reflection, and critical thinking				
Specifics of management plan are consistent with stated goals				
Part II				
Provides appropriate examples of “cultural gaps” that might occur.				
Provides examples of culturally responsive classroom management.				
Assignment is thorough and complete.				

Note about writing: You are going to be teachers. As such, you will be communicating in writing to students, parents, administrators, and other school personnel. In order to be a good model for your students and to exhibit professionalism, it is vital that you write clearly and demonstrate mastery of grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. (In other words, you should know the difference between *it’s* and *its*, between *principal* and *principle*, and among *there*, *they’re*, and *their!*) For this reason, we expect your papers to be clear, articulate, professional in appearance, and free of technical errors.

Attendance Policy

Given the fact that this course meets only five times and relies heavily on student participation, we expect perfect attendance. If illness or emergency prevents you from attending, you will have to arrange with your instructor to compensate for your absence (e.g., by completing additional written work).

It is also important to be punctual (*at the beginning of class and after the break*). Since the class is very activity-oriented, you can't simply "get the notes" if you are late.

Grading Policy

This course will be graded in terms of Pass/No Credit. Grades will be submitted to the registrar in Fall 2011 after course requirements are met.

Academic Integrity: I expect that you will comply with standards of academic integrity (that is, you will not even think about cheating) in this course. If you need assistance in understanding an assignment or course content, please seek assistance from other appropriate resources or me. Assignments, however, should be your own work, except in cases where I have required a group product. The consequence for violating policies of academic integrity and other elements of the student code of conduct are serious and can have a tremendous negative impact on your academic progress and future career. You should not turn in the same work in two separate classes without the specific written approval of the faculty members involved. Leaving work until the last minute can increase the temptation to plagiarize work from journals or "borrow" friends' work. You can avoid problems by getting your work done early. Exams are also your own work. Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity (http://www.rcstudentservice.rutgers.edu/academic_integrity.html).

TOPICS AND READINGS

SESSION #1 (9/12)

ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR BEHAVIOR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

Introduction to Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Question: How do effective classroom managers begin the school year?
What is classroom management?
What does it mean to be a “culturally responsive” classroom manager?

Assignment for next class:

Read Chapters 1, 2, and 4 (if you have not already read them)
Reflection Paper: Chapter 4

SESSION #2 (9/26)

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE, MORE CARING COMMUNITY

Questions: How can I foster a classroom climate of respect and caring? How can I help my students develop responsibility for their own behavior? How can I communicate effectively with students who come to me with problems?

Assignment for next class:

Read Chapter 5
Reflection Paper: Chapter 5

SESSION #3 (10/10)

WHEN PREVENTION IS NOT ENOUGH: DEALING WITH INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOM

Questions: Are there alternatives to screaming? What should I do when.....?

Assignment for next class:

Read Chapter 12
Reflection Paper: Chapter 12

SESSION #4 (10/24)

DEALING WITH INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOM PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Questions: What can I do to prevent potentially explosive situations from escalating?

Assignment for next class:

Read Chapters 13 and 14
Do Activity 4 in Chapter 13 (p. 385); Report findings in a 1-page typed paper
Classroom Management Plan

SESSION #5 (11/7)

HELPING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

REFLECTING ON CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND THE INTERNSHIP

Classroom Management Plan due—be prepared to share yours with the class!

Questions:

What do we do if we suspect child abuse?

What are the managerial successes and challenges of my internship?

What have you learned about classroom management?