

**Compassionate Classrooms:
A Guide to Building Safe Learning Communities**
EDUO 9944 - Six Graduate Level Units/Credits
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Course Overview

A National Survey of Children's Health has found that half the students in U.S. schools have experienced trauma and/or chronic stress. Given the strong connection between our emotions and learning, we know that the majority of these students are not ready to learn when they arrive at school. In this workshop, educators will collaborate with colleagues while learning how to create environments that promote trusting relationships and social-emotional development. Teachers will experience what it's like to be in a classroom where students feel welcome, safe, and ready to learn. Through two-weeks of powerful readings, dynamic discussions, and hands-on projects, educators will walk away from this workshop invigorated and ready to build safe learning communities for their students.

Course Objectives

In this course, participants will have the opportunity to:

- develop an understanding of how trauma and chronic stress can affect their students.
- investigate and learn strategies for teaching students who have had an adverse childhood experience.
- participate in lessons, activities, and projects that are designed to demonstrate how to create curriculum and classrooms that allow students to feel welcome, safe, and capable of learning.
- demonstrate the ability to create compassionate curriculum and build safe learning communities for all.

Course Relation to CCS or other Professional Standards

While completing the class assignments, activities, lessons, and projects, educators enrolled in this course will work toward fulfilling the following professional teaching standards:

1. ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING ALL STUDENTS IN LEARNING

- 1.1 Connecting students' prior knowledge, similar experiences, and interests with learning goals
- 1.2 Using a variety of instructional strategies and resources to respond to students' diverse needs
- 1.3 Facilitating learning experiences that promote autonomy, interaction and choice
- 1.4 Engaging students in problem solving, critical thinking, and other activities that make subject matter meaningful
- 1.5 Promoting self-directed, reflective learning for all students

2. CREATING & MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING

- 2.1 Creating a physical environment that engages all students
- 2.2 Establishing a climate that promotes fairness and respect
- 2.3 Promoting social development and group responsibility

3. UNDERSTANDING AND ORGANIZING SUBJECT MATTER FOR STUDENT LEARNING

- 3.4 Developing student understanding through instructional strategies that are appropriate to the student

4. PLANNING INSTRUCTION AND DESIGNING LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR ALL STUDENTS

- 4.1 Drawing on and valuing students' backgrounds, interests, and developmental learning needs
- 4.5 Modifying instructional plans to adjust for student needs

5. ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

- 5.1 Establishing and communicating learning goals for all students

6. DEVELOPING AS A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR

- 6.1 Reflecting on teaching practice and planning professional development
- 6.5 Working with colleagues to improve professional practice

Course Outline

- Day 1: Introduction/Community Building/Requirements
- Day 2: Trauma Informed Schools
- Day 3: Social-Emotional Learning
- Day 4: The Importance of Relationships
- Day 5: Everyone is Welcome Here
- Day 6: Guided Fieldtrip Books
- Day 7: Restorative Discipline
- Day 8: Teachers Need Support Too
- Day 9: Project Presentations/Review
- Day 10: Process the experience and information learned

Course Requirements

1. Attend all ninety hours of class.
2. Read all assigned readings.
3. Participate in:
 - all class activities
 - all class discussions
 - all class projects
4. Write three papers in reaction to educational issues, methods, activities, or strategies introduced in either daily class time or nightly reading assignments.
5. Give a 30-minute hands-on presentation of a lesson you've taught in your classroom that you believe supports social-emotional learning.
6. Gather books and resources to share in class.
7. Help make this a successful class by enthusiastically completing all of the above requirements and performing at least one special classroom job or responsibility.
8. Complete and present your self-reflection assignment.
9. Complete and turn in the class evaluation form.

Course Assessment Rubric

Class members will be assessed on participation in all discussions, activities, and projects as well as on attendance. Furthermore, participants will be evaluated on their presentations and written reaction papers.

Area Assessed	Exemplary: A to A-	Acceptable: B+ to B-	Unacceptable: INC
Attendance	Attend all class sessions	One excused absence	More than one absence
Participation	Enthusiastically participates in all class activities, discussions, and projects	Reluctantly participates in all class activities, discussions, and projects	Does not participate in all class activities, discussions, and projects
Presentations	Class presentations are professional, demonstrate an understanding of concepts with real-world applications, and are well organized	Class presentations are professional, but somewhat disorganized and only demonstrate a partial understanding of concepts	Class presentations are unprofessional, disorganized and/or do not demonstrate an understanding of the topic or concepts
Written Assignments	All written assignments are on topic, well organized, provide adequate evidence, and are free of grammatical/spelling errors	Written assignments are on topic, but somewhat disorganized with little evidence and contain some grammatical/spelling errors	Written assignments are off topic, disorganized, lack evidence and contain many grammatical/spelling errors

Addendum:

Course Philosophy

This class operates by the notion that the best learning takes place when people feel they are part of a community that respects all learners. Since everybody perceives the world differently, information will be presented in a variety of ways. Numerous methods will be used to process presented information, as each person has a unique way of connecting new information to what they already know. Being that individuals demonstrate understanding in their own ways, there will be multiple procedures for assessing understanding. Another belief on which this class is based is that long-term learning only occurs when you actually do what you learn. Adhering to these tenets, the information provided throughout the ninety hours of class time is delivered through readings, videos, discussions, activities, reports, and lessons presented by the learner as well as the instructor.

Class Resources

The following resources and references were used in the development of this workshop. You will not be required to read all of the information below and will likely be asked to read other resources that are not yet listed. Participants are not required to purchase any of the books or articles below. The instructor will provide all required readings to participants during the workshop.

Books:

Alvarez-Ortiz, Lourdes, et. al. (2017) *Teaching to Strengths: Supporting Students Living with Trauma, Violence, and Chronic Stress*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Frey, Nancy et. al. (2019) *All Learning is Social and Emotional: Helping Students Develop Essential Skills for the Classroom and Beyond*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Posey, Allison (2018) *Engage the Brain: How to Design for Learning That Taps into the Power of Emotion*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Souers, Kristin and Hall, Pete (2016) *Fostering Resilient Learners: Strategies for Creating a Trauma-Sensitive Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Articles:

Alber, Rebecca. "Supporting Students Living in Foster Care" Edutopia, August, 2019

Bridgeland, John and King, John. "America's Invisible Homeless Students" Education Week, August, 2019

Buschman, Scott and Posnick-Goodwin. "Teen Court Rules!" California Educator, June/July 2019

Cimons, Caitlin. "The Case for a Trauma Informed Approach" Education Week, August, 2019

Cordova, Susan. "Superintendent: Immigrant Students Need a Safe Harbor in School" Education Week, August, 2019

Demoro, Sam. “A Lot of Pride” California Educator, June/July, 2019

Dunlea, Michael. “Every Student Matters: Cultivating Belonging in the Classroom” Edutopia, September, 2019

Feeney, Shari. “Brining a Dog to School” Edutopia, June, 2018

Flannery, Mary Ellen. “How Restorative Practices Work for Students and Educators” NEA Today, August 2019

Flannery, Mary Ellen. “Inside a Trauma-Informed Classroom” NEA Today, August 2019

Fong, Katherine. “Teaching Through Trauma” California Educator, August/September 2019

Heidel, Bridey. “Be the Change” California Educator, March, 2019

Ingle, Ashley. “4 Ways to Foster Positive Student Relationships” Edutopia, September, 2019

Jones, Sasha. “Ditching Detention for Yoga: Schools Embrace Mindfulness to Curb Discipline Problems” Education Week, June, 2019

King, Marissa. “Stories Help Build Strong Classroom Culture” Edutopia, August, 2019

Korbey, Holly. “The Power of Being Seen” Edutopia, October, 2019

Lavery, Laura. “Social and Emotional Learning in World Language Class” Edutopia, September, 2019

Malone, Hui-Ling. “Teacher Education Needs to Acknowledge Whiteness” Education Week, September, 2019

Maurice, Elias. “Getting Creative with SEL” Edutopia, November, 2018

Minero, Emelina. “When Students are Traumatized, Teachers are Too” Edutopia, October, 2017

Mullane, Shannon. “Middle School Students Bring Restorative Justice to Ignacio” The Durango Herald, September, 2019

Paunesku, Dave. “The Deficit Lens of the 'Achievement Gap' Needs to Be Flipped. Here's How” Education Week, July, 2019

Peeples, Julian. “Constant Refinement” California Educator, June/July 2019

Peeples, Julian. “Happy Trails: The Magic of Therapy Dogs in Schools” California Educator, June/July

Peeples, Julian. “Support Lacking for LGBTQ+ Students” California Educator, March, 2019
2019

Provenzano, Brandie. “Ways to Reclaim Your Joy in Teaching” Edutopia, September, 2019

Reid, Rosie. "Talk Time for All: 9 Strategies for Speaking Up in Class" California Educator, June/July 2019

Samuel, Marj. "The Power of Heart-Centered Communication" Forbes, September, 2019

Schultz, Katherine. "There Is Rampant Distrust in Education. Here's How to Fix That" Education Week, July, 2019

Schwartz, Sara. "Next Step in diversity Training: Teachers Learn to Face Their Unconscious Bias" Education Week, May, 2019

Schwartz, Sara. "Teachers Support Social-Emotional Learning, But Say Students in Distress Strain Their Skills" Education Week, July 2019

Schwartz, Sara. "What Do Teachings Really Want From PD?" Education Week, May, 2019

Sparks, Sarah. "Do Distressed Students Have a Right to Trauma-Sensitive Schooling?" Education Week, September, 2019

Sparks, Sarah. "How Caring for Students in Distress Can Take a Steep Toll" Education Week, September, 2019

Sparks, Sarah, "Nobody Learns It in a Day: Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools" Education Week, August, 2019

Sparks, Sarah. "Some FAQs for Educators on Children's Trauma" Education Week, August, 2019

Terada, Youki. "The Key to Effective Classroom Management" Edutopia, February, 2019

Will, Madeline. "How Can Teachers Bounce Back From Failure?" Education Week, May 2019

Will, Madeline. "When School's a Battleground for Transgender Kids, Teachers Learn to Protect, Affirm Them" Education Week, September, 2019

Woodward, Cicely. "6 Strategies for Building Better Student Relationships" Edutopia, August, 2019

Videos:

Edutopia, February, 2018. "Transitioning to Trauma-Informed Schools"

Edutopia, September, 2019. "Supporting Personalized Learning Through Advisory"

Edutopia, January, 2019. "The Power of Relationships in Schools"

Edutopia, October, 2017. "Making Sure Each Child is Known"

Edutopia, November, 2017. "It's Time to Stop Calling SEL Soft Skills"

Edutopia, February, 2018. "Restorative Circles: Creating a Safe environment for Students to Reflect"
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