

15:255:534 CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION (1 credit)
Fall 2011, Bishop House, College Avenue Campus, 4:30-7:30
Instructor: Jeffrey Melillo
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Office Hours: By arrangement

Catalog Description: Examination of research on classroom organization and management. There is a strong 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.

- **2.3** Teachers know and understand 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.
- **2.4** Teachers value and are committed to 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:

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- **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.

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.

OR

Weinstein, C. S. (2003). Secondary Classroom Management: Lessons from Research and Practice (2nd edition). NY: McGraw-Hill.

These books are available from the Rutgers Bookstore (One Penn Plaza, Ferren Mall). Hopefully, you have already purchased the one that corresponds to the teacher education program in which you are enrolled and have read the first four chapters. In some cases, these books 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. Final paper (due in October at the final session): This project is required of all students regardless of their student teaching status. Your final project is to develop a classroom management plan for yourself (approximate length 5 pages, typed, double-spaced). Reflect on what you have read, on our class discussions, and on your experiences during the first 5-6 weeks of your fall internship. Then develop a plan that addresses the following questions: (a) What rules will guide classroom behavior? Will you develop and distribute them or will you generate them with students? (b) What procedures will you establish for collecting homework, going to the restroom, taking attendance, and keeping track of work for absent students? (c) What will you do to create a sense of community and caring? (d) What consequences will you invoke when students violate classroom rules?

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 2005 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

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

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 and write reflection paper on Chapter 5

SESSION #3

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 and write reflection paper on Chapter 12

SESSION #4

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 (in October):

1. Classroom Management Plan
And
2. Read Chapters 13 and 14
Secondary: Do Activity 1 in Chapter 13 (p. 357); report findings in a 1-page typed paper
Elementary: Do Activity 4 in Chapter 13 (p. 385); report findings in a 1-page typed paper

SESSION #5 (fall semester)

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 substance abuse (secondary) or child abuse (elementary)?

What are the managerial successes and challenges of my internship

What have you learned about classroom management?

Classroom Management Plan Checklist (You do not need to incorporate all of these ideas, but this may help you think about some of the things you may want to include)

1. Creation and explanation of rules and procedures.

Do you want the class to help?

Will they be posted?

Will each student get a copy?

Will parents/caregivers get a copy?

Will it be in the form of a contract the students will sign?

How much time will you take for this process?

2. Minor infractions/consequences

3. Chronic misbehavior and solutions

4. Homework policy

5. Grading system

Will participation count?

Will students get to re-write papers or re-take an exam if they earned a bad grade?

Will you give extra credit?

6. Routines (attendance, passing out paper, leaving class to use the restrooms)

7. Absentee/make-up work policy

8. Rules/procedures for cooperative learning, problem solving groups, discussions, and labs (student-student interactions)

9. Incorporation of community building strategies, multicultural perspectives

10. Strategies for dealing with bullying, acts of prejudice or violence when witnessed by the entire class.