## CTSE 1000 - Step 1: Inquiry Approaches to Science Teaching 1 Credit (Lecture: 1 Hour, Lab: 2 Hours)

**Term:** Fall 2025  
**Class Meetings:** Thursdays 9:30-10:45, EDUC 2114  
**Lab:** Field placements will occur **four** times throughout the semester **Instructor:** Mr. Nathan W. Tubbs, [tubbsnw@auburn.edu](mailto:tubbsnw@auburn.edu), EDUC 3456  
**Office Hours:** Office hours will be posted on Canvas.   
**Textbook:** There is no textbook to purchase. All required materials will be made available in Canvas.  
  
**Course Description**

In this course, students who want to explore teaching careers become familiar with lesson plan development by observing, writing, and teaching lessons in an elementary school classroom. While students build and practice inquiry-based lesson design skills, they also become familiar with and practice classroom management in the elementary school setting. Following their Step 1 experiences, students can decide to continue to explore teaching as a career by registering for Step 2 and the remainder of the AUTeach curriculum, leading to teacher certification.

Class meets once a week on campus. During this time, students learn how to navigate the school environment and how to write inquiry-based lessons. Teams of AUTeach students will observe a Mentor Teacher in a local elementary school and teach three inquiry-based lessons in that teacher’s class. Mentor Teachers will demonstrate effective teaching techniques and classroom management strategies, giving AUTeach students a true taste of working in a supportive, diverse educational setting. This course emphasizes writing effective 5E lesson plans, with a focus on the importance of using appropriate questioning strategies to improve the lesson.

Teaching lessons to elementary students and making classroom observations represent the major field components of this course and require at least one 2-hour block of time during the school day on those weeks. Field assignments are based on the schedules and needs of the students.

## Course Objectives

In this course, students will learn how to do the following:

1. Demonstrate science content knowledge in the planning and teaching of inquiry-based upper elementary science lessons, utilizing the 5E Instructional Model.
2. Utilize exemplary sources of and appropriate resources (including appropriate technologies) for inquiry-based science lessons.
3. Write performance objectives aligned with national and state standards and assessments of those objectives for each lesson.
4. Demonstrate awareness of diversity within classrooms, discuss the implications for teaching and learning, and explore strategies for achieving instructional equity.
5. Develop and use probing questions to elicit feedback to determine students’ misconceptions, alternative conceptions, and acquisition of knowledge.
6. Demonstrate proficiency in the use of technology for professional productivity and student engagement with instruction.
7. Reflect on personal interest in teaching.

## Expectations

### Attendance & Participation

### In class, you will: 1) plan and practice your lessons with your partner, 2) receive feedback from the instructor and other members of the class regarding your lessons, and 3) observe and learn from demonstration lessons. Thirty percent of your grade is based on attendance, active participation, and professionalism in all class sessions and field experiences. Credit for attendance requires arriving to class sessions and fieldwork appointments on time, participating in all class activities, and staying until the session ends. Students will begin the semester with 30 points. Deductions will be made for each unexcused absence (-5), tardy (-2), or lack of professionalism (-5). Field activities are considered class activities, and any late arrival or early departure of 30 minutes or more constitutes an absence rather than a tardy.

***Missing Class Sessions***

#### Because the course meets only once per week and there are no tests, most topics and activities are covered in only one class session. Missing class means you miss essential information and experiences for that week. Most students will be working with a partner. The workload for each lesson should be shared equally. If you are not in class, you inconvenience your partner by forcing them to work with you outside of class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to communicate with your partner about coordinating the next lesson. Additionally, if a class is missed for a reason that falls under the university’s excused absence policy, documentation should be emailed or handed to the instructor(s) within two days of the absence.

***Missing Field Appointments***

A missed teaching appointment at your assigned school is taken very seriously. The Mentor Teachers you will work with have generously donated their classrooms and student learning time for your education. A missed field appointment must be rescheduled as soon as possible. To reschedule a missed field appointment, the student must contact within 24 hours the course instructor, who will correspond with the mentor teacher regarding a possible make-up date. If a missed field appointment cannot be rescheduled, the grade will be excused only if the absence is for a reason that falls under the university’s excused absence policy, with provided documentation. Lack of transportation is not an excusable reason to miss a field appointment, so be proactive and let someone know if you need assistance. **If you have a serious emergency and you must miss your scheduled teaching day**, notify your partner, Mentor Teacher, and your AUTeach course instructor(s) as soon as possible. Your partner will teach the lesson alone, and you will be responsible for completing the missed lesson on a later date. **Failure to complete all field requirements will result in failure of the course regardless of accumulated points.**

***Technology***

You must have access to and be able to use technology for course assignments (e.g., Canvas, Word, Google documents, Adobe Acrobat, etc.) and for timely and appropriate communication with your instructor, Mentor Teacher, partner, and classmates. **Check your email daily and regularly access Canvas** to view and post assignments. You will also be expected to learn from your mentor teacher the preferred technology options for the lessons you will teach. For example, don’t send PowerPoint slideshows and MS Forms quizzes to teachers at schools that use Google Classroom. Likewise, don’t send Google slides, docs, quizzes, etc. to schools that use Microsoft products. You will learn these preferences from your course instructor and/or mentor teacher.

### Professionalism

### As representatives of Auburn University and AUTeach, and as visitors in local school districts, you are expected to maintain professionalism in all field experiences for this class. You are expected to be on time (at least 15 minutes early to field placements), appropriately dressed as a teacher, and well-prepared for all field experiences. Before your first field appointment, you must sign and adhere to the department’s Professional Behaviors Contract, which will be distributed and discussed in class.

### Background Check & Fingerprinting

### To be eligible to go into the local schools, all AUTeach students must consent to a background check and fingerprinting. No Auburn University employee will be able to see the contents of the background check, only whether you have passed. More details will be provided in class and on Canvas. You must always bring a government-issued ID to your field placements each time you attend (e.g., driver’s license or passport).

### Academic Honesty

Students will be expected to abide by the Auburn University Academic Honesty Code found in the [*Student Policy eHandbook*](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/).  All academic honesty violations will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee. A plagiarism checker will be used throughout the semester. When using someone else’s ideas or work, you must include appropriate citations and references.

### Disability Accommodations

Any students who require accommodations should electronically submit their university-approved accommodation documentation through AU Access and must meet with your course instructor regarding the specific accommodations requested. Please mention this to your instructor in the first week of class so that a meeting time can be set up either during office hours or before/after class. If you need to establish your accommodations with the Office of Accessibility for the first time, please contact the Office of Accessibility, 844-2096, 1228 Haley Center (<https://accessibility.auburn.edu/>).

## Assignments

### Field Experiences

In Step 1, a team of two students will be assigned to an elementary school classroom. Over the course of the semester, the team will visit this classroom to conduct **one observation and teach three inquiry-based lessons**. Early in the semester, the team will communicate with their Mentor Teacher to verify the dates of the observations. The dates and topics of the three lessons are already set. **Dates for field events may be changed ONLY by the instructor or Mentor Teacher.** See the course calendar for semester observation and teaching dates.

### Lesson Plans and Reflections

You will write reflections for one classroom observation of your Mentor Teacher. You and your partner will be responsible for writing and revising a lesson plan for each lesson you teach. Students will share the responsibility of developing and writing their lesson plans. Then, one student (Student A) will lead teach Lesson Plan 1 while the other student (Student B) supports and observes. For Lesson Plan 2, Student B will lead teach while Student A supports and observes. Following each lesson, both students will write a reflection on their experiences. For your final project, you will 1) revise one of your lesson plans and 2) give a short presentation of your revisions, explaining your rationale for the changes you made.

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| Observation 1 | Co-Teach | Elem Lesson Plan 1 | Elem Lesson Plan 2 |
| Observe Mentor Teacher | Students Co-Teach with Mentor Teacher | **Student A**: Lead Teacher  **Student B**: Support | **Student B**: Lead Teacher  **Student A**: Support |

### Mentor Teacher Feedback

## Your Mentor Teacher will complete a feedback form for each lesson. Mentor Teachers may choose to provide a hard copy of the feedback form or email an electronic copy at the end of each lesson you teach. You are responsible for getting that feedback form from your Mentor Teacher before you leave and then submitting it to your instructor as part of your grade.

## Grading

Grading scale: A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 65-69, F = below 65%

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Activities |  | Points |
| **Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism**  (-5 per unexcused absence; -2 per tardy; -5 for lack of professionalism) | | 30 |
| **Reflections**  Reflection 1: Classroom Observation 1  Reflection 2: Co-Teach Lesson  Reflection 3: Elementary Lesson Plan 1 (MS-LP1)  Reflection 4: Elementary Lesson Plan 2 (MS-LP2) | 5  5  5  5 | 20 |
| **Lesson Plans**\*  E-LP1: Objectives, Draft, and Final Lesson Plan  E-LP2: Objectives, Draft, and Final Lesson Plan | 15  15 | 30 |
| **Mentor Teacher Feedback Forms**  Submit Feedback Forms to Course Instructor | 2.5 | 5 |
| **Final Project** (Based on a lesson you taught)  Final Project Presentation  Revised Lesson Plan | 5  5 | 10 |
| Return of all inventory materials |  | 5 |
|  | Total | 100 |

\*Late lesson plans will result in a 1pt deduction per day late and may result in delayed or canceled field experiences, which will negatively affect your grade.

**AI Policy: Not Permitted in this Course**

In this course, it is expected that all submitted work is produced by the students themselves, whether individually or collaboratively. Students must not seek the assistance of Generative AI Tools like ChatGPT. Use of a Generative AI Tool to complete an assignment constitutes academic dishonesty.