Completing the Learning Center Assignment

The Learning Center Assignment provides you will an opportunity to design a differentiated, multi-faceted, and/or multi-modality series of lessons or group activity. This assignment may be in the form of a passion center based on an area of interest, a project based or problem based learning sequence.

- Prepare an in-depth differentiated, multi-level, multi-faceted and/or multi-modality learning center or project based learning assignment that could be implemented in your field placement.
- Present a research base for your lessons and learning activities. The research may focus on motivation, the content of instruction, the format of instruction or other elements.
- Present a mini-paper that includes at least five references to support your choice content, instruction or other aspect of the project. You must follow APA format for your research presentation and citations.
- Create a minimum of three lessons and activities that provide various means to learning the concepts and content.
- Design a system for management of the components of the center or learning sequence.
- Include techniques and reinforcement strategies for student success.
- Include a minimum of at least commercial or reference-based resources that support the center or project based learning activity.
- Prepare materials for sharing in a manner such that others may replicate the center.
- Present your Learning Center or Project Based Learning Activity to the class.

Most elementary candidates are familiar with the structure for a Learning Center. The Learning Center for this course should reflect something that you are passionate about or have an interest in sharing with others. However, the Education Specialist Credentials are kindergarten through age 22 credentials. Many candidates in the program will have experiences at the middle and high school levels. Since the Learning Center structure may not be appropriate for the secondary level, an alternative, a Project Based Learning Activity has been added to the options for candidates.

Notes on the Project Based Learning Activity

The structure for project based learning activities fall into two categories, those that are teacher facilitated and those that are teacher guided. Choose the emphasis that best fits the content of the topic, the needs of your students and the structure/format of your placement.

(i) teacher-facilitated, student emphasized. A teacher-facilitated project transforms teaching from "teacher telling" to "students doing." It places the emphasis of the doing on the students.

- Engaging learning experiences that involve students in complex, real-world projects through which they develop and apply skills and knowledge;
• A strategy that recognizes that significant learning taps students' inherent drive to learn, capability to do important work, and the need to be taken seriously;
• Learning in which curricular outcomes can be identified up-front, but in which the outcomes of the student's learning process are neither predetermined nor fully predictable;
• Learning that requires students to draw from many information sources and disciplines in order to solve problems;
• Experiences through which students learn to manage and allocate resources such as time and materials.

(2) **Teacher-guided** perspective, teacher accountability is emphasized. A teacher-guided project lets you teach to your curriculum standards AND engage your students. Accountability is placed on the teacher.

- pick the different skills and content you will teach (for example, standards derived);
- identify the essential knowledge you want all students to learn (key objectives);
- craft a question that will focus the project and engage your students (driving question);
- decide how students will demonstrate what they have learned (products/performances);
- choose or create assessment tools to clarify expectations and evaluate student work (rubrics)

Successful completion of this assignment enables candidates to demonstrate competency in relation to Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Standards and Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs):

- Standard 23 Planning and Implementing Curriculum and Instruction
- Standard 24 Positive Behavior Support
- Standard 25 Characteristics and Needs of Individuals with Mild to Moderate Disabilities
- TPE 4 Making Content Accessible
- TPE 5 Student Engagement
- TPE 6A, B, C Developmentally Appropriate Teaching Practices
- TPE 9 Instructional Planning
- TPE 10 Instructional Time
- TPE 11 Social Environment