

TE 921: LEARNING TO TEACH

Instructor: Dr. Kristen Bieda

Email: kbieda@msu.edu

Office and Hours: Erickson 317 or via Zoom; By Appointment Only

Class Location: Erickson 109

Class hours: Wed. 4:10-7

Course Overview

“In medicine, as in any profession, we must grapple with systems, resources, circumstances, people – and our own shortcomings, as well. We face obstacles of seemingly unending variety. Yet somehow we must advance, we must refine, we must improve.” – Atul Gawande (*Better: A surgeon’s notes on performance*, p. 8)

Introduction

As indicated by the course title, this class will focus on what, how, and why teachers learn. One important feature of this course is that we will frame learning to teach as a career-long endeavor. Therefore, the course will not focus exclusively on one particular moment in teachers’ learning trajectories; rather, we will think together about how teachers learn their profession from pre-service experiences to professional development throughout their career.

Purposes of class

- 1) To catalyze development of your theories of learning to teach as we form a community of scholars.
- 2) To prepare you to plan, carry out, analyze, and present research or literature synthesis about teacher learning.
- 3) To become critical consumers of the research and literature about learning to teach.

General trajectory

To provide structure for our co-learning and conversations, this class is divided into three overlapping sections.

- The first 1/3 of the course provides us with an opportunity to unpack the tacit assumptions we all harbor about learning to teach. Individually and collectively, we will theorize about, and define, “learning” and “teaching”. Regardless of your future career paths, you should be able to articulate your vision of the dual features of the course title – you will continue to develop your vision of how people learn, and you will take a stance on “what counts” as teaching and relate it your vision of how people learn complex professional work.
- The second 1/3 of the course applies our developing ideas about “learning” and “teaching” to the preparation of beginning teachers. As you are aware, what novice teachers learn in their preparation programs, how they learn, and why teacher educators choose to provide particular kinds of learning opportunities to beginners are idiosyncratic and contentious. Therefore, we will discuss how novices can/should learn to teach, and how we can/should prepare them for their imminent professional work.
- The final 1/3 of the course applies our developing ideas about “learning” and “teaching” to the complicated reality of teachers during their school career. Teacher learning does not end with

preservice education and teachers' initial certification processes. During this time, we will address topics involving how people learn in the context of professional work, how professional development can help/hinder teacher learning, and how researchers (and teachers) define a learning trajectory that frames any systems of support for ongoing professional learning.

Accommodations

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at <http://rcpd.msu.edu>. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (VISA) form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.) Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

Class Expectations/Assessment

1. This class is a seminar, which means that it is anchored around class discussions. In order for the seminar format to work, people must have completed the readings for the class ahead of time and come prepared to discuss them. Reading academic texts is different than reading a novel or news articles. I am happy to provide you with strategies for unpacking and analyzing academic texts.
2. I expect students to attend class regularly and to participate actively in class discussions and activities. It is especially important that you use your notes on the readings to think about the big ideas of each piece before class so you can contribute to our collaborative analytical efforts. *Please bring the readings to class or bring technology to access the readings during class.* If for any reason you must miss class, please notify me beforehand and ask a classmate to take notes for you.
3. Note that participation does not mean talking a lot. Be mindful of the ways your comments are connecting to the flow of the conversation and what has already been discussed. From time to time, I may ask you to come to class prepared to respond to a particular question that emerged from the readings or to continue a class discussion online. These tasks will also be counted as participation.
4. Assignments must be completed on time. If for any reason an assignment will be late, please talk with me ahead of time. Without permission, all assignments will be graded down by 10% for every day late. Incompletes will only be given under unusual circumstances.
5. All of your written work will be held to high standards and should conform to proper rules of grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling. It may be helpful for you to have someone proofread your paper before you turn it into me. Please use APA guidelines for citations, since that is the most commonly used style by social sciences publications:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html.
6. Grading. My philosophy on grading in a doctoral course is that the type of evaluation I provide to you should be similar to the type of evaluation an academic would receive in their position. That is, no one gives you a letter grade, but you do get feedback from various constituents like your department chair, faculty mentor, journal reviewers, etc. You also are obligated to deadlines. The university requires me to give you a letter grade, so I will determine grades based on the following protocol:
 - (a) I start out the semester assuming that everyone will earn a 4.0

(b) Your grade will be adjusted if any of the following happen. The more that these things happen, the greater the impact on your grade: *turning any assignment in late without notice 24 hours in advance; missing more than 2 class sessions; attending class but not contributing to discussions; failure to submit revised work if asked to revise; receiving the same feedback on multiple assignments.*

7. I **encourage** you to come talk to me about the readings or your interests outside of class.

Assignments

A note about assignments: One purpose of this class is to provide you with opportunities to legitimately participate in the valued practices of the academic profession. In other words, I have purposefully constructed the assignments so that you can engage in the work required of academics, and you will do so in a safe and collaborative community of peers.

1. Defining learning to teach

We will begin our semester by defining and unpacking our current thinking about “learning to teach”. As emerging scholars, teacher educators, and policymakers, you should be able to articulate your vision of “learning to teach”. Your initial definition and explanation of “learning to teach” will change as the semester progresses. It is good practice, therefore, to take a stance about a contentious issue (learning to teach) and to trace how your ideas develop.

Please post to the dropbox on D2l a response to this prompt by **September 15** (11:59pm on Sept. 15 is fine) – “I define “learning to teach as _____”. I developed/used this definition because _____”

Feel free to consider including the following to support your claims:

- a bit about some of your ideas about learning to teach and from where they come;
- reflect on your own learning to teach;
- identify some of the influences on your professional identity and practices; and
- provide a brief analysis of how you make sense of your development as an educator.

Your response has a 3-page limit (double spaced) – I encourage you to use this as an exercise in clearly stating your ideas to a reader.

2. Unpacking an article

One purpose of this seminar is to provide you with an opportunity to practice for your current and future work as scholars, educators, policymakers, etc. In this class, you have an opportunity to practice unpacking, describing, and analyzing the arguments and ideas of your colleagues in the field of teacher education.

You will lead a discussion about one article during the first half of the semester, and a second article during the second half of the semester. In the week prior to your presentation, you are encouraged to meet with me to discuss the article. Your grade for this assignment consists of two parts:

Part 1: Write out responses to the following questions about each section and submit to me prior to/at the start of class (email is acceptable)

Introduction

What is the problem (or problems) the author will address? What are the reasons for addressing the problem?

Background/Literature review

How is the literature review organized? What role does it play in the article?

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

How is the conceptual or theoretical framework assembled? What role does it play in the article? How is it connected to the way the research questions are posed, the data is collected, and claims made and discussed?

Identifying Major Claims and Evidence for Claims

What are the major claims in this article? How do you know? What evidence is used to back up the claim?

Your Analysis of the Article

What is your stance on this article? Do you agree with the claims? If so, why? If not, why? How does this article shape on your understanding of teacher education?

Part 2: 45 minute presentation/discussion about article

You will have 45 minutes to present and begin a discussion about the article during class. The activities and/or discussion questions should help your classmates unpack, describe, and analyze each section of the article. You should also provide opportunities for your colleagues to share their ideas and ask questions. I highly encourage your unique interpretation about “what counts” as a presentation – the purpose of it is to catalyze a conversation about the ideas for the week.

3. Podcast

You will produce a 10-min, audio-recorded podcast synthesizing ideas from a cluster of 2-3 weeks of readings and post as an audio file on D2L. You will model your podcast on the entertaining “[Stopwatch Science](#)” from NPR’s Hidden Brain (minus the ads!), where the hosts summarize studies in 1 minute chunks. I will also put samples from previous classes on D2L.

There will be 3 clusters; you will sign up to create a podcast for 1 cluster:

- Cluster #1: What is good teaching? How do we know? (Due September 29)
- Cluster #2: Issues of preservice teacher education (Due October 27)
- Cluster #3: Issues of continuing teacher education (Due December 1)

This is an opportunity to practice the important skill of distilling complex research results and theoretical arguments into succinct sound-bytes accessible to a non-research audience. I have also found that if you write a script for the podcast, the script can be useful to distribute to our class as a resource for listening and reflection. We will be able to share those scripts in a shared Google folder.

4. Research Paper/Project:

PRESENTATION: December 8

PAPER DUE: December 17

Choose one of the following options. Regardless of the option you select, this assignment should not exceed 15 double-spaced pages (including References).

Option #1: Do a mini-research project on the pedagogy of one of the courses in the MSU teacher education program. With the permission of the instructor, observe at least three sessions of a teacher education class, practicum, or supervisory group. Interview the instructor and students about what you observed. Analyze the class and how it seems to affect students' learning. In your analysis, be sure to incorporate readings from the class.

Option #2: Do a mini-research project on the pedagogy of a professional learning program. With the permission of the instructor (or organization), observe at least three sessions of some professional learning opportunities. Interview the instructor and teachers about what you observed. Analyze the professional learning sessions and how they seem to affect teachers' learning. In your analysis, be sure to incorporate readings from the class.

Option #3: Review a set of articles (approximately 15) that helps you make sense of some particular interest you have in "learning to teach" work. This paper is broader than the other two options, so I can help you construct a topic based on your interests and needs.

Your grade for the paper comes from four parts:

Part 1 – Topic: Please provide a 1-2 paragraph description of the paper you intend to write. Indicate the option you are selecting and why this topic is interesting to you, and your plan and timeframe for collecting and analyzing data/reviewing articles and constructing an argument. You can submit this to the dropbox on D2L. **Due date: October 8**

(NOTE: Please let me know if you would like to discuss your paper's progression)

Part 2: Peer review: One feature of the academic profession is peer review – the process by which we share ideas with colleagues for the purpose of constructive feedback to enhance the written work. You will practice peer review on a colleague's paper draft using the rubric for the final paper (which, by the way, is the rubric used for your comprehensive exams). Please see D2L for the scoring rubric. You will receive the draft of your colleague's paper by **November 19**. The review is due back to your colleague (with a copy sent to me via email), by **December 3**.

Part 3 – Presentation: The last class will offer an opportunity for you to share your papers/projects with the class. Depending on the size of the class and the organization of people working as individuals or with a partner, we will decide on the time limit of presentations as the date approaches.

Due date: December 8

Part 4 – Final paper: You can submit this to the dropbox on D2L. **Due Date: December 17**

Class Schedule

September 8, 2021: Introduction to the Course, the Topic, and the Participants

During the first class, following introductions and a review of the course structure and requirements, we will discuss some basic premises upon which this course rests. Our initial conversation will review some basic assumptions about learning to teach. We begin by situating teachers' learning in the context of teachers' work: that is, teaching and student learning. Theories about teacher learning, in my view, are fundamentally tied to a vision of "good" teaching. We will spend some time in the first class exploring each other's visions of good teaching, to clarify the reference points we will be using for examining teacher learning.

Among other questions, we will consider:

- "What counts" as good teaching?
- Who gets to decide "what counts" as good teaching and why? Who gets to decide how teachers should learn to become "good" teachers? Does it matter?
- Can "good" teachers become better? Or worse?
- How and when do teachers learn "good" teaching?

Readings

[Loewenberg Ball, D., & Forzani, F. M. \(2009\). The work of teaching and the challenge for teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60\(5\), 497-511.](#)

[Ladson-Billings, G. \(1995\). Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32\(3\), 465-491.](#)

[Parker, W., Lo, J., Yeo, A. J., Valencia, S., Nguyen, D., Abbott, R. D., Nolen, S. B., Bransford, J. D., & Vye, N. J. \(2013\). Beyond breadth-speed-test: Toward deeper knowing and engagement in an advanced placement course. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50\(6\), 1424-1459.](#)

September 15, 2021: Visions of Learning and Lenses for Seeing It

Defining learning to teach assignment due

In this session, we consider various theories about how people learn. We take up theories that are psychological in origin as well as theories that attempt to *bridge* gaps between traditional cognitive views of learning (it's all in the individual's head) and behavioral conceptions (it's all outside the head; learning is "reinforced" by conditions external to the individual). The bridging theories are broadly referred to as sociocultural theories of learning. We discuss metaphors for learning that relate to these theories (such as learning as behavior change, learning as participation, learning as production, etc.).

We will discuss some fundamental questions that relate to the topic of teacher learning, for example:

- Is learning about process, outcome, or both?

- Does “change” equal “learning” or (especially in the context of education) does learning imply improvement?
- Is learning something that occurs for individuals, does it occur collectively, or both?
- Do various learning theories compete with one another—or, can they be viewed as complementary?

Readings

[Peressini, D., Borko, H., Romagnano, L., Knuth, E., & Willis, C. \(2004\). A conceptual framework for learning to teach secondary mathematics: A situative perspective. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 56, 67-96.](#)

[Kelly, P. \(2006\). What is teacher learning? A sociocultural perspective. *Oxford Review of Education*, 32, 505-519.](#)

[Skinner, B. F. \(1954\). The science of learning and the art of teaching. *Harvard Educational Review*, 24\(2\), 86-97.](#)

September 22, 2021: The Problem of Evidence

The field has grappled for a long time with questions about the effects and effectiveness of teacher learning activities, and at the root of these questions lay knotty issues about *evidence*. Policymakers, professional developers, and scholars have not been able to agree on what to treat as evidence that teachers learn anything. In part, the debates reflect confusions or simply lack of recognition of the theoretical issues addressed in earlier classes (e.g., what will we treat as “learning to teach” to begin with?). And, in part, there are legitimate complexities in identifying the ways in which teacher learning expresses itself in teaching practice that may appear at unpredictable moments across long periods of time. In addition, the debates also reflect political realities of the contemporary reform context, as stakeholders try to ascertain what professional development activities are contributing to the student learning “bottomline.”

Informed by readings that discuss the effects of professional development activities, and purport to lay out evidence of their effects, we will consider these questions:

- What can we treat as “evidence” of professional learning, and in what ways does this evidence capture what might be going on as teachers engage in professional learning activities?
- What conceptions of professional learning underlay the evidence? What other assumptions are at work?
- What is likely to count as evidence of professional learning to particular stakeholders?
- What scholarly tools (measures, research designs) are likely to be helpful in gathering evidence of professional learning? What scholarly problems have researchers yet to solve?

Readings

[Crespo, S. \(2016\). Truth, lies, and videotapes: Embracing the contraries of mathematics teaching. *The Elementary School Journal*, 117\(1\), 101-118.](#)

[Levin, D., Hammer, D., & Coffey, J. \(2009\). Novice teachers' attention to student thinking. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60\(2\), 142-154.](#)

UTEMPT NSF IUUSE Proposal. Accessible via D2L. Read pg. 1-2 (up to the part that starts “The intellectual merit...”) and read Theoretical Framework section on p. 5-6. Prepare a response (you can send to me via email) to answer the following three questions about this proposal:

- Is learning about process, outcome, or both?
- Does “change” equal “learning” or (especially in the context of education) does learning imply improvement?
- Is learning something that occurs for individuals, does it occur collectively, or both?

There are no word limits or page requirements, nor should you worry about APA formatting.

Discussion Leader: Jennie

September 29, 2021: Professional learning: How do other professionals learn? Is teaching a profession to learn?

Podcast 1 due

To begin our transition into preservice teacher learning, we will use our developing theories of learning to contemplate how professions provide particular kinds of learning opportunities for practitioners. Specifically, we will explore how professions define their *practice*, and we will grapple with how practice relates to debates about what teachers should know and be able to do. We will also look particularly at the vexing issue of the relationship of theory and practice and how this relationship is represented in professional learning activities.

We will consider such questions as:

- How can professional learning activities simulate reality (if at all)?
- How do professional educators know when novices are ready to participate in a community's valued practices?
- What is the relationship between “theory” and “practice” in professional learning activities?
- Is teaching a profession? How does teaching compare to other professions in terms of daily practice and how a novice learns such work?

Readings

In D2L: Gawande, A. (2002, January 28). The learning curve. *The New Yorker*, 52-61.

[Shulman, L. S. \(1998\). Theory, practice, and the education of professionals. *Elementary School Journal*, 98, 511-526.](#)

[Cohen, J., Wong, V., Krishnamachari, A., & Berlin, R. \(2020\). Teacher coaching in a simulated environment. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 42\(2\), 208–231.](#)

PICK ONE OF THESE (the other is optional)

[Rose, M. \(1999\). "Our hands will know": the development of tactile diagnostic skill teaching, learning, and situated cognition in a physical therapy program. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 30\(2\), 133-160.](#)

[Jordan, B. \(1989\). Cosmopolitical obstetrics: Some insights from the training of traditional midwives. In *Social Science Medicine*, 28, 925-944.](#)

Discussion Leader: Kristen

Learning to Teach – Preservice Teacher Education

We now begin the second 1/3 of the class by applying our developing theories about “learning” and “teaching” to preservice teacher education. As you are aware, teacher education is confronted by many critiques about the “quality” of preparation. I believe that one tacit reason for such critiques involves the very ideas we have discussed thus far – there is little consensus among teacher educators about what counts as “learning” and “teaching”. Therefore, it is difficult to declare what we are preparing preservice teachers to know and be able to do.

October 6, 2021: The knowledge conundrum

Paper Topic Due

One continual debate in “learning to teach” literature is the idea of teacher knowledge. The idea that “knowledge” can be acquired by individuals in a context and transferred to another setting (i.e., the foundation of cognitive learning theories) gained significant traction in teacher education literature in the 1980s. In this class, we will focus on Shulman’s proposal of a specialized knowledge base for teachers and see where such ideas have traveled over time. We will also consider critiques of learning to teach framed solely as knowledge acquisition using our broadening understanding of learning theories.

Questions to consider:

- Is there a single knowledge base for teachers? How can we identify and codify it?
- If a beginning teacher knows “more”, do they make better instructional decisions?
- How can beginning teacher learn “knowledge” about teaching if they are inexperienced at their professional work?

Readings

[Shulman, L. \(1987\). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57\(1\), 1–22.](#)

[Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. L. \(1999\). Relationships of knowledge and practice: Teacher learning in communities. *Review of Research in Education*, 24\(1\), 249–305.](#)

[Reckase, M. D., McCrory, R., Floden, R. E., Ferrini-Mundy, J., & Senk, S. L. \(2015\). A multidimensional assessment of teachers' knowledge of algebra for teaching: Developing an instrument and supporting valid inferences. *Educational Assessment*, 20\(4\), 249–267.](#)

Discussion Leader: Lakya

October 13, 2021: The practice conundrum

As Shulman noted, knowledge about teaching does not exist in a vacuum – teachers learn in the context of their daily work. Therefore, we turn to a growing movement in some teacher preparation programs to reframe their work around “teacher practice”. Like other professions, learning to teach requires, at some point, opportunities for novices to try out, and receive feedback on, the daily work of teaching. How such opportunities are structured, where they occur, and the type of feedback generated have implications for novices’ learning trajectories.

Questions to consider:

- If learning to teach involves practice, which practice(s)?
- Can we simulate actual practice in methods courses? Should we?
- What is the role of the teacher educator in working with novices on practice?

Readings

[Grossman, P., Compton, C., Igra, D., Ronfeldt, M., Shahan, E., Williamson, P. \(2009\). Teaching practice: A cross-professional perspective. *Teachers College Record*. 111 \(9\).](#)

[Lampert, M. \(2010\). Learning teaching in, from, and for practice: What do we mean? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61\(1\), 21–34.](#)

[Philip, T. M., Souto-Manning, M., Anderson, L., Horn, I., J. Carter Andrews, D., Stillman, J., & Varghese, M. \(2019\). Making Justice Peripheral by Constructing Practice as “Core”: How the Increasing Prominence of Core Practices Challenges Teacher Education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70\(3\), 251–264.](#)

[Given the reaction to some of the claims of article, the authors issued a Corrigendum, which is important for clarification purposes: <https://doi-org.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/10.1177/0022487119855041>.

PICK ONE OF THESE (the rest are optional):

[Windschitl, M., Thompson, J., Braaten, M., & Stroupe, D. \(2012\). Proposing a core set of instructional practices and tools for teachers of science. *Science Education*, 96\(5\), 878-903.](#)

[Ball, D., Sleep, L., Boerst, T., & Bass, H. \(2009\). Combining the development of practice and the practice of development in teacher education. *The Elementary School Journal*, 109\(5\), 458–474.](#)

[Fogo, B. \(2014\). Core practices for teaching history: The results of a delphi panel survey. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 42\(2\), 151-196.](#)

Discussion Leader: Kristen

October 20, 2021: Blurring the lines of learning – preservice teacher learning across contexts

One critique of teacher preparation is that the learning opportunities novices have in methods courses do not reflect the reality of classroom life. This week, we examine efforts to deconstruct boundaries between learning opportunities in teacher preparation programs and other sites of learning. We will consider why some teacher preparation programs emphasize such work, and the tensions that can rise when multiple actors have a stake in beginning teacher learning.

Questions to consider:

- *Where* should beginning teachers learn how to teach?
- How should various sites of beginning teacher learning inform teacher preparation programs (if at all)?
- Should we prepare beginning teachers to function in the reality of schools, or should we prepare them to act as change agents (OR, is that question not as dichotomous as it seems...)

Readings

[Cook-Sather, A. \(2009\) “I am not afraid to listen”: Prospective teachers learning from students. *Theory Into Practice*, 48\(3\), 176-183.](#)

[McCarty, T. and Lee, T. \(2014\). Critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and Indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84\(1\), 01-124.](#)

[VanDerHeide, J., & Marciano, J. E. \(2021\). Preservice teachers taking action: Enacting teaching practices and pedagogical theories in an after-school literacy club field experience. *Journal of Teacher Education*, DOI: 10.1177/00224871211033588](#)

Discussion Leader: Al

Learning to Teach – Continuing Teacher Education

We now begin the final 1/3 of the class by applying our developing theories about “learning” and “teaching” to continuing teacher education. While teacher preparation occupies many discussions about

learning to teach, the daily work of constantly improving instruction given changing contextual circumstances is a career-long endeavor. There is no shortage of resources and professional development options (tacit and explicit) for experienced (and novice) teachers to use and learn from. However, research about the circumstances teachers need to continually learn notes that many “one shot” options do not resonate with teachers, nor do they gain traction in teachers’ everyday practice. Therefore, we will discuss what experienced teachers need/want to learn, debate how their learning may/may not differ from preservice teachers, and conceptualize how to provide powerful professional learning opportunities for teachers.

October 27, 2021: Learning from Others: Typical Practice and Conventional Wisdom about “Good” Professional Development

Podcast 2 due

There are well-established forms of support for the professional learning of practicing teachers — especially, the “one-shot” workshop, the university-based course, the annual trip to the teaching conference. Over the past three decades and more, these have probably accounted for the bulk of formal inservice teacher education in public school districts. Though other forms are becoming more prevalent and popular, the patterns of typical practice have staying power. They are efficient, easy to integrate with school schedules and routines, and well understood by providers and participants alike. In several ways, these forms of support create a particular context for professional learning, one that sits largely outside of the classroom and generally at some remove from the particular problems of practice that individual teachers are encountering in their work, though the content of the workshop or course might well address these problems in some generic way. In addition, teachers are also “talked to” by others – outside their context – about how to teach.

The possible deficiencies of these forms of support have long been recognized, so much so that a new conventional wisdom has grown up about the shortcomings of typical practice and the attributes of “good” professional development. In this class, we will review the critique of typical practice, while trying to understand what these forms of professional learning support do and do not enable.

Questions to consider:

- On what assumptions about professional learning do typical forms of professional development support appear to rest?
- As typically practiced, how might these forms of support affect the engagement of professional learners and what they might take away from that engagement? For what purposes, if any, might these forms of professional development support be especially appropriate?
- On what theoretical and empirical bases do the critique of typical professional development practice and the prescriptions for “good” professional development sit?
- What might be treated as evidence of “successful” support for professional learning in the context of typical professional development practice?

Readings

[Borko, H. \(2009\). Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain. *Educational Researcher*, 33\(8\), 3-15.](#)

[Penuel, W. R., Fishman, B. J., Yamaguchi, R., & Gallagher, L. P. \(2007\). What makes professional development effective? Strategies that foster curriculum implementation. *American Educational Research Journal* 44\(4\), 921 –958.](#)

[Garet, M.S., Porter, A.C., Desimone, L., Birman, B.F., & Yoon, K.S. \(2001\). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38, 915-945.](#)

Discussion Leader: Kristen

November 3, 2021: Learning with Others Part 1: Learning in the Context of One’s Own—and Others’—Classroom Practice

Unlike typical professional development sessions, a growing focus on learning in the context of one’s own classroom—or sometimes in the classroom of other colleagues—has begun to reveal powerful possibilities for teachers. In some instances, individual teachers are helped to address problems of their own instructional practice in real time, usually with someone else (e.g., an instructional coach, mentor, or administrator) in the room observing, advising, modeling, or otherwise co-participating in the instructional work, while commenting on the instructional moves and their consequences. There are clear virtues in this way of approaching professional learning (e.g., the closeness to current practice, the possibility of vividly re-imagining practice), and at the same time potential drawbacks (e.g., the buzzing confusion of a functioning classroom, the unpredictability of real-time events, lack of cultural norms to support this type of learning).

Questions to consider:

- In what ways does ongoing classroom work generate useful questions and puzzles that can become the focus of professional learning? How are these questions framed and by whom?
- What supports teachers to think differently about their teaching practice or engage in new ways of working with their students, when their own classroom work becomes the real-time medium for their professional learning?
- What assumptions about professional learning and the professional learner does this form of professional development make? On what theoretical and empirical grounds?
- What might be treated as evidence of successful support for professional learning in the context of one’s own teaching practice?

Readings

[Chazan, D., Ben-Chaim, D., Gormas, J., Schnepf, M., Lehman, M., & Neurither, S. \(1998\). Shared teaching assignments in the service of mathematics reform: Situated professional development. *Teaching and teacher education*, 14\(7\), 687-702.](#)

[Lampert, M., Boerst, T., & Graziani, F. \(2011\). Using organizational assets in the service of ambitious teaching practice. *Teachers College Record*, 113\(7\), 1361-1400.](#)

[Louie, N. \(2020\). Agency discourse and the reproduction of hierarchy in mathematics instruction. *Cognition and Instruction*, 38\(1\), 1-26.](#)

Discussion Leader: Kristen

November 10, 2021: Learning with Others Part 2: Learning in Collaboration with Researchers

In addition to colleagues, teachers sometimes work with, and learn with, researchers in various contexts. Given the power dynamics between teachers and “academics”, it is possible that typical interactions between researchers and teachers could result in ineffective learning opportunities. However, note two features of the readings this week with regards to teacher learning. First, examine the role of the teacher in the research project. How they inform both their own instruction, and the researcher’s investigation, have methodological implications. Second, the role of the researcher is different from a passive observer, a stance that the researchers explicitly note. The shift from pure ethnography to real-time interactions with teachers requires the researcher to develop a particular inquiry stance.

Questions to consider:

- In what ways does ongoing classroom work generate useful questions and puzzles that can become the focus of professional learning? How are these questions framed and by whom?
- What supports teachers to think differently about their teaching practice or engage in new ways of working with their students, when their own classroom work becomes the real-time medium for their professional learning?
- What assumptions about professional learning and the professional learner does this form of professional development make? On what theoretical and empirical grounds?
- What might be treated as evidence of successful support for professional learning in across teaching contexts?

Readings

[Johnson, R., Severance, S., Penuel, W. R., & Leary, H. \(2016\). Teachers, tasks, and tensions: Lessons from a research–practice partnership. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, 19\(2\), 169–185.](#)

[Manz, E. \(2015\). Examining evidence construction as the transformation of the material world into community knowledge. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 53, 1113–1140.](#)

[Horn, I. S. \(2010\). Teaching replays, teaching rehearsals, and re-visions of practice: Learning from colleagues in a mathematics teacher community. *Teachers College Record*, 112\(1\), 225-259.](#)

Discussion Leader: Jennie

November 17, 2021: Learning with Others Part 3: Learning to Teach in a System of Support

Through their participation in professional learning activities, either as individuals or as groups of professional colleagues, teachers learn about their work and in varying degrees come to enact new forms of practice in their classrooms. Intimately connected to their learning is another kind of learning, variously described as “organizational” or “system” learning. In brief, the organization as a whole (school, district) can be construed as a “learner” and its learning—evidenced in system-wide norms, practices, structures, routines, and other collective features that transcend individual roles or contributions— involves more than the sum of the professional learning within it. What is more, some degree of organizational or system learning may be an essential prerequisite for the organization to frame and sustain conditions for professional learning. Conversely, professional learning may be a powerful impetus for the organizational learning process.

Questions to consider:

- What might “system learning” mean to participants in schools and school districts? How do individuals and groups participate in such learning?
- How might the professional learning of educators within these schools and districts be related to the learning of the organization or system as a whole, and vice versa?
- What conditions might nurture and enhance organizational or system learning, as well as its capacity to reinforce professional learning?

Readings

In D2L: Copland, M. A., & Knapp, M. S. (2006). Essential ideas and tasks for learning-focused leaders. Chapter 2 in Authors, *Connecting leadership with learning: A framework for reflection, planning, and action* (pp. 9-25). Alexandria VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

[Gallucci, C. \(2008\). Districtwide instructional reform: Using sociocultural theory to link professional learning to organizational support. *American Journal of Education*, 114, 541-581.](#)

In D2L: Gawande, A. (2007). On washing hands. In A. Gawande, *Better: A surgeon’s notes on performance*, 13-28. New York: Picador.

Discussion Leader: Al

November 24, 2021: NO CLASS –You will receive your colleague’s draft paper by today.

Reminder: The review is due back to your peer by December 2

December 1, 2021: Learning to teach whom?

Podcast 3 due

In this final discussion day, we will initiate a conversation about the generalizability of teachers' learning opportunities amid calls for teachers to teach "all students". We will explore how conversations about social justice, multicultural education, and equity have pressed on those who design opportunities for teacher learning. We will also attempt to tackle the thorny conceptual issue of learning to teach in communities while considering the needs of individuals. Finally, we will carry this conversation into the realm of teacher learning from the perspective of the practitioners – do all teachers learn the same way?

Questions to consider:

- How can we prepare teachers (novices and experienced) to teach "all students"?
- Should we have methods courses for teachers to teach urban students/rural students/suburban students/Pacific Island students, etc.?
- Do all teachers learn in the same way? What assumptions does the field make?

Readings

[Cochran-Smith, M., Shakman, K., Jong, C., Terrell, D. G., Barnatt, J., & McQuillan, P. \(2009\). Good and just teaching: The case for social justice in teacher education. *American Journal of Education*, 115\(3\), 347-377.](#)

[Gutiérrez, K. D. & Rogoff, B. \(2003\). Cultural ways of learning: Individual traits or repertoires of practice. *Educational Researcher*, 32\(5\), 19–25.](#)

[Pinkard, N., Erete, S., Martin, C. K., & McKinney de Royston, M. \(2017\). Digital youth divas: Exploring narrative-driven curriculum to spark middle school girls' interest in computational activities. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 26\(3\), 477-516.](#)

Discussion Leader: Lakya

December 8, 2021

Presentations of research projects

Research papers due December 17, 2021