

## WHY THE TRANSFORMATION?

When teaching teachers about teaching, the *structure* of the course is itself instructive — and particularly important for a foundations course taken by students across various teacher education programs at Purdue. A course on learning and motivation that is structured in such a way that fails to promote learning and motivation sends mixed signals to students and potentially undermines the content of the course.

The primary purpose of EDPS 23500 is simply that students learn how people learn. Of course, key to meeting this objective is an understanding of developmental and motivational considerations in creating environments conducive to learning as well as knowing how to identify when learning has actually taken place (i.e., assessment). But being an effective teacher is more than mastering this content—it is equally as important that our students have the will to effectively apply it. Doing so requires, in part, an understanding of one’s own learning processes and strategies so as to also model effective learning for their future students in their future classrooms. The intent of the redesign is to better model these principles.

**COURSE:** EDPS 23500 Learning & Motivation

**IMPACT TEAM:** Mike Yough (Fellow, Spring 2013 Cohort), K. Andrew R. Richards (CIE), Jason A. Ware (CIE), Chantal Levesque-Bristol (CIE), Robert A. French (ITaP)

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

We are still in the data-collection phase of the redesign, but early results are promising. Interestingly, while students in the “control” section of the course *reported* increased understanding in terms of meeting general outcomes for the course, in *practice* they did not score significantly higher on any of the specific learning outcomes for the course. Indeed, students in the IMPACT section of the course experienced significant gains in 3 of 15 learning outcomes:

- Understand the characteristics of long-term memory
- Understand psychological needs
- Understand achievement goals



## THEN...

The previous structure of the course consisted of two lectures and a shared recitation with another teacher education foundations course, as well as a shared early field experience to put “theory into practice.” Though attempts were made to make lecture interactive, the large class size in a large lecture hall made it prohibitive to conduct activities that promote deeper understanding of the material. Thus, lectures generally consisted of reviewing some of the main themes in the text, synthesis of readings, expansion of concepts, etc. The course is where Purdue addresses many of the state and national standards of teacher education, thus there is pressure to “cover a lot of material” in the course in preparing our students to be effective educators.



## ...AND NOW

The corner stone of the redesign was to move the lectures to Blackboard Learn. Students check their comprehension of the lectures by taking low-stakes quizzes and explore their conceptual understanding by making contributions to discussion boards. Class time is freed up to allow for a broader array of active learning strategies, such as conducting experiments on working memory and working through case studies. Large- and small-group discussions are maximized allowing for students to make stronger connections between the course and their practicum experience.

## UNFORESEEN ‘IMPACT’

Beyond the implementation of hybrid approach to EDPS 235, preliminary results indicate that the traditional class has been improved in the following ways:

- Students find the learning environment to be more student-centered in the class after the redesign
- Students’ perception of competence related to their ability to meet the requirements of the course is higher post-redesign
- Students’ perceptions of self-determined motivation are higher post-redesign
- Students’ overall evaluations of the instructor are higher post-redesign

