

Tracking of Use of Data for Improvement: Course level (Initial)

Program: ED 351 General Curriculum and Methods for Middle and Secondary Teaching
Primary Data Set(s): ED 351 Course evaluations

At the May 2012 secondary program meeting for PreK-12 and 6-12 licensure programs, the instructor shared with the faculty team the results of her course evaluations from a several year time period that indicated consistent qualitative feedback from students that the “loading of assignments for a 1sh course was too heavy” (scroll down to Attachment A for minuted excerpt). Although student complaints of “too much work” can be common, the team decided to use the data as a reason to review the balance of coursework between the blocked pair of courses: the ED 351 General Methods (1sh) course that is paired with a Special Methods course (2sh) particular to each endorsement area (eg. ED 374 History and SS methods).

The discussion revealed that the instructor for ED 351 was following course objectives to introduce general methods foundations, but that one particular assignment, the Instructional Strategies Chart, might actually be more developmentally appropriate for the special methods courses since pre-service candidates should be exploring the research base for instructional strategies that are particularly suited for their particular endorsement areas. The secondary teacher education faculty team made the decision to remove this particular assignment, thus reducing the course load in ED 351 and providing a more pedagogically sound rationale for placement of an “instructional strategies” assignment within each individual Special Methods course. The instructor of ED 351 maintained the general focus on the theory of sound secondary instruction, and appropriate assignments within ED 351, while the team brainstormed a list of possible adaptations of this assignment for the Special Methods courses. Individual professors tailored the assignments for their particular Fall 2012 special methods courses.

Evidence: Syllabi excerpts

ED 371 Special Methods for Middle and Secondary Teaching: Biology

IV. Class activities/ journaling (15%)

Throughout the class sessions you will be asked to participate in learning exercises that will help you gain proficiency in designing instructional strategies specific to the science. You will be asked to write and/or discuss your thoughts and reflections about class topics during each class session.

ED 373 Special Methods for Middle and Secondary Teaching: English

2. Teaching and Assessment Activities

A minimum of 2 times during the course you will be expected to teach and assess a 30 minute lesson that integrates multiple ELA domains and highlights a particular strategy and domain.

ED 374 Special Methods for Middle and Secondary Teaching: History and Social Science

Class activities/ journaling (15%)

Throughout the class sessions you will be asked to participate in learning exercises that will help you gain proficiency in designing instructional strategies specific to the social studies. You will be asked to write and/or discuss your thoughts and reflections about class topics during each class session.

ATTACHMENT A: MINUTES Excerpt

Special Methods Instructors Meeting Minutes

May 31, 2012, 3:45-5:00 p.m., CC 234

Present: Brenda Bechler, Myron Blosser, Sandy Brownscombe, Emily Fagan, Barbara Fast, Barbara Gautcher, Beth Lehman, Mike Medley, Cathy Smeltzer Erb

Regrets: Sharon Miller, Tom Long

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3. Cathy reminded instructors of Special Methods course expectations, as noted below. Some expectations were modified from past years following discussion among instructors and data received from course evaluations and other program assessments.
 - j. Instructional strategies from the content perspective is a significant focus of the course.
 - k. The Instructional Strategies Chart assignment has been removed from ED 351 due to data received on student course evaluations that this assignment overlaps with Special Methods assignments. It could be incorporated into the Special Methods courses. If you wish information about this assignment, please ask Cathy.

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Adjourned @ 5:10 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Cathy Smeltzer Erb