

## **Peer Evaluation of Teaching**

**For: Laurie A. Ramirez**

**Course: CI 5750: Teaching Diverse Young Adolescents**

**Completed by: Shanan Fitts**

**December 23, 2013**

### **How does the class seem to fit with other courses offered in the program?**

Dr. Ramirez's course is essential to the middle-grades program and complements the other courses offered by providing a forum within which students reflect on their knowledge, dispositions, and growth vis-à-vis learner diversity. The course addresses issues of race, class, and gender and encourages the students enrolled to reflect on their beliefs about diverse learners and how these beliefs interact with and inform their teaching practices. The course also goes beyond reflection by requiring students to attempt to put themselves into new and potentially uncomfortable settings that do not reflect their own cultural norms so that they can increase their cross-cultural competence.

### **How is the course material appropriate, relevant, and current?**

The course materials are clearly aligned with the NC Professional Teaching standards and with the middle grades program requirements. For each week, Dr. Ramirez has provided students with a variety of relevant readings and videos and allows students to choose which materials they want to engage with. It was clear that the instructor sought to incorporate student interests and experiences into the course content, which is very appropriate. The emphasis on reflective teaching is also consonant with the goals of the middle grades program.

### **How is student learning evaluated?**

Student learning is evaluated in a variety of ways in this course. Dr. Ramirez requires weekly or bi-monthly reflections on course readings in order to assess student reactions to texts, as well as to foment discussion on course topics. Additionally she includes an immersive experience during which students have to become directly involved in an environment or context where they feel that they are a "minority" in order to gain a firsthand perspective on the minority experience as well as to hone students' observational skills. Finally she also requires students to conduct research into topics of interest and present their learning to their classmates. Throughout the course and throughout the assessments, the emphasis on reflection and self-assessment of growth is maintained as a clear theme.

### **What are the students required to do in this class?**

Students are required to reflect on their own personal and teaching history as relates to diversity, select an area of interest and conduct a variety of research into this area from conducting direct observations and interviews, to reading research articles.

**What are the 2-3 major strengths you observed?**

Two strengths of this class include the emphasis on reflection in teaching and learning, and involving students in the development and progression of course content. Because the course is focused on developing students' knowledge, attitudes and competence with diverse learners, self-reflection is absolutely essential and as noted above that is a clear emphasis in the course. Secondly, it is clear that Dr. Ramirez seeks and values the input of students in terms of the content explored throughout the class.

**What are the areas in which you would suggest alternatives?**

With regards to suggestions relevant for the hybrid course, please refer to the review conducted for Learning Technology Services, which is attached below.

**What additional comments do you wish to make about this person's teaching?**

None.

**Peer Reviewer:**       **Shanan Fitts**  
                                  (Signature)

## Peer Evaluation for Course Guide

Course: Developer: Laurie A. Ramirez

Peer Evaluator: Shanan Fitts

Date of Peer Evaluation: 12/01/13

1. After reviewing the Quality Matters rubric please comment on any aspects of the course that may not minimally meet the stated criteria.

See [http://www.qmprogram.org/files/QM\\_Standards\\_2011-2013.pdf](http://www.qmprogram.org/files/QM_Standards_2011-2013.pdf)

With regard to content, the course appears thorough and current in all areas.

Areas that may need improvement might include:

- Including an introduction to the professor
- Explicit instructions/ guidelines for posts (etiquette)
- Possibly more information about specific learning objectives in addition to or in place of listing the standards that guide the course. Perhaps list the course level objectives and then note which standards are relevant?
- Possibly more information related to the areas listed in the “Learner Support” section of this rubric

2. Please comment on the overall alignment of the course materials, with the program or department's requirements for this course.

The course materials are clearly aligned with the Professional Teaching standards and with the middle grades program requirements. For each week, Dr. Ramirez has provided students with a variety of relevant readings and videos and allows students to choose which materials they want to engage with. It was clear that the instructor sought to incorporate student interests and experiences into the course content, which is very appropriate. The emphasis on reflective teaching is also consonant with the goals of the middle grades program.

3. Please comment on any materials, assessments, or activities that may be missing elements of the course, or, required expectations if this course is prerequisite to other courses.

N/A

4. Please comment on the rigor and pace of the course.

This course is being offered during the summer semester and so is taking place over a shorter time period. The entire set of readings for the course is quite extensive and could be quite a bit to digest. However, Dr. Ramirez does not require students to read and view all of

the materials listed. Assignments required are varied and involve participants directly in their own learning. The pace and rigor appear to be appropriate for a masters level course.

5. Please provide suggestions for streamlining the course. For example, are there any non-essential learning activities based on your knowledge of the curriculum or program?

I think the folks at LTS may have some suggestions for streamlining the presentation of the content, but in terms of the content itself, I did not find it to be overwhelming or repetitive. She included a nice mixture of case studies, online discussion boards, video responses and reading responses. In regards to assignments, I could see that students may confuse the observation experience and minority experience, so I might just be sure that the purpose of each of those assignments is clearly delineated. Dr. Ramirez has several reading selections for each topic in order to provide students with choice. She could potentially eliminate some of these articles/ chapters if providing these choices is overwhelming to students.

6. Please provide suggestions for any areas of the course that may need additional student activities, assessment, application, guidance or depth of coverage in order to meet the typical expectations of student learning in this subject matter.

Course content looks quite thorough to me!

7. Please provide feedback on any area of the course design that could be improved.