

**AESC 4920 (AESC 6920) Service Learning**  
**Project FOCUS (Fostering Our Community's Understanding of Science)**  
**Spring 2019 Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Dr. Jason Peake  
**E-mail:** jpeake@uga.edu  
**Office:** 130 Four Towers, 405 College Station Rd  
**Office Phone:** 706-542-0262

**TA:** Ben Byrd  
**Title:** Graduate Teaching Assistant  
**E-mail:** bbyrd94@uga.edu  
**Office:** 129A Four Towers, 405 College Station Rd

**Hours Credit:** 3

**Meeting Location/Times:**

AESC 4920S	T	2:30 pm-03:20 pm	Aderhold Hall	317
AESC 4920S	W	2:30 pm-03:20 pm	Aderhold Hall	119
AESC 4920S	W	3:35 pm-04:25 pm	Aderhold Hall	119

**OVERVIEW**

This course facilitates a partnership between Athens-Clarke County public schools and the University of Georgia. Students enrolled in this course will spend significant time (minimum of 40 hours per semester) in a local elementary or middle school assisting a classroom teacher in hands-on science instruction. Your participation in this program will allow you to meet the following course goals:

1. Improve the science experiences and science content knowledge of elementary and middle school students in the UGA area through relevant and hands-on science instruction
2. Increase awareness among elementary and middle school students about career opportunities related to the sciences
3. Provide experiences for students and teachers that will bring about more positive attitudes about science
4. Improve the content knowledge and confidence of local elementary and middle school teachers and foster sustained, positive changes in how they approach science
5. Develop a sense of community involvement for UGA students that will continue after graduation
6. Educate UGA students on different educational topics and how to assist in public school classroom, as well as allow them to get a feel for teaching
7. Enhance the communication and leadership skills of UGA students

## **UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

## **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS**

The University of Georgia is committed to providing access for all peoples with disabilities and will provide accommodations if notified. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>

Please contact your TA within the first two weeks of class to provide documentation indicating qualification for services in order for any modifications and/or accommodations to be made.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Be a positive representative of Project FOCUS**

As a member of Project FOCUS you are a representative of the program as well as the University of Georgia. Project FOCUS has been actively involved in the Clarke County School District (CCSD) since 2002 and has a reputation of being a positive educational support for teachers. As a representative of Project FOCUS you are expected to fulfill all requirements of the course in an efficient manner and **make a positive impact** on your teacher and students.

### **2. Spend 3 hours a week helping in your assigned classroom**

You must spend a minimum of three hours in the CCSD classroom per week. You are also expected to spend time out of class planning and preparing your hands-on lessons. Your partnering teacher will assess you based on your effort, reliability, professionalism, and ability to communicate ideas. Less than 40 hours earn an automatic "F" for the course.

Please note that you are expected to have 40 contact hours with students and your teacher over 13 weeks. This is roughly **3 hours a week**. If you are forced to miss a scheduled time in the classroom, you must contact your teacher beforehand and arrange to make up hours accordingly.

### 3. Contact your assigned teacher as soon as possible

You are expected to start your work at the school the third week of class. During the second week of class, you are expected to meet your 3 hour requirement by meeting your teacher and spending at least one hour observing his or her classroom. During this time, you and your teacher should plan the activities you will be doing the following week.

### 4. Attend Weekly Reflection Sessions

You are required to attend and participate fully in each reflection session scheduled for the semester. During these meetings, you will receive help with science lesson ideas and experiments, discuss experiences, get introduced to “hot topics” in science education, and most importantly support each other. Your grade for this portion counts as 15% of the total grade. There is **no cell phone or laptop use allowed during reflection sessions unless specified before class**. You are also not allowed to be on your cell phone while in your school classrooms unless a specific situation where you need photography or video.

Note: Attendance implies your presence at the **entire** session. Arriving late or leaving early will result in a deduction on the day’s attendance grade.

**Absences:** If you are unable to attend your normal reflection session, you should email your TA immediately and make every effort to attend a different session that week (listed above). If you are sick or unable to attend any session that week for a valid reason, you may be allowed one make-up opportunity at the discretion of your TA.

### 5. Write Weekly Reflection Journals

You will submit a reflection journal according to the schedule provided (roughly one/week – see organizational calendar below). Your journals are expected to be detailed and thoughtful and to follow the prompt for that week posted on eLC. Please include the journal number and your name on all submissions. All entries are to be typed and submitted as a PDF or Word Document on eLC each Sunday by 11:59 PM. Late submissions will be accepted up to two days late (with a penalty). eLC will send you a submission receipt if the assignment is successfully submitted. If you do not receive this email then it was not submitted properly. **It is your responsibility to make sure your assignment is submitted successfully. 12 journals are due over the course of the semester with no make-up at the end.**

## 6. Create and Present Your Best Lesson

During the semester, you will choose a favorite lesson you have taught at the elementary school. This "Best Lesson" should be an interactive lesson that teaches students, not a review activity. You should write up your lesson plan including the following categories as a guide:

1. The Standard(s) your lesson addresses
2. Target grade level
3. Materials
4. Safety concerns
5. How to facilitate the lesson
6. What you would modify in doing the lesson if you taught it again

These best lesson plans will later be incorporated into the Project FOCUS website with the other best lesson plans and will be a resource for teachers and other FOCUS students. The assignment has two components: a submitted lesson and a presentation in class. For the presentation, you will act as the teacher and model the lesson.

## 7. Complete a Recruitment Presentation at UGA

Towards the end of the semester, you will create a brief handout or PowerPoint to present to a class or a club at UGA about Project FOCUS. More information about this requirement can be found on eLC.

## **PROFESSIONALISM AND PARTICIPATION**

15% of your grade comprises an assessment of your professionalism and participation both within your CCSD classroom and reflection session. This grade will be based on information from your partner teacher regarding your preparation, conduct, and representation of FOCUS and UGA. This information will be based on your hours logs, any conversations with your teacher, and your teacher evaluations.

Most students lose points here for failure to show up on a teaching day without notifying their classroom teacher in advance, or by being on their cell phone during their teaching time. Another common issue is for students to fail to meet the 3-hour per week classroom time requirement. **Ten percent will be taken off per no-show in the classroom that is reported.**

## **COURSE GRADING**

**Below is the grading scale  
for this course:**

A 92.33-100  
A- 90.00 - 92.32  
B+ 87.67 - 89.99  
B 83.34-87.66  
B- 80.00-83.33  
C+ 77.67 - 79.99  
C 73.34-77.66  
C- 70.00-73.33  
D 69.99-60  
F 59.99 and below

**Below is the grade distribution  
for this course:**

Teacher evaluations 20%  
Reflective Journals 20%  
Reflection Sessions 20%  
Summary Reflection Journal 10%  
Professionalism and Participation 20%  
Best Lesson and Recruitment Presentations 10%

## **GRADUATE OR HONORS CREDIT**

See Dr. Peake to discuss possible projects that will suffice to earn graduate or honors credit for the course. A one-page proposal of the project must be submitted to Dr. Jason Peake through email ([jpeake@uga.edu](mailto:jpeake@uga.edu)) by **September 10**. The final paper must be submitted to Dr. Jason Peake through email by **November 26** and the project must have been completed by that date to receive graduate or honors credit.

*The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

**Project FOCUS: Spring 2019  
AESC (FCID) 4920S/6920S Service Learning  
Organizational Calendar**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Holid</b>	<b>Journal</b>	<b>Reflection Sessions</b>	<b>Notes and Due Dates</b>
1	Jan 9			Syllabus & Introductions	
2	Jan 14 - 18		#1	Classroom Management and Resources	Contact teacher, meet and plan for 1 hour, observe for 2 hours in classroom
3	Jan 21 - 25		#2	Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) & Clarke County Elementary Science Curriculum Map (Amy Peacock, PhD)	1 <sup>st</sup> week of teaching for those who can start
4	Jan 28 – Feb 1		#3	Writing Lesson Plans	Everyone should be teaching by this week
5	Feb 4 - 8		#4	Special Needs Students	Meet in front Driftmier Hall
6	Feb 11 - 15		#5	Effective Teaching	
7	Feb 18 - 22		#6	Teaching Methods - Demonstration	Remind your teacher to submit Teacher Eval #1
8	Feb 25 – Mar 1		#7	Teaching Methods – Hands On	
9	Mar 4 - 8		#8	Teaching Methods – Problem Solving	

10	Mar 11 - 15		#9	Spring Break	
11	Mar 18 - 22		#10	Teaching Methods – Labs	Remind your teacher to submit Teacher Eval #2.
12	Mar 25 - 29		#11	Student Evaluation	
13	Apr 1 - 5		#12	Best Lesson Workshop	
14	Apr 8 - 12		#13	Best Lesson Presentations	
15	Apr 15 - 19			Best Lesson Presentations	
16	Apr 22 - 26		#14		<p>Last Day of Teaching</p> <p>Final Reflective Summary due</p> <p>Honors/Grad Credit Project Summary due</p> <p>Remind your teacher to submit Teacher Eval #3</p>

## Appendix A – Journal Topics

### Journal Descriptions

**Note: Be sure to save electronic copies of your journal submissions**

#### **Journal 1— (Everyone Must Submit this Journal!)**

This is a two page minimum reflection that should address who you are as a person. This is a reflection, *not a biography*. Describe your educational background. How important was education to you and your family growing up? Give some examples that reflect how important it was. Describe your favorite and least favorite educational experiences (could be a day or a whole year) and describe why. How do you learn best? How do you know you have truly learned something? Can all children learn? What is more important, challenging the most advanced student or helping the slowest student catch up? What made you consider a career in education? What made you want to do project focus?

#### **Journal 2**

By this week you have met with your teacher and observed. Reflect on your observations. What is the ability level of your students? Is there a broad range of ability from high to low? What behavior plan does your teacher use? How do you think your teaching style will compare to your teacher's? If you are still waiting to meet with your teacher, review the Georgia Performance Standards for your grade level at [georgiastandards.org](http://georgiastandards.org). What do you think about the characteristics and nature of science sections? Do you agree with what they claim about science and do you think it is important for your students to understand these things? Why or why not? What about the science content, is the depth of it adequate/too easy/too hard for your students? Do you feel like you will be able to teach the content at that level? Think back to your elementary science, do you feel like these standards were taught to you?

#### **Journal 3**

Reflect on this week's experiences. This is not a summary or list of events, reflect on what happened and consider what went well, what different, and why. What would you do differently if you got to reteach this tomorrow? What were the challenges? Did the students learn what you hoped they would learn? How do you know they learned it?

#### **Journal 4**

What significant learning events happened in your science classroom this week? What caused them to happen? What was your role and what was your teacher's role in the science lesson? How is your presence benefiting the learning environment? What are some difficulties in the process of schooling?

You may focus on:

- How the children responded to your hands-on activity
- How the children interacted with you, the teacher and each other
- The children's attitudes toward the experiment or activity
- How the teacher felt about and reacted to the experiment or activity
- Anything you have gained from the experience

#### **Journal 5**

This week, while you are teaching, select two students to pay special attention to. One student should be the one that is the most problematic for you, which could mean the child misbehaves or that you find it difficult to teach the child. The second student should be one that you feel you have the least in common with. For each of



these students, describe them and then really focus on what you have done to teach each of these students. Finally, *and this is really the big part of the assignment*, reflect on what you should do differently with the time you have left so that you can reach each of these students.

### **Journal 6**

What significant learning events happened in your science classroom this week? What caused them to happen? What was your role and what was your teacher's role in the science lesson? How is your presence benefiting the learning environment? What are some difficulties in the process of schooling?

You may focus on:

- How the children responded to your hands-on activity
- How the children interacted with you, the teacher and each other
- The children's attitudes toward the experiment or activity
- How the teacher felt about and reacted to the experiment or activity
- Anything you have gained from the experience

### **Journal 7**

What is a good teacher to you? Use your classroom experience both as a teacher and watching your classroom teacher. Describe attributes and examples of good teaching. Also, describe what a good teacher is not. Pick some examples from your class and describe how these fit your definition of good teaching and also some examples of bad days or lessons that were not examples of good teaching and explain why they were not.

### **Journal 8**

Choose one student who is an English language learner, gifted, or receiving special education services. Describe how that student interacts and learns in the classroom, but focus on practical, tangible steps you could take to reach that student more. How does your teacher work with this student? Does he or she make the accommodations you are recommending? Does this student belong in your classroom? If so, why? If not, what type of class would be a better fit and why?

### **Journal 9**

Law, medicine, and a few other fields are considered *professions*. You go to professional school to attain the necessary degree and the field licenses itself, such as with the bar exam to license lawyers. There is a debate in education about whether or not teaching is a profession. For this journal, you will weigh in on the debate. View certification requirements at <http://www.gapsc.com/ProspectiveEducator/routesToInitialCertification.aspx>. Use your experiences teaching and observing your teacher as well as the requirements for getting a teaching certificate to support your argument for or against teaching as a profession.

### **Journal 10**

At this point, you have been working with your teacher for a while. Compare and contrast your teaching style with your classroom teacher's teaching style. While no two people teach the same way, different styles can work for different people. At the same time, there are some absolutes that are just good teaching and other practices that are bad teaching practices no matter what your style or personality is. What do you feel are the strengths and weaknesses for each of you? Do you think your teacher is aware of his or her weaknesses? Do they seem to be striving to improve their teaching or are they more apathetic? Do you think they see themselves as a teacher the way you do or are they in denial where they think they are a different kind of teacher than they actually are?

**Journal 11**

If you have written 10 journals already, you do not need to do this one. Otherwise, this is a free write where you may reflect on any aspect of your experiences in the classroom.

**Journal 12 - Summary Reflection**

After your weeks of experience teaching, take a look back at your journal entries (you should have saved these) and think about the changes you have helped make and witnessed in your children, teacher and yourself. Reflect on your entire experience this semester and discuss how you have changed as a teacher. How do you view your students, your teacher, teachers in general, elementary education in general after this semester? If you were to do FOCUS again, what would you want to do differently? What do you wish you had known when you first started that would have helped you be more successful? This should be 3-4 pages in length.



## Appendix C – Teacher Evaluation

### SAMPLE TEACHER EVALUATION

Science Partner's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Activity Name/Topic:

Directions: Please rate the Science Partner on each category, using the following rating scale:

\*Please note, the partner is a college student with a science background, but is not a trained teacher.

10=Excellent (overall outstanding job)

7=Good (performed well in the classroom)

4=Average (acceptable but could improve)

1=Poor (showed minimal effort)

#### **Collaborative Effort**

\_\_\_\_\_ Arrived at scheduled times

\_\_\_\_\_ Dressed appropriately

\_\_\_\_\_ Follows school policies and procedures

#### **Preparation**

\_\_\_\_\_ Knowledge of science content area

\_\_\_\_\_ Organized appropriately

\_\_\_\_\_ Had materials ready by scheduled time

#### **Teaching**

\_\_\_\_\_ Promoted learning of science skills through hands-on and inquiry

\_\_\_\_\_ Asked students open-ended questions and encouraged them to ask questions

#### **Interaction with children**

\_\_\_\_\_ Communication with students

\_\_\_\_\_ Moved around the room/interacted with all students and student groups

\_\_\_\_\_ Responsive to student questions

#### **Teaching Plan**

\_\_\_\_\_ Collaborated with you and had approval for activity

\_\_\_\_\_Content relevant to Georgia Standards

**Professionalism**

\_\_\_\_\_Arrived up on time

\_\_\_\_\_Was not on cell phone during class unless to photo/video

\_\_\_\_\_Appropriate dress for a professional setting

Note: You will have 3 evaluations, these will be totaled at the end of the semester to determine this 20% of your final grade.