



EDE 4504
Creating & Differentiating Learning Environments
84494 001
Fall 2026

Instructor Name

Dr. Sam Haraf

University Course Description

This course examines various approaches to managing the elementary instructional environment and specific strategies for maintaining a safe, positive classroom climate. An inquiry lens is used throughout to explore the key question: How does classroom management inform teaching and learning in K-6 classrooms? This is an ESOL infused course with an emphasis on instructional resources for English Language Learners. This course is a clinically rich course in teacher preparation and is taken in tandem with a field experience. This course is a field based course.

Course Requisites

Prerequisite(s):

Corequisite(s):

Course Format

This is a face-to-face, highly interactive course. Students should expect to attend all class sessions and to engage actively in class sessions through

collaborative learning activities, micro-teaching experiences, small group discussions, and peer-facilitated learning. In this course, you will observe, experience, and practice using pedagogical approaches that you could apply in your future classroom.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify beliefs about creating learning environments and classroom management
- Compare alternative strategies and models for classroom management and maintain a management system that promotes a supportive, safe, organized, and efficient student-centered learning environment
- Create high expectations and maintain a climate of openness, inquiry, fairness and support that is respectful of learner differences.
- Use and model clear, acceptable oral and written communication
- Integrate technological resources, current information, and communication technologies to support teaching and learning for all learners
- Apply the principles of differentiated instruction and use a variety of materials and strategies to differentiate the learning environment, instruction, and assessment to create learning experiences for all learners
- Identify strategies for communicating instructional, behavioral, and assessment data with students' parents and caregivers
- Engage in inquiry to explore questions related to classroom management and implement knowledge learned during teaching
- Demonstrate understanding of ethical practices in planning instruction and managing student behavior, adhere to the Code of Ethics and the Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession of Florida, pursuant to State Board of Education Rules 6B-1.001 and 6B-1.006, F.A.C., and fulfill the expected obligations to students, the public, and the education profession

Course Objectives

Students will describe, analyze, and apply:

- Varied strategies and models for classroom management
- The role of high expectations and maintaining a climate of openness, inquiry, fairness and support that is respectful of learner differences (e.g. cultural, familial, linguistic, and ability)
- The importance of clear, acceptable oral and written communication
- The integration of technological resources in planning and management

- Approaches for communicating with students' parents and caregivers
- Using inquiry to facilitate exploration into questions related to classroom management and differentiated instruction
- The role of ethical practices in planning instruction and managing student behavior

Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

1. Lined notebook for internship field notes/weekly field note assignments
2. Poplawski, K. (2023). *The morning meeting book (4th edition)*. Thunder Falls, MA: Center for Responsive Schools, Inc.
3. Levin, J., & Nolan, J. F. (2021). *Principles of classroom management: A professional decision-making model, (8th edition)*. Boston: Pearson.
4. Additional articles and chapters assigned by your instructor will be located in your Canvas course.

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials

1 set of markers for classroom activities- Optional

How to Succeed in this Course

Doing well in this course is contingent upon your active participation and the initiative you take in class, as well as in your internship classroom in your connected clinical experience course. Monitoring due dates closely, keeping up on the required reading, and coming to each class prepared with the materials expected each week will ensure that you have interacted with the content required to take active part in the learning activities that will take place in class. Please note that attendance is required in this class, and you will earn points for weekly attendance and participation. Absences will result in loss of attendance/participation points. Open communication with your course instructor, as well as with your Mentor Teacher (MT) and your clinical supervisor, will support your ability to complete assignments in your internship classroom in a timely manner. Your Level 1 clinical experience (EDE 4941) is where you will enact the assignments for this course; the two courses operate hand-in-hand. If you are not enrolled in EDE 4941 or another clinical experience, it will be imperative that you have access to an elementary classroom weekly where you can enact the required assignments.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale

%	Grade
97-100	A+

%	Grade
94-96	A
90 – 93	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-
67 – 69	D+
64 – 66	D
60 – 63	D-
0 – 59	F

Grade Categories and Weights

Grade Categories and Weights

Assessment Category	Percent of Final Grade
1 Developing Professional Identity through Attendance & Participation (30%) + Engaging with Course Content and Readings (20%)	50%
2 Connecting Theory and Practice through Implementing and Reflecting on Routines	20%
3 Philosophy of Classroom Management** (Critical Task)	30%

Instructor Feedback Policy & Grade Dissemination

I will respond to email communication relevant to the subject matter within 48 hours of the date received. I will provide timely feedback on assignments throughout the course. You can access your scores at any time using "Grades" in Canvas. For guidance on how to do this, please visit the [Canvas Guide on How to View Grades](#).

Major Topics and Course Schedule

Weekly Course Schedule

Course Schedule & Topics	Major Assignments
Module 1: Course Introduction Morning Meeting Introduction	Morning Meeting Book, p. 1-49
Module 2: Morning meetings, continued; Exploring Students' Home, Family & Community Backgrounds	Morning meeting jigsaw reading assignment Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull, p. 8-17
Module 3: Establishing Relationships with Parents/Caregivers & Their Role in Students' Behavior	Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull Ch. 3: <i>Families: Resources for Organization and Management</i> "An Assigned Nickname" Case Study
Module 4: Factors that impact student behavior	Levin & Nolan, Chapter 3 - Understanding why students exhibit misbehavior Milner, chapter 2 excerpt Internship field notes assignment: Names, schedule, seating chart
Module 5: Classroom Organization and Physical Environment	Clayton and Forton ch. 3-4 - Classroom Arrangement Tending to Learning Environments (Fisher and Frey, 2023) <i>Room for Improvement</i> (Dillon, 2018) Internship field notes assignment: Physical Environment

Course Schedule & Topics	Major Assignments
Module 6: Setting Expectations and Establishing Rules & Norms	DeVries, & Zan (2003). When children make rules. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 61(1), pp. 64-67. Milner pp. 98-104 - Classroom management is about creating a caring environment Levin & Nolan, pp. 155-172 - Establishing Classroom Guidelines Internship field notes assignment: Rules and Procedures
Module 7: Philosophical Approaches to Management The Hierarchy of Interventions; Proactive and Nonverbal Interventions in Student Behavior	Levin & Nolan pp 234-246 (Prerequisites to intervention, proactive interventions, nonverbal interventions) Charles, C. M. (2010). Alfie Kohn's 'Beyond Discipline'. In <i>Building classroom discipline</i>, pp. 189-204. Boston. Allyn and Bacon Internship field notes assignment: Student ages and common behaviors Internship routine enactment 1 & reflection due
Module 8: Theories of Teacher Influence	<i>Principles of Classroom Management</i>: Levin & Nolan pp. 98-119 ("Teacher Authority Bases" and "Theories of Teacher Influence"); Teacher authority bases quiz Read excerpt "Classroom Management is about Effective Instruction" (Milner pp. 71-86); complete reading application
Module 9: The Hierarchy of Interventions - Verbal Interventions in Student Behavior	Read Levin & Nolan, chapter 9: Using Verbal Interventions and Logical Consequences Read: Charles, C. M. (2010). Linda Albert's 'Cooperative Discipline'. In <i>Building classroom discipline</i>, 67-84. Allyn and Bacon: Boston Internship field notes assignment: Hierarchy of interventions

Course Schedule & Topics	Major Assignments
Module 10: Philosophical Approaches to Classroom Management	Internship field notes assignment: Student demographics Read Canter's Assertive Discipline Read "Reframing Classroom Management"
Module 11: Establishing High Expectations	Read Bondy, E., & Ross, D. D. (2008). The teacher as warm demander. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 66(1), 54-58. Read excerpt "Classroom Management is about Creating a Caring Environment" (Milner pp. 107-129) Internship field notes assignment: Conveying student expectations Internship routine enactment 1 & reflection due
Module 12: Restorative Practices	Read excerpt "Classroom Management is about Restorative Discipline" (Milner pp. 133-164) Draft of Philosophy of Management due - Parts 1 & 2
Module 13: Differentiating for Students with Chronic/Severe Behavior Problems	Read Levin & Nolan, Chapter 10: Classroom Interventions for Working with Students with Chronic Behavior Problems Draft of Philosophy of Management due - Part 3 Classroom Management Routines checklist with mentor teacher signatures due
Module 14: Managing and Differentiating the Learning Environment	Draft of Philosophy of Management due - Part 4 + Peer Review Read Jung, L. A., & Smith, D. (2018). Tear down your behavior chart. <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 76(1), 12-18. Internship field notes assignment: Students as Individuals (academic, behavior, personal)
Module 15: Differentiating for Students with Chronic/Severe Behavior Problems & Seeking Outside Assistance	Read Levin & Nolan, Chapter 11: Seeking Outside Assistance Philosophy of Classroom Management *(Critical task) due
Synthesizing Beliefs for Personal Philosophy of Classroom Management	

****Assignments are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. All updated course assignments and details about requirements, including due dates, will be listed in Canvas. Students can access Canvas modules and course announcements for the most up-to-date information.**

USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online:

<https://www.usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx>

Student Recordings

Florida Statute 1004.097 Free Expression on Campus

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal, educational use (USF Policy 10-048). A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty member is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the USF Student Conduct Code.

Course Policies: Grades

This course is designed to prepare teacher candidates for success in future elementary classroom/school settings. In order to make the most of the learning experience and to foster the learning of self and others in our collaborative learning environment, students are expected to attend all

classes and to stay up-to-date with all assignments, readings, and activities. Assignments are due on the specified dates. Active, professional, and informed participation in each class is an essential component of the course and will factor into final grades where indicated.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is a professional expectation. Because much of the learning is designed for group activities and collaborative, hands-on learning, your **in-person attendance is required for all scheduled classes**. Attendance will impact student weekly participation points and final grading (see details in Canvas).

Late Work Policy: All work is expected by the indicated due date and time, unless you have communicated at least 48 hours in advance about flexibility needed and reached an agreed-upon revised due date with the instructor. Late assignments will result in point deductions for each day late, unless an extension has been approved. Any assignment that is turned in after 7 days will forfeit the right for revisions and instructor feedback. After 14 days assignments will not be accepted and will receive no credit.

Canvas assignments without a point value (i.e., “complete/incomplete” assignments) are due at the time/date indicated on Canvas. Timely and high-quality completion of these assignments has a direct impact on students’ Participation & Preparation grade (Assignment Category 1: Developing Professional Identity through Participation). Incomplete/late assignments or assignments that do not address requested revisions will result in point deductions on Assignment Category 1.

Rewrite Policy: Rewritten assignments will only be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and will require communication in advance of turning in the rewritten assignment. Instructors may require an assignment to be rewritten if the teacher candidate turns in work that does not meet the minimum expectation for the assignment.

Group Work Policy: Collaboration is critical to your development as a teacher. Teacher candidates are expected to work collaboratively when classroom activities and assignments are described as group work, including for regular in-class assignments. The quality of this collaboration will be reflected in your Participation and Professionalism grade. Please note that assignments not identified as group work must be completed independently and must abide by [USF’s academic integrity policy](#).

Grades of "Incomplete"

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. For undergraduate courses: An "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course. For undergraduate students, this time limit may not exceed two academic semesters, whether or not the student is in residence, and/or graduation, whichever comes first. For graduate students, this time limit may not exceed one academic semester. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

This course is offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please consult the [Canvas Student Guides](#). You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu. All students are expected to keep up with their progression through the course in Canvas, to monitor course information and weekly announcements using Canvas, to regularly check their USF email account (at least twice per

week), and to reply to email/Canvas communications from the instructor where requested within a timely manner (48 hours).

Laptops: Regular access to a computer or laptop is required for this course. Students will complete a variety of assignments that involve writing, research, collaboration, audio/video recording, and digital submissions, all of which necessitate reliable access to a device. Devices must be capable of running current web browsers and supporting Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings, communication, and course activities. Students are responsible for ensuring their device is functional, charged, and able to connect to the internet for completing all assigned work, both in class and out of class.

Phone Usage: All technology, including laptops, ipads and phones should be put away during class, unless explicitly allowed for the classroom task at hand.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness

Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy

USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and USF Policy 0-004. If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email.

The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Course Hero / Chegg Policy

The USF Policy on Academic Integrity specifies that students may not use websites that enable cheating, such as by uploading or downloading material for this purpose. This does apply specifically to Chegg.com and CourseHero.com – almost any use of these websites (including uploading proprietary materials) constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Professionalism Policy

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com

In this course, turnitin.com may be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you may be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Netiquette Guidelines

- Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
- Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
- Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
- Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
- Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

Email and Discussion Board Guidelines

- Use the subject line effectively by using a meaningful line of what your email or discussion is about.
- Keep your emails and postings related to the course content. You should not post anything personal on a discussion board unless it is requested by the instructor.
- Any personal, course or confidential issues should be directly communicated to the instructor via email. The discussion boards are public spaces; therefore, any issues should not be posted there.

End of Semester Student Evaluations

All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

Food and Drink Policy (for in-campus sessions only).

Please adhere to the firm policy of no beverages (other than bottled/capped water), food, tobacco products, or like items in the classroom. Your

understanding of the necessity for this policy and cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website.](#)

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[USF IT Services](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout site.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free resource for USF undergraduate and graduate students. At the Writing Studio, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you, at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, email: writingstudio@usf.edu.

[Writing studio website for the Tampa campus and Sarasota-Manatee Teachout Site.](#)

[Writing studio website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Student Ombuds Office

Florida Statute 1006.51 and Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.011 require that all public institutions provide ombuds services to students. The Student Ombuds Office at USF is a confidential, impartial, informal, and independent

resource for students experiencing challenges related to the university. Ombuds can help students safely explore options, clarify processes, and consider next steps. [Learn more or make an appointment at usf.edu/student-ombuds.](https://usf.edu/student-ombuds)