

Reflection 1

1. What course would you like to revise, and why? Please include course number and title as well as share what program(s) it's included within.

The courses that I'm going to be revising are our reading and writing methods for elementary teachers in grades pre-K to fourth grade (LLED 400 and LLED 401). A lot of the reason why I'm interested in reworking these two courses is because we are in the process of rewriting them anyway; formerly LLED 400 covered reading and LLED 401 covered writing, but moving forward both will cover reading *and* writing while 400 will focus on ages pre-K to first grade and 401 will focus on 2nd to 4th grade. Trying to work smarter and not harder, it makes sense to me that we spend the time creating the new courses with a culturally relevant and sustaining approach built into them rather than trying to add these foundations in post hoc.

2. Which CRSE competencies are (or are likely to be upon your revision) addressed in this course? This can be changed later.

Per the answer to question six below, I will be doing some collaborative identification of which of the competencies we want to most heavily focus on. With that in mind, I anticipate prioritizing competencies 3, 4, 7 and 8 (3 - design and facilitate culturally relevant learning that brings real world experiences to educational spaces; 4 - provide all learners with equitable and differentiated opportunities to learn and succeed; 7 - communicate in linguistically and culturally responsive ways that demonstrate respect for learners, educators, educational leaders, and families; 8 - establish high expectations for each learner and treat them as capable and deserving of achieving success).

3. What do you hope to get out of this process? What benefits do you anticipate?

I hope to get out of the process two courses that I can be proud of and that I feel confident are helpful for not only our students but their future students. I've also been thinking about the relationship between curriculum and teaching & learning, how they are closely related, but also quite different from each other. I'm thinking about the limitations and affordances of each... the fact that a very solidly culturally sustaining curriculum does not necessarily guarantee that it will be implemented with culturally sustaining teaching & learning practices. And also that, conversely, very intentional culturally sustaining teaching & learning practices can only do so much to remedy a curriculum that doesn't have the same foundation. I'm also hopeful that this process will help me to think more clearly about and to reconcile the relationship between these aspects of the learning space a bit in my mind.

4. What challenges do you anticipate?

I won't be working on these things by myself and our ultimate plan has to be something that will be implemented across all Penn State campuses where the courses are taught, so it's a challenge to think about the curricular intentions being taken up in so many different spaces and about there being consensus about how to move forward. I am hopeful that the community of practice has provided me with a lot of language, ideas and guidance for moving forward that will minimize some of these challenges, however. Another challenging aspect of the work of curriculum writing is that it never seems finished. Given this, it may be a good idea for me to think--at the onset--of my goal as laying the foundation versus having a completely finished, tied up with a bow, product at the end. A last challenge that comes to mind is the management of the macro and the micro simultaneously. We are going to be both refining the skeleton of the course and also attempting to put the meat on the bones, and, in my experience, sometimes those two processes are less harmonious than I would like them to be.

5. How do you think your colleagues will respond? For example, will they be motivated, indifferent, or want to join you and revise their own syllabi?

Because there's a small team of us who are already tasked with this job, I think I can avoid some of the otherwise potential struggles that might come with this. I've been the leader on the project up to now, so I also don't think I will be interpreted as a usurper by emphasizing our incorporation of the competencies. Because at a college level we have been using the language of anti-racism for a few years now, it will not be a new concept for people who are working on this individual project or really for anyone across the college. I do hope, however, that this course revision/development can serve as a process that others can draw from when they're thinking about revising other courses or writing them for the first time. Even though we have been doing some groundwork laying around anti-racism as a college stance, the trickle down into applied action has been somewhat slow. In other words, more people are talking about equity-centered practices than doing them explicitly, so maybe this will help bridge that divide.

6. How will you include your colleagues in this project?

I am one of a team of three who will be working most closely on this, and as part of our first meeting on February 10th, we will start with an overview of the competencies, so we can benchmark which of them we want to include as part of our focal points.