

Education Department Writing Plan

In determining Writing Emphasis courses in the education department, we considered the type of writing our students do, the skills they must develop, and the best opportunities they can have to develop those skills. We thought about how to foster our students' continued growth and development as writers from the early to the middle to the final stages of the Education program, as well as the instructional expertise and preferences of faculty members and the mentoring and modeling of writing we wish to provide as a department.

Types of Writing

Students pursuing a major or minor in education must show minimal competency in ten professional standards determined by the state legislature and enforced by the Iowa Department of Education. Of particular relevance are those competencies related to instructional planning, delivery of instruction, and professional reflection on their craft. Students in our courses are expected to develop such competencies in the context of expectations for teachers in K-12 classrooms, with particular attention to skill with (among other things):

- Writing clearly-stated objectives for learning and teaching, in lesson and unit plans
- Adhering to professional standards for carrying out and reflecting on instruction
- Assessing for learning in ways that allow for instructional differentiation
- Developing activities that foster, facilitate, and enhance student learning

More recent national teacher evaluation assessments refer to the vocabulary necessary for demonstration of competency in the field as “teacher talk.” Terms of art in teaching are part of the focus in writing lesson plans. Students also develop a “teacher talk” vocabulary through reflection, a required aspect of writing in the elementary education major and secondary minor. As students build their professional identities, transforming from student into teacher, they can observe their own progress by reading their reflections from blog posts they start in the program’s introductory course, *Educational Foundations*. They also maintain a blog of their experiences in their field placement in *Practicum*, a course that requires a minimum of 60 hours in a local classroom.

Education program students finish their time at Coe with a full-time placement as a student teacher in a local classroom (or in two local classrooms). Throughout their semester of student teaching, students continue to reflect on their learning by blogging. The semester culminates with a professional presentation of their ePortfolio, a compilation of their reflections on and understandings of the professional standards and competencies required for state licensure.

Skill Development & Coursework

The skills developed in Education courses are embedded in reflection, allow for rewriting, and require demonstration of the mastery of concepts. We want students to understand that they are expected to reach mastery in their learning and that mastery comes with revision, feedback, and reflection.

The education department organizes its courses into three levels. At each level student writing development is facilitated by instructional approaches and learning activities that foster the development of skill in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Instructional planning for the simultaneous development of all four modes of language helps ensure that program students acquire the communication skills necessary for success in the teaching field.

Level I courses can be taken prior to being admitted into the teacher licensing program. All education majors and minors must take the four Level I (or Core) courses: *Educational Foundations*, *Human Relations*, *Exceptional Learners*, and *Educational Psychology*. We have determined that student writing development should begin in two of the Core courses, *Educational Foundations* and *Human Relations*. The types of writing emphasized at this beginning level include summaries, analysis, reflection, and a teaching philosophy statement.

Level II classes include the first course with a substantial field experience, *Practicum* (with its complement, *Technology Lab*). Learning experiences at this level introduce students to reflective writing that answers such questions as *How would you use this strategy in your own classroom? What might this approach look like if you taught it at X or Y grade level?* etc. Level II courses require students to demonstrate mastery in writing lesson plans, as well as greater skill with analysis and reflection. At this level students also write analytic reflections, annotated bibliographies, modified lesson plans, and a variety of other documents central to effectively carrying out their future professional duties, such as letters and emails to parents, classroom newsletters, performance evaluations of student work, and the like. Students produce these documents in the *K-12 Literature*, *English Language Learners*, and *Professional Writing for Teachers* courses.

Level III classes are those in which students bring together and refine their mastery of lesson and unit planning, reflections on pedagogy, materials creation, and documents for communicating with multiple stakeholders. Courses at this level include all *Methods* courses for elementary and secondary content areas, as well as the semester-long *Student Teaching* experience. The types of writing emphasized at this level include lesson plans, unit plans, analysis, reflection, and synthesis. Writing at this level is supported by classroom approaches that emphasize oral communication, critical discussion of course topics, and the utilization of a professional vocabulary.

Elementary Education Major (*Course for the endorsement in reading)

	Level I Courses (2)	Target Assignments	Level II Courses (5)	Target Assignments	Level III Courses (6)	Target Assignments	Student Teaching	Target Assignments
WE	EDU-105 Ed Foundations EDU-187 Human Relations	Philosophy of ed Reflective blog Field experience reflection Identity paper Privilege paper	EDU-215 Practicum EDU-219 Tech Lab EDU-270 Content* EDU-260 Lit K-12* EDU-237 ELL* EDU-220 Prof Writing for Teachers	Lesson plans Reflective blogs Philosophy of ed Annotated bibliography Program analysis Genre study	EDU-345 Elem LA Methods* EDU-305 Elem Science Methods EDU-335 Elem Math Methods EDU-355 Elem Reading Methods* EDU-365 Elem Soc St Methods EDU-295 Diagnostic Reading*	Lesson plans Unit plans Reflective blogs Adaptive plan Annotated website Case studies	EDU-481 Seminar	Rationales Reflective blogs Annotated lesson plans

Secondary Education Minor

	Level I Courses (2)	Target Assignments	Level II Courses (1)	Target Assignments	Level III Courses (1)	Target Assignments	Student Teaching	Target Assignments
WE	EDU-105 Ed Foundations EDU-187 Human Relations	Philosophy of ed Reflective blog Field experience reflection Identity paper Privilege paper	EDU-215 Practicum EDU-219 Tech Lab	Lesson plans Reflective blogs Philosophy of ed	EDU All Secondary Methods	Lesson plans Unit plans	EDU-481 Seminar	Rationales Reflective blogs Annotated lesson plans