Contextual Factors
Western Teacher Work Sample Assignment for EIS 303 & EIS 304

Submit this assignment as a Microsoft Word file under the appropriate heading on the ASSIGNMENTS section of WesternOnline. This assignment is due on or before Sunday, March 6 at 11:55 p.m. Assignment needs to be 3-5 pages in length and includes three pieces of data from the Illinois School Report Card for your district.

Definition: The teacher candidate uses information about the learning-teaching context and student individual differences to set learning objectives and benchmarks and plan instruction and assessment informed by their understanding of relevant major schools of thought.

Task 1.1: Describe community, district and school factors that may impact student learning
• What type of geographic community (e.g., rural, urban, suburban, etc.) does the school primarily serve?
• What type of social community (e.g., working class, farm, middle-class, etc.) does the school primarily serve?
• In what type (e.g., small, large; regular, charter, etc.) of school district is the school embedded? How typical, relative to other schools in the district is your school (ethnically, politically, progressive/experimental, etc.)?
• What are the specific characteristics of the school itself (e.g., age of the building, number of classrooms, typical classroom size, etc.)

Identify and discuss the instructional implications of one or more contextual factors identified above.

Task 1.2: Describe classroom factors that may impact student learning
• What grade level is your classroom?
• Where in the building is your classroom located and what are the chief characteristics of the classroom space?
• Define and discuss the classroom atmosphere (e.g., bright and colorful, noisy, quiet, etc.).
• What is the classroom management system (e.g., procedures, rules, routines, etc. For more examples, see Wong & Wong, unit on classroom management)?
• Is this a single teacher classroom? Are any teaching aides or assistants present?
• Are any new initiatives or curriculum changes (e.g., RTI, differentiated instruction, block scheduling, etc.) impacting your classroom?

Identify and discuss the instructional implications of one or more contextual factors identified above.

Task 1.3: Describe student characteristics that may impact student learning
• How many students are there? What is their ethnic, gender, linguistic, etc., composition?
• Are there any students needing special accommodations? If so, what are those accommodations?
• What developmental level(s) (developmental stages, skill level, etc.) is/are represented?
• Identify and discuss all groups, if any, in your classroom in terms of ability, motivation, etc.?

Identify and discuss the instructional implications of one or more contextual factors identified above.