RACHEL LAFLER – ANNOTATED TRANSCRIPT

This page examines the courses that I took as part of Michigan State University's (MSU) Master of Arts in Education (MAED) program. The courses are listed in chronological order, organized by semester. For each course, I have provided the following information: course title, course instructor(s), and a brief description of my experience.

⬥ *TE = Teacher Education* ⬥ *ED = Education* ⬥ *CEP = Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education* ⬥

FALL 2012:

TE 802: Reflection & Inquiry in Teaching Practice I
Dr. Ashely Woodson

This was my first experience with graduate-level courses, as I took it during my student-teaching internship year. This course was designed to inform and enhance my professional practice by enabling me to directly relate the content to my experiences in the classroom. For example, as I learned about designing effective lessons and the importance of assessing one's teaching methods, I completed an in-depth reflection of one of my unit plans. The course also focused on the importance of inquiry and data driven reflection. Overall, the course provided me with foundational knowledge about how to be an introspective and effective educator.

SPRING 2013:

TE 803: Professional Roles & Teaching Practice II
Christina Jenkins

While the previous course focused on researching, analyzing, designing, and implementing specific teaching methods and strategies in the classroom, this course focused on the bigger picture of teacher-student relationships. Throughout the semester, I learned about how educators, could enhance student learning and achievement by understanding the context in which they work. This includes knowledge of: the school, the students - their interests, needs, home life, abilities, struggles, etc. - and the surrounding community. Not only did I learn about the importance of such understandings, but I was also challenged to apply these understandings in positive and effective ways. For example, after learning that a specific class was very interested in sports, I effectively described a war scenario using a sports analogy. I also better understood a student's struggles, as she was a teen mom.

TE 804: Reflection & Inquiry in Teaching Practice II
Dr. Ashely Woodson

This course was the continuation of TE 802, therefore it continued to focus on researching and analyzing data regarding teaching, learning, and general educational policy. That said, instead of focusing primarily on learning about such topics, like the first course did, the focus was more on the application of such understandings in a real-world context. I also continued to reflect on the content using my student-teaching experience. For example, I conducted an inquiry activity in which I researched the history of Mardi Gras costumes, which showed me the cultural impact of various groups of people and how modern activities are rooted in cultural traditions. This pushed me to analyze new ways to show students how historical content is applicable in the real world.

FALL 2016:

ED 800: Concepts of Educational Inquiry
Dr. Steven Weiland and Nathan Clason

Throughout history, it has been human nature to engage in inquiry, as people seek answers to life's big questions. This course served as an introduction to the MAED program by focusing on the foundational

elements of education including the following concepts of educational inquiry: philosophical, psychological, biological, historical, biographical, autobiographical, and ethnographic. The course was organized into six units, each of which concentrated on a specific facet of educational inquiry. It was also designed in a way that allowed students to work entirely at their own pace. After working my way through a hypermedia-rich lecture and completing an additional assigned activity, such as reading a book or watching a film, I was required to write an essay in response to a specific prompt. These assignments pushed me to not only learn about the foundations of educational inquiry, but also to apply the knowledge by engaging in the inquiry process myself and synthesizing new knowledge in the essays.

CEP 813: Electronic Assessment for Teaching & Learning
Dr. Colin Gallagher and Spencer Greenhalgh

Many people think of the same thing when they hear the term "assessment" - it's something you do, like a test, to show that you have learned something; however, this one-dimensional thinking does not reflect the tremendous potential and impact of assessments in education. This course focused on foundational theories of assessment by examining different assessment methods and purposes. It also focused on how to design and implement effective assessments, especially in digital contexts. Overall, this course really pushed me to reflect on my professional practice and analyze my underlying beliefs regarding assessments. For example, it caused me to rethink my use of formative assessments as I realized how much assessments can be used as tools for learning, not just of learning. I also gained valuable experience working with various technology tools/resources, such as Minecraft, and knowledge regarding how to effectively integrate technology in an intentional and meaningful way.

SPRING 2017:

CEP 815: Technology & Leadership
Dr. Aman Yadav and Spencer Greenhalgh

Being a technology expert does not necessarily make someone adequately prepared to be a leader in the educational-technology realm, as one must first understand the key elements of learning, technology, and leadership individually. This course focused on the intersection of these elements by examining topics such as leadership styles, the creation of a vision and strategies to help implement it, and frameworks such as TPACK (Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge) which facilitate the effective integration of technology in education. Through the use of multiple instructional methods and learning activities such as online lectures, readings, screencasts, case studies, and Twitter, as well as regular collaboration with peers and instructors via Zoom sessions, I gained valuable knowledge regarding educational technology. More importantly, I gained experience being a leader in this field through the creation of a sample professional development plan that could be implemented school-wide. I also developed a vision statement addressing a current problem of practice including a detailed plan for how the plan could be implemented.

CEP 820: Teaching Students Online
Dr. Anne Heintz and Carmen Richardson

Online learning is becoming increasingly prevalent in today's educational system, as more students are taking online courses and more teachers are creating hybrid/blended learning environments by integrating online learning into otherwise traditional settings. Although the content and learning objectives may be the same, teaching online requires different skills and strategies than traditional classroom teaching. This course focused on the scope of online education by examining topics such as course management systems (CMS)/learning management systems (LMS), flipped classrooms, online literacies, universal design for learning principles, and "classroom" management strategies for online courses. Each week, I explored new topics via readings/lectures and engaged with the content by applying my knowledge when completing various activities. These assignments were conducted in an interactive Google Doc ("Developer's Notebook") which promoted communication between instructors

and students. I also directly applied course content knowledge and strategies in the creation of a fully functional online course module.

SUMMER 2017:

CEP 883: Psychology of Classroom Discipline
Dr. My Lien

Understanding certain psychological principles enables educators to better understand their students and their needs. This allows educators to make informed decisions regarding policies, procedures, and instructional methods, thereby promoting the development of a positive and productive learning environment in which all students can succeed. This course focused on leveraging psychological understandings to be an effective educator by examining fundamental theories of human development and analyzing their educational implications. Throughout the semester I collaborated with a group of approximately six students regularly via discussion boards as we completed weekly assignments. These activities required us to apply knowledge from readings/lectures to real world situations, enabling us to see how these understandings can be applied to our professional practice. For example, in a case study, we analyzed data for a student with disruptive behavior and created a behavior plan. I also created a sample classroom management plan and provided a detailed rationale for each decision based on course content knowledge.

TE 846: Accommodating Differences in Literacy Learners
Shannon Prince

Although many people think of literacy instruction as being the responsibility of elementary reading/writing teachers, it is imperative that educators of all grade-levels and disciplines are aware of best practices in literacy. This course focused on the following topics: the impact of literacy skills (or deficits) on a child's academic success, effective literacy instruction in secondary education, differentiation and accommodation of literacy-related tasks, and how to integrate literacy instruction across content areas. Each week, I applied my knowledge from the readings/lectures by completing an assignment of some sort and sharing my experiences with peers via discussion boards. In addition, I completed a semester-long "literacy learner analysis" project in which I worked with an individual student on a specific set of literacy skills (summarizing from multiple sources) enabling me to apply new knowledge from the course. This course is designed to meet the Michigan Department of Education's requirement for certified teachers to complete an advanced, diagnostic reading instruction course in order to qualify for the second tier of certification (the Michigan Professional Teaching Certificate).

FALL 2017:

ED 870: Capstone Seminar
Dr. Matt Koehler, Brittany Dillman, Spencer Greenhalgh, and Sarah Keenan-Lechel

Reflection is an integral part of growth and learning. This course pushed me to reflect on my time in MSU's MAED program and create an online portfolio synthesizing my learning experiences. Overall, the structure of the course guided me through the development of my portfolio as it was organized into week-long modules, each introducing a new requirement. As the semester progressed, I added new sections, while continuing to work on, and improve, existing parts, thanks largely to feedback provided by instructors and peers via collaborative opportunities such as video reflections on FlipGrid. In the end, this course facilitated the development of a unique online portfolio that not only examines my experiences in graduate school, but also represents myself as an individual and a professional, allowing me to continue utilizing this portfolio in a variety of ways in the future.