



The University of Georgia

AESC/FCID 4920/6920 Service Learning
Project FOCUS (Fostering Our Community's Understanding of Science)
SPRING 2024 Course Syllabus

Instructor Contact

Instructor	Maria Reynalyn "Len" Helm
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Course Information

Course Title	Project FOCUS (Fostering Our Community's Understanding of Science)
Course ID #	AESC/FCID 4920/6920
Credit Hours	3
Semester/Year	Spring 2024
Meetings	Wednesday Weekly Schedule Choices: W 12:40 pm-01:30 pm C120 Life Sci F. Davison W 01:50 pm-02:40 pm C120 Life Sci F. Davison W 03:00 pm-03:50 pm C120 Life Sci F. Davison

Course Description

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 39 hours per semester) in a local elementary or middle school assisting a classroom teacher in hands-on science instruction.

Course Objectives

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

Important Dates

Jan 8 – Classes begin for Spring 2024

Jan 15 – Holiday: Martin Luther – No Classes

March 4-8– Spring break

March 21–Withdrawal deadline

April 29 – Last day of classes

Policies

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups

Empathy First:

In this course, brief explanations for absences or missed work are accepted without the need for extensive personal details.

Grace Period:

A 5-day window is provided for the submission of missed assignments without penalty.

Communication:

Should you have any absences or missed assignments, please inform me. My goal is to maintain open channels of communication.

Evaluation and Grading

Letter Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Teacher Evaluation	10%
Reflective Journals	10%
Reflection Sessions	10%
Recruitment Presentation	5%
Best Lesson or Your Experience	5%
Professionalism and Participation	10%
Volunteer Hours	50%
Total	100%

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

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

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 accommodation 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>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Three before me

Students' ability to solve problems independently and collaboratively is a crucial component to the personalized classroom, and a clear indicator of student agency. *3 Before Me* is a strategy used to develop these skills by requiring students to first ask three different people (including themselves) for support when they find themselves stuck. Instead of solely relying on the teacher for answers, students are empowered to push through challenges on their own to build confidence, resilience, and in turn autonomy. Please communicate directly with your supervising teacher, for the sake of time, it is very important that you problem-solve on your own.

2. Email Etiquette

Keep your tone professional.

Avoid vague subject lines... subject lines should be descriptive and short.

Use proper email punctuation.

Practice correct grammar.

Resist emojis in email.

Choose your email salutation carefully.

Be succinct with your question.

Leave the right impression with your email sign-off.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. Contact your 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.

6. Attend Weekly Reflection Sessions

You are required to attend in-person and participate fully in each class meeting 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.

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 and Professor 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.

7. 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, audio recordings, or video recordings and submitted via eLC. Late submissions will not be accepted. 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. Ten journals are due over the course of the semester with no make-up at the end.

8. 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. These may have to be recorded this semester depending on UGA's response to Covid19.

9. 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.

GRADUATE OR HONORS CREDIT

See your instructor 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 through eLC by **January 28**. The final paper must be submitted through eLC by **April 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.

*EDIT: at least **39** volunteer hours*

PROFESSIONALISM AND PARTICIPATION

10% 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 hour's 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.

Project FOCUS: Spring 2024
AESC (FCID) 4920S/6920S Service-Learning Organizational Calendar

Week	Dates	Assignment	Reflection Sessions	Notes and Due Dates
1	1/10		Syllabus & Introductions Module 1: VARK: What is your learning style? Pre Survey: Self-efficacy	Submit background check in class and complete online placement information
2	1/17	Background Check	Module 2: Community Service Learning: Four Stages of Self Authorship Scheduling Spreadsheet	Contact teacher, trade contact information and plan for first observation Journal 1
3	1/24	Introduction email, Schedule proposal	Module 3: Code of ethic and Professionalism	Everyone should be teaching by this week Journal 2
4	1/31	#1	Module 4: The Journey to Becoming an effective Teacher	Everyone should be in their school by this week. Journal 3
5	2/7	#2	Module 5: Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) & Clarke County Elem. Science Curriculum Map Special Needs Students and Effective Teaching	Journal 4
6	2/14	#3	Module 6: Writing Lesson Plan Science education stock	Journal 5

			room (Room 219)	
7	2/21	#4	Module 7: Teaching Methods – hands-on Best lesson Presentation Project FOCUS YouTube Recruitment presentation	Journal 6
8	2/28	#5	Module 8: Volunteer hours spreadsheet Guest Speaker – Dr. Seri Beall, Science Curriculum Coordinator, Clarke County School District	Remind your teacher to submit Teacher Eval #1. Journal 7
9	3/13	#6	Module 9: Best Lesson Planning Rubric Schedule	Journal 7
10	3/20	#7	Module 10: Teaching Methods – demonstration	Journal 8
11	3/27	#8	Module 11: Teaching Strategies	Journal 9
12	4/3	#9	Module 12: Best Lesson or Your Experience Presentations Part 1	Journal 10
13	4/10	#10	Module 13: Best Lesson or Your Experience Presentations Part 2	Recruitment presentation and list of participants assignment due

14	4/17	#11	Module 14: Best Lesson or Your Experience Presentations Part 3 (Final Presentation)	
15	4/24	#12	Module 15: Service Reflection Discussion Post Survey: Self-efficacy	Last Day of Teaching Final Reflective Summary due Honors/Grad Credit Project Summary due Remind your teacher to submit Teacher Eval #2

Appendix B – 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	Interaction with children _____ Communication with students _____ Moved around the room/interacted with all students and student groups _____ Responsive to student questions
Preparation _____ Knowledge of science content area _____ Organized appropriately _____ Had materials ready by scheduled time	Teaching Plan _____ Collaborated with you and had approval for activity _____ Content relevant to Georgia Standards
Teaching _____ Promoted learning of science skills through hands-on and inquiry _____ Asked students open-ended questions and encouraged them to ask questions	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 2 evaluations, these will be totaled at the end of the semester to determine this 20% of your final grade.

Appendix C – Best Lesson

Rubric

Name _: _____

Component	Distinguished	Good 6-8	Fair < 6	Score
Lesson format: Standard(s) & Objective(s)	9-10 Clearly identifies standard(s) and objectives	6-8 Identifies standard(s) and objectives;	< 6 Identifies one of the standards(s) or objectives	
Lesson format: Introduction Target grade level Materials Safety concerns How to facilitate the lesson Closure Assessment Modification/Adaptation	16-20 Intro grabs attention; Instruction follows an appropriate sequence; Time for guided and independent practice provided; Summary or closure to lesson; Some form of assessment and data collection in lesson Modification/ Adaptation of the lesson is included	11- 15 Intro a statement of objectives; Instruction follows a developmental sequence in general; Guided practice provided; Closure is review of objectives; Some form of assessment OR data collection in lesson No modification/adaptation of the lesson	<11 Intro a greeting to the class; Instruction is not sequential or unorganized; No practice provided; No closure statement or activity; No assessment or data collection in lesson No modification/adaptation	
Materials: Age appropriate Task Appropriate Professional in appearance	16-20 Materials appropriate for elementary students; Materials designed to match the objectives of the lesson;	11- 15 Materials too easy for elementary students; Materials appear to be a ‘fun’ way to approach objectives of lesson;	<11 Materials too difficult for elementary students; Materials are not targeting objectives of lesson;	

	All work is neatly word processed or hand printed in ink on clean paper	Work is not produced on clean paper or is of inconsistent quality in print	Paper is torn, frayed, smudged-print is poor in quality	
Reflections:	16-20 Written in first person using formal language; Thoroughly describes experience developing lesson and materials; Projects the likely success of conducting the lesson as a means of obtaining a teaching position	11- 15 Written in first person, using informal language; Summarizes the experience developing lesson and materials: Alludes to the likely success of conducting the lesson as a means of obtaining a teaching position	<11 Written in third person with informal language; Loosely relates thoughts on developing lesson and materials; Does not address likely performance of teaching lesson to acquire a teaching position	
Mechanics: Grammar Spelling Punctuation	9-10 No grammar, spelling or punctuation errors	6-8 No more than a total of 8 grammar, spelling or punctuation errors combined	< 6 More than 8 grammar, spelling or punctuation errors on the entire project	
Presentation:	16-20 Professionally presented in a well-organized manner	11- 15 Professionally presented in an organized manner	<11 Somewhat presented in a professionally and was not well organized	
Total				/ 100

Comments: