



Teaching About Teaching

Competency

The cooperating teacher provides a clear rationale as they model planning and preparation, the classroom environment, and instructional practices necessary for a successful lesson.

Key Method

The cooperating teacher demonstrates the interconnectedness of planning and preparation, the learning environment, and learning experiences based on best practices, using metacognition and reflection.

Method Components

Developing Effective Educators

The role of the cooperating teacher is to facilitate the growth of a student teacher as an educator. Student teaching is a vital step for preservice teachers as they transition into the role of effective educators. As a capstone experience, student teaching is the point at which the cooperating teacher creates an environment where the student teacher prepares to teach their own class.

Effective cooperating teachers model the key elements involved in teaching while explicitly instructing their student teacher as they take these steps. Cooperating teachers will model:

- Reflection and metacognition
- Planning and preparation

- Creating the learning environment
- Designing and implementing learning experiences
- Demonstrating professionalism
- Building relationships with students

Reflection and Metacognition

Educators use metacognition throughout their teaching. Metacognition is the reflective activity of monitoring and managing one's own thinking and learning. When reflecting, cooperating teachers draw on their knowledge and awareness of their teaching in several ways. They plan the work, manage its progress, and evaluate it.

Student teachers who observe experienced teachers often state that “the more skillful the teaching, the easier everything looks, and the more difficult it is to understand how success is achieved” (Brown, 1994). Cooperating teachers should be aware of their “craft knowledge” and articulate the cognitive awareness occurring in their mind to the student teacher. Researchers define **craft knowledge** as the practical knowledge based on experience, developed over time by considering both successes and mistakes. This craft knowledge encompasses domains of knowledge of practice owned by the cooperating teacher and developed through experience and practice in the system.

These areas include:

- **Personal practical knowledge:** Insights and understanding a teacher develops over time in the classroom, including beliefs, values, attitudes, and decision-making habits based on what has worked previously.
 - Example: A teacher develops a habit of greeting students at the door because, over time, it has fostered relationships and improved classroom management.
- **Classroom knowledge:** Understanding how a classroom functions, including classroom dynamics, group interaction, and how routines, procedures, and the environment support engagement.
 - Example: Knowing which students need specific seating and how to create groupings for cooperative learning.
- **Pedagogical content knowledge:** A term coined by Lee Shulman to describe the ability to teach content effectively by blending subject knowledge with pedagogy. It includes representing subject matter in comprehensible ways, anticipating and planning for misconceptions, and planning for a variety of learners.

- Example: A math teacher explains fractions using images or familiar experiences to help students grasp abstract concepts.
- **Ability to adjust instructional practice:** The capacity to adapt teaching strategies in response to student needs, research, or formative data. It includes modifying and differentiating materials and shifting practice when new research suggests better approaches.
 - Example: Recognizing that lessons that have worked in the past are less effective than newer techniques and adapting instruction to reflect current best practices.

Craft knowledge is essential to becoming a reflective, effective, and responsive educator.

Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching

Charlotte Danielson created a framework for teaching designed “to change professional learning to empower teachers to be their best in service of each and every student.” The framework is organized into four domains.

Understanding this framework supports cooperating teachers in articulating their craft knowledge.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

The components in Domain 1 outline how a teacher organizes the content students are expected to learn—in other words, how the teacher designs instruction. Components include demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy, demonstrating knowledge of students, selecting instructional goals, demonstrating knowledge of resources, designing coherent instruction, and assessing student learning.

Cooperating teachers model how they understand the discipline they teach and how they select important concepts to share with students. This includes preparing lessons and designing effective assessments. Effective teachers know their students, understand their unique needs, and plan accordingly.

Domain 2: The Learning Environment

The components in Domain 2 focus on the non-instructional interactions that occur in a classroom. These include creating an environment where all students feel safe and respected regardless of individual differences; building positive rapport between students and teachers; fostering a culture

for learning; managing classroom procedures; managing student behavior; and organizing the physical space.

Cooperating teachers teach their student teachers about the classroom structure and the intentional arrangements they put in place in the physical environment of students. They model how these structures support students' social-emotional needs, respect students, allow for risk-taking, and support the whole child.

Domain 3: Learning Experiences

The components in Domain 3 constitute the core of teaching—students' engagement with content. They include communicating clearly and accurately, using questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in relevant learning, providing relevant feedback, and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.

The cooperating teacher models effective learning experiences, provides instruction, and engages students in meaningful work. They show how experiences are built on prior knowledge and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning through productive struggle and student choice, where appropriate.

The classroom is a place that supports all students through a variety of strategies such as:

- Questioning and discussion
- Collaborative learning
- Project-based learning
- Integrated technology
- Student choice
- Productive struggle

The educator understands the unique needs of their students and designs/implements experiences that support a wide range of learners. The cooperating teacher can justify and explain how they plan for students who:

- Have special needs
- Are linguistically diverse
- Are gifted and talented
- Have social-emotional needs
- Need trauma-informed instruction
- Benefit from equity-focused practices in education

Domain 4: Principled Teaching

Principled teaching refers to the professional actions taken by the cooperating teacher beyond the classroom. These actions demonstrate dedication to growth and professionalism. Teachers recognize that their impact on students extends beyond school walls and model a commitment to personal and professional growth.

Actions that early-career teachers can take include:

- Joining a professional association
- Sponsoring a student club or activity
- Taking professional workshops or courses
- Attending conferences
- Conducting action research

The cooperating teacher models this dedication and professionalism with their student teachers. They demonstrate appreciation for the community they serve, act dependably in the school and district, and contribute to the profession by acting as change agents when needed.

Principles of general psychology apply. To grow professionally, the student teacher must meet their lower-level physiological, safety, and social needs. (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs) A level of trust between the cooperating teacher and student teacher must be established before deep learning occurs. This is parallel to student learning in the classroom, but focuses on mutual respect between adults, including respect for background and experiences. This trust includes honoring student teachers' identities (race, class, language, gender, etc.) and avoiding assimilation into harmful norms.

Supporting Rationale and Research

Danielson, Charlotte. (2011). *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (pp. 3–4). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2023-08/danielson-framework-teaching-evaluation-instrument-2011.pdf>

Dowey, S. (n.d.). What do teachers understand about metacognition and why does it matter? *Impact*, Autumn 2023(19), 50-55. [What do teachers understand about metacognition \(Dowey, n.d., #\)n and why does it matter?](#)

Golding, C. (2009). *Integrating the disciplines: Successful interdisciplinary subjects*. Melbourne, Australia: Centre for the Study of Higher Education. <https://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/resources/trauma-informed-practices-postsecondary-508.pdf>

Cooperating Teacher Stack

Teaching About Teaching

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N.D. (2010) Danielson Aligned Lesson Plan Template for Formal Observations

<https://pdf4pro.com/amp/cdn/danielson-aligned-lesson-plan-template-for-k-usd-edu-567479.pdf>

Hacker, D. J., Dunlosky, J., & Graesser, A. C. (Eds.) (2009). Handbook of Metacognition in Education. New York: Routledge.

Northeastern Center for Advanced Teaching). Multidisciplinary Teaching: more lenses reveal more meaning.

<https://learning.northeastern.edu/multidisciplinary-teaching/>

Weaver, John Matthew. Development of the Metacognition for Teaching Inventory and Exploration of P-12 Teachers' Metacognition for Teaching, Oklahoma State University. [ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, 2022.29997704.](#)

Yves, Karlen., Hurt, C., Jud, J., Rosenthal, A., Eberli, T. (2023). Teachers as learners and agents of self-regulated learning: The importance of different teachers competence aspects for promoting metacognition. Teaching and Teacher Education. Vol. 125. Retrieved from:

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104055>

Resources

Readings

[Charlotte Danielson's Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching](#)

[The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument](#)

[The Danielson Group](#)

[A Practical Guide to Equity in Education | Positive Action](#)

[Cooperating Teachers' Best Practices for Mentoring #2](#)

[Cooperating Teachers' Best Practices for Mentoring #3](#)

[Cooperating Teachers' Best Practices for Mentoring #4](#)

Cooperating Teacher Stack

Teaching About Teaching

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Case Studies

[Variety of Case Studies to Learn Different Teaching Strategies](#)

Videos

[Brief Intro to Metacognition](#)

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the microcredential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and be proficient for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

350-500 words

Please use the suggested word count as a guide to answer the contextual questions below. This will help the assessor understand your current context for this microcredential.

Please don't include any information that will identify you to reviewers.

Respond to:

1. Describe your classroom setting. Explain the grade(s) and content you teach. Include any information that will help the assessor understand the situation in which the student teacher will be working.
2. Reflect on your experience as a cooperating teacher by answering:
 - a. How do you view the cooperating-teacher role as a way to promote education and support success?
 - b. What's one thing you want your student teacher to take away from their time with you and your class, and why is it important?
 - c. How have metacognitive practices helped you decide what and how to guide your student teacher?

Passing: Response provides detail that shows metacognition in your work as a cooperating teacher. Writing is organized and easy to understand.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this microcredential, please submit the following two artifacts as evidence of your learning.

Please don't include any information that will identify you or your students to reviewers.

Artifact 1: Lesson Plan

Create a lesson plan that includes the following parts of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. This lesson will be the foundation of your instructional work with your student teacher. Include details that show your planning process.

- Planning and Preparation
 - State content outcomes for the lesson and list the materials that you will use.
 - Provide a specific example showing how you've planned for all student needs in your classroom, including:
 - Students with special needs
 - Linguistically diverse students
 - Gifted and talented students
 - Students with social-emotional needs
 - Students needing trauma-informed instruction
 - Equity in education considerations
- Learning Experience
 - Describe the learning experience students will have in this lesson.
 - Include any modifications you created or used for the student groups listed above.
- Learning Environment
 - Describe the arrangement of students or the classroom that will enhance the learning experience.
- Assessment of Student Learning
 - Explain how you will assess whether students have learned what you expected.

Artifact 2: Metacognitive Analysis

Write an analysis that highlights all three domains of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching within the lesson and justifications for your choices. This analysis should demonstrate how you model for your student teacher the thinking that you use in planning and preparation.

Example: Learning Experiences

“Think-Pair-Share was used to engage all students in the thinking process for solving the math problem. I give students 5-10 seconds of private thinking time, then allow them to rehearse their strategy with a partner before sharing with the whole group. This sequence supports hesitant students and increases overall participation.”

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Lesson Plan	Lesson plan shows all three aspects of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching—planning and preparation, learning environment, and learning experience—and explains how learning will be assessed.	Lesson plan shows two of the three aspects of Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (planning and preparation, learning environment, learning experience).	Lesson plan shows none or only one of the aspects.
Artifact 2: Written Analysis	The cooperating teacher clearly articulates teaching practices within the lesson plan related to planning and preparation, learning environment, and learning experiences, and explains how learning will be assessed. Provides rationale for each aspect that shows the student teacher why it's important. Includes information you will share with your student teacher as you design the lesson and model the thinking you use to develop lessons, adjustments, assignments, and assessments.	The cooperating teacher discusses but doesn't clearly identify teaching practices related to planning and preparation, learning environment, and learning experiences. Provides some rationale for each to show the student teacher their importance, but doesn't fully explain the thinking process you'll share.	The cooperating teacher doesn't clearly identify teaching practices related to planning and preparation, learning environment, and learning experiences. Provides little rationale for each and doesn't include information about the thinking you'll model for the student teacher.

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Part 3 Reflection

350-500 words

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this microcredential. For tips on writing a strong reflection, review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please don't include any information that will identify you to reviewers.

Reflect on what you learned by addressing:

1. How will this learning impact you in the role of a cooperating teacher?
2. How does explicitly using metacognition support you and your student teacher in improving practice?
3. What specific actions will you take to serve in this role?
4. How will completing this microcredential impact the students in your classroom?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has positively impacted both educator practice and student success. Reflection is complete, organized, and easy to understand. Answers include specific examples and next steps that relate to the three domains from Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching.