Effective Cooperative Learning

Course Syllabus

Course Description

The contemporary classroom asks more of teachers than ever before. Academic content must be taught alongside equally important competencies such as social-emotional skills, problem solving, critical thinking, self-regulation, and learning dispositions. When taught discretely, this can become an overwhelming task. But when intentionally integrated they become a synergistic and mutually supportive curriculum. This is where cooperative learning truly shines. As one of the most widely studied instructional techniques, cooperative learning addresses content alongside other curricular competencies, allowing teachers to effectively cover multiple standards simultaneously. Unfortunately, cooperative learning is often tried and dismissed because it does not seem to work for a particular developmental range, population, or subject area. This is often due to a misapplication of the technique. This course will explain the philosophical underpinnings and walk participants through the necessary components of cooperative learning. Participants will see examples of what works, what doesn't, and why. If you are looking for a fun way to cover a diverse curriculum while keeping students engaged and learning, this course is for you.

This course enhances classroom teaching effectiveness and supports improved student outcomes by introducing new knowledge in philosophy and key components of cooperative learning, demonstrating how its intentional integration can help teachers effectively teach academic content alongside social-emotional skills and critical thinking, while addressing common challenges and providing practical examples to keep diverse students engaged and learning.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Articulate the evidentiary and philosophical bases of cooperative learning.
2. Describe the elements necessary to make cooperative learning effective.
3. Train students on the use of group techniques and group processing.
4. Describe how to effectively assess cooperative learning activities.
5. Understand how to use cooperative learning effectively in diverse learning environments.
6. Enhance student interaction and promote authentic conversation.
7. Recognize and address some common challenges to cooperative learning.
8. Design cooperative activities that keep students engaged.

Modules

- Module 1: Foundations of Cooperative Learning, Quiz 1
- Module 2: Elements of Cooperative Learning, Quiz 2
- Module 3: Preparing Students to Work in Groups, Quiz 3
- Module 4: Assessing Cooperative Learning Activities, Quiz 4
- Module 5: Diverse Learners, Quiz 5
- Module 6: Promoting Authentic Conversations, Quiz 6
- Module 7: Challenges to Cooperative Learning, Quiz 7
- Module 8: Designing for Engagement, Quiz 8

Grading:

Each quiz must be passed at an 80% or higher (three attempts allowed).

Format

This is a self-paced, asynchronous (no required live meetings) course. Throughout the PD course, you will find it helpful to take notes along the way to assist with the quizzes. Within each module, you will find reflection assessments that are not graded but will help in your journey through the course. There is an interactive forum in the course to help you connect with peers and instructors, share ideas, and collaborate on best practices throughout your learning journey.