

Integrating Understanding: An Examination of Student Learning

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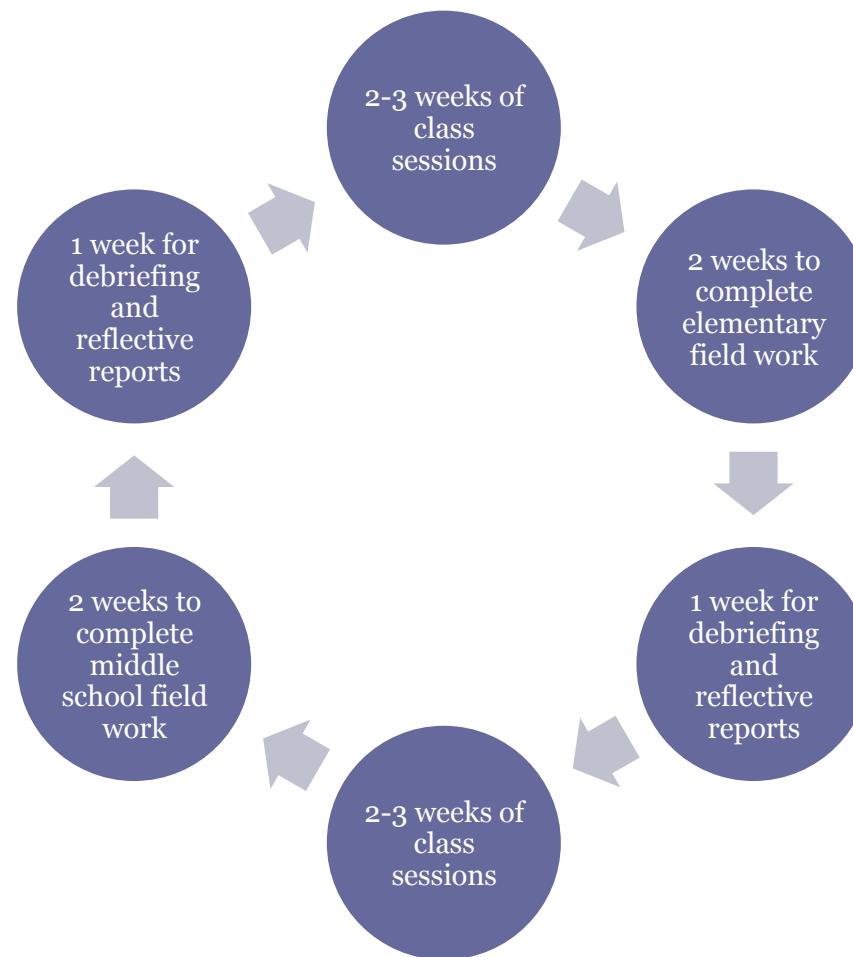
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The Context of the Class

- EDU 101 – Introduction to K-12 Student Development
 - Exposes students to developmental theory
 - Focus is on three domains (cognitive, social/emotional, physical)
 - Three components of the course
 - Textbook reading; in-class discussions/activities; field work

The Rhythm of the Class





The Issue

- Students' inability or unwillingness to make clear connections between theoretical understanding of development to practical understanding in the field work.
- Said a different way – students' seem not to see how what they observe in the field exemplifies the theory they read and discuss in class.



The Question

- *Where and how does learning occur in an introductory education course on student development?*
 - *How do education students use course reading assignments, in-class activities/discussions, and field experiences to understand theoretical concepts related to the three domains of student development (cognitive, physical, and social)?*



Methodology & Participants

- Qualitative Case Study
- 4 participants
 - All sophomores
 - 2 reserved, thoughtful, engaged, but not always participatory (A/B students; Spanish & English)
 - 1 out-going, prepared, organized, engaged and highly participatory (A student; English or Psych)
 - 1 out-going, usually prepared, not as organized, engaged, but highly participatory (History)



Data Sources -- Analyzed

- Reading quizzes & midterm test
- Autobiographical paper
- Elementary online journal
- Elementary Paper



Data Sources -- Not Yet Analyzed

- Middle School Paper
- High School Project
- Course Portfolio Reflective Essays



Coding Framework

- Used Wiggins & McTighe (2006) “Six Facets of Understanding”
 - Explanation
 - Interpretation
 - Application
 - Perspective
 - Empathy
 - Self-Knowledge

[Understanding coding framework definitions.doc](#)



Analysis Process

- Coded assignments & student work
 - Read assignment guides and quiz/test questions
 - Coded verbs
 - Read quiz/test answers
 - Coded phrases & verbs
 - Read autobiographical & elementary papers
 - Coded sentences & paragraphs

Preliminary Findings

- AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PAPER
 - Two student participants showed evidence of **four** of the *Six Facets of Understanding*
 - Application was the only facet **not** evidenced in any of the participants, which may not have been expected.
 - [Autobio_analysis chart.doc](#)

Preliminary Findings cont.

- **ELEMENTARY PAPER**
 - Student #4 stands out as having all but one of the facets (Empathy) evidenced in his paper and the only one to have Self-Knowledge.
 - Student #1 stands out as being the only one to not have Application show up at all.
 - The mid-to-high incidence of Explanation and Interpretation are not surprising.

[Elementary Paper_analysis chart.docx](#)



Findings indicate mismatch?

- **Autobiographical Paper**
 - Coded for Interpretation & Self-Knowledge
 - Papers coded for all facets except Application
- **Elementary Paper**
 - Coded for Interpretation, Application, Perspective & Self-Knowledge
 - Papers coded for high incidence of Explanation & Interpretation



Preliminary Implications

- If I want to see more or different facets in student work (as an indication of their different levels of understanding), then I need to ask for them.



Next Steps

- Finish data analysis – middle school paper, portfolio reflective essays, high school project, other online journals
- Continue to build profiles of individual cases (within case analysis)
- Continue to look at patterns across cases
- Literature review!



Emerging Questions

- Should I (in the future) document evidence of the six facets during class discussions since that component of the course is essentially excluded from the study?
- Should I consider a different framework for coding?
- With only 4 cases, should I analyze data from all 10 students?
- Will it confound the work if I use another class?



Works cited

Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2006). *Understanding by design*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.