



The Teacher as  
**Moral  
Practitioner**

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**Student Teaching  
Senior Project**

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**Character**

**Competence**

**Service**

*Revised Jan 2015*

# GRACE COLLEGE

## STUDENT TEACHING SENIOR PROJECT

(Based on the Teacher Work Sample model)\*

*\* Many of the materials in this document were developed by representatives of the Renaissance Partnership Institutions and are used with permission of The Renaissance Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality Project, a Title II federally funded project. More information may be found at <http://www.wku.edu/rtwsc/index.php>.*

### I. Purpose:

A key to your success as a teacher is to carefully observe your students' work and progress in the classroom and to use these observations to nurture the growth and learning of your students and to inform your teaching practice. This project is designed to help you continue your development as a reflective practitioner by systematically documenting and analyzing student learning (InTASC Standard #9). It is also an opportunity to practice the kind of personal and professional development and reflection that many schools are requiring of their teachers and to prepare you for professional licensing requirements.

### II. Task:

You will design a Teacher Work Sample (TWS) that employs a range of strategies and builds on each student's strengths, needs, and prior experiences. Through this performance assessment, you will provide credible evidence of your ability to facilitate learning. During a 2-3 week period, you will document how you nurture and assess the growth and learning of your students as you teach a thematic unit or extended topic in one of your classes or subjects. This particular segment of teaching may be part of a longer unit for which you have the responsibility for planning and teaching. Before you teach the unit, you will describe contextual factors, identify learning goals based on state approved standards, create an assessment plan designed to measure student performance before (pre-assessment), during (formative assessment) and after (post-assessment), and plan your instruction.

After you teach the unit, you will analyze student learning and then reflect upon and evaluate your teaching as related to student learning as you examine the documentation you have gathered. Presentation of your findings will be conveyed in a written analysis and reflection paper and will include artifacts you have collected from your systematic study of teaching and learning. You will also present an oral report of your project to a group of peers and evaluators during Sr. Seminar.

The TWS contains seven teaching processes identified by research and best practice as fundamental to improving student learning. Each teaching process is followed by a TWS Standard, the Task, a Prompt, and a Rubric that defines various levels of performance on the standard. The Standards and Rubrics will be used to evaluate your TWS. The Prompts (or directions) help you know how to document the extent to which you have met the standard.

### III. Format

- *Ownership*: Complete a cover page that includes “Student Teaching Senior Project,” your name, grade level(s) taught and/or subject(s) taught, and date submitted.
- *Table of Contents*: Provide a Table of Contents with page numbers that lists the sections and attachments.
- *Charts, graphs and attachments*: Charts, graphs and assessment instruments are required as part of the TWS document. You may also want to provide other attachments, such as student work. However, you should be very selective and make sure your attachments provide clear, concise evidence of your performance related to your students’ learning.
- *Narrative length*: A suggested page length for your narrative is given at the end of each section. You have some flexibility of length across components, but the total length of your written narrative (excluding charts, graphs, attachments, and references) should not exceed twenty (20) word-processed pages, double-spaced in 12-point Arial font, with 1-inch margins.
- *References (not included in total page length)*: When you refer to another person’s ideas or material in your narrative, you must cite these in a separate section at the end of your narrative under *References*. You may use any standard form for references.
- *Anonymity*: In order to ensure the anonymity of students in your class, do not include any student names or other identification in any part of your Sr. Project.

### IV. Guidelines for Documenting Teaching and Learning During this Senior Project:

1. The collecting of documents will take place during a 2-3 week period in the context of a thematic unit or an extended topic you are teaching.
2. You will include some key lessons (at least three) that explore the chosen theme or topic of the unit.
3. Choose 3 students who represent a variety of learning preferences, strengths, and needs for observation and documentation during this study.
4. For each of the selected key lessons (at least three) from this theme or topic, you will create a detailed lesson plan that outlines
  - what you expect students to be able to do as a result of the lesson.
  - what you did during the lesson.
  - what your students were supposed to do and what they actually said and did during the lesson.
  - what differentiations you made during the lesson based on the response of students.
  - what evidence you have from the 3 chosen students of what was learned.
  - how you determined whether the lesson had the desired influence on the students. (Did it help them to learn something worth learning in a way that has a sustained and substantial influence on how they think/act/feel?)
5. Keep copies of all hand-outs, quizzes, or other teaching materials you use. Write notes or comments on the materials about the effectiveness of these materials in relationship to your intended goals.
6. Keep copies of the work of (particularly the 3) students. Be sure to date each piece. (These may be photocopies so you can return the originals to the students in a timely manner.)
7. Take pictures of activities that occur during this unit. (Check school policy on taking pictures of students or videotaping them.)
8. Organize all gathered data for analysis, reflection, and presentation into a 3-ring binder. Do not use plastic sleeves for any pages.

## **Checklist of the Requirements of the Senior Project**

- ❑ Description of the contextual factors and identification of 3 students representing different learning preferences, strengths, and needs
- ❑ Written unit plan, including clear goals, as well as the major learning activities and assessment strategies for the unit
- ❑ At least three detailed individual lesson plans, including reflections, from the unit taught during the study
- ❑ Photographs of any or all of these: students working during your teaching of this unit/theme, a related bulletin board or learning center, guest speakers, etc. (optional)
- ❑ Samples of selected students' work demonstrating both alignment with learning goals and student improvement
- ❑ Clear explanation of how collected documents show your skill in addressing instructional goals within the context of the performance standards
- ❑ Documentation of informal and formal assessment strategies used during the study
- ❑ Clear explanation of how assessment information was used to monitor your own teaching strategies and behavior in relation to student success and your changes to plans and instructional approaches accordingly
- ❑ Thoughtful reflection on how you used the documentation collected during this study to evaluate student learning and to revise your teaching practice, including how the study might influence your teaching in the future
- ❑ Documentation of informal and formal assessment strategies used during the study
- ❑ (In the final reports) Use of present tense in the contextual factors section of the report and past tense thereafter (except in the "implications" portion of the last section, which would naturally use future tense)

## **Senior Project Grading Policies**

1. The Senior Project grade will be 30% of the final student teaching grade. The Senior Projects will be presented at the midpoint of the semester so that there is time to do a second project and remediate, if needed.
2. A student teacher whose grade is less than C on the Senior Project will be required to do a new Senior Project. He/she will pay a fee for a mentor and for the evaluators of the second Senior Project. The student teacher will write out a remediation plan for success with his/her advisor and the Dean will review the Plan for Improvement. The mentor will then work with the student teacher to help him/her to understand the past mistakes and make changes to create a successful second project. The mentor will not walk the student teacher through the second project, but will explain areas of deficiency from the first project, such as implications of contextual factors, writing of learning goals, creating assessments, etc. The student will use this information to be successful on the second project.
3. Regardless of the final score on the second project, the student teacher can earn a final grade no higher than a C.
4. If the student teacher does not earn the required C or better for the second project, he/she will be required to repeat the project during a new student teaching placement during Session A of the following semester.
5. Failure to pass the project the third time will result in the student teacher graduating with a "non-teaching" degree.

# Teaching Processes Assessed by the Renaissance Teacher Work Sample

## Teaching Processes, TWS Standards, and Indicators

### Contextual Factors

*The teacher uses information about the learning-teaching context and student individual differences to set learning goals and plan instruction and assessment.*

- \* Knowledge of community, school, and classroom factors
- \* Knowledge of characteristics of students
- \* Knowledge of students' approaches to learning
- \* Knowledge of students' skills and prior learning
- \* Implications for instructional planning and assessment

### Learning Goals

*The teacher sets significant, challenging, varied and appropriate learning goals.*

- Significance, challenge, and variety
- \* Clarity
- \* Appropriateness for students
- \* Alignment with state standards

### Assessment Plan

*The teacher uses multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during, and after instruction.*

- Alignment with learning goals and instruction
- \* Clarity of criteria for performance
- \* Multiple modes and approaches
- \* Technical soundness
- \* Differentiation based on the individual needs of students

### Design for Instruction

*The teacher designs instruction for specific learning goals, student characteristics and needs, and learning contexts.*

- \* Alignment with learning goals
- \* Accurate representation of content
- \* Lesson and unit structure
- \* Use of a variety of instruction, activities, assignments, and resources
- \* Use of contextual information and data to select appropriate and relevant activities, assignments, and resources.
- \* Use of technology

### Instructional Decision-Making

*The teacher uses ongoing analysis of student learning to make instructional decisions.*

- \* Sound professional practice
- \* Adjustments based on analysis of student learning
- \* Congruence between changes and learning goals

### Analysis of Student Learning

*The teacher uses assessment data to profile student learning and communicate information about student progress and achievement.*

- \* Clarity and accuracy of presentation
- \* Alignment with learning goals
- \* Interpretation of data
- \* Evidence of impact on student learning

### Reflection and Self-Evaluation

*The teacher reflects on his or her instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice.*

- \* Interpretation of student learning
- \* Insights on effective instruction and assessment
- \* Alignment among goals, instruction, and assessment
- \* Implications for future teaching
- \* Implications for professional development

## Contextual Factors

### TWS Standard

*The teacher uses information about the learning-teaching context and student individual differences to set learning goals and plan instruction and assessment.*

### Task

Discuss relevant factors and how they may affect the teaching-learning process. Include any supports and challenges that affect instruction and student learning.

### Prompt

In your discussion, include the following:

- **Community, district, and school factors.** Address geographic location, community and school population, socio-economic profile, and race/ethnicity. You might also address such things as stability of community, political climate, community support for education, and other environmental factors.
- **Classroom factors.** Address physical features, availability of technology equipment and resources, and the extent of parental involvement. You might also discuss other relevant factors such as classroom rules and routines, grouping patterns, scheduling, and classroom arrangement.
- **Student characteristics.** Address student characteristics you must consider as you design instruction and assess learning. Include factors such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, special needs, achievement/developmental levels, culture, language, interests, learning styles/modalities, and students' skill levels. In your narrative, make sure you address students' skills and prior learning that may influence the development of your learning goals, instruction, and assessment.
- **Instructional implications.** Address how the contextual characteristics of the community, classroom, and students have implications for instructional planning and assessment. Include specific instructional implications for at least two characteristics and any other factors that will influence how you plan and implement your unit.

**Suggested Page Length:** 2-3

## Learning Goals

### TWS Standard

*The teacher sets significant, challenging, varied, and appropriate learning goals.*

### Task

Provide and justify the learning goals for the unit.

### Prompt

- **List the three learning goals (not the activities) that will guide the planning, delivery, and assessment of your unit.** These goals should define what you expect students to know and be able to do at the end of the unit. The goals should be significant, challenging, varied, and appropriate. At least one must deal with literacy. Number or code each learning goal so you can reference it later.
- Show how the goals are aligned with state and/or district standards. (Identify the source of the standards.)
- Identify the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of your learning goals.
- Discuss why your learning goals are appropriate in terms of formal data, research, student development, pre-requisite knowledge and skills, and other student needs.

**Suggested Page Length: 2-3**

## Assessment Plan

### TWS Standard

*The teacher uses multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during, and after instruction.*

### Task

Design an assessment plan to monitor student progress toward learning goals. Use multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during, and after instruction. These assessments should authentically measure student learning and may include performance-based tasks, paper-and-pencil tasks, or personal communication. Describe why your assessments are appropriate for measuring learning.

### Prompt

- **Provide an overview of the assessment plan.** For each learning goal include assessments used to judge student performance, format of each assessment, and adaptations of the assessments for the individual needs of students based on pre-assessment and contextual factors. The purpose of this overview is to depict the alignment between learning goals and assessments and to show differentiations to meet the individual needs of students or contextual factors. You must use a visual organizer such as a table, outline, or other means to make your plan clear.
- **Describe the pre- and post-assessments that are aligned with your learning goals.** Clearly explain how you will evaluate or score pre- and post-assessments, including criteria you will use to determine if the students' performance meets the learning goals. Include copies of assessments, prompts, and/or student directions and criteria for judging student performance (e.g., scoring rubrics, observation checklist, rating scales, item weights, test blueprint, answer key).
- **Discuss your plan for formative assessment that will help you determine student progress during the unit.** Describe the assessments you plan to use to check on student progress and comment on the importance of collecting that particular evidence. Although formative assessment may change as you are teaching the unit, your task here is to predict at what points in your teaching it will be important to assess students' progress toward learning goals.

### Example of (Partial) Assessment Plan Table: Grade One

Learning Goals	Assessments	Format of Assessment	Differentiations
<b>Learning Goal 1</b>  <i>Example: Students will link wild animals with their habitats.</i>	Pre-Assessment   Formative Assessment   Post-Assessment	checklist: game with animal masks & centers representing habitats (tree, lake, burrow, cave)  animal puppets and habitats (e.g., bird and nest) anecdotal records re. Q & A picture journals  checklist: game with animal masks & centers representing habitats	Repeat and modify instructions, as needed. Demonstrate and assist with cutting, gluing, etc. Provide model of a mask and model how to move to habitat centers. Keep all activities high-interest and brief.  Provide concrete models and assistance with fine motor tasks as needed. Provide multiple explanations and model performances. Process writing ( <i>i.e.</i> , dictations) when needed. Provide verbal cues and plenty of wait time for Q & A.

**Suggested Page Length:** 2 + pre- and post-assessment instruments, scoring rubrics/keys, and assessment plan table

# Design for Instruction

## TWS Standard

*The teacher designs instruction for specific learning goals, student characteristics and needs, and learning contexts.*

## Task

Describe your unit of instruction related to unit goals, students' characteristics and needs, and the specific learning context.

## Prompt

- **Results of pre-assessment.** After administering the pre-assessment, analyze student performance *relative to the learning goals*. Depict the results of the pre-assessment in a format that allows you to find patterns of student performance relative to each learning goal. You may use a table, graph, or chart. Describe the pattern you find that guides your instruction and/or change of the learning goals.
- **Unit overview.** Provide an overview of your unit. Use a visual organizer such as a block plan or outline to make your unit plan clear. Include the topic or activity you are planning for each day/period. Also indicate the goal or goals (coded from your Learning Goals section) that you are addressing in each activity. Make sure that every goal is addressed by at least one activity and that every activity relates to at least one goal.
- **Activities.** Describe at least three unit activities that reflect a variety of instructional strategies/techniques and explain why you are planning those specific activities. Include at least one activity that is a research-based best practice and cite the research. In your explanation for each activity, include the following:
  - how the content relates to your instructional goal(s),
  - how the activity stems from your pre-assessment information and contextual factors,
  - what materials/technology you will need to implement the activity, and
  - how you plan to assess student learning during and/or following the activity (*i.e.*, formative and summative assessment).
- **Technology.** Describe how you will use technology in your teaching and learning and how your students will use technology to learn.

**Suggested Page Length:** 3 + visual organizer

## Instructional Decision-Making

### TWS Standard

The teacher uses on-going analysis of student learning to make instructional decisions.

### Task

Provide **two** examples of instructional decision-making based on students' learning or responses.

### Prompt

- Think of a time during your unit when student learning or response caused you to change your original design for instruction. (The resulting changes may affect other students as well.) Cite specific evidence to support your responses to the following:
  - Describe the student learning or response that caused you to rethink your plans. The student learning or response may come from a planned formative assessment or another source (not the pre-assessment).
  - Describe what you did next and explain why you thought this would improve student progress toward the learning goal.
- Now, think of one more time during your unit when another incident of student learning or response caused you to change a different portion of your original design for instruction. (The resulting change may affect other students as well.) Cite specific evidence to support your responses to the same items above.

**Suggested Page Length: 2-3**

## Analysis of Student Learning

### TWS Standard

*The teacher uses assessment data to profile student learning and communicate information about student progress and achievement.*

### Task

Analyze your assessment data, including pre/post assessments and formative assessments, to determine students' progress related to the unit learning goals. Use visual representations and narrative to communicate the performance of the whole class, subgroups, and three individual students. Conclusions drawn from this analysis should be provided in the "Reflection and Self-Evaluation" section.

### Prompt

In this section, you will analyze data to explain progress and achievement toward learning goals demonstrated by your whole class, subgroups of students, and individual students.

- **Whole class:** To analyze the progress of your whole class, create a table that shows pre- and post-assessment data for the whole group on the whole test. Then create a graphic summary that shows the extent to which your students made progress (from pre- to post-) toward the learning criterion that you identified for each learning goal (identified in your Assessment Plan section). Summarize what the graphs tell you about your students' learning in this unit (*i.e.*, the number/percentage of students who met the criterion).
- **Subgroups:** Select a group characteristic (*e.g.*, gender, performance level, socio-economic status, language proficiency) to analyze in terms of **one learning goal**. Provide a rationale for your selection of this characteristic to form subgroups (*e.g.*, girls vs. boys; high- vs. middle- vs. low-performers) based on scientifically based research. You must cite the source(s) of this research. Create a graphic representation that compares pre- and post-assessment results for the subgroups on this learning goal. Summarize what these data show about student learning in these subgroups.
- **Individuals:** Report on the three students you chose that demonstrated different levels of performance. Explain why it is important to understand the learning of these particular students. Use pre-, formative, and post-assessment data with examples of the students' work to draw conclusions about the extent to which these students attained the learning goals.
- At a minimum, you are to have five graphs of pre-test and post-test scores: 1. whole group average, 2. each student average, 3. each learning goal for the whole group (all on the same page) 4. the subgroups (on one learning goal), and 5. the three students (all on same page).

**Note:** *You will provide possible reasons for why your students learned (or did not learn) in the next section, "Reflection and Self-Evaluation."*

**Suggested Page Length:** 3-4 + charts and student work examples

## Reflection and Self-Evaluation

### TWS Standard

*The teacher analyzes the relationship between his or her instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice.*

### Task

Reflect on your performance as a teacher and link your performance to student learning results. Evaluate your performance and identify future actions for improved practice and professional growth.

### Prompt

- **For each goal**, identify successful and unsuccessful activities and provide reasons for their success or lack thereof.
- Select the learning goal where your students were most successful. Describe two or more possible reasons for this success. Consider your goals, instruction, and assessment along with student characteristics and other contextual factors under your control.
- Select the learning goal where your students were least successful. Describe two or more possible reasons for this lack of success. Consider your goals, instruction, and assessment along with student characteristics and other contextual factors under your control. Discuss what you could do differently or better in the future to improve your students' performance
- Reflect on possibilities for professional development. Describe at least two professional teaching goals that emerged from your insights and experiences with the Senior Project. Identify two specific steps you will take to improve your performance in the critical areas you identified

**Suggested Page Length: 2-3**