

**Training Teachers as Actors: Applying the Methods of Stanislavski,
Johnstone and Boal to the Secondary Methods Classroom**

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“My feeling is that a good teacher can get results using any method, and that a bad teacher can wreck any method.”

Keith Johnstone, *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre* (1979)

Introduction

We believe that an effective teacher is present to his or her class the way a good actor is present to her audience. Effectiveness includes confidence; an easy facility with diverse teaching methods; an enhanced ability to quickly form positive relationships with students, and a stance of adapting to change and challenge with creativity and grace through improvisation and reflection.

The First Day

Our students found the first day of Secondary Methods class a bit disconcerting. They were not expecting two instructors. Further, one of the instructors was not their familiar education professor but a stranger from the Theatre Department. More disturbing yet, we started by telling them that, in our experience, it matters very little what method of instruction a teacher uses.

Studies show that teachers who can use a variety of methods are more effective (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Reeves, 2005; Sweeney, 2000, Trimble, 1999). Further, when teachers use different methods, so do their students. Students thereby absorb not just content but new ways to know about the world (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2004 pp 38). Still, we told our class, knowing and employing a variety of teaching methods won't, in and of itself, make you an effective teacher.

We could tell by their expressions that they just were not buying this. Eileen had had all of these students in prior classes and she was known for being a “teacher’s teacher,” someone who believes passionately in the value of learning a variety of pedagogical strategies. Not only was there a stranger in the class purporting to be their instructor, but Eileen seemed to be taking on a whole new persona. How very odd.

How We Got There

Our collaboration started when, after teaching Secondary Methods for many years, Eileen set out to discover why some of her students seemed to be very much at ease expanding their range of methods whereas others were extremely uncomfortable. In surveying her class, she found that the more successful ones *all* had some form of acting background. An award winning classroom science teacher, Eileen herself had no acting background whatsoever, so she went to see David and asked him about the pattern she had discovered. Why would students with a theatre background do better?

And David answered: *“Well, for starters, there are the obvious reasons it might help for a teacher to have some acting background. For example, it can't hurt for a teacher to be a bit of a ham, to be demonstrative, to have the ability to be, well, dramatic in the classroom. [But that's a matter of style: I've known a lot of wonderful teachers who aren't that way at all.] Actors learn to think on their feet – and to do so under pressure – that helps. And actors have some experience overcoming stage fright.”*

“More importantly with respect to effective teaching, actors learn to create intentional relationships with other actors and with the audience. I have a fair amount of experience playing love scenes with women I don’t particularly care for in real life. For that matter, I’ve learned to have a good time exacting terrible revenge on people I’m actually fond of. Over the years, I’ve found that the skills I use to create these fictional (and frequently dysfunctional) relationships on stage can be used to shape more functional relationships in real life.”

“Before I go into any of my classes (particularly when we’re at a tough point in the semester – right after midterms, say, when a lot of people are starting to burn out or have just gotten a disappointing grade), like any teacher, I go over my class plan. But, more than just reminding myself what I want to accomplish that day, I spend some time thinking about who the students are to me, why I care about them, what I want for them, what I want for me, and so on. It’s very much the same kind of mental warm-up I use before going on stage, and I learned it from studying the Stanislavski system, also known as “Method” acting.”

“During class, I’m acutely aware of how my relationship with the students is ever-changing. I may come in with the best plan in the world, but the moment that plan comes in contact with reality; to some extent I’m winging it. Over the years, I’ve learned to read the room quickly and to respond and modify my plans accordingly. Some of this ability just comes with experience, but it helps that I had some training in Keith Johnstone’s approach to theatrical improvisation.”

“After class, like any teacher, I replay the action in my mind, savoring moments I thought were particularly good, celebrating victories, kicking myself for mistakes, wondering how to reach people I’m having trouble reaching, and so on. One of the most effective techniques I’ve found with these ‘hindsight’ sessions is not just to remember what happened but to spend some time imagining – and even playing out -- how I might have done it better. Basically, I re-write the script so that it has a more satisfying ending. This isn’t just wish-fulfillment, it’s a way of learning to do things better next time. It’s a powerful tool, and I got it from studying Augusto Boal’s techniques – what he calls ‘theatre of liberation.’”

Subsequent to this conversation, we collaborated on a number of sessions, linked classes, and workshops for novice teachers using variants of the Johnstone, Stanislavski, and Boal methods of actor training. When we were finally given the go-ahead to team-teach the Secondary Methods class in fall semester 2005, we designed our syllabus (See Appendix A) in such a way that our students would combine learning new pedagogical methods with these three common approaches to actor training.

Relationships

Noam Chomsky once said that teaching is 99% relationships and 1% everything else. Our retrofit of the Secondary Methods class centered on the shift in focus from *what* the teacher does to *who* the teacher is. Judging by the current proliferation of disposition assessments across the nation in teacher education programs, it seems it has become more apparent to teacher educators, that being ‘in relationship’ turns out to be the most important ingredient in successful classroom teaching. If you are not in relationship with your students, it matters little what method you use to teach your content; you will

likely fail. Using some simply taught relational concepts -- derived from actor training and which transfer easily to the classroom -- we set out to teach our pre-service teachers to become more adept at creating effective relationships.

We started with the concepts of *status* and *accepting offers*. According to Keith Johnstone, it is possible to look at every human interchange as a series of mostly small, subtle adjustments and negotiations of social position. We tell our friends our troubles, for example, and they perk up a bit; we tell them a recent success and, though they may be happy for us, they get a bit depressed. Most of our status transactions (though certainly not all) are largely unconscious; we have been conditioned to carry them out without thinking. Johnstone believes that the best improvisational actors – and the best teachers – have trained themselves to become aware of status transactions. Further, some of us tend to be high-status players and some low. These are adaptive specializations similar to what happens in a wolf-pack. Actors trained in Johnstone’s methods learn to play both sides of the status divide. Better, they learn to become status manipulators, capable of raising and lowering themselves and others at will. By going through some simple improv exercises described in Johnstone’s book, our students began to recognize and label the status transactions they were experiencing and to experiment with playing unaccustomed status roles.

Experienced improvisers recognize that, on stage, you have to accept every offer the other actor is giving you, even if that offer displeases you or leads you in a direction you didn’t want to go. Otherwise, the scene never takes shape; the two actors simply struggle for control of the narrative and the audience loses interest. Conflict on stage is actually a manifestation of *agreement* between the actors that the action will go forward in a certain way. Accepting an offer continues the play; blocking it stops the play. To accept an offer is to recognize the de facto situation on stage; to block an offer is to deny reality.

In using Johnstone’s exercises in this area, we were basically trying to help our pre-service teachers to process and work with the signals they receive from their students. In part, this means being open to suggestion; teacher education texts often advise us to say yes to students more often than we say no (see Logan, 1997). However, we stressed, in accepting offers, a teacher need not accede to every student request. The purpose of training in accepting offers is primarily to become more sensitized to what is actually going on in the classroom, that is, to “read the room” more quickly and react appropriately. The lecturer who goes on and on while students fall asleep, for example, is blocking their offer. How much better to accept the offer and find a way to engage with them. Another example: the “wise guy” in the class is often one of the more creative, inventive students. Teachers often simply squelch (block) wise guys. How much better to try to find ways to channel and co-opt that rebellious, creative energy, to put it to good use rather than wasting it.

Microteaching & Lesson Planning

Standard microteaching consists of a pre-service teacher preparing a microteaching lesson on one concept, using one teaching method (Orlich, Harder et al. 1994), teaching the lesson, being evaluated, being taped, and self-evaluating using the feedback from peers, instructor and self from watching the tape and experiencing the lesson.

When Eileen had taught the Secondary Methods course in prior years, she provided her pre-service teachers the opportunity to perform at least three different microteaching (MT) lessons with feedback from their peers and instructor – and with the admonishment and assumption that they should and would improve from MT1 to MT 2 to MT 3. In theory, adult learners when confronted with their weaknesses via experiential learning should be self-motivated to address those weaknesses (Knox, 1982). In theory, using different strategies to teach enhances learners' chances of success regardless of their learning style (Sellers, 2001).

One limitation of this standard model is that it seems to operate on the assumption that one classroom is very much the same as another. When teachers plan for teaching they typically use some sort of sequential plan modeled after the Madeline Hunter (2004) model whereby they plan for how to deliver content. However, not until Washington State implemented its *Written Instructional Plan* in 2003 did any lesson plan models include the characteristics of the students being taught. We believe our pre-service teachers need to think about these kinds of questions: How large is the class? Who seems eager to learn? Who seems hostile? Who is needy? Who's focused? Who's out of it? Nor do the plans incorporate other aspects of what Stanislavski would call the "given circumstances" of a scene: What is the school like? The classroom? What time of year is it? What happened yesterday? What's the administration of the school like? The parents? Etc.

Another major limitation of this model is that it is primarily external. A pre-service teacher receives a good deal of coaching on *how* to teach, but without a concurrent self-reflective process, the effectiveness of the coaching is greatly diminished. In the process of rehearsing a role, an actor trained in the Stanislavski method asks himself: What is my character's intention? What is driving this person? What does he want? What is he afraid of? What is getting in his way? We wanted our pre-service teachers, in the process of rehearsing their lessons, to ask similar questions of themselves, to probe their own intentions, motivations, obstacles, drives and fears. (See Appendix B for an example of lesson planning assignment incorporating given circumstances and intention.)

In creating the given circumstances of their practice classroom, we asked our pre-service teachers to give themselves some kind of challenge they would like to overcome – not a nightmare scenario, per se, but some circumstance designed to bring up their insecurities and allow them to practice not just their pedagogical strategies but also their relational abilities.

The concept of intention works best when there is something for the pre-service teacher to push against or through. The greater the obstacle, the greater must be the will to overcome it. To a pre-service teacher rehearsing under a set of (at least mildly) difficult circumstances, it quickly becomes clear that she must be clear about not just what to teach but how she will treat the students, who they are to her and what she wants for them. As our pre-service teachers began to work on their scenarios and to rehearse them in class, they soon realized that they would need to relate each lesson to a sense of higher purpose – to their best reason for wanting to be a teacher in the first place.

Microteaching Rehearsal & Performance

One of the often-heard complaints of students in a teacher education program is that they have to sit there and watch each other teach. When a student herself is the teacher, she is engaged, but during other students' microteaching sessions, it's pretty much a "yawn party." Our microteaching rehearsals and performances were, by contrast, engaging for everyone in the room. In part, this was because, at each rehearsal and performance, everyone in the class was assigned a role based on the pre-service teacher's set of given circumstances. But perhaps more importantly, we discouraged the kind of detached, theoretical discussion of how students ought to teach that David calls "sniping from cover" in favor of a more engaged model based on Augusto Boal's theatrical praxis.

Boal attempts to do away with the distinction between actor and spectator. His actors, taking direction from the audience, enact a situation of oppression – something that has actually occurred in the audience's experience or is occurring on an ongoing basis. If an audience member has an idea about how an actor might play a part more realistically, she is encouraged to step onto the stage and play out at least part of the role herself by way of demonstration. Indeed, members of the audience may end up replacing the entire cast. As such, they are no longer spectators but what Boal calls "spect-actors," not just passive witnesses but active participants in the action.

Each time one of the students had a criticism of how another pre-service teacher had handled part of a lesson – or of how another spect-actor in the scene had played his part – we kept discussion to a minimum, demanding instead that anyone with a criticism or new idea should *get up and show us*.

As his objective is to help oppressed peoples to find their own paths to liberation, Boal's dramaturgy is not fixed. He is committed to the Anti-Aristotelian notion that a tragedy is not inevitable, that the play can and should be re-written, indeed, that it is the obligation of the spect-actors to do what they can to improve conditions now and – when things do not go as they would have wished – to re-visit past scenarios to see how they could have played out better.

Not only did our students have the opportunity to rehearse their microteaching lessons and make revisions in their plans before the final performance; they also had the chance to re-visit the scene afterwards. We called this part *20/20 Hindsight*. Having already been graded on their work and received feedback from us and from their peers, our pre-service teachers had the opportunity to reflect on and play out moments in which they felt they had been ineffective, to experiment with other approaches and to work out better solutions with the support of their colleagues. These hindsight sessions proved to be some of the most valuable in the course. Our students took to the idea that a teacher is never really done with teaching a lesson -- it keeps getting better and better as you perform, review, indulge in hindsight, and re-perform. In our view, this cycle – as opposed to a model in which pre-service teachers, once they have been graded on a micro-teaching assignment, are done with it -- more accurately reflects a secondary teacher's life in the classroom.

Inter/personal Experiments and Practicum Experiences

How, we asked ourselves in planning the course, will we ensure that the kinds of transformations we expect to happen in our classroom actually transfer to our pre-service teachers' practicum experiences? We started from the premise that it is useful for novice

teachers not only to experiment in our classroom with a variety of unfamiliar instructional methods, but also – as actors do – with *unaccustomed behaviors*. Our experience has been that effective teachers work not just to expand their classroom “bag of tricks” but to become more effective as people – especially with regard to swiftly creating effective relationships with relative strangers (not to mention strange relatives).

In designing the “Inter/Personal Experiment” assignment, we drew upon the paradigm of actor training. Actors recognize that, in growing up, all of us develop habits of speech, of movement, of interaction with others. Both deliberately and on the unconscious level, we adopt a sense of personal “style.” We become used to seeking out some activities and avoiding others. We learn to believe in some things and disbelieve in others. In short, by the time we reach adulthood, we’ve acquired a set of complex parameters that we tend to stay within. Commonly, we refer to this set of parameters as our “personality” – or just our “self.”

However, a life in the theatre demands that actors regularly step outside of these parameters. Rather than being limited to roles that most closely resemble their own personalities, most actors would prefer to play a variety of roles. Over time, actors become skilled observers and imitators of other people’s behavior. Moreover, they become skilled at noticing and altering their own habitual behaviors. As an essential part of their craft, actors experiment with expanding, breaking and re-defining their own personal parameters. We believe, as corroborated by our students who had an acting background, that it is useful for teachers -- especially novice teachers – to do the same.

To that end, at the beginning of the semester, we asked our students to fill out a questionnaire to identify what they thought, as future teachers, would be their most valuable personal assets (defined as qualities, such as firmness, compassion, enthusiasm, patience, etc., or abilities, such as explaining complex concepts in simple terms, organization, relating well to teenagers, etc.), and what would be their greatest liabilities (examples: a short temper, an inability to stop speaking, a tendency to babble when nervous, etc.).

We then asked them, on a weekly basis – with an eye towards improving their effectiveness as teachers – to identify a pattern in their own behavior and to design an experiment in which they would do things a little bit differently. Examples: a student who tends to speak rapidly would try slowing down; another who self-identifies as “easygoing” would try being more assertive or demanding. We stipulated that each experiment must be designed to achieve specific measurable results: how often would the student try on the behavior, under what circumstances, for how long, etc.? By the end of the week, the student need not have achieved the anticipated or desired result, but the student must document that a behavioral experiment has actually been attempted.

At the end of the week, each student wrote a report on the results and a reflection on the usefulness of the experiment. What happened? How did people react? How did it feel? How might the student use the results of her experiment to help herself become a more effective teacher? If the student were to try stepping even further outside of her normal pattern, how might she go about it?

We encouraged students to “take on” the areas they had identified in their questionnaire. If a student saw in himself an ability to connect with special education students, for example, we asked how he might do it even better. If a student was concerned about her students accepting her authority, we suggested that she experiment

with adopting behaviors that might increase that authority – or decreasing behaviors that might undercut it. As the semester progressed, and they began to achieve positive results, we would ask them to find ways to apply those results to their practicum teaching and to their microteaching lessons.

At the end of the semester, they were to write a final reflection on the experiments, noting dramatic results, breakthroughs and disappointments. What did they learn the most from? Which experiments would they like to continue – and perhaps make into regular habits? How might these habits serve to make them more effective teachers? This reflection would also include a new assessment of their assets and liabilities. What traps should they be mindful to avoid? What strengths should they rely on or work to increase? What deficits should they work to address?

Results, Discussion, and Perspectives

Data sources include: Instructor observations, student comments, student work microteaching drafts, microteaching final drafts, experiments and results, final experiment and final reflection, practica journals, classroom teacher evaluations, microteaching self evaluations, midterm and final grades with instructor comments, midway focus group, final student course evaluations, and finally follow-up student interviews.

Although we are still assessing the data and analyzing the impact of the course on our student's teaching and relational abilities, preliminary results of the success of the class indicate that our previous co-requirement of Secondary Methods with Acting Class has fostered experimentation, reflectivity, and community in some of our Pre-service teachers. For most of our Pre-service teachers in the Fall of 2005, the theatrical practices we introduced them to seem to have enhanced their teaching effectiveness, increased their confidence, substantially alleviated their performance anxiety, and added to their ability to foster positive relationships with students.

Ironically, it seems that the more we refer to the training we offer as theatrical or acting-based, the more resistance we encounter. When we don't call it acting, they buy it. Apparently, the theatrical metaphor makes them nervous. We have a few ideas about why this might be, but feel this merits further examination.

Conclusions

We hope the preliminary results of this work will have a wide appeal to diverse audiences (teacher educators, faculty in other fields, professionals in other fields, performance artists, and teacher education students). Ultimately, we would like to see teacher preparation programs adopt these techniques: expanding the focus of their training to include not just the externals of sound teaching practice but also the internal practices essential to taking on the role of the teacher. In the mean time, we will continue to refine our own methods and to track both the short-term and long-term effects of this approach.

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Appendix A

Syllabus for ED 484 Med 584 General Secondary Methods & Ed 487 Med 587 Directed Secondary Practicum Fall 2005 Saint Martin's College

Instructors: David Hlavsa and Eileen Reilich Class Meetings: T 1p-4:50p Room TBA

David Hlavsa 360-438-4345 OM 343 dhlavsa@stmartin.edu davidlisa@sprynet.com

OH: MW 3p-6p and by appointment.

Website: http://homepages.stmartin.edu/fac_staff/dhlavsa/index.htm

Eileen Reilich 360-438-4418 OM 469 ereilich@stmartin.edu OH TBA

Website: Under Construction

Special Needs: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have medical and/or safety concerns to share with us, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please contact us as soon as possible. We will work closely with you and Karen McSwain kmcswain@stmartin.edu (Access Services Director) to meet your documented needs.

Required Textbooks:

Baldwin, M.D. & J.F. Keating Teaching in Secondary Schools. Pearson, Merrill, Prentice Hall. ISBN 0130422231

Other Required Readings

Periodically, we may have you read an article which has relevance to class material. These will either be brought to class for you or placed on reserve in plenty of time for you to make a copy for yourself and read it. Be sure to be familiar with our library system and facilities.

Course Description: This combined and integrated course is designed to teach prospective middle and high school teachers the principles and practices of high quality classroom teaching used in secondary schools.

Course Goals: The overall goal of this course is to have you, as prospective middle and high school teachers, examine and experiment with the internal and external processes of becoming an effective teacher. This course of study combines and integrates two different courses, Secondary Methods and Directed Secondary Practicum with certain techniques used in the training of actors. You will learn new methods of teaching and how to increase your effectiveness in the implementation of these new methods of teaching. Through exercises and assignments based on the theatrical work of Stanislavski, Johnstone, and Boal, you will become more effective as a teacher: increasing your confidence; enhancing your ability to quickly form positive relationships with students; adopting or strengthening a regular practice of reflecting on your teaching; and learning to “think on your feet”—adapting to change and challenge with creativity and grace.

Course prerequisites: We are assuming you have had and successfully passed ED 204: Introduction to Education; and ED 302: Curriculum and Instruction.

General Class Policies and Expectations:

This class is run in accordance with policies of student department and expectations as stated in the student policies manual for St. Martin’s University. Please see us immediately if circumstances arise that may make it difficult for you to meet these expectations.

Participation Policy: Full participation is assumed and expected.

Homework Policy: Please check the requirements for the specific assignments. Late work is not accepted.

Group assignments and activities will be expected to be an even division of labor. If this is not the case, we expect to be informed of the uneven division of labor before the project is presented or turned in.

Attendance Policy: Attendance and punctuality are mandatory. We expect you to be at all class meetings on time except in case of a genuine emergency.

Incomplete policy: in accordance with SMU policy: in order to request an incomplete grade in this course you must be passing the course at the time of the request and you must have completed at least half the course. In addition, unless the reason for the incomplete request is beyond your control, if you request an incomplete, the highest grade you can earn is a B+.

***Grading policy:**

	Undergraduate	Graduate
<i>484/584 Secondary Methods</i>		
Personal/Interpersonal Experiment Weekly reports	40	40
Microteaching (3)	60	55
Undergrad Total	100	
Graduate Student-Led Exercise	N/A	5
Grad Total		100

Ed 487/MED 587 Directed Secondary Practicum

Your grade is based on

- a) Practicum Evaluation by your teacher
- b) Your Journal Entries

Letter Grade	Percentage Bracket
A	95-100%

A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	??-59

Syllabus Detail

Week	Date Tuesdays	Reading Assignments	Homework
1	Aug 30 Jill Bauer 15 minutes		
2	Sept 6 Jill Bauer JA training		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
3	Sept 13		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
4	Sept 20		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
5	Sept 27		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
6	Oct 4		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due Microteaching #1 Done
7	Oct 11		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
8	Oct 18		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
9	Oct 25		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
10	Nov 1		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due Microteaching #2 Done
11	Nov 8		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
12	Nov 15		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
13	Nov 22		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
14	Nov 29		Inter/Personal Experiment Report Due
15	Dec 6		Final Experimental Report Due Microteaching #3 Done Practicum Journal Entries due
16	Dec 13		Practicum Evaluations Due

Microteaching

Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Kauchak & Gibson (1994, p. 168-170) describe microteaching as “a technique that affords both beginning and advanced teachers excellent opportunities to plan and practice a wide array of new instructional strategies.” Microteaching allows the teacher to “place small aspects of teaching under a microscope” and to “improve specific teaching skills with a small group of students by means of a brief, single-concept lessons.” Microteaching is an empirically-tested procedure that allows you to: (p. 168)

1. Practice a new technique, strategy, or procedure in a supportive environment
2. Prepare and deliver a lesson with reduced anxiety
3. Test new ways to approach a topic or lesson
4. Develop very specific delivery techniques such as introducing a topic, giving an Assignment, or explaining an evaluation procedure
5. Be evaluated both by others and by yourself
6. Gain immediate feedback of your performance by viewing the video playback
7. Risk little but gain much in valuable experience
8. Subdivide complex teaching interactions into related elements
9. Manage your own behavior in a systematic manner

The purpose of these microteaching assignments is to give you the chance to practice different methods of teaching in your content area, and establish relationships with those you teach. You will have the benefit of trying and becoming very familiar with at least three different methods by being assigned at least one familiar method and two unfamiliar methods to teach in your microteaching lessons. You will vicariously learn about other methods your colleagues use to teach their content area. Each person will microteach at least twice during the semester; these lessons will be videotaped, and you will be evaluated by us --your instructors, yourself and your peers. You will be given time in class to rehearse your microteaching lessons with a small group and/or your instructors giving feedback.

Your responsibility as teacher will be to: a) create, implement and evaluate a lesson plan according to the lesson plan schema handed out in class, in your content area. You will provide a rough draft of that lesson plan during the time you rehearse the lesson then you will provide a copy of the final draft of that lesson plan and method recipe to us the day you teach the lesson. **Please contact us if you need extra help in figuring out how to match your material to your method.** You will also provide, to any handouts for your lesson and bring any props and materials for your performance.

As an audience member, you will act at the age level required by the teacher; with only one “troublemaker” assigned or cast by Eileen and David. You will evaluate your peers in an honest, forthright, descriptive and constructive manner. In order to facilitate

Work in progress, use with credit to the authors please.

your vicarious learning of the method presented, you will note how you might use the demonstrated method in YOUR content area on the method recipe.

Microteaching (continued)

Grading for Microteaching Implementation:

1. **Instructional effectiveness:** You demonstrate your chosen method, show content competence, and successfully integrate method and content. You carry out the steps of the lesson plan (mental set, instructional input, guided practice, closure); you achieve your instructional goals within the allotted time; and you demonstrate that the class has in fact learned what you set out to teach.
2. **Performance:** You find ways to build intentional, positive, effective relationships with your students. When challenges arise, you address them.
3. **Effort/preparation:** Your written work and your work in rehearsal evidences careful thought and planning.
4. **Bravery:** In the interest of becoming a better teacher, you have taken on a challenge in the course of this assignment: perhaps you have elected to try an especially unfamiliar technique, or you've given yourself a substantial obstacle to overcome in the classroom...
5. **Improvement:** You have found ways to apply your inter/personal experiments to become more effective as a teacher. Over the course of planning, rehearsing and performing your lesson, you have become more adept in your chosen method, your mastery of content and/or your general effectiveness in the classroom.
6. **Self insight:** You have used the micro-teaching process to gain insight into your own character, your potential assets and liabilities as a teacher.

If you fail -- or feel you have failed -- a microteaching lesson, you may contact us to discuss doing the lesson over.

Microteaching Checklist

Item	MT#1 Assigned Method: _____	MT#2 Assigned Method: _____	MT #3 Assigned Method: _____
Lesson Plan given to instructors the day of your lesson; Recipe for Method to instructors and classmates the day of your lesson			
Teach lesson in time allotted .			
Evaluate self. Debrief in written format using the reflective cycle and incorporating all evaluations and feedback and hand in debriefing w/in 48 hours.	written (email)	Written (email)	written (email)

MED *584/587 Graduate Student-Led Warm Up Exercises Transition from Outside to Inside

In the beginning few weeks of the semester, Eileen and David will lead the class in a warm-up exercise at the start of each class. Then the grad students will take over...

The primary purpose of a warm-up exercise is provide a transition from outside to inside the classroom. It is designed to re-focus the students' (and the teacher's) attention from extraneous concerns to the task at hand.

A warm-up may also serve any number of important secondary functions. For example, it may:

- Give students an experience that will provide an easy entrée to a topic that the teacher intends to cover in class.
- Get their bodies moving so that, in the midst of a relatively sedentary school day, they'll have more physical energy for the task at hand.
- "Break the ice," i.e., provide or provoke social interaction among students.
- Foster a sense of cooperation and/or team competitiveness.
- Help them to put aside petty concerns and focus on a higher purpose.

Our experience is that it's good to plan warm-ups in advance, but that it is also necessary to "read" the group at the start of class and to evaluate on the spot whether the chosen exercise is likely to achieve the desired result. (Say, for example, that you have a relatively sedate exercise planned, but the students are bouncing off the walls – you have to make a judgment call as to whether the planned activity is likely to calm them down or rather to add to their jitters.) Therefore, we find it useful to have a number of possible warm-ups ready for the beginning of any given class: a "Plan A" (what you'd like to do), a "Plan B" (an alternate route to roughly the same goals) and a "Plan C" (something relatively sure fire you pull out in an emergency).

Grad students: Over the course of the semester, on two separate occasions, you will each lead us in a warm-up exercise of your own choosing or devising (dates to be arranged). You will need to meet with the instructors to get your warm-up plan approved in a timely manner. For your warm-up exercise you may want to take into account:

- What else we are likely to be doing in class that day (check with Eileen and/or David in advance for more information) so that your exercise will provide an artful transition to the task(s) at hand
- Your estimation of your own and other students' typical energy on Tuesday afternoons after lunch
- Your assessment of how well we are working as a team and what we might need to work on

- Your sense of where we are in the semester and how that relates to people's emotional life, willingness to take risks, etc.
- Do you think we need to pump things up? To de-stress? To get the creative juices flowing? To regress? To reflect?
- What qualities might you want to foster among us? Expression? Playfulness? Reflection? Enthusiasm? Adventurousness? Trust? Inquisitiveness? Consideration?

MED *584/587 Graduate Student-Led Warm Up Exercises (continued)

As discussed above, we recommend that you have more than one option in mind. At the close of the exercise, the class will discuss the experience. You are expected to be able to articulate your objective(s) in choosing the exercise.

You will then e-mail us a self-evaluation within 48 hours addressing the following questions:

1. Describe the exercise. If the exercise was not your "Plan A," describe Plan A and why you chose not to do it.
2. What were the objectives of the exercise you led?
3. How did it work?
4. Given the benefit of hindsight, what might you do differently?

Personal & Interpersonal Experiments for Teachers

The Premise: Good teachers are constantly on the lookout for ways to improve their effectiveness in the classroom. They seek not only to increase their mastery of their subject area but also to acquire an ever expanding variety of instructional strategies. The best teachers, however, know it is not enough to have a big “bag of tricks.” They are also working on becoming more effective *as people*.

In growing up, we all develop habits of speech, of movement, of interaction with others. We adopt a sense of personal “style.” We become used to seeking out some activities and avoiding others. In short, by the time we reach adulthood, we’ve acquired a set of complex – and sometimes unconscious -- behavioral parameters that we tend to stay within. It’s easy to do things we’re already used to doing, but doing things we’re *not* used to takes practice and a willingness to experiment.

This assignment involves identifying some of your own habitual behaviors (both in and outside the classroom) and – with an eye towards improving your effectiveness as a teacher -- experimenting with expanding your *range*. For example, do you tend to speak rapidly? What would it be like to slow down sometimes? Another example: In order to get along with others, do you tend to “go along” with them as well? What would it be like to try on being more assertive?

The Assignment: Each week, you are to **identify** a pattern in your own behavior and to design an **experiment** in which you do things a little bit differently. Over the course of the week, you’ll try on this new pattern of behavior and then write up a **report** on what happened. The report can be as terse (or as voluminous) as you like, as long as it demonstrates that you have tried to achieve **specific measurable results**. The experiment need not have achieved the anticipated or desired result, but the report should show that an experiment has been attempted.

Keep copies of all your reports. At the end of the semester, we will ask you to turn them in again along with your reflections on the whole semester’s experiments.

Inter/Personal Experiment Report Format

1. **Results:** Report on last week’s experiment. What happened? How did other people react? What was it like for you? How did it feel? If you were to try stepping even further outside of your normal pattern, how might you go about it?
2. **Observation:** Describe a behavior pattern you tend to follow, one you’d like to experiment with altering. What exactly do you do? When does it typically happen? With whom? How often? Under what circumstances? **Note:** If you like, you may take several weeks to experiment with expanding your behavioral range in a single area (in which case, this section of the report might remain basically the same for several weeks). However, if you do this, you must come up with a new experiment each week.

3. **Experiment:** Come up with a plan to modify (or perhaps initially just track and record) the behavior during the coming week. Set specific goals as to how many times you will carry out the experiment: where, with whom, how often, etc. **Important:** you need to design an experiment that will give you a *specific measurable result*. Think: how will you know when you have successfully attempted and/or accomplished what you set out to do?

Final Reflection On Interpersonal & Personal Experiments

(Due December 6)

Please turn in copies of all your weekly reports from the semester along with this reflection.

300 words minimum:

1. In designing and carrying out the weekly experiments, what were your most dramatic results? What breakthroughs did you achieve? What were your most disappointing experiences? What did you learn the most from?
2. After looking over your reports, what further observations (beyond what you've already written) can you make about your assets and liabilities as a teacher? What traps will you need to be mindful to avoid? What deficits will you need to address? What strengths can you rely on? What areas do you want to keep working on?

Practicum

Journal Entries and assignments (Minimum 5 entries)

1. Minimum five journal entries that have to do ONLY with your Practicum Placement and the things you notice in the school. Journal in the J.R. Davis Format: a) what happened, b) my analysis, c) essential truths or ideas of the situation and d) what would I do differently? You may indeed do more than five entries. Suggested timing of writing journal entries is every 1-3 days of practicum placement.
2. Journal entries need to focus on the interactions between students and teacher. Use the things learned in class as a lens through which to view these interactions.
3. Each of your journal entries need to be in narrative form and at least 300 words long (about 1 page single spaced, or two double spaced).

Saint Martin's College Teacher Certification Program

PRACTICUM EVALUATION

To: SMC Student: complete the information in this box. Your classroom mentor teacher will complete the evaluation. The student must return the completed and signed evaluation to the SMC Faculty member overseeing your practicum.

Your Name: _____ **Semester/Year:** _____ **Course Title & Number:** _____

Required Practicum Hours: _____ **SMC Instructor:** _____ **Office Phone:** _____

Cooperating Teacher: _____ **School:** _____

GRADE Level of class: _____ Students' Ethnic background: _____

Type of Classroom (Please check all categories that apply):

Regular Education ____ Special Education ____ Gifted ____ Inclusion ____

Record of Practicum Hours in the Classroom

Date & #/Hrs.	Date & #Hrs	Date & #Hrs	Date & #Hrs	Date & #Hrs
			Total Hours	

To: Classroom Mentor Teacher: Narrative Comments (Please use additional pages if necessary):

1. Interaction with students and teachers in the classroom and school:

2. Knowledge of subject areas:

3. Ability to organize, utilize resources and prepare for teaching:

4. Ability to deliver an effective lesson:

Cumulative Evaluation (Please Circle One of the numbers)

1	2	3	4
Evaluation Fail	Fail	Marginal Pass	Pass
SMC expectatio n	Novice	Pre-Student teaching	Pre-Student teaching

***Note: Classroom Teacher: Your signature on this form signifies this person has spent these hours in your classroom**

A cumulative evaluation of 3 or more is a passing score. Any score below 3 Indicates not passing.

Signature of *Cooperating Teacher: _____ Date:

Signature of SMC Course Instructor: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

Lesson Plan Template for Microteaching

Part I.

Three EZ Steps to Lesson Planning

1. What am I going to teach (“it”)?
2. How am I going to teach “it”? (method and demeanor)
3. How do I make sure they got “it” before they leave my class? Combine this with your objective from your intention.

Part II

A. List the most important given circumstances that apply to teaching this lesson. You want enough to start getting a feel for and a clear picture of the situation. Some details will be more pertinent than others. You don’t need to know everything about the situation. Write about a page of description. Relevant given circumstances might include such factors as:

- The age of your students
- How many students?
- Where are you in the term?
- Where you are geographically?
- The ethnicity, class, and/or cultural diversity (or homogeneity) of your students
- Who among your students is “getting it”?
- Who isn’t? Why?
- You’re dealing with an incident that happened in the previous class.
- Where you are in your teaching career? (1 year out? 5 years out? Etc.)

B. Formulate an intention with respect to your students – both the class as a whole and any individual in the class you might find challenging or especially want to reach. Relationship: Who are they to you? Desire: What do you want for/from them? Objective: How will you know when you’ve got what you want? What would success look, feel, sound like? Obstacle: What is the main obstacle you will encounter in teaching this lesson? [For maximum benefit, describe one that corresponds to your worries and/or something you believe you need to work on as a teacher.]

C. What kinds of things might you do to overcome this obstacle?

Part III: How to perform the method of teaching you were assigned or have chosen.

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NOTE from David and Eileen: Fret not. This is a rough draft. You may decide to refine, revise or change these circumstances later as rehearsals progress.