

ED246E: Elementary Teaching Seminar (Practicum)

“Exploring Teaching”

Summer & Pre-Fall 2016

Soyoung Park

CERAS 327

office hours by appointment

Erika Johnson

CERAS 327

office hours by appt. or drop in

Course Description

The STEP Teaching Seminar sits at the nexus of the clinical and academic elements of the teacher preparation program. Pragmatically, the Teaching Seminar serves as the official Stanford University course for three elements of the STEP Elementary curriculum: (1) the student teaching experience, (2) the supervisory program, and (3) the ‘Seminar’ sessions.

The Seminar Sessions

In the summer/pre-fall course, our focus will be on **Exploring the Teaching Profession**, and we will address several big questions: **Why teach? What is (good) teaching? What makes teaching so complex? and Who do we serve and how?**

In addition to these core themes and questions, we will devote class time to each of the following:

- deliberations about the connections between educational scholarship and clinical practice
- discussions of the connections and challenges associated with our varying conceptions and aims related to equity and social justice in the context of teaching and learning in schools and classrooms
- exploration of essential curricular areas for multiple subject teachers, such as health and physical education
- opportunities to support candidates as you navigate your journey into the teaching profession.

Weekly readings, discussions, and activities will be orchestrated in conjunction with field experiences in local public schools. The elements of the Teaching Seminar serve as the glue for your experiences in STEP as a whole, and a bridge between scholarship and clinical practice. Through these experiences we will work to develop both conceptual and practical knowledge in service of your preparation as a member of the teaching profession and as an educational leader.

- All Stanford students are expected to follow the **Stanford Honor Code** and **Fundamental Standard**, as noted in the STEP Handbook and Stanford Student Guide.

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/vpsa/judicialaffairs/about/welcome.htm>

- Students with Disabilities.** Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made.

Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk; phone: 723-1066; web site

<http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae>.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Student Teaching & Supervisory

To complete this section of the course, you must meet **all** of the expectations related to the field placement, including regular attendance and active participation at the STEP/Sunnyvale Summer School, related planning and supervisor meetings, and all seminar meetings. You are expected to develop and maintain professional and collegial relationships with

the cooperating teachers, STEP staff and faculty, and your STEP peers. Professional standards for the teaching profession are articulated in the Quarterly Assessment document (standard 6).

Beginning some time in August, your Supervisor will work with you to design and support your growth and development in your Fall student teaching assignment, based on the STEP design principles as outlined in your Handbook (see Graduated Responsibility, in particular).

2. Summer School Journal + Guided Observations and Reflections

During the four weeks of the summer school, you should maintain a journal that includes your observation notes, questions, and reflections on your experiences. This is YOUR journal and may be kept in any form that you like. Your notes and reflections may consider anything that captures your interest. For example, you could focus on the behavior and/or learning of an individual or group of students, your cooperating teacher's curricular and instructional strategies, your thoughts and feelings.

See **Assignment A** for specific Guided Observation and Reflection tasks each week of summer school.

3. Active Seminar Participation

Come to class each week prepared to contribute actively to our course sessions.

SEMINAR ASSIGNMENTS

SUMMER

- A. Summer School Guided Observations

PRE-FALL

- B. Physical Education, Movement, and Health Related resources
- C. Context of Our Work: School and Community Study

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

To receive full credit for course participation, meet all of the following expectations:

- Attendance, promptness, preparation, participation, and professionalism.

To receive full credit on a given assignment, meet all of the following expectations:

- Prompt – Turn your work in on time.
- Complete – Fulfill all stated expectations of an assignment.
- Thoughtful – Take the time and reflection to prepare something of interesting.
- Careful – Proof read your work. Rules of grammar, spelling, punctuation, proper citation (APA formatting), etc. should be followed.

Student will be expected to revise and resubmit work until is satisfied expectations for the course.

READINGS

Books

1. Paley, V.G. (1997). *The girl with the brown crayon*.
2. Kohl, H. (1984). *Growing minds: On becoming a teacher*.

STEP Orientation

Shulman, L. (1998). "Theory, Practice, and the Education of Professionals." (Focus on pp. 515-521.)
Good & Brophy. (2008). "Increasing Teacher Awareness through Classroom Observations," in
Looking in Classrooms, pp. 17-32.

Week 1 Readings (on Canvas)

- Edelman, M.A. (1999). "Teachers and their messages," in *Lanterns: A memoir of mentors*, pp. 20-23 and 133-140.
- Gavins, A. (2005). "Being on a moving train." In *Why we teach*, pp. 97-104.
- Peng, K. (2014, Winter). "Why Teach?" *STATIC: The Journal*, pp. 59.
- Swanson, S. (2010, March/April). "Be like Charlotte." *Stanford Magazine*, p. 20.
- Swope, S. (2004, December 20). "A lesser form of immortality? It'll do." *Newsweek*, p. 18.

Other readings: Exploring Teaching (on Canvas)

- Berger, R. "What is a Culture of Quality?" In *A culture of quality*, pp. 7-51.
- Cuban, L. (2001). "How can I fix it?"
- Hawkins, D. (1974). "I, thou, and it." In *The informed vision: Essays on learning and human nature*, pp. 48-62.
- Howard, T. (2014) "Teaching teachers to reflect on race." <http://www.nea.org/tools/48838.htm>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *Dreamkeepers*. Chapter 6.
- Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*, pp. 221-232.
- McIntosh, P. (1990). "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." Essay adapted from
McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Race, class, and gender in the United States: An integrated study*, 4, 165-169.
- Norman, D. (1980) What goes on in the mind of the learner? In W.J. McKeachie (Ed.), *New directions for teaching and Learning*, pp. 37-49. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Skilton-Sylvester. (1999). "Teaching without charisma." In Edelsky, C. (Ed.), *Making justice our project*, pp. 115-140. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Steele, D. & Cohn-Vargas. (2013). *Identity Safe Classrooms*. Chapter 7. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Additional Resources

- California Curriculum Frameworks and Content Standards: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/>
- * Bookmark: Framework and Standards for Health & Physical Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/pe/>
- Child Abuse: Educator's Responsibilities (2007). California Attorney General's Office.

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Assignment A: Summer School Guided Observations and Reflections

Each week during summer school you should conduct two guided observations as described below. At least one of the two observations/reflections should explicitly focus on "Teaching for Equity," based on a focus question or prompt of your own choosing. The purpose of these guided observations is two-fold:

- (a) to help you uncover some of the richness and complexity of the work of teachers and the experience of schooling for your students, and
- (b) to help you build your observational skills.

These observation tasks should take no more than 20-30 minutes. Take notes in your Summer School Journal. We will ask you to refer to your notes in Seminar or the summer Supervisory sessions, but you do not need to submit your notes in class.

Week1: Building classroom community

Describe some of the ways your CT works to build community and set norms. You might attend to activities, language, personal interactions, notes and signs, invitations to participate, and more. Your thoughts, questions, and reactions are also relevant, but be sure to separate them from your observation notes.

Week2: Sketch your classroom

Draw a map of the classroom. Be sure to note resources and materials. You might also highlight the types of activities and opportunities that take places in different spaces, when they are used, by whom, etc.

Week3: Educational technology

Spend some time observing in the domain of educational technology based on a focus question of your own choosing. Here are some sample questions that might shape your inquiry:

- *Environment:* What materials and resources are available to students (these might include equipment, space, time, people)?
- *Students/Activity:* What types of activity are the students engaged in? Be sure to note details of who is involved, in what ways, what seem to be the rules and expectations? who sets them? who has access to which resources, etc.
- *Adults:* What roles are the grown ups playing in the environment? How are they shaping, supporting, impeding the work of the students?

Week4: Focal child across settings

This week, spend some time taking notes on one child of interest across multiple settings. Spend 5 minutes observing the student in different venues and activities (e.g. whole group setting, transition time (eg, lining up for recess), independent work time, recess, brunch, entry or exit to school, etc.). Reflect on what looking across venues adds to your understanding of this particular student.

Teaching for Equity

Once a week focus some attention in your observation and reflection journal on a topic related to teaching for equity based on a focus question or prompt of your own choosing. Here are some sample questions that might shape your inquiry:

- *Participation:* What patterns of participation do you notice (based on gender, language, or other features) in different realms of school activity?
- *Access:* Look for ways the teacher (or others) offer "entry points" for diverse students: different ways for students to engage, understand, express, make sense of, get comfortable with ...
- *Connection:* In what ways do observe connections being made to students, their families and communities?

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Assignment B: PE, Movement & Health Resources

(due 8/26)

Prepare a short description of one promising activity or resource offered to the students in your placement school/classroom related to health, movement and/or physical education. We will compile our ideas into a small resource guide on the course site. Be sure to include any information necessary for someone else to understand and implement the activity you describe.

Each candidate should submit one promising activity. You will upload your work to a subpage within the Elementary Seminar page in Canvas.

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Assignment C: The Context of Our Work: School and Community Study

Two of our essential questions for this quarter are “*What makes teaching so complex?*” and “*Who do we serve and how?*”

As teachers it is important for us to be grounded in the context of the schools and communities in which we teach. These contexts are important resources for us as teachers and for the students and families we serve. The school and community contexts matter. They are part of the complexity of the endeavor of teaching *and* they offer valuable assets and resources for our work in supporting students and their families.

Part I: The School Context (due 9/2)

In 1-2 pages (you can include charts or tables), report on the following questions related to the school context of your student teaching placement:

1. Describe the demographic makeup of your school:
 - a. What is the total student enrollment?
 - b. What proportion of the school’s student population comprises:
 - i. English language learners?
 - ii. Special education students?
 - iii. Students on free or reduced price meals?
 - iv. Various student ethnicities?
2. Describe the school’s academic program:
 - a. How many classes per grade? How many students per class?
 - b. What about special education programs and services?
 - c. Any other special features of your school (academic programs, language pathways, specialized programs, family programs, etc.)?
 - d. “Specials” like art, music, p.e., library, etc.?
 - e. Does your school have a stated mission, vision, or philosophy? If so, what is it?
3. Who works at this school?
 - a. How many teachers? Varying experience levels?
 - b. Who else works at the school?
4. Anything else of note that you’ve learned about the school context you would like to report?

Resources: Here are some possible sources of information for your exploration: Your school is likely to have a website with useful information. A “SARC” report (“School Accountability Report Card”) should also be publicly available. You can also link here: <http://school-ratings.com/> and here: <http://www.greatschools.org/> for online school ratings and other publically available information. And, of course, you can talk with the administrators and office staff as well as your cooperating teacher.

Part II: Community Context and Community Assets (due 9/9)

In 2-3 pages, report on important features and assets of the neighborhood and community contexts of your placement school. The possibilities for exploration are endless, so we have identified a few possibilities for you below. For the purposes of this report, focus your efforts on just a few community features and resources that seem valuable and important (2-3 would suffice). Be sure to hone in on

positive assets and resources available in the community that might be relevant to your work as a teacher and/or your students and their families. (This does not mean, however, that you need to ignore the disproportionate allocation of resources.)

Some examples of areas to explore include the following:

- Recreation and entertainment
- Youth activities and resources
- Non-profit organizations, especially those relevant to school youth
- Libraries, parks, public transportation, etc.
- Public assistance resources
- Types of buildings: houses, apartments, markets, stores, restaurants, etc.
- Healthcare and wellness
- Religious organizations
- Median income, median home price and cost of rentals
- Average age of community
- Education of adults
- Distance from the school, how students get to school, and how long it takes

You can do this by:

- Finding a map of the school boundary area
- Touring the neighborhood
- Researching on-line
- Interviewing a parent, teacher, school counselor
- Interviewing a local business owner, worker, resident, or politician
- Talking with a leaders of a local non-profit (e.g. afterschool program or religious organization) serving area youth

While it is not a requirement that you conduct an interview as part of this assignment, we encourage you to talk with at least one person you might not otherwise have connected with in service of this assignment.

Part III: Synthesis and Reflection (due 9/16)

- INDIVIDUALLY, prepare a brief reflection (1-2 pages) based on your work exploring your school and community context. The following prompts might help guide your reflection:
 - What surprised you about what you learned from research?
 - How might what you learned influence your practice as a teacher?
 - What impact do you think these community resources might have on your students?
 - Reflect on one aspect of the context of your work is arranged to perpetuate (in)equity.

Project Notes: *If you are placed at the same school site as other STEP colleagues, you may gather your information for Part I together. For Part II, please gather your information separately (i.e. explore different topics, interview different people), but feel free to synthesize that information into one product. For Part III, everyone should complete an independent reflection paper.*