

# ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

## **An Online Course for Educators**

### **1. Course Description**

Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* provides teachers, principals, supervisors, mentors, coaches, and others with a tool to promote and assure quality in teaching and continual professional learning.

This course will engage participants in an in-depth study of Danielson's framework as a means to further their professional learning and address fundamental questions like "How good is good enough in teaching? Good enough at what exactly? How do we know, and who should decide?"

Through self-assessment, reflective practice, and professional conversation, participants will learn how to use the framework to scrutinize and strengthen classroom teaching practices to improve student learning.

Throughout the course, participants will continually assess their practice through Danielson's detailed levels of performance and through the ongoing task of self-reflection. Regardless of the role of the participant, this course will prepare participants to utilize the framework to become their best professional selves.

This course was developed by Dr. Kari Weston. Weston earned her Ed.D. in Administration and Policy Studies at The George Washington University. She is an experienced classroom teacher, school administrator, and central office director who has been recognized with several awards throughout her career. She currently works as an educational consultant, author, and adjunct professor of curriculum, instruction, and school leadership.

### **Prerequisites**

All participants must have a computer with Internet access available for the duration of the course. It is the responsibility of the participant to contact the instructor as soon as possible about technical difficulties that may arise during the course and to make reasonable accommodations.

Unless otherwise specified, participants must complete the reading of the material by the end of the first week of the course.

### **2. Course Rationale\Course Overview\Course Teaching Methods**

Teacher quality is the single most important factor influencing student achievement. A growing body of research confirms that the qualifications of teachers based on measures of knowledge and expertise, education, and experience account for a larger share of the variance in students' achievement than any other factor, including poverty, race, and parent education.

These findings put quality teaching at the center of schooling systems and school effectiveness; and recognition of the critical relationship between teachers and learners highlights the need to better define and communicate what constitutes good teaching. Likewise, understanding of what constitutes quality teaching is a necessary aspect of any strategic approach to ensuring the provision of quality teachers, and necessary also in ensuring a shared commitment across teacher

employers, the community and all levels of government on how best to develop and support teacher quality.

Teachers today have to be increasingly successful with a wide range of learners in order to prepare future citizens with the sophisticated skills needed to participate in a knowledge-based society. The sort of pedagogy needed to help students develop the ability to think critically, to create and to solve complex problems, and to master complex subject matter, is much more demanding than that needed to impart and to develop routine skills. Thus, teachers have to be both knowledgeable in their content areas and extremely skillful in a wide range of teaching approaches to cater for the diverse learning needs of every student. In sum, what teachers know, do, and value matters.

The framework for teaching is a research-based set of components of instruction used by practitioners to promote the kinds of professional conversations that will help further understand and enhance their complex teaching skills. Additionally, the framework may serve as a foundation for recruitment, hiring, mentoring, coaching, professional development and teacher evaluation processes by school/district administrators interested in helping teachers become more thoughtful, successful practitioners.

If you want to ensure all students are afforded quality instruction and improved outcomes, this course is for you.

### **Course Teaching Methods**

This course meets online for four weeks. There is not a designated meeting time and work may be done at participants' convenience; however there are specific deadlines that must be met. Deadlines are outlined in the Moodle course.

### **3. Course Goals\Student Learning Objectives\Illinois Content & Teaching Standards Addressed:**

The following goals reflect the PD Course's conceptual framework:

- To help educators understand the practices of good teaching as defined in the rubrics of Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*
- To make continuous improvements to professional practice through reflection and structured dialogues with colleagues

### **Student Learning Objectives**

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify a coherent, clear set of standards that define effective teaching
- Reflect upon, understand, and enhance the practice of teaching
- Assess and chart professional growth within the framework
- Apply Danielson's theory of professional practice to a school initiative

### Illinois Teaching Standard Addressed

Standard 7 - Assessment – The competent teacher understands and uses appropriate formative and summative assessments for determining student needs, monitoring student progress, measuring student growth, and evaluating student outcomes. The teacher makes decisions driven

by data about curricular and instructional effectiveness and adjusts practices to meet the needs of each student.

7J) uses assessment results to determine student performance levels, identify learning targets, select appropriate research-based instructional strategies, and implement instruction to enhance learning outcomes;

7K) appropriately uses a variety of formal and informal assessments to evaluate the understanding, progress, and performance of an individual student and the class as a whole;

7L) involves students in self-assessment activities to help them become aware of their strengths and needs and encourages them to establish goals for learning;

7O) effectively uses appropriate technologies to conduct assessments, monitor performance, and assess student progress;

#### **4. Units of Work\Required Course Text and Resources Course Schedule**

##### ***Week 1***

- Post self-introduction
- Discussion 1, Chapters 1 and 2
- Explore online professional learning communities (PLN)  
<http://connectededucators.org/communities/?sort=views>

##### ***Week 2***

- Discussion 2, Chapter 3
- Discussion 3, Chapter 4
- Learning Log Activity
- PLN Experiences

##### ***Week 3***

- Discussion 4, Chapter 4
- Discussion 5, Chapter 4
- Discussion 6, Chapter 4
- Learning Log Activity
- PLN Experiences

##### ***Week 4***

- Discussion 7, Chapter 6
- Learning Log Activity
- PLN Experiences
- Final Project

#### **Required Course Text and Resources**

Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Internet resources may be identified during the course.

## 5. Course Requirements and Assignments

1. **Reading:** Participants should finish reading the required course text by the end of the first week.
2. **Weekly Discussion Postings:** All questions must be answered completely. Responses should reflect critical thinking, creativity, and a deep grasp of the reading material. Initial discussion responses for course credit may not be posted after the due date. Conversations that develop as a result of a post may continue without credit.
3. **Responses to Other Learners' Discussion Posts:** Each learner must respond with at least five sentences each to at least two other learners' weekly discussion postings. Responses must be completed during the current week of the discussion posting.
4. **Final Project:** The final project is an important component of the course. Specific directions for completing this assignment are provided during the course.
5. **Post-Course Learning Reflection:** Following completion of the course, each participant will reflect on what was learned. This reflection will examine the impact of the course on classroom teaching practices in order to improve classroom learning.

## 6. Evaluation and Grading Procedure

The course is graded on the following rubric. Criteria focus on frequency and quality of postings and responses. No assignments, discussion board posts, or projects will be accepted after their due dates. Learners must earn a minimum of 13 points on the following rubric to earn a "pass" for the course. Learners with 12 points or fewer will earn a "fail" for the course. The grading scale is as follows:

Grading Scale:

**18–17: A**

**16–15: B**

**14–13: C**

**12–0: F**

### Rubric

Criteria	Maximum 3 points	Average 2 points	Minimum 1 point
Log-ins	Three or more times per week	At least two times per week	One time per week or less
Postings	Responds to all prompts with clear and relevant comments	Responds clearly to all prompts but lacks detail or relevance	Fails to respond to required number of prompts

Responses	Responds to two or more peers' postings for each prompt with clear and relevant comments	Responds to at least one peer's posting for each prompt but lacks detail or relevance	Fails to respond to the required number of peers' postings for each prompt
Netiquette	Consistently applies standards of courtesy and clarity in communication	Generally conforms to netiquette standards	Pays little attention to netiquette
Entry	Rich in critical thinking, content connections, unique perspectives, and language choices	Substantial and thoughtful content; effective language choices	Rather thin, with little supportive detail and/or weak language choices
Final Project	Fully addresses each component of the final project in detail as outlined in the course; uses proper grammar and spelling	Addresses all components of the final project as outlined in the course but lacks some detail; contains a few grammar or spelling errors	Fails to address all components of the final project as outlined in the course; lacks detail; contains several grammar and spelling errors

## 7. Attendance Policy

This course meets online for four weeks. There is not a designated meeting time and work may be done at participants' convenience; however there are specific deadlines that must be met. Deadlines are outlined in the Moodle course.

## 8. Code of Conduct\Academic Honesty & Integrity Statement

### Academic Honesty & Integrity Statement

Students are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity as students of Aurora University by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabricating, plagiarism, etc., will result in the student's receiving a zero for the test, assignment, or paper.

All participants in the course are bound by an academic code of conduct expected as standard behavior in an institution of higher learning. Students taking the course for credit are also bound by any additional Code of Conduct outlined by the credit-granting institution.

As members of the education community, instructors and participants share responsibility for maintaining this environment. It is essential that all members of the community subscribe to the ideal of academic honesty and integrity and accept individual responsibility for their work. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Participants who knowingly or intentionally conduct or help another student perform dishonest conduct, acts of cheating, forgery, or plagiarism will not receive credit.

Netiquette/Communication

In an online course, the majority of communication takes place in the course forums. When there is a need for communication that is private, whether personal, interpersonal, or professional, instructors will use individual email addresses or telephone. The primary means of communication for this course is written. The written language has many advantages: more opportunity for reasoned thought, more ability to go in-depth, and more time to think through an issue before posting a comment. Written communication also has certain disadvantages, such as a lack of the face-to-face signaling that occurs through body language, intonation, pausing, facial expressions, and gestures. As a result, please be aware of the possibility of miscommunication, and compose comments in a positive, supportive, and constructive manner. Communication shall not obstruct or disrupt the teaching, research, or administration of the course.

Harassment will not be tolerated. Sexual, racial, and other forms of harassment are defined as conduct that is objectively offensive and substantially impairs a person's ability to participate equally in the academic environment on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or perceived membership in any of these classifications

#### Copyright Statement

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#### Disciplinary Measures:

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, has in any way violated the Code of Conduct is subject to warning depending on the nature of the offense. The Center for Learning reserves the right to withhold granting a certificate of completion and/or credit for the course if the instructor recommends disciplinary measures for any student in violation of the Code of Conduct. The Center for Learning reserves the right to ban the student from enrolling in future courses.

### **9. Final Examination**

The final project is an important component of the course. Participants write a two- or three-page reflection about Danielson's framework for teaching and their own professional growth as an educator. They will include references to specific components on the framework and connections to levels of performance on the rubrics, along with specific ways they plan to utilize this learning in their own development as an educator. Specific directions for completing this assignment are provided during the course.

## **10. American Disability Act Compliance**

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this course, are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Adaptations of teaching methods, class materials, including text and reading materials or testing, may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

## **11. Bibliography**

Danielson, C. (2008). *The Handbook for Enhancing Professional Practice: Using the Framework for Teaching in Your School*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Danielson, C. (2009). *Implementing the Framework for Teaching in Enhancing Professional Practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Danielson, C. (2009). *Talk About Teaching!: Leading Professional Conversations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., & Keeling, D. (2009). *The Widget Effect*. Brooklyn, NY: New Teacher Project.