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Improving Teaching and Learning through Inquiry-Based Field Experience

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Improving Teaching and Learning Through Inquiry-Based Field Experiences

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Context

- Teacher education shift to performance-based model
- New imperative to ensure that content can be applied in school settings
- Graduate level candidates are teaching while enrolled in program of study
- University programs serve two concurrent roles: preparation and induction support
Redesign of Field Experience

- Traditionally, faculty include field assignments in courses
- Field assignments were individually designed
- Our task was to change the design of field assignments to increase the likelihood that candidates would:
  - Demonstrate the performance(s)
  - Improve their practice
  - Sustain the improvements in their classroom/school
Field Activity Template

- Rationale
- Planning
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Standards
- Artifacts
- Outcomes
- Timelines
- Resources
Rationale

- Provide purpose for assigned activity
- Try to design in way that promotes improved learning/teaching
- Include national and state perspective
- Include impact of content associated with field assignment on candidate and/or PreK-12 student performance
Steps

- Planning
  - Include key steps to complete as preparation for assigned activity
  - Think about gathering, developing, becoming familiar with materials

- Implementation
  - Outline sequence of steps
  - Provide guidance to “move through” activity

- Evaluation
  - Usually includes a rubric or scoring guide
  - Include framework to support reflection
Other Template Components

• Standards
  • Identify national and/or state standards addressed by completing field assignment

• Artifacts
  • Some artifacts are automatically created by completing the assignment
  • Other artifacts must be developed by the candidate to document completion/impact of activity

• Outcomes
  • Impact on candidate performance
  • Impact on PreK-12 student performance
Other Template Components

- Timelines
  - Can begin with short assignments and expand to extended ones
  - May be organized in stages of completion
  - May be arbitrary if context variables are not of concern

- Resources
  - Typically includes tools/resources needed to complete assignment
  - Readings to provide content associated with assignment
  - Can include “Go To” resources
Changes Over Time

- Shift from fully completed template to template with partial information
- Candidate adds information to key sections based on their needs/context
- Parts of template are left blank for candidate to complete
- Candidate uses template to design individual field assignments based on need/context
Examples of Pedagogical Decisions

- **Rationale** – Candidate generates need for particular improvement activity
- **Plan** – Allow candidate to use data/information resulting from previously completed field activity as plan for new field activity
- **Implement** – Candidate generates steps needed to implement improvement activity based on experience
- **Evaluate** – Candidate refines/develops rubric to evaluate work resulting from improvement activity
Examples (Con’t)

- Standards – Candidate independently aligns work with professional standards
- Artifacts – Candidate determines the types/number of artifacts needed to document successful implementation of the activity
- Outcomes – Candidate determines the impact of the activity through reflection
- Timelines – Candidate establishes timeline needed for implementation and/or aligns timeline with needs of employment setting
- Resources – Candidate identifies, catalogs, and disseminates resources needed to complete improvement activity
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