

## CIG697 - Culminating Experience for English Language Arts Emphasis

The culminating experience for the student seeking a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in English Language Arts is a portfolio. The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate that **as a result of your matriculation through the masters program** you are able to meet standards set by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). This portfolio will contain evidence that you possess the knowledge, skills, abilities and commitments outlined in the five core principles of the NBPTS. The NBPTS has developed standards and assessments for the purpose of recognizing and rewarding excellent teaching. (You can find more information about this organization and their certification process at <http://www.nbpts.org/>) It is appropriate that the principles upon which their certification process is based should be the foundation of this culminating experience.

The five core principles appear below along with guidelines for evidence that you might include in your portfolio

### **1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.**

Provide evidence that as a teacher you

- make knowledge accessible to all students.
- act on the belief that all students can learn
- treat students equitably,
- recognize the individual differences that distinguish one student from another and take account of these differences in your practice.
- adjust your practice based on observation and knowledge of their students' interests, abilities, skills, knowledge, family circumstances and peer relationships.
- understand how students develop and learn and incorporate the prevailing theories of cognition and intelligence in your practice.
- understand the influence of context and culture on behavior.
- develop students' cognitive capacity and their respect for learning
- foster students' self-esteem, motivation, character, civic responsibility and their respect for individual, cultural, religious and racial differences.

### **2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.**

Provide evidence that as a teacher you

- have a rich understanding of the subject(s) you teach and appreciate how knowledge in your subject is created, organized, linked to other disciplines and applied to real-world settings.
- develop the critical and analytical capacities of your students through the teaching of your subject
- command specialized knowledge of how to convey and reveal subject matter to students.
- recognize the preconceptions and background knowledge that students typically bring to each subject and of strategies and instructional materials that can be of assistance.
- understand where difficulties are likely to arise in teaching your subject and modify your practice accordingly
- use instructional strategies that allow you to create multiple paths to the subject you teach
- teach students how to pose and solve their own problems.

### 3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

Provide evidence that you as a teacher

- create, enrich, maintain and alter instructional settings to capture and sustain the interest of your students and make the most effective use of time
- engage students and adults to assist your teaching and enlist colleagues' knowledge and expertise to complement your own.
- command a range of generic instructional techniques, know when each is appropriate and can implement them as needed.
- know how to engage groups of students to ensure a disciplined learning environment, and how to organize instruction to allow the schools' goals for students to be met.
- set norms for social interaction among students and between students and teachers.
- understand how to motivate students to learn and how to maintain their interest even in the face of temporary failure.
- assess the progress of individual students as well as that of the class as a whole.
- employ multiple methods for measuring student growth and understanding and can clearly explain student performance to parents.

### 4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

Provide evidence that you as a teacher

- exemplify the virtues you seek to inspire in students -- curiosity, tolerance, honesty, fairness, respect for diversity and appreciation of cultural differences -- and the capacities that are prerequisites for intellectual growth: the ability to reason and take multiple perspectives to be creative and take risks, and to adopt an experimental and problem solving orientation.
- draw on your knowledge of human development, subject matter and instruction, and understanding of your students to make principled judgments about sound practice.
- make decisions that are not only grounded in the literature, but also in your experience.
- engage in lifelong learning
- critically examine your practice, seek to expand your repertoire, deepen your knowledge, sharpen your judgment and adapt your teaching to new findings, ideas and theories.

### 5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

Provide evidence that as a teacher you

- contribute to the effectiveness of the school by working collaboratively with other professionals on instructional policy, curriculum development and staff development.
- can evaluate school progress and the allocation of school resources in light of your understanding of state and local educational objectives
- are knowledgeable about specialized school and community resources that can be engaged for their students' benefit, and are skilled at employing such resources as needed.
- work collaboratively and creatively with parents, engaging them productively in the work of the school (NBPTS, 2002).

Your portfolio should have an Introduction that consists of a current resume or vita and a listing of all the courses, their titles, instructors, term taken, and grades received in your masters program.

Your portfolio will have five sections--one for each of the principles. **Collect** all the artifacts (e.g., research reports, reviews, lesson and unit plans, etc.) you have created during your course of study and/or as a result of your coursework in the masters program. **Select** at least one artifact for each section that provides evidence of the bulleted accomplishments for that principle. (It is not necessary to address every bullet). Write an introduction to each section in which you explain how the artifacts you have chosen **connect** to the NBPTS principles and **reflect** your learning in the masters program.

