Student-Centered Learning Course Syllabus

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Students at the Center Distinguished Fellow Arthur Baraf, with co-fellow Lori McEwen, created a course for Providence College designed to support teacher-learners to master four core competencies known to promote high achievement in secondary-level students.

The course actually uses learner-centered practices rather than just talking about them. Perhaps the most exciting part of this invaluable resource is its dynamicity — as Arthur teaches new sections of the course, he will be reflecting, revising, and updating content and resources based on the feedback he receives from his students and the data he gathers regarding the effectiveness of the lessons.

Sign up at sclresearchcollab.org/connect to receive updates on new versions of the course syllabus and to see the final projects created by the teacher-learners.

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For the latest version, visit bit.ly/SCLsyllabus

EDU 663: Diversity Seminar: Student-Centered Learning

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

Instructor: Arthur Eduardo Baraf (abaraf@metmail.org)

Guest Lecturer: Lori McEwen (lbmcewen@gmail.com)

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Research on urban teaching has identified traits of effective urban teachers as well as approaches to teaching that are linked to increases in urban student success, both academically and socially. This course focuses in detail on these traits and teaching methods and how they can best be implemented in the participants' own classrooms.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do I apply high quality student-centered learning (SCL) in my classroom to achieve deeper learning outcomes, career/college/civic readiness, and equity for students in urban settings?

CORE COMPETENCIES

Learners will be able to:

1. Explain with clarity, depth, and nuance what SCL is and how SCL strategies and mindsets help achieve deeper learning, career or college, or civic readiness, and equity in urban settings.

2. Analyze and reflect on their own beliefs and mindsets in relation to various SCL approaches, and how those approaches inform issues of identity and equity.

3. Apply (in theory or in action) SCL strategies in the classroom.

4. Effectively communicate SCL practices to other stakeholders using digital tools in order to develop teacher leadership skills.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS

As often as practicable, student will have choice in the medium used to complete class assignments and assessments.

1. Exploring Student-Centered Learning Group Project

2. Interview with an SCL Researcher or Practitioner Project*

    Blog Rubric

    Podcast Rubric

3. Implementation, Research and Reflection Project*

      [Blog Rubric](#)

      [Podcast Rubric](#)

[Portfolio Defense Rubric](#) (Due 6/30)

*Either project two or three must be a podcast.

STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING SUBTOPICS

PERSONALIZED LEARNING

- Personalized Learning Plans: Collaborating with learners to co-design learning goals and experiences that include learner preferences and optimal learning conditions (e.g., modalities, technology use, the nature and duration of learning activities, pacing, grouping size, and when/where learning will take place).

- Project-Based Learning

- Culturally-Responsive Pedagogies

- Blended Learning

- Differentiated instruction

- Learner inventories / profiles

- Universal Design for Learning

- EL strategies (SDAIE, SIOP etc)

- Cooperative learning strategies

STUDENT OWNED LEARNING

- Self/Peer Assessment: Enlisting student input in the process of constructing, refining, and applying rubrics by which they will critique, revise and demonstrate competence.

- Helping learners identify their own interests, strengths, needs and preferences (e.g., interest inventories, checklists, reflection exercises).

- Metacognition: Providing learners with a systematic method (i.e., a learner profile) for documenting learning; encouraging and modelling methods for reflecting; and encouraging revision of their learning strategies based on these reflections.

- Cultivating students' growth mindsets.

- Cultivating self-regulation: optimizing the learning environment and showcasing strategies to help students develop the skillsets to initiate and sustain attention amid distractions.

- Enhancing student voice opportunities in the classroom and school/community (curricular decisions, participatory-action research, class meetings, restorative practices, student-led conferences, etc.)

ANYTIME/ANYWHERE LEARNING

- Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs)

- Internships / work-based learning

- Online learning

- Badging / Micro-credentials

- Place-based learning

- "Summer melt" learning opportunities

- Family engagement strategies

- Mentoring programs

COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING

- Creating learning progressions

- Using assessment and data as tools for learning

- Beginning at a level appropriate to students' prior knowledge and learning needs (with heterogeneous grouping strategies, coupled with targeted and challenging interventions to keep students moving at a pace that consistently develops their proficiencies rather than permits low expectations).

- Progressing at a pace that fits needs

- How students demonstrate competency when ready

- Multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency

- Evidence of learning in multiple ways

- Progressions to elevated learning opportunities or more challenging material based on demonstrated competency (not seat time)

POLICIES

- If you cannot make it to a class, please send Arthur an email: **abaraf@metmail.org**

- You will be presenting your assignments to the class on specific dates, it is essential that they be done on time.

- For any clarifications or need for "office hours" or extra help, please email me.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Session	Competencies/Topics	HW (due next class)	"Choice Board" HW (must choose at least one to complete for next class and be prepared to share)
1	**Core competency #1, plus:** • Learners will understand the theory of action behind SCL, understand the course roadmap, and build community through the three levels of cultural identity. **Part 1:** Overview of syllabus & Understanding Competencies **Part 2:** Framing the problem and solution **Part 3:** Community building using culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices	• Sign up for Soundtrap audio editing, start watching tutorials and play around with it (or if you have a Mac, use Garageband if you prefer). • If you'd like, obtain a microphone for better quality recordings. • Read "Why Project-Based Learning" (or some other PBL text) • Read something from the Choice Board and be prepared to verbally share content and reflections with classmates • "Who you are as an educator" to be presented as a **2 page** essay, an annotated PPT or prezi, or similar medium. Consider the following prompts: • What is the purpose of schools education? • What is the role of a student? • What is the role of the teacher? • How do children learn best? • How has your experience as a student shaped your view of your role as an educator?	• Read Essential Project Design Elements Checklist • Read Project Design: Overview and Student Learning Guide • Read 2nd Grade Project Design Example • Explore Buck Institute for Education • Explore Edu-Topia PBL • Explore High Tech High's Teacher's Guide to PBL • Listen to book review of PBL in the Elementary Grades: Step-by-Step Guidance, Tools and Tips for Standards-Focused K-5 Projects by Nikki Pulito • Listen to book review of Project Based Learning (PBL) Starter Kit: To-the-Point Advice, Tools and Tips for Your First Project in Middle or High School by Vicente Vallejo • Listen to book review of Thinking Through Project Based Learning: Guiding Deeper Inquiry by Jayne Conway
2	**Core competency #1, #2, & #4, plus:** • Learners will understand how to use PBL strategies to design their own **projects**, and learn how Anytime/Anywhere learning is facilitated at The Met. **Part 1:** Project-Based Learning, framing of "Implementation, Research and Reflection Project", and Met High School student PBL **Part 2:** Presentation of "Anytime, Anywhere Learning" (with Met students examples). **Part 3:** Exploring Student-Centered Learning Group Project work time.	• Read "Unconscious Bias: When Good Intentions Aren't Enough" • Read something from the Choice Board and be prepared to verbally share content and reflections with classmates • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies (to be shared with classmates) • Collaborate on group projects	• 7 articles on preparing White teachers to prioritize equity in their work (choose one) • Or White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

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3	Core competency #1, & #2, plus: • Learners will understand how teachers' white identity impacts teaching students of color Part 1: Culturally-Responsive Pedagogy subtopic: Teaching while white in urban schools Part 2: Exploring Student-Centered Learning Group Project work time.	• Watch the four short videos in the Student-Centered Assessment Video Suite • View Linda Darling Hammond Assessment Continuum • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ (to be shared with classmates) • Collaborate on group projects	
4	Core competency #1, & #4, plus: • Learners will understand various methods of Student-Centered Assessment, and be able to identify the elements of an effective educational advocacy blog Part 1: Student-Centered Assessment mini deep-dive Part 2: Reading and analyzing exemplary blogs from studentsatthecenter.org, and norming to blog rubric	• Read Teaching Students to Ask Their Own Questions: One small change can yield big results by Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ (to be shared with classmates) • Collaborate on group projects • Choice Board readings optional this week	Optional • COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION Staying Shallow or Going Deep? • A Personalized and Integrated Approach to College, Career and Life Readiness
5	Core competency #1, #2, #3, & #4, plus: • Learners will learn how to use the Question Formulation Technique in their classrooms Part 1: "Student-Owned Learning" Group project presentation Part 2: "Competency-Based Learning" group project presentation Part 3: The Question Formulation Technique (Worksheet, Card)	• Explore the Blackstone Academy Charter Website, especially all the links on the About Us page. • Read Before the first question: How to prepare for an audio interview • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ (to be shared with classmates)	

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6	**Core competency #1, #2, #3, & #4, plus:** • Learners will learn how to conduct and edit a podcast interview **Part 1:** High School SCL Model: Blackstone Academy (podcast interview demonstration) **Part 2:** Personalized Learning Group Project Presentation	• Written reflection (max 1 page) on the challenges and success of working in a group with suggestions for improving areas of challenge • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ (to be shared with classmates)	
7	**Anytime Anywhere Session** **CLASS DOES NOT MEET** **Core competency #1, #2, #3, & #4, plus:** • Learners will reflect on their own curriculum ideology, and learn about/practice "anytime, anywhere" learning	**Somewhere and sometime before the next class complete the following.** • Read Rhode Island KIDS COUNT "Anytime, Anywhere" Fact Sheet • Read 21 Tips for Connecting Learners to Their Community • Submit your completed Project Proposal for your "Implementation, Research and Reflection Project" • Read this Curriculum Ideology chapter and complete the self-assessment and graphing sheet • Read/Listen to something from the Choice Board (right) and be prepared to verbally share content and reflections with classmates • Conduct your interview (if possible) • **2 page** typed essay on the challenges and benefits of this "Anytime/Anywhere" session, as well as the strategies you employed to be successful. Also reflect on the developmentally appropriate structures and supports needed for the students at the age level you teach for anytime/anywhere learning? • Review the Blackstone Valley Prep website-in particular this video, the middle school academics tab and the results tab	

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8	**Core competency #1 & #3** **Part 1:** Middle School SCL Model: Blackstone Valley Prep **Part 2:** Review previous year's projects, norm with rubric, and use a charette protocol to get feedback on proposals.	• Read Chapter 1 of Better Carrots than Sticks • Read something from the Choice Board or connected to your project proposal and be prepared to verbally share content and reflections with classmates • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ plus your plan for achieving competency in domains where you've yet to demonstrate proficiency (to be shared with classmates)	• Listen to podcast interview of Julia Steiny about Restorative Justice implementation in Central Falls • Read Teaching Restorative Practices with Classroom Circles by the Center for Restorative Practices • Read Overview of Restorative Practices from San Francisco Unified
9	**Core competency #1, plus:** • Learners will understand how to employ a student-centered approach to discipline **Part 1:** Student-Centered "Discipline" **Part 2:** Complete a project "charrettes" for each student	• Read GLSN Model District Policy on Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students • Look at the Genderbread Man graphic	
10	**Core competency #1, #2, & #4, plus:** • Learners will understand how to be a more culturally-responsive teacher through gaining knowledge about gender and sexual identities, and understand the marriage of neuroscience and culturally responsive teaching **Part 1:** CRT subtopic: Gender & Sexuality (Guest: Eva Dayon: her website) **Part 2:** CRT Subtopic: The marriage of neuroscience and culturally responsive teaching	• Complete and score yourself on the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory • Complete a Learner Sketch learner profile for yourself • Read something from the Choice Board or connected to your project proposal and be prepared to verbally share content and reflections with classmates • Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ plus your plan for achieving competency in domains where you've yet to demonstrate proficiency (to be shared with classmates)	• Listen to the podcast episode Implementing Student-Led Conferences in 2nd Grade • Listen to the podcast book review of Leaders of their Own Learning by Ron Berger • Read Assessing Metacognitive Awareness by Schraw & Dennison • Read Education Alberta; Making A Difference, Meeting Diverse Learning Needs with Differentiated Instruction. Chapter 3, "Developing Learner Profiles". Pp 23-44. • Read Ontario Board of Education; Learning For All: A guide to effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students Kindergarten to Grade 12. Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction. Pp 31-50. • Annotated List of Differentiation Strategies • Read EL Education: Helping All Learners: Learning Profile

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11	**Core competency #1 & #3 plus:** · Learners will be able to employ strategies to personalize (learner profiles) and increase student agency through metacognition **Part 1:** Learner Profiles **Part 2:** Metacognition	· Explore the Summit Learning Website · Come prepared to share a tech tool for personalization (eg website) · Read something from the Choice Board or connected to your project proposal and be prepared to verbally share content and reflections with classmates · Short written reflection on what progress you made toward mastering any of the Core Competencies+ plus your plan for achieving competency in domains where you've yet to demonstrate proficiency (to be shared with classmates)	· Listen to SCL podcast interview of Daniel Gibson (teacher at BVP HS) discuss the role of teacher in a Blended Learning model. · Listen to interview of Newsela Founder, Dan Cogan-Drew discuss how his tech company is differentiating and personalizing reading and social studies instruction. · "Technology in Education: An Overview" Ed Week article
12	**Core competency #1, #2, & #3 plus:** · Learners will gain strategies use technology to enable SCL **Part 1:** Middle School SCL Model: Blackstone Valley Prep **Part 2:** "Personalized" mini-deep-dive: Technology to aid SCL	· Complete "Interview with an SCL Researcher or Practitioner Project" · Complete "Implementation, Research and Reflection Project" · Complete Portfolio Defense	
13	**Core competency #1, #2, #3, & #4** **Part 1:** Portfolio Defense Presentations **Part 2:** Final Reflections using "I Used to Think and Now I Think" and our essential question.		