

Using technology effectively to improve teaching and learning

Excellence in Teaching (EiT)

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Activities offered by EiT that are designed to prepare teachers to integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction, including activities consistent with the principals of universal design for learning.

Excellences in Teaching (EiT) faculty members incorporate various technology-enhanced activities that are designed to prepare EiT teacher candidates to integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction. Incorporating activities consistent with the principals of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) require designing and delivering face-to-face EiT courses geared towards guiding EiT teacher candidates to better understand how to develop lessons that emphasize multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement.

Representation: UDL recommends teachers learn how to design and implement lessons in more than one format. Initially, EiT candidates learn how to utilize various assessment tools (e.g., surveys) that best determine students' learning styles and strengths. Understanding students' differences (consistent with cognitive neuroscience), guides the EiT candidate to better understand how to judiciously use technology that includes not only printed sources such as a textbook, but audio, video and interactive learning. Candidates learn that providing students with the opportunity to complete technology-enhanced assignments best suited to their learning styles and strengths is more conducive to developing self-directed learners that become more motivated to complete academic tasks.

Action and expression: UDL recommends teachers learn that there are multiple options for students to complete an assignment. EiT candidates participate and learn the importance of designing and implementing technology-enhanced instructional activities that extend beyond the traditional worksheet and print-based environment and learn how to judiciously incorporate technology to provide learner-centered activities.

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Engagement: UDL encourages teachers learn to sustain students' interest during the learning cycle by including choices and providing activities that are relevant to students' lives. EiT candidates learn that planning and designing technology-enhanced activities extends beyond the implementation of multimedia presentation such as power point.

Learning how to transition to a digital learning environment requires that EiT teacher candidates understand that technology is a tool- a tool that is used judiciously. Additionally, important topics such as copyright issues that fall under the Fair Use clause and teaching students about plagiarism is included. Appropriate use of technology to avoid inappropriate communication that can be "perceived" or leads to inappropriate relationship with students is a critical component prior to teaching how to incorporate technology.

Engaging in and learning how to create a digital-learning environment that fosters engagement and encourages student to become independent and self-directed learners include:

NiceNet (Internet Classroom Assistant)

Rationale: Teaches EiT candidates learn how to communicate and collaborate with students in an online environment through the use of a discussion board. ICA has three major components: reading, electronic response, and electronic interaction. Although ICA is not synchronous, it is conducive to EiT candidates learning how to further extend the activities, questions, and/or videos to have students engage in a "flipped classroom."

Google Suite - Developed by Google, G Suite is a brand of cloud computing, productivity and collaboration tools, software and products.

Rationale: Teaches EiT candidates how to incorporate technology-enhanced activities that help students complete assignments by connecting with peers/teacher, creating

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documents, and storing files when working with projects, writing assignments both at school or any other location.

Google Classroom - Developed by Google, Google Classroom is a free web service for schools.

Rationale: Teaches EiT candidates how to use paperless method for simplifying, creating, distributing and grading assignments. Also streamlines the process of sharing files between the students and teachers.

Nearpod - An interactive classroom tool for teachers to engage students with interactive lessons.

Rationale: Teaches EiT candidates how to create interactive lessons in minutes and/or import existing lessons and add interactive features such as Quizzes, Polls, Open Ended Questions.

Edpuzzle – Teacher selects a video and tracks students' comprehension as well as monitors if students are watching videos.

Rationale: Teaches EiT candidates how to incorporate technology-enhanced activities that are self-paced and can include interactive video lessons or videos from on-line sources such as Khan Academy.

Dyknow – Classroom management software that provides an exact snapshot of student device activity through actionable data teachers can use.

Rationale: Teaches EiT candidates how critical it is to monitor electronic devices and keep students on-task, implement a block plan, and lock student screens. Additionally, the candidate is taught how to access analytics that show how students use devices during class.

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