



## AFT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION COURSE OVERVIEW

### **Course: Foundations of Effective Teaching II: Building Academic Success**

#### **Summary**

This course addresses the challenges teachers are facing today to raise the performance levels of all students while also closing the achievement gap. It addresses both environmental and instructional conditions that foster student achievement by (1) examining the effects that teacher expectations and the social context of the classroom have on student learning, and (2) providing an in-depth study of two instructional models—cognitive apprenticeship and cooperative small groups—that actively engage students and address the diversity of their learning needs. The case study method is also taught and modeled as a tool for professional learning.

This advanced course is targeted to more seasoned educators who are prepared to engage in in-depth study and reflective practice. It also may be used to support school improvement teams or schoolwide initiatives to raise achievement.

**Pre-requisite:** *Foundations of Effective Teaching I.*

#### **Course Content**

##### ***Teacher Expectations and Their Effect on Student Achievement***

The expectations teachers have for particular students influence what those students are able to achieve. Teacher behaviors toward low-achieving and high-achieving students may differ greatly, sometimes resulting in less effective teaching practices for low achievers. Specific elements that are explored in this unit include self-fulfilling prophecies, teacher differential behaviors, efficacy perceptions, teacher types and styles, status expectations, student behaviors, tracking practices, and school wide interventions.

##### ***The Effects of Social Context on Student Achievement***

The sociology of the classroom—the nature of human interactions in school—affects student engagement and achievement. In the classroom, teachers and students make up a social context that can influence each other’s motivation, attitudes, and self-perceptions. Factors that influence the social context of the classroom are students’ own perceptions; peer influences; teacher competency perceptions; and teacher behaviors such as management styles, projected locus of control, breadth of teaching strategies, student expectations, and communication styles.

### ***Cognitive Apprenticeship***

Traditional apprenticeships were based on the master showing the apprentice how to do a task (a tangible, physical activity) and then helping him or her do it. Cognitive apprenticeship is an instructional model that adapts this approach to the teaching and learning of cognitive skills. Through this coaching model, expert thinking is made visible by externalizing processes that are usually carried out internally. Explored in depth are the five elements of cognitive apprenticeship: modeling, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration.

### ***Cooperative Small Groups***

A synthesis of research confirms that it is instructionally and socially beneficial to carefully construct small, diverse student groups in which students function cooperatively to perform classroom tasks. This unit examines types of cooperative small groups, specific techniques for using groups effectively, the effects of small-group activities on student interactions and learning, and strategies for implementing small groups successfully.

### ***The Case Study Method***

Using Welty & Silverman's Case Study Method, participants explore instructional issues from various perspectives. This method promotes active problem solving in dilemma-driven cases. Its structure is fact finding, analytic and action driven. Participants analyze classroom-based situations, identify problems, apply relevant research concepts from *Foundations I & II*, develop solutions, and predict effects on practice.

### **Key Researchers**

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