

American University
TESOL Program
TESL-620 English Language Teaching III
Fall 2009

Course Description

This final course in the English Language Teaching course series serves as a bridge looking back from actual classroom practices and constraints to make sense of the theory and practices our program advocates within those classroom contexts. Therefore, one focus of the course is to help students learn (through reflection) who they are as teachers, and, from this base, to gain practice in thinking about the wide range of considerations and decisions that make teaching the very complex and extremely situated process it is. The second focus is to review current trends in classroom practice to provide student teachers with practical classroom teaching tools.

Course activities will rely heavily on analyzing and discussing teaching videos, case histories, and actual lesson materials so that student teachers can practice reasoning through classroom matters. To supplement in-class activities, student teachers will engage in field experience through formal teaching placements or informal observation and tutoring. The ultimate goal of English Language Teaching III is that students will leave their program of study prepared for the actual teaching situations they encounter—confident of themselves as TESOL instructors.

Course Goals

The main goal of this course is to develop students' situated reasoning about teaching and classroom matters. In working towards this goal, you will

- develop awareness of what you believe about teaching and how you actually teach,
- be encouraged to create a more flexible and less conservative mindset about teaching,
- use what you have learned in other TESOL courses as a framework for decision-making,
- confirm the value of reasoning through all aspects of classroom decisions,
- learn to distinguish between simply delivering lesson content and delivering lessons through sound pedagogical structure,
- learn how to get to know a classroom and how to make decisions in response to that classroom's opportunities and constraints,
- add (and review) a range of current classroom practices and practical tools to your teaching repertoire, and
- prepare for the real teaching situations you will encounter so that you leave your program of study confident of your teaching abilities.

Typical Classroom Routine

1. What do you already know about the class topic?
2. Discussion of week's topic
3. Analysis of one student's lesson plan or syllabus and materials/textbook for adaptation

Course Texts and Materials

- Johnson, K. (1999). *Understanding Language Teaching: Reasoning in Action*.
- Richards, J., & Lockhart, C. (1996). *Reflective Teaching in Second Language*
- E-reserves and readings available on Blackboard and/or distributed in class

Requirements

You are expected to complete all assigned readings and assigned tasks before class (see course schedule; additional material may be distributed in class). All work must be handed in on the due date; late work will receive a grade reduction.

Academic Integrity

In accordance with the University Academic Integrity Code, work already submitted to other courses or collaborative work, must be approved in advance by the instructor. Please review the code online at <http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/index.htm>.

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.

Course Assignments

Participation and Preparation (10%)

Teaching/Learning Autobiography and Action Plan* (20%)

This assignment consists of two parts and will be completed over the course of the semester (1) the autobiography and (2) the action plan. The purpose is to build your awareness of how your previous experiences affect your perspectives on language learning, teaching, and professional participation (e.g., involvement in professional organizations and professional development activities) and then develop goals to future enhance your competence and participation in each of these areas. (3-5 pages)

Teaching/Learning Autobiography (due September 10, 2009) acts as an introduction and establishes a context for your action plan by describing the following:

1. What are your language learning experiences and how do they affect your beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes about language learning?
2. Language teaching experiences and how do they affect your beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes about language teaching?
3. Professional participation and experiences and how does it affect your beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes about professional development?

Action Plan (due together with autobiography as an introduction on December 10, 2009) describes goals you want to achieve in the areas of language learning, language teaching, and professional development based on the reflection and analysis you carried out in the autobiography. For each area, describe at least five goals along with specific ways you can attempt to implement those goals, a time frame for implementing your goals, and when you anticipate they will be achieved. Conclude your action plan with a summary of what you learned through the experience of carrying out this assignment, noting any limitations and including suggestions of how it might affect your future classroom practice.

Philosophy of Teaching (10%, due September 24, 2009 AND December 10, 2009)

This assignment will help you develop guidelines and criteria for what should be included in your classroom environments. Focus on how you teach English, referring to theory and methodologies when necessary, but primarily aimed at how you **teach** language. Include practices that bring your beliefs and values to life in the classroom along with examples of what those practices might look like. See the Practicum Handbook 2009 for further guidelines. (2-3 pages)

Three Lesson Logs and Final Reflection* (10%, due October 1, 2009)

You will complete three class logs as described in the Practicum Handbook 2009 along with a reflective report (1-2 pages) which addresses reoccurring or salient themes noted in the class logs.

Learner Descriptions and Needs Analysis* (10%, due October 15, 2009)

The aim of this assignment is to provide a general description of your host classroom students and their needs in order to motivate your lesson planning process for your practicum teaching. For guidelines, see the Practicum Handbook 2009. (3-8 pages)

Classroom Curriculum Report* (10%, October 29, 2009)

You will learn and report on your host classroom's curriculum – its design, methodological practices, history, relationship with other courses/programs, texts and materials (and why used), and stakeholders. See the Practicum Handbook for further guidelines. (3-5 pages)

Lesson Plan + Materials* (5%, Weeks 6-9)

You will submit one of your lesson plans (preferably one you are using in your current practicum teaching) to be used for small group discussion and critique in class. This should help you prepare one lesson for your Program Portfolio and will give you feedback for further adaptation and use. Your lesson plan should be submitted (complete with materials, if needed) one week prior to the discussion. If you choose to resubmit a lesson used from ELT-II or another course and has received feedback, that critique

should be included together with your assignment submission. (See Practicum Lesson Plan Format for additional guidelines.)

*Note: Students are not required to submit five lesson plans or alternative report on previous teaching experiences. However, students in formal practicum placements must submit copies of all five (or more) lesson plans (and materials) they taught in the Host Classroom to the ELT III Course instructor.

Adapted Lesson from a Textbook* (5%, Weeks 10-13)

Working with textbooks that are inadequate for or incompatible with learner audience needs, teacher beliefs, or institutional constraints is a common dilemma faced by new and experienced teachers. One of the biggest challenges for new teachers is feeling as if they must “teach to the text” when there is too much or not enough material to be covered in one lesson. Using the same discussion framework as your Lesson Plan, we will practice making textbook lessons more effective. (submit lesson plan in same format as for the Practicum together with a copy of the textbook lesson you adapted)

Host Instructor Teaching Beliefs* (10%, due November 19, 2009)

This paper will help you to better understand why your host instructor conducts his/her classroom the way he/she does. Your report should include the classroom teaching values and beliefs as well as your response to these beliefs in your own classroom teaching. See Practicum Lesson Plan Format for additional guidelines. (2 pages)

Teaching Video (with lesson outline, materials, & self-critique) (10%, due December 3, 2009)

As one of the TESOL Master’s Portfolio requirements, you should videotape yourself teaching. The video should showcase your best adaptation of current theory, methodology, and practice. The video will be accompanied with a short lesson outline/description and appropriate materials as well as a self-critique (2-3 pages) discussing strengths and weaknesses of the lesson and any modifications you would make in future iterations of the lesson.

*These assignments (marked with an asterisk) will be posted to Blackboard in the interest of learning together with and supporting our community of practice.

Tentative Course Schedule

	Class Topics and Activities	Readings	Assignments Due
Week 1: August 27	Course Introduction, practicum placements, identity and teaching	Richards & Lockhart, Ch 1 Brady, Eight ways... Ur, Classroom research, Ch 22	
Week 2: September 3	Teaching metaphors revisited, evaluating teaching practices, motivating learners <i>Karen Taylor, Triangle model of professional competence</i>	Johnson, Ch 1, 2 Kumar, Beyond Methods, Ch 1-2 Kramersch, What is cultural authenticity	Teaching metaphor
Week 3: September 10	Teaching values and beliefs and applying them to the classroom	Johnson, Ch 3 R & L, Ch 2 Prabhu, Why there is no best method Brown, Intrinsic Motivation	Learning/Teaching Autobiography
Week 4: September 17	Learning about students, determining their needs	R & L, Ch 3 Anonymous, One host instructor's beliefs Schwartz, Observing & Analyzing EFL... Braine, TEFL Professional Biographies	
Week 5: September 24	Teacher decisions and classroom dynamics	R & L, Ch 4 Johnson, Ch 4 Brown, Teacher roles and dynamics Johnson, The vision vs. the reality	Philosophy of Teaching
Week 6: October 1	Teacher roles and classroom constraints <i>Renee Feather: Common pitfalls and how to avoid them</i>	R & L, Ch 5 Leki, Pretty much screwed up Staehr, Case Studies 1 & 2	3 Logs + Reflection
Week 7: October 8	Structuring lessons; adapting assigned lessons; highlighting language in content lessons	R & L, Ch 6-7 Johnson, Ch 5 Bailey, The best laid plans, Ch1	
Week 8: October 15	Giving instructions, modeling, scaffolding, eliciting	R & L, Ch 8 Peregoy & Boyle, Scaffolding Garlikov, The Socratic Method	Learner Description and Needs Analysis

Instructor: J. Uhler

Week 9: October 22	Teacher talk, feedback and error correction	R & L, Ch 9 Brown, A model for correction...	
Week 10: October 29	Teaching across environments; classroom management	Johnson 6, 7, 8 Jigsaw Schmidt, Good Teachers are Ringleaders Hadfield, Classroom dynamics	Classroom Curriculum Report
Week 11: November 5	Responding to and evaluating student assignments	R & L, Ch 9 Vale & Feunteun, Managing children's case Kohn, A tale of two teachers...	
Week 12: November 12	Multi-proficiency and multicultural classrooms; responding to learning styles and multiple intelligences	van Lier, Conflicting voices Brady, Teaching to multi-level classes Herrel, Multiple intelligence strategies Ur, Large heterogeneous classes	
Week 13: November 19	Syllabi and curricula; thematic and course units	Brady, Curriculum design tips Graves, Conceptualizing content	Host Instructor Teaching Beliefs
Thanksgiving Break			
Week 14: December 3	NNSTS; employment issues	Medgyes, Language training Burnaby & Sun, Chinese teachers... Li, It's always more difficult... Barratt & Kontra, Native English-speaking Stzanski, Getting the most... Brady, Some tips on the job search...	Teaching Video
Week 15: December 10	Time management, professional development, evaluations	Johnson, Ch 9 Vale & Feunteun, Management of Time Christison & Stoller, Time management Ur, Teacher development Bailey, Why bother with professional...	Action Plan Goals (+autobiography) Revised Teaching Philosophy

* Additional reading assignments will be posted on Blackboard eReserves