

Doctoral course for Spring 2018

The Methods Course

in Teacher Education: Challenges and Opportunities

C I 597, sec 006 (class number 25473)

Tuesdays 11:15-2:15, Keller 112

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Course description: This course will focus on the “methods course” in teacher education. A common feature of teacher education programs in almost any setting, methods courses are those courses teacher candidates take that address how to teach. Of course, “how to teach” is nowhere near as simple as that would sound, and even less simple is how to *teach* how to teach, in a way that will actually influence *how* candidates will teach. We will read research on methods courses, analyze many examples at Penn State and elsewhere, and inquire together about methods course design. We’ll explore:

- **WHY** have methods courses at all? Are there things to learn about how to teach that can’t be learned through field experience alone?
- **WHAT** shall the content of methods be? Are there such things as “general methods,” or must methods courses always be content-area-specific? What shall students read and come to know in a methods course?
- **WHO** shall teach methods courses, and who shall take them? What happens when practitioners teach methods, as opposed to university faculty? Or when we co-teach?
- **WHEN** shall methods courses occur in the timespan of a teacher preparation program? Must they be concurrent with field experience, or should they precede it? What prerequisite knowledge or experiences matter for the success of a methods course?
- **WHERE** shall methods courses be taught? On site in a school? At the university? Somewhere else? What about online?
- **HOW** shall methods be taught? What course activities actually help teacher candidates learn to teach? What are appropriate uses of readings? Peer teaching? Classroom inquiry?

Course clientele: This course is open to doctoral students from across the College of Education as well as related areas such as music education, art education, and others with career interests in teacher education.

Leave the course with **YOUR OWN METHODS SYLLABUS**, useful for the job market and future education faculty roles.