

Manchester College
Content/Methodology Paper
Corrective Reading
Celsie Myers
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Manchester College offers a variety of informational courses required to graduate with an Elementary Education degree. Many of the courses are directed towards teaching the students a specific area of education while others overlap with information. The beginning years of an elementary education major are not stressful while the last year is very overwhelming with a lot of busy work, many projects and high expectations. Information about the required portfolio, interviews, and testing required should be given during the first year of being an elementary education major unlike my experience of not receiving most of this information until my second year. I enjoyed most of the courses required for my major but some were overwhelming with projects while other overlapped information learned from previous courses.

My first experience in the education classes at Manchester College was Introduction to Teaching, which I took during January term in Fort Wayne. The course information was useful but I did not gain a lot of knowledge because the class was during the day at the elementary school. The experiences in the classroom were not useful to me either because I was placed with the music teacher, which was not in my area of interest. The classroom experience would have been more beneficial if I was placed in a regular general education classroom. The course itself could have been constructed better if important issues were explained more effectively such as what is expected inside the classroom, portfolio requirements and interviews throughout the different years of college.

Introduction to Early Childhood and Child Development were two classes that I experienced a lot of overlap of material between the two classes. The case study project in Child Development was one of the most beneficial projects that I have completed

during my college career. I gained a lot of information about the development of children through this project and retained more information from this project than taking the Early Childhood class. Even though it was the professor's first year of teaching this particular course, I believe the outline of the course was very beneficial to the college students and information gained from this course is very useful.

One of the worst courses I experienced in the content of education was Educational Psychology. The use of class time and construction of the material provided in class was not presented in an effective manner. The major project in this class was developing a unit plan, which was a beneficial project for us to complete but it was not talked about in class. For most of the class, it was the first time for writing lesson plans or even thinking about constructing a unit plan. The class instruction would have been more useful if it was based more on how to plan a unit plan, write lessons and tie everything together.

The courses dedicated to the 'specials' in the elementary school are important to be incorporated into our college years. I really enjoyed the experiences in Music for Elementary Teachers, Art Education for Elementary Teachers, Creative Dramatics and Teaching Fundamental Movements. A couple of the courses should have been directed more towards what elementary students are supposed to be learning instead of making us do projects that are more at the college level. Elementary Art, for example, would have been more beneficial if the projects were directed more towards possible projects for elementary students. Projects that we had to complete in class for hard for college level students let alone elementary students. Along with the Art course being difficult, Teaching Fundamental Movements would have been more beneficial if it was

constructed as hands-on learning experience with children. Instead of teaching our demonstrations to other college level students, it would have been more effective if we could have had elementary students to teach our lessons to, while gaining experiences teaching physical education. There were a variety of useful lesson plans integrating physical education gained through this course.

Music for Elementary Teachers was taught based on the material elementary education students would be learning in the school not on a college level. It is more important for us to see what the students are learning, want or willing to learn instead of learning harder material that would not be beneficial in the classroom. Creative Dramatics was also taught in an excellent way because we were given different types of teaching using creative dramatics. We were given the chance to teach a group of students integrating creative dramatics and interacting with the elementary students. I gained many ways to integrate creative dramatics, music, art and physical education into the daily curriculum.

World Civilizations and American History, which were also required by the Education Department, should have been separate courses from the history classes taught to the other college students. Both courses are taught at the college level, but would be more beneficial if they were directed towards elementary standards and information they are required to know. If we were seeking a minor or major in history, then these two courses should be required but in our case, the content of the course should be structured towards information taught in the elementary class.

Field Biology was a very effective course with good use of classroom time and relevant material to what is taught in the elementary classroom. The information in the

course, itself was difficult and directed towards college students but the labs were aimed towards elementary students. When the weather was nice, we were given the opportunity to interact with children and walk them around Koinoinia, teaching them about nature, plants and insects located at the camp. The professor constructed this course in a way that was beneficial to us as potential elementary Science teachers.

All of the math courses could have been better instructed and made better use of class time. All the math courses are needed because as teachers we need to know how to calculate basic math problems and do basic math skills. Math I and II would have been more useful if directed more towards the elementary classroom. The professor of Math I was very confusing and had us do projects that were not relevant to teaching mathematics. Our project was to create our own base ten system and explain how it works. This project confused more people than explained anything. Math for Elementary Teachers II was more of a computation course. The professor was not confusing and he explained how to teach different types of mathematical problems as well as how to calculate them. The third course teaches us how to use models to teach elementary math. The use of class time could be constructed more effectively and efficiently by teaching us different ways to use models or compute a problem. The tests in this course are memorization tests rather than actually learning the material.

My experience with Literacy Block would have been more beneficial to me if the class was split up into multiple classes. There was a lot of information that we needed to learn but was being crammed into one class. All the information was relevant and will be very useful in the classroom but was too crammed together. My experience with the tests was that they were mostly memorizing information good enough to spill out on the exam.

The trade books were an excellent project for us to do and are good references to use in student teaching. The project would have been more beneficial if we did more of a variety of trade books instead of quantity of each category.

The Mild Interventions courses taught at Manchester College are very beneficial and detailed with good quality information. The use of class time was constructed effectively and the professor made good use of materials available such as example IEPs, etc. The course, Foundations of Exceptional Learners lays the foundation of the Mild Intervention courses. The first two courses, Learners with Mild Disabilities and Mild Intervention Strategies were basically information repeated from the first course but in more detail about specific disorders. The one course I really struggled with was Assessment and Implementation because the professor was not teaching at her ability level due to the fact that she was going through a busy time in her life. I felt like we were being pushed aside as the least important part and class time was not very effective. Our major project was creating an IEP based off of information given to use in a packet. The class was not taught how to write an IEP, which made this project very confusing and difficult. Students majoring in Mild Interventions should be given the opportunity to sit in an IEP meeting, previously arranged by the professor, to see what actually happens within the meeting. This would give the student insight to know whether they are truly able to teach Mild Interventions.

During my senior year, Methods block, I felt overwhelmed by the amount of coursework expected in such a short amount of time. All the courses included in Methods block have useful and relevant information but a couple of the classes and projects would have been more meaningful if constructed in a different way.

The course, Natural Science and Social Science Methods, was a very constructive class which the professor made very good use of class time. The instructions were based on information that we would be teaching in the elementary school. The class had labs on every Friday which included Social Studies and Science lessons that gave us creative lesson plans to use in our own classrooms someday. The material we discussed in class was relevant and will be useful in the future along with the projects we created. We experienced writing the different lesson plans to find which one best suits our teaching style and created a field trip plan to gain an idea of how one is created.

Early Childhood Curriculum, would be more useful if the information was more relevant to today's schools. The textbook is outdated because it still talks about persona dolls, which I have yet to see in the schools. The unit plans that we are creating are a good informational source to get acquainted with but information was expected early in the course that we did not have the information for. For example, the parent letter was one of the first articles due and we were supposed to include all the standards that we would be covering throughout the lesson plans. We were not expected to have all the lesson plans created until November. Much of the projects were major busy work that was not effective or teach anything. Anti-bias curriculum is common sense for most of us, and we would have learned more through experiences in the school.

My experience in Classroom Behavior Management was very beneficial because the information was relevant and very useful. I learned a variety of information about the various theorists and their discipline styles. The discipline paper we are expected to write was explained thoroughly. The time filler project was very effective because we each

now have these to keep students engaged when there is only ten minutes or so left of class time.

I did not have a good experience in Corrective Reading because I did not retain any information from the first half of the semester. The tests were basically working on memorization skills, which I struggle with. I do not feel like I was taught any information although the information in the course is very relevant. The Professional Website is a very useful and beneficial project because we can use it in the long run for interviews and show proof of our work to the principal. I struggled to see the importance of the tutoring project because we all know how to tutor a struggling reader through many tutoring experiences. The project was not very organized and not very clear on the expectations needed to fulfill the requirements. I enjoyed the class but I had a hard time seeing the importance of it through lack of instruction of material.

Overall, my experience at Manchester College has been phenomenal and I enjoyed taking most of the courses. I believe Manchester College has an excellent Education department who works hard to create effective teachers that have the desire and passion for teaching. This is written based on my experiences attending Manchester College and will be different for every education student one talks with.

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