Contact Information:
Phone: 053-281-9414
Email: ericg@pardes.org.il
Skype: mrgatahs

Course Description:
Teaching is often called a “craft” or even an “art.” While there may be an element of craftsmanship to teaching, the most effective practitioner is best defined as a “professional.” The professional teacher is constantly engaged in learning, experimenting, and reflection. In this course, we will examine what the research tells us are best practices in education, and we will explore the application of the research into practice. In particular, we will be exploring several big ideas of teaching which are considered fundamental to good teaching.

Learning Objectives:
The big ideas for this course are:

1. Good teaching is rooted in good planning. Teachers must plan around clearly defined learning outcomes and a vision of what success looks like. Formative assessment is built into every lesson. In defining goals, one must consider 21st century outcomes.

2. Good teaching considers the diversity that exists within the classroom. Differentiation is a key strategy used to address learning differences. Teachers must be committed to learning strategies to work with students with special needs. Teachers must create a classroom environment which is respectful and safe.

3. Learning is an active endeavor. As such, teachers should design lessons that challenge students to be actively engaged.

4. The professional teacher is deeply involved in reflection. Such a teacher is constantly examining her or his own teaching in a critical manner, as well as the various contexts where he functions. To critically reflect requires one keep current in the world of educational research and for one to be a lifelong learner.

Required Texts:
Weekly readings will be available on-line. No purchase of a text is necessary.

Optional Texts:
The following texts are nice references and supplements to the classroom readings.


Assessment:
Students will be assessed in the following ways:

1. Engagement: Be engaged in the learning by being prepared and attending and participating in every class session. You should always feel free to continue a discussion begun in class after class with your peers or the instructor. This class is a blended learning class which means that there is a significant virtual presence for our class. Be sure to be on top of readings and assignments. On seminar days, you are to work in the Beit Midrash with your chevruta on a text and an assignment. As well, after each class, an article or so will generally be posted along with a discussion question. Please be sure to respond to the discussion questions AND to thoughtfully respond to at least one other person’s comment. (38 points)

2. PLC Presentation: Choose one article relevant to the class (from a quality journal, chapter from a book, reputable web site). Be sure to clear the article before you start working on it. Consider the following questions: What essential question is the article dealing with? What is your initial opinion? What does the article suggest as a big idea? How do they know? How does reading this article impact your opinion? Design a lesson of about 25 minutes in length (+/- 5 minutes) to walk our class through your article. Your lesson should be engaging and active—consider using an active learning technique. You should begin your lesson by stating a goal, and end it by doing some brief form of assessment. Please post your lesson plan and a reflection in your journal on the question: was it successful, and how do you know? Also, please post your article for everyone on the Haiku. (15 points)

3. Unit Creation: Create a unit based on the principles of unit design discussed in this class. In particular, your unit will include consider big ideas, essential questions, “to knows” and “to dos” and summative assessments. It will include 5 to 10 lessons using the lesson planning template we will discuss in class. Your lessons will build in formative assessment and differentiation and will consider issues of student engagement. On the second to last lesson, you will share your essential question and enduring understandings with the class and “try out” one activity. Please note that the unit itself is due prior to student teaching. Details to follow. This project will be done with a partner. (30 points)

4. Video Reflection: Utilize the lesson planning template as you plan during your practicum. Video one lesson for analysis. When you return, have a discussion with your chevruta about the lesson using the rubric we will discuss in class. On the final class, submit a “paper” with a link to your video, a summary of your peer discussion, a personal reflection on the teaching, and your thoughts about this process. (1-3 pages) (15 points)

5. Inspiration: In the middle of your first year of teaching, at one point or another, you will probably throw up your hands and ask: is it worth it? At this point you need some inspiration! Everyone is asked to find two inspirational pieces for teachers and share with the class on two assigned dates. Optional: bring in a snack for the class! (2 points)

Course Accommodations for Disabilities:
Hebrew College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in programs. Accordingly, if a student has a documented disability, and as a result, needs a reasonable accommodation to attend, participate or complete course requirements, then he or she should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. For further information, see the Student Handbook at http://hebrewcollege.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook.pdf.

If you require course accommodations because of a documented disability or an emergency medical condition, please email your instructor as soon as possible. We are happy to work with you on any issues you have to ensure that you can participate fully in the class and complete the course requirements. Please do not wait until the assignments are due for a retroactive accommodation, but discuss the situation with your instructor before you experience difficulty.
**Course Structure:**
Please note that all readings will be posted on the class web site one week prior to their being due.

**Session 1: The Professional Teacher -- September 11**

*Essential Questions:*
1. Who is the "professional" teacher?
2. What are "regularities" and how do professional teachers challenge them?

- characteristics of the professional teacher
- reflective practitioners examine and challenge regularities in their teaching, their school, and tin education broadly

**Session 2: Data Informed Practice -- October 2**

*Essential Question: How can teachers use data to ensure student success?*

- summative versus formative assessment
- introducing the lesson planning template: clear objectives and built in assessment

**Session 3: The Goals of Education – October 9**

*Essential Question: What are the goals of education and how do these direct our planning?*

- what goals do we have so that students are prepared for life in the 21st century?
- goals in the “Understanding by Design” framework: standards, benchmarks, big ideas, essential questions, outcomes (to know, to be able to do)
- spiritual outcomes
- performance assessments and rubrics

**Seminar 1: Trilling and Fadel “Speak” – October 16**

**Session 4: Unit Design and the Inquiry Methodology – October 23**

*Essential Questions: How does UbD help us design units that are focused on the goals of education? How can Inquiry be used as the basis of unit design?*

- creating units using the “Understanding by Design” framework
- performance assessments and rubrics
- the Inquiry methodology

**Seminar 2: Wiggins and McTighe “Speak” – October 30**

**Session 5: Embedding Best Practices in Lesson Planning – November 13**

*Essential Question: How can we realistically create lessons that embed best practices in education?*

- using the lesson planning template
- lesson design that embeds goals, assessment, and differentiation

**PLC Presentations I**

**Sessions 6 & 7: Student Engagement – November 20 & 27**

*Essential Question: How do we know when students are learning?*

- "engagement" defined
- measuring engagement using video
- five no-fail techniques for creating engagement when teaching Tanach (guided chevruta learning, graphic organizers, think-pair-share, choral response, "magic")

**PLC Presentations II & III**
Seminar 3 & 4: Unit Design Project Work Session – December 18 and 25

Session 8: One Class, Many Faces -- January 1

Essential Question: Who are the learners in our class?
- through the MI lens
- through the special needs lens
- through the student interest lens

Seminar 5: Howard Gardner “Speaks” – January 8

Session 9: Getting Over the "Teach to the Middle Myth" – January 22

Essential Question: How do we design our lessons to meet the varying needs of our students?
- concept of differentiation
- techniques for differentiation (ability grouping, scaffolding, open ended questions, enrichment)
- MI by design: what thirty years of practice have taught us

Seminar 6: Dewey and Kahn and E.D. Hirsch “Speak” – January 29

Session 10: Students with Exceptionalities – February 5

Essential Question: How do we program for students who are considered “exceptional”?
- a brief history of addressing special needs in American classrooms (IDEA, ADA, NCLB)
- a brief overview of the most common exceptionalities: learning disabilities, ADHD, spectrum disorders, giftedness
- RTI and the IEP -- accommodations versus modifications
- planning for the gifted child

Optional Seminar: Unit Design Project Work Session – February 12

Session 11: Classroom Management for Success – February 19

Essential Question: What tools need to be utilized to create a positive learning environment in the classroom?
- review of setting up a classroom bound by rules, routines, and procedures.
- case studies of difficult situations (e.g. Bullying, cyberbullying, duty to report, cheating, etc.) – what to do and where to turn
- a strategy for dealing with challenging students (and parents!) using "Collaborative Problem Solving"

Unit Design Projects DUE

Student Teaching

Student Teaching Reflection and Seminar 7: Lesson Study Project Work Session – April 30

Session 12: Unit Design Presentations – May 7

Unit Design Projects will be presented

Session 13: In the Footsteps of Rabbi Preida – May 14

Essential Question: What does it mean to be an ethical educator? What does it mean to be a Jewish educator?
- the ethics of teaching
- Judaism’s view of the teacher

Lesson Study Project DUE