



**EDCI 545.41E: Issues in the Development of the Elementary Curriculum  
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2020**

According to State of Texas HB 2504, this course syllabus must be submitted for review prior to the course's scheduled start date. Therefore, the instructor has the right to modify this syllabus and course calendar at any time between submission for publication and the first day of class. Furthermore, the instructor has the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the course itself provided that (1) such changes do not increase expectations or requirements beyond a reasonable equivalent and (2) students are given ample notification.

**Instructor:** Dr. Karen Nix

**Office Location:** Professional Learning, 3819 Towne Crossing, Mesquite TX 75150

**Office Phone:** 972-882-7393

**Office Fax:** 972-882-7457

**University Email Address:** knix@mesquiteisd.org

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

**Meeting Times:**

This course meets 4 times during the semester. The remaining time will be spent within the eCollege course. Class meetings:

January 29, February 19, March 25, and April 22 – 4:30-7:30 – Professional Development Center

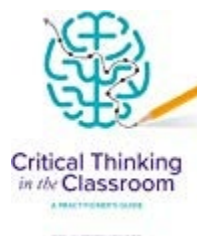
**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

Students should purchase books prior to the first class meeting.

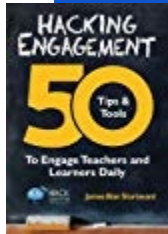
*Textbook(s) Required:*

Critical Thinking in the Classroom: A practitioners guide by Sandra Love and Rebecca Stobaugh

[https://www.amazon.com/Critical-Thinking-Classroom-Practitioners-Guide/dp/162763231X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=6VUTOIKV03QV&keywords=critical+thinkin+g+in+the+classroom+a+practitioner%27s+guide&qid=1573835818&s=books&sprefix=critical+thinking+in+the+%2Cstripbooks%2C153&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Critical-Thinking-Classroom-Practitioners-Guide/dp/162763231X/ref=sr_1_1?crid=6VUTOIKV03QV&keywords=critical+thinkin+g+in+the+classroom+a+practitioner%27s+guide&qid=1573835818&s=books&sprefix=critical+thinking+in+the+%2Cstripbooks%2C153&sr=1-1)



Hacking Engagement: 50 Tips and Tools to Engage Teachers and Learners Daily by James Sturtevant  
<https://www.amazon.com/Hacking-Engagement-Teachers-Learners-Learning/dp/0986104965>



Students should purchase books prior to the first class meeting.

### **Course Description:**

ELED 545: The purpose of this course is to note how various philosophies have influenced the development of the elementary curriculum in order to meet the changing social and economic trends. Research articles will be studied in order to evaluate selection of procedures and materials. Practical experiences will be provided in the construction of course of study units for the elementary grades.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

**Overall Objective:** The primary objective of this class is for students to: (1) become more fully aware of best practices in teaching the primary subject areas in elementary schools; (2) employ best practices in their classrooms not previously used; (3) document results of employing best practices; (4) develop an in-depth awareness of one curriculum area in support of the primary curriculum; (5) contrast currently used teaching practices with those recognized as best practices; and (6) adjust instructional practices accordingly

By the conclusion of the term, the student will be able to:

1. Be knowledgeable of the TEKS/curriculum in all major subjects taught in elementary schools, where they come from, and how they align with state and national curriculum initiatives.
2. Become acquainted with best practices in the major subjects taught in elementary schools.
3. Develop expertise in one of the curriculums that is considered secondary to the core curriculums – and often optional depending on the school system.
4. Be familiar with some of the important literature on curriculum development.
5. Develop competencies in planning and presenting results of research to larger bodies.
6. Implement teaching and learning strategies in one's own classroom based on the learning acquired in this course and/or other courses taken in the cohort program.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. During each of the three units, you will work on various combinations of assignments; worksheets, activities, asynchronous threaded discussions, readings, literature searches, etc.

1. **Class Attendance.** Our class will meet face-to-face 3 times during the semester. See the Course Calendar for those dates. Attendance at all class meetings is required and essential to your success in this experience. Students are expected to be on time and actively participate. The rules of the University regarding class attendance will be followed in this course. The university policy on excused absences is explained in the University Catalog and includes: (a) participation in a required or authorized university activity; (b) illness that is verifiable; (c) death in the immediate family; (d) obligation at a legal proceeding in fulfilling responsibility as a citizen; and (e) other reason as determined by individual faculty to be excusable. Although you are urged to notify faculty in advance, in the event you are not able to attend class, such notification does not constitute an excused absence. The consequence of one absence is a reduction of one letter grade in the course; two absences will result in a reduction of two letter grades; missing all three classes will result in an "F" in the course. In the event of any absence, you are responsible for obtaining class materials/assignments/notes from your colleagues and/or via *eCollege*.
2. **Participate Appropriately.** A noticeable trait of master teachers is the way in which they actively pursue and interact with their own learning journey. Your faculty will make a subjective judgment as to the overall quantity and quality of your class participation. Commit yourself to active learning by demonstrating the attributes of inquisitiveness, questioning, searching, struggling for answers to your questions, and contributing your own professional knowledge to the rest of the class. We expect that you will evaluate and modify your goals, your practice, and your aspirations over the cohort journey.
3. **Adhere to the Code of Conduct.** "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." In a program such as this, you are always working and interacting with others during classes. In that regard, you are expected at all times to behave in the same manner that you would expect your students to behave in your classroom. Please refrain from side conversations as they distract others and interrupt your learning. All cell phones and text devices should be silenced during class time. If you must make/receive a call or text during class, please step out of the classroom.

#### **Specific Requirements (Related Student Learning Objective)**

4. **Read Assigned Textbooks (Objectives: 2, 3, 4).** The assigned texts are shared on the first page of the syllabus. Both texts are required reading.
5. **Reaction Papers and Threaded Discussions (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4).** Each chapter you read is followed by one of two types of response assignments: (1) reaction papers which are completed and submitted to *eCollege* and (2) threaded discussions which require you to interact online with a small group of your colleagues. Reaction papers are evaluated based on the quality of the written work. Threaded discussions are graded on the quality of your contributions to your colleagues.

- 6. Instructional Logs (Objectives 1, 2, 4).** Three instructional logs will be submitted. This semester the emphasis is on learning about innovative and creative instructional strategies that are supported by research on best practices. Instructional logs this semester will document what you did and how well your students responded. Specific details on how to select your teaching strategy and report results are available by clicking on the appropriate links in eCollege. The seven components of the instructional log include: (a) strategy I used, (b) why I used it, (c) research base for the strategy, (d) target population, (e) plan of action, (f) results, and (g) what I learned.
- 7. Explore Innovative Curriculums (Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5).** Our textbook focuses primarily on the core content taught in elementary schools. To supplement the text, we will explore some of the other areas for which teachers are responsible. Teachers will form small groups of 2, select one area listed below (or propose one), and spend the semester learning about that topic.

**Suggested Areas of Study**

1. Cooperative Learning
2. Checking for Understanding/Formative Assessments
3. Ability Grouping
4. Direct Vocabulary Instruction
5. Effective Questioning Techniques
6. Tutoring and Acceleration
7. Student Reflection
8. Summarizing and Notetaking
9. Learning Walks
10. Lesson Planning and Lesson Cycle
11. Student Engagement
12. STEM
13. Positive Behavior Supports

On the final night of class, your team will set up a show-and-tell table to display what you have collected and make a short presentation to the other teachers who visit your display. Specific instructions for studying your topic and presenting it to your peers will be found in the appropriate links in eCollege.

- 8. Visit A Creative Teacher or Program (Objective 1, 2).** In exchange for submitting a fourth instructional log, students are given the option of arranging a visit to the classroom or a teacher or specialists who has a reputation for being a model teacher in the specific areas in which you are interested. You will spend one hour or more during the semester visiting a teacher, a classroom, or a special program in which you will, hopefully, observe students and instruction that will meet a special objective you have established. You could visit, for example:
- A teacher on your campus or in your district that is known to be especially creative/effective in one of the subjects that you teach in your classroom. This allows you to get out of your own confines and see something that might inspire you.
  - A program on your campus or in the district that provides instruction in the special curriculum area that you or your team are studying this semester, e.g., character education, gifted and talented, etc.

You may already have that teacher or program in mind. If not, you are to speak with your building principal or other professionals on your campus to get ideas. You could also contact the subject area coordinator for the subject area in which you are interested to see what ideas he/she might have. Once you have completed your visit, write a reflection paper on (a) who you visited and for what purpose, (b) what you observed and learned, and (c) how it helped you in your own teaching or understanding of what others do. More specific guidelines are provided in the appropriate links in eCollege.

### **Grading: Evaluating Work Products.**

Individual assignments are evaluated on the following factors:

- Depth of thought behind the writing
- Language structure
- Quality of word choice that may be unusually striking, vivid, or creative
- Organization
- Thoroughness in the understanding and assimilation of concepts
- Appropriateness of the content presented
- Sense of unity in the product, i.e., polished
- Transitions between concepts or thoughts
- Frequency of sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper
- Number of errors

### **Grading Assignments:**

Using the grading factors outlined above, you will receive one of the following grades on your work:

All assignments are graded on a scale of from 5 (highest grade) to 0 (lowest grade) based on the following criteria:

**5 - Exceptional – Exceeds Minimum Expectations in All Areas Addressed.** Well above average in thought, language structure, and word choice; extremely well organized; shows thorough understanding and assimilation of concepts; excellent sense of unity; polished transition between concepts or thoughts; frequent sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; quality word choice that may be unusually striking, vivid, or creative; virtually free of errors.

**4 - Above Average – Meets Minimum Expectations in the Majority of Areas Addressed and Exceed Expectations in Some Areas.** In general command of thought, sentence structure, and word choice; organized; shows some understanding of concepts; good sense of unity; good transition between concepts or thoughts; some sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; good word choice that may be vivid or striking; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; few if any errors.

**3 - Average - Adequate in some Areas and Inadequate in Others.** Problems in some of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organized and formatted appropriately; good unity, sequence, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**2 – Below Average - Inadequate in Several Areas.** Problems in several of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**1 – Unacceptable - Inadequate in Many Areas.** Problems in many of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**0 - Not Submitted or Not Accepted By Instructor.**

**Late Work**

All work turned in through eCollege is timed. Late work is considered any work turned in after the due time stated in the *Schedule of Assignments*. Work turned in during class is considered late if it is not ready at the beginning of class. All late work is subject to a reduction in grade as follows:

- Up to 24 hours late – reduction of one numerical grade, e.g., from 5 to 4
- Up to one week late - reduction of two numerical grades, e.g., from 5 to 3.
- Up to two weeks late – reduction of three numerical grades, e.g., from 5 to 2.
- More than two weeks late – Grade of “0”

**Determination of Final Grade.**

Grades on individual assignments are numerical and based on the table below. Grades are recorded in the eCollege grade book.

| <b>Course Component</b>                | <b>Points Per Assignment</b> | <b>Total Possible Points</b> |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Class Participation                    | 5                            | 5                            |
| Instructional Logs (3 assignments)     | 10                           | 30                           |
| Reaction Papers (4)                    | 5                            | 20                           |
| Threaded Discussion Topics & Responses | 5                            | 10                           |
| Reflection Paper on Classroom Visit    | 10                           | 10                           |
| Team Presentation                      | 10                           | 10                           |
| Total Possible Points                  |                              | 85                           |

Numerical grades are recorded in eCollege and available to you when you click on “Gradebook.” ECollege also calculates a “percentage score” based on the assignments completed to date and also based on the total number of assignments for the semester. The most important percentage is the one based on assignments completed to date.

At the end of the semester, numerical scores are converted to percentage based on the total assignments for the semester. Instructors use percentage scores to calculate a preliminary final grade on a scale of 91-100% (A), 81-90% (B), 71-80% (C), 61-70% (D), etc.

Once the grade is determined based on the criteria above, it is then adjusted upward for participation, enthusiasm, cooperation, and general code of conduct; adjusted downward for attendance, lack of participation, lack of withitness, and other factors that might apply.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

**Internet Connection.** Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

**Word Processor.** MS Word is the recommended word processor for eCollege

**Power Point.** You will need access to the Microsoft Power Point application to prepare a slide show presentation of your research proposal

**Operating Systems.** Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:  
<https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

**Questions about the course, assignments, syllabus, etc.**

Contact me via email any time 24/7. If you have not received a response within 48 hours, or if you have a more urgent need to contact me, please call me.

**Submitting Assignments:**

All assignments are submitted through the eCollege Dropbox. All assignments have due dates and penalties are assessed for late work. I use a document called "Schedule of Assignments" to record every assignment along with the date and time each is due.

**Announcements:**

Announcements are posted often during the semester on the course home page. In some cases I will also send the same announcement to you via the eCollege email system.

## **Email Correspondence**

From me to you: All emails from me will be sent to your University email account, not your work or home email. Therefore, it is important to go to Leo Mail often.

From you to me: You should send emails directly to me at the email address provided on the first page.

## **Emergencies:**

Call me at home. Phone number will be announced via Cohort Meeting.

## **eCollege Student Technical Support**

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

**Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

**Email:** [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

**Help:** Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures/Policies:**

#### **Late Work.**

Specific dates and times are established for every assignment. Grades on work not turned in when due are automatically reduced beginning immediately upon exceeding the deadline. For example, assignments typically have a midnight deadline. If you exceed that midnight deadline, your work is automatically reduced by one numerical grade. For the next 24 hour period, the grade is reduced again by one. Work cannot be made up and extra work is not allowed to compensate for missing or later work. The final authority on time is the time recorded on your assignment by the eCollege clock. Refer to the earlier section on grading for more details.

#### **University Specific Procedures:**

**Appeal of the Final Grade** (13.99.99.R0.05 Student's Appeal of Instructor's Evaluation, Effective September 1, 1996. Revised December 15, 1999, Revised February 8, 2007)

1. The final grades awarded by faculty members are their expert judgment concerning student performance. Students challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was unfair based on:
  - a) Some basis other than performance, or
  - b) standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section,
  - c) a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus.
2. Students who believe their grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor.



3. If no satisfactory resolution is reached with the instructor, or if the instructor is unavailable, the student shall appeal to the department head. A grade appeal must be initiated in writing with the department head (or dean if the department head is the instructor) within six months of the last day of the semester in which the grade was awarded. The department head will examine the student's appeal to determine whether the student has established an apparent case of unfair academic evaluation as described in section 1. If the student has not established a case that appears to have merit, the department head will so inform the student and the instructor without delay.
4. If the case has merit, the department head will secure, from all parties, written statements and other such information as he or she deems helpful and will issue his or her findings and remedies, if any. In so doing, the department head will be guided by the principal the burden of proof lies with the student.

For additional information regarding the appeal of a final grade above that of the department head, please consult the latest version of the graduate catalog or contact the Head of the Department, Curriculum and Instruction, at 903-886-5537.

### **Academic Integrity/Honesty Statement**

This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course, or brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university.

### **ADA Statement**

#### **Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Gee Library**

**Room 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

**[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)**

**A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.**

**Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).

**Non-discrimination Policy**

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.