

# TEACHING STRATEGIES (TSTX)

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## **TSTX 502 An Effective Guide For Integrating Debate in the Classroom 3 credits**

Rhetoric and debate used to be standard classes in schools' curriculum. Although these classes have fallen by the wayside, the need for effective debating skills and critical thinking has not. As students face the constant communication on the Internet and today's divisive political and social issues, it is more important than ever that they know how to express their knowledge and opinions skillfully and effectively. Incorporating debate as an instructional strategy in your classroom will help them do just that. In this course, you will review the debate process and how it can promote critical thinking and a deeper connection to content regardless of what subject matter you teach. You'll learn how to help students form effective arguments, analyze resources, research debate stances, and participate in small-group and whole-class debates. In addition, you will create a series of graphic organizers and scaffolding strategies that will help you engage all of your students in the debate process regardless of natural interest or ability. Debating will help your students improve their public-speaking skills, work collaboratively, and be a more active part of the assessment process. By the end of this course, you will have an actionable plan for integrating debate into your classroom and a strong foundation for making debate an essential element of learning and instruction. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

## **TSTX 503 Applying the Habits of Mind in the Classroom and Beyond 3 credits**

Problem solving and critical thinking are buzzwords we hear all the time. But how do you teach these broad concepts to your students, particularly in a way that they will continue to use after they've left your classroom? In this course, you will explore personal mindset and the role that mindset plays in developing your beliefs about how you learn as well as how your students learn. Habits of Mind consist of 16 behaviors that people can learn to utilize to make them more effective learners. Using the intentional strategies from this course, you will be able to select and create activities that support Habits of Mind and create an environment that encourages their use. In addition, you will be able to assess students' abilities to use Habits of Mind to ensure that they are internalizing thinking processes that they can use for the rest of their lives. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to incorporate Habits of Mind into your classroom and school to prepare your students to handle any intellectual challenge that comes their way. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

## **TSTX 504 Bell Ringers and Exit Slips: Creating Powerful Beginnings and Endings 3 credits**

Getting your students quiet, focused, and primed for learning during the first five minutes of class can be extremely challenging. However, integrating bell ringers (i.e., quick, targeted start-of-class activities that students do at their desks) and exit slips (i.e., activities completed during the last five minutes of class) into your instruction can make beginning and ending a class less difficult. In this course, you will develop concrete, actionable strategies for choosing bell ringers and exit slips based on curricular objectives. You'll learn how to differentiate bell ringer and exit slip activities for diverse learners (e.g., English language learners, students with special needs) and formatively assess student work so you can modify instruction going forward. In addition, you'll review examples of bell ringers and exit slips for different subject areas so you can engage students in creative and critical thinking and incorporate these activities into daily instruction. Using the techniques and resources from this course, you'll be able to easily implement best practices for using bell ringers and exit slips to start and end every class period successfully. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

## **TSTX 506 Beyond Survival Mode: Maintaining your Passion Throughout your Teaching Career 3 credits**

Why did you become a teacher? For many of us, the inspiration to teach springs from a deep desire to serve the next generation and make the world a better place through learning. However, the path to becoming a master teacher is filled with challenges that can seem to be roadblocks toward those dreams. How do successful teachers keep that fire burning within them? What traits do they share that push them to sustain a high level of effectiveness? In this course, you will explore your past and your inner motivations to help you reawaken the passion that will sustain you throughout your career. Whether you are seasoned or brand new to teaching, you'll benefit from examining excellent teachers to learn how to tackle your fears, move through the stages of teaching, and discover what it means to become a complete teacher. In addition, you'll cultivate techniques for building a strong community among your colleagues so you can learn from and support one another. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to move beyond survival mode and nurture the passion that led you to teaching throughout your entire career. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

## **TSTX 508 Building Cultural Competency to Improve Instruction and Student Achievement 3 credits**

Although our society's dedication to serving diverse populations has increased dramatically in the last few decades, it can be easy to miss the subtle ways cultural background can impact students' learning in your classroom. Whether it's other students' behavior or your own methods of communication, small differences in culture can confuse and alienate different populations of students. In this course, you will learn strategies for how to teach with cultural competence so that all students receive active support in the classroom, thus limiting their risk of dropout. You'll start by examining your own cultural background and how that impacts your thinking, and also learn how to assess students' backgrounds, including identifying gifted and talented, special needs, and at-risk students. You will cultivate tools and resources for fostering an inclusive learning environment; communicating clearly both verbally and nonverbally; and working with families and support services to help students succeed. By learning more about your own and others' cultures, you'll be able to handle even the most culturally sensitive scenarios to ensure a safe space for all students to learn and grow. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 512 Classroom Management Strategies for Student-Centered Instruction 3 credits**

In the past, classroom management techniques have focused on teachers—giving advice on how to instruct students and manage their behavior. In contrast, effective classroom management in the 21st century calls for a shift to student-centered approaches that place students at the center of the learning experience. In this course, you will learn how to work with your students to set up a classroom that supports exploration, motivates students, and authentically engages them in meaningful learning experiences. You will develop techniques for building positive teacher–student relationships and dealing with difficult students to prevent power struggles. With student-centered instruction, your students will practice taking responsibility for themselves, making good choices, and taking ownership over their own learning. You can aid them in this process by creating activities with high levels of engagement and nurturing a prosocial learning environment that drives positive academic and social outcomes. With the strategies you learn in this course, you will be able to transform your classroom into an environment where students take charge of themselves and their learning. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 513 Coaching for Character 3 credits**

Coaches play a unique role in their students' lives that impacts much more than their athletic performance. In a position that lies somewhere between parent, friend, and teacher, coaches have the ability to help students grow not only as athletes but also as human beings. In this course, you will learn how you can use coaching to connect with your students and instill important, lifelong values in them. You'll examine how the psychological benefits of playing sports contrast with the dangers of developing negative attitudes and behaviors, and how to help your student athletes overcome these difficulties. In addition, you will assess your approach to sportsmanship, particularly in terms of building individual character and showing respect for the team, opponents, officials, and other coaches. Finally, you will explore different coaching philosophies and create a plan for implementing a character education curriculum with athletes. Using the techniques from this course, you will be equipped to teach your student athletes how to excel not only on the playing field but also in their day-to-day lives for years to come. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 516 Co-Teaching Strategies 3 credits**

Co-teaching can have enormous benefits for both you and your students. However, co-teaching requires careful planning and coordination to ensure that students receive unified, cohesive instruction—and that you and your co-teachers have a smooth, stress-free experience. In this course, you will learn strategies and best practices for how to build a successful instructional team that can effectively meet the diverse needs of today's classrooms. You'll examine six different co-teaching models and how to best apply them in your context, and you'll also gather tools for effective classroom management, lesson planning, and differentiation in a co-teaching classroom. In addition, you'll learn how to define the various co-teaching roles and responsibilities; plan for and execute instruction to optimize learning in a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework; and establish and maintain a positive rapport with your co-teaching partners and students for a powerful and engaging learning experience. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources you need to co-teach successfully and create positive student and teacher outcomes. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 518 Creating a Highly Engaging Lesson Plan 3 credits**

Have you ever spent hours researching and planning a lesson only to be met with bored stares, complaints, and lackluster participation from your students? No matter how important or exciting the content is, the lesson design must be equally engaging to capture students' attention so they'll be motivated to focus and retain the information long after the lesson itself. In this course, you will examine how to develop and execute highly engaging lesson plans regardless of what grade or subject you teach. You'll learn how to identify the signs of student engagement and analyze highly engaging lessons so you can replicate effective strategies in your own instruction. In addition, you'll create differentiated activities and assessments tailored to diverse learning styles and achievement levels so you can keep all students engaged based on their unique interests and abilities. Using the resources and techniques from this course, you will have a plethora of engaging learning opportunities you can use in your classroom to help students learn more deeply. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 519 Cultivating Student-Centered Classrooms 3 credits**

In the traditional approach to teaching and learning, the burden of designing and communicating learning tasks falls primarily on the teacher. In student-centered instruction (SCI), much of this heavy lifting is shifted to the students, even at the earliest stages of learning. SCI facilitates increased motivation to learn, greater retention of knowledge, deeper understanding, and more positive attitudes toward the content and the work involved in learning. But how do you shift your classroom from traditional to student centered? In this course, you will explore how student-centered instruction can extend and enhance students' learning, improve 21st-century skills, and engage reluctant learners. You will learn how to incorporate SCI into every aspect of teaching and learning, including planning, management, assessment, and meeting the needs of diverse learners. In addition, you will develop strategies to help students become independent learners who can create, explore, discover, problem solve, and innovate—all valuable skills they will need to thrive in college and careers. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources you need to implement SCI in your classroom and increase your students' achievement and engagement in your class and beyond. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 520 Designing Blended Learning for Student Engagement and Achievement 3 credits**

Students are now digital natives: tech-savvy individuals whose regular interaction with technology influences how they learn, think, and communicate. With this major change to the way students understand and interact with the world, it is essential that teachers integrate technology in their instruction to build students' digital literacy, engagement, and career and college readiness. This course is designed as a guide for teachers who are interested in integrating blended learning in into their classrooms to increase student engagement and achievement, differentiate instruction, and connect students to meaningful, community-driven learning experiences. By the end of the course, you will be able to design and implement meaningful blended learning experiences with objective-aligned assessments and activities that address students' unique characteristics as digital natives and foster core 21st-century skills. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 521 Designing Online Assessments for Students 3 credits**

Online assessments are becoming more and more popular even in the traditional K–12 classroom. Online assessments give you more options for creativity and also reinforces vital computer proficiency skills for students. But how do you incorporate online assessments into your class? What types of activities are possible, and how do you offer useful feedback to your students in this medium? In this course, you will learn how to leverage the resources and tools currently available to you to develop effective formative and summative assessments. You will explore ways to create authentic and engaging assessments online and how to provide meaningful and instructive feedback in an efficient and timely manner. In addition, you'll develop strategies for implementing collaborative group projects to help your students learn how to work together in an online space. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to incorporate online assessments in your class in a way that makes sense for your context and that will help your students learn and grow on a deeper level. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 522 Differentiated Instruction 3 credits**

If you've been a teacher for any length of time, you know that all students learn differently. They have different learning styles, abilities, and preferences, and in a typical classroom, their skills can vary from below grade level to at grade level to above grade level. This leaves you with the challenge of planning instruction that reaches a wide range of learners so that all students have the individual support they need to achieve at their highest level. Differentiated instruction (DI) is an educational approach of tailoring instruction to meet the needs of individual students. When you use DI effectively, students will be engaged in learning in the manner that suits them best without adding significant planning or instructional time for you. In this course, you will master the skills necessary to effectively differentiate instruction for optimal achievement by all students. You will learn how to identify individual students' needs and learning styles, and create activities and tiered lessons that will meet those needs. You will cultivate different strategies for grouping students, arranging your classroom, and using cognitive approaches that help students take ownership of their learning. Using the practical and easy-to-implement strategies from this course, you will be equipped to reach and teach every student regardless of proficiency level and learning style. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 524 Empowering Students through Educational Equity 3 credits**

If you teach in a low-income school, you may have noticed that your students don't respond well to traditional educational methods or that they show signs of having experienced academic inequity. To alleviate these difficulties and prepare your students for future scholastic and social challenges, teachers in urban schools should take advantage of new pedagogical approaches that consider your students' circumstances, provide them with a safe educational environment, and help them thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. In this course, you'll study various factors that influence the social, emotional, mental, and academic development of students from diverse backgrounds and standards of living. You'll learn strategies for extending the classroom and for developing and modifying effective, meaningful instruction and activities that engage these students, meet their needs, and prepare them for college and a career. In addition, you'll examine the benefits of creating assessments that measure your students' performance based on new criteria for achieving academic success. By the end of the course, you'll be able to cultivate a learning environment that supports your students' academic and socioemotional development to prepare them for 21st-century opportunities. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 525 Essential Teaching Practices for the 21st Century Teacher 3 credits**

Teaching in this century requires a new approach that actively meets the needs of digital natives (students who have always had personal technology in their lives). To engage your technologically savvy students, you need to incorporate educational strategies that integrate technology and differentiation into your instruction and assessments. In this course, you'll learn how to inspire 21st-century students to think critically about the world, engage appropriately with digital tools and social media, and build the creative, collaborative, and communicative skills they'll need to succeed. You'll review best practices for improving achievement, such as aligning lessons to the Common Core State Standards and targeted learning outcomes. In addition, you'll acquire strategies for connecting instruction to real-life experiences, improving classroom management, providing targeted feedback on formative and summative assessments, activating prior knowledge to enhance learning experiences, and using technology, differentiation, and student-centered instruction to support diverse learners. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to incorporate technology into your instruction and assessments to engage your students in solving complex real-world problems, foster cooperative learning in the classroom, and ensure their success in the contemporary world. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 526 Flexible Seating 1 credit**

The physical space of our classrooms is one of the components of our teaching practice over which we have some control. The way we utilize the space we are given can help or hinder classroom management, facilitate or limit collaboration in group work, and impact how we are able to differentiate instruction. For these reasons, more teachers are turning to flexible seating design to best meet the needs of their students. Flexible seating is one of the cornerstones of the student-centered classroom and is backed by research that supports the impact of movement on learning. Flexible seating is more than just a variety of seating; instead, it's a space organized to provide academic growth and student engagement with accountability and ownership of learning. Teachers who choose flexible seating need to know that there is some prep work involved and guidelines to follow to ensure flexible seating works for you and your students. This course will provide the tools for you to implement flexible seating in your classroom. In each module, we will look at how teachers content guides the organization of the space for student learning. The course will provide ways for you to look at the purpose of flexible seating and how to assess the needs of the classroom with your philosophy of teaching in mind, but also setting up an effective classroom for active learning and increasing student accountability. The modules will also explain research on brain-based methods for improving learning that can be achieved through changing a classroom from traditional to flexible seating. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 527 Flipping Your Classroom: Redefining Homework and Instruction 3 credits**

Would you be willing to turn your traditional classroom on its head if you thought it would increase student engagement and achievement? Flipped learning—a new framework for instruction—does just that. In a flipped classroom, the teacher inverts traditional teaching methods by delivering instruction online and through videos outside of the classroom and moving homework into the classroom. This method provides students with ample opportunities to engage in authentic, application-based learning with timely and consistent feedback from the teacher. In this course, you will examine different flipped learning models and select one that works for your students' diverse interests and needs. Next, you will develop strategies for overcoming the potential challenges of switching to this model, and also set up a learning management system to help you streamline your course content. Finally, you will plan differentiated learning activities and assessments that will help your students master the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. In a flipped learning environment, you can increase student motivation, manage student behavior, and differentiate instruction in a brand new way. This course gives you all the tools you need to flip your classroom in a way that works for your teaching style and your unique population of students. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 528 Fostering Teacher Collaboration within Small Groups 3 credits**

In the midst of grading, lesson planning, parent communications, and the myriad other responsibilities teachers have, collaborating with other teachers can sometimes feel like the last thing you want to add to your plate. However, when you have the right tools and mind-set for it, collaboration can actually make your teaching and lesson planning a stronger and less stressful experience. In this course, you will explore your personal mind-set about collaboration among teachers. Whether or not you're experienced with this type of collaboration, you'll learn the benefits of partnering with other teachers to improve your own practice and benefit student learning. You'll also explore how building on social capital can create an improved learning environment and how you might be able to plan lessons and projects with other teachers. In addition, you'll gather the resources you need to facilitate professional learning communities, including book studies, action research projects, lesson studies, and peer observation. Using the strategies from this course, you will be able not only to find the time for building a strong learning community, but also to maximize your collaboration for the benefit of yourself and others. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 529 Grading for Mastery: Guiding Students Through the Learning Process 3 credits**

As teachers, we've all had the frustrating experience of students memorizing enough to get an "A" on the test, only to forget the material a week later. This type of grading and learning doesn't help students grow and doesn't help you know where they are actually succeeding or needing additional help. Mastery grading may be just the solution you need to solve this problem. Unlike traditional grading, mastery grading focuses on evaluating whether students have actually mastered a learning standard (rather than whether they attained a certain letter grade) before they move on to the next level. In this course, you will examine the history and purposes of grading, including your own beliefs about the practice. You'll compare and contrast traditional grading with mastery grading and see how mastery grading aligns with Common Core State Standards. In addition, you'll consider the impact of zeros, deductions for late submissions, homework completion, and test redos on student learning. Finally, you'll learn how to incorporate mastery grading principles even if your school or district doesn't, and how to create buy-in among parents and colleagues. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to implement mastery grading in your classroom to encourage students to focus on learning, not simply earning a grade. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 530 Highly Effective Questioning Strategies for Teachers 3 credits**

According to Brandon Cline (2018), "while asking questions may seem a simple task, it is perhaps the most powerful tool we possess as teachers." Through questioning, we have the power to push our students' thinking to the highest levels. We have the power to create challenging, rigorous tasks that help our students grow academically, think deeply, and spark their curiosities. In this course, you will learn exactly how to implement highly effective questioning strategies into your daily instruction so that your students can reach beyond their potential. This course will introduce you to highly effective questioning strategies by clearly explaining the purpose behind questioning and how it impacts student achievement. After developing a clear understanding of why teachers ask questions, you will begin to explore the Bloom's Taxonomy framework and use it to create questions at various levels. Next, you will learn exactly what makes a question "high quality" and then use this knowledge to create your own rigorous questions. After creating questions, it is important to know what to do and how to respond after your students answer your questions. You will learn how to give specific feedback that addresses confusion as well as pushes students to think even more deeply. Finally, you will apply all that you learned in this course to shift the balance of power in your classroom so that your students become good questioners and take charge of their own learning. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to use questioning as a daily instructional strategy in your classroom. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 531 How to Stop Playing Catch-Up: Time Management for Teachers 3 credits**

For many teachers, it feels like there is never enough time to do everything for work and still have time to breathe, reflect, and spend time on outside interests. Time management is the thread that runs through almost all aspects of teaching — planning and organizing the day/week/month/year, dealing with interruptions, communicating with colleagues and parents, planning lessons, grading, and the list goes on. With a more efficient approach to instruction, teachers experience increased work performance and less stress, and, as a result, better personal and academic outcomes for students. In this course, teachers will gain concrete, practical tools to assess how they currently spend their time, identify where they can streamline or eliminate tasks, manage the challenges posed by unplanned interruptions and distractions, and increase efficiency with work email, lesson and assessment planning, grading, and other daily tasks. By the end of the course, teachers will be equipped with an actionable set of best practices to successfully tackle any time management challenge—and stop playing catch-up. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 532 Level Up! Student Achievement Through Gamification and Game-Based Learning 3 credits**

Video games are characterized by compelling storylines, immediate feedback, and rewards for achievements, all of which make them engaging and motivating to players. Game-based learning and gamification use these and other game-based strategies to transform how students learn. In a gamified learning environment, the coursework is the game and the students are the players! In this course, you will take an in-depth look at games, gaming culture, and game design to identify the characteristics of gameplay that make it such a powerful learning tool. Regardless of whether or not you use technology, you can incorporate best practices to gamify your instruction to leverage the benefits of gameplay, and develop strategies to move the classroom from teacher centered to student centered. In addition, you'll learn methods for transforming lessons into multiplayer games that engage all types of learners, including gifted learners and students with special needs. By the end of this course, you will be equipped with strategies for creating and selecting educational games that are best suited for your content, your grade level, and your students' unique interests and needs. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 535 Motivating Unmotivated Students (Research and Practice) 3 credits**

Students come to class with varying levels of motivation. Some are ready and eager to learn, while others struggle to engage in content. Why do students' levels of motivation differ so greatly? And is there anything you can do to motivate unmotivated students? For better or worse, motivation affects student learning, but luckily, you have the unique opportunity to positively impact all students regardless of their motivation level when they enter the classroom. In this course, you will explore the major theories of motivation, your role in encouraging and promoting student motivation, and strategies you can implement to develop students' mind-set toward learning. You'll examine learning approaches, the concepts of growth mind-set and grit, and the importance of encouraging academic risk. In addition, you'll learn how to set up your classroom physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually so the environment itself is motivating to your students. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to motivate even the most reluctant student to come to class ready to learn. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 536 Operation Organization: Establishing Order in Your Classroom 3 credits**

A well-organized classroom is an important instructional tool. When everything has a place and there is a clear system for maintaining order, students and teachers can focus on learning. In an organized classroom, desks are tidy, papers are filed, materials are accounted for, and the physical layout matches the needs of instructional activities. But with the many tasks and responsibilities teachers juggle on a daily basis, keeping the classroom organized often loses top priority. In this course, you will garner practical, proven methods for creating and maintaining an organized classroom throughout the school year. You will design a personalized organization plan that best supports students and instructional goals, including everything from eliminating clutter to creating a functional filing system for storing important resources and curriculum materials. In addition, you'll learn how to motivate students to be active participants in your classroom's organization and take ownership of your shared space. By the end of this course, you will be able to implement organizational strategies that reduce distractions and promote productivity, a sense of control, and efficiency for the benefit of both you and your students. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 540 Rewiring Education: Teaching and Assessing Essential 21st Century Fluencies 3 credits**

We hear about 21st-century skills all the time in education, in the news, and in governmental policies. But what does this term really mean? What skills are essential for young people to succeed in this digital age? In this course, you will learn the essential skills and techniques you need to effectively integrate 21st-century fluencies into your curriculum. You'll develop strategies for cultivating students' knowledge and skills in solution fluency, information fluency, creativity fluency, media fluency, and collaboration fluency. In addition, you'll learn practical methods for integrating technology into your teaching, and for assessing 21st-century fluencies. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to define and teach your students the skills they need to succeed in the digital world and workforce. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 541 Study Smarter, Not Harder: A Practical Guide to Teaching Study Skills 3 credits**

Effective study skills are essential to student success at every grade level. Students must know how to identify what to study, develop a study plan, and implement effective study tactics without having to rely constantly on their teachers. However, researchers have found that many of the study methods that are taught in schools are ineffective and do not advance learning or memory retention. In this course, you will build pedagogical approaches for teaching study skills that increase students' independence, retention, and confidence. You'll learn practical, scientifically based best practices grounded in cognitive science and educational research to help your students succeed. In addition, you will examine common study weaknesses and how to model and scaffold metacognitive techniques to help students build strategies that will work for them. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to integrate explicit study instruction into your existing curriculum so you can build students' skills for academic success and lifelong learning. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 542 Teachers as Leaders 3 credits**

Teachers lead their students every day in the classroom, but there are so many more opportunities for teachers to make an impact. Through leadership roles, teachers can help support retention in their schools, create a pathway to school-wide and district leadership, encourage professional development, participate in sustained school improvement efforts, and more. In this course, you will explore the various roles of teacher leaders in your school and district. You'll learn the value of distributed leadership in the school community and how you can establish yourself in leadership roles to support these structures. In addition, you'll gain concrete tools for running effective meetings, supporting colleagues in engaging in constructive dialogue, and implementing practices that build leadership and collaborative structures. Finally, you'll examine the impact of teacher leadership on school improvement through research and case studies. With the knowledge and techniques from this course, you will be able to sharpen your leadership skills so you can better serve your colleagues and improve your team, school, and district. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 543 Teaching for Rigor in K-12 Classrooms 3 credits**

It seems everywhere you turn, there's an article or blog post emphasizing the importance of "rigor" in the classroom. But what exactly is rigor, and how do you incorporate it on a practical level in your classroom? In this course, you will examine how to effectively implement rigorous instruction in every stage of the lesson cycle and in the classroom as a whole. Through an interactive and hands-on approach, you will learn how to promote participation, independent thought, and critical thinking, and how to structure rigorous activities to best facilitate meaningful and purposeful engagement in the classroom. Examples include using gamification, project-based learning, small-group discussion, Socratic questioning, and writing exercises to challenge students to interact more deeply and authentically with content. In addition, you'll either gather or create a set of activities, scaffolding devices, and graphic organizers that you can start using in your classroom immediately to help your students grow and succeed. Using the strategies from this course, you will be able to prepare your students for life outside the classroom by pushing them to learn and grow in a way that's appropriately rigorous for their level of understanding. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 545 The 4 C's of Project Based Learning 3 credits**

The idea of project-based learning (PBL) has been around for a while now, and as with any popular strategy, its impact can become diluted over time if not used correctly. Although students working on a long-term project may have some inherent benefits, there's always a risk that class projects can drift into directionless (albeit related) busywork that doesn't look beyond the classroom. To solve this problem, PBL has evolved to include a new Gold Standard that incorporates the "Four Cs" of the Partnership for 21st Century Learning: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. These are the core skills students will need to succeed in modern-day careers, and you can effectively instill them in your students through Gold Standard PBL. In this course, you will take an in-depth look at will examine project-based learning (PBL) and discuss its evolution to Gold Standard PBL practices and how they compare to the projects you currently use in your classroom. You'll practice creating PBL questions and units that address the Four Cs, and review a number of ideas and examples of projects and rubrics you might be able to use in your classroom. In addition, you'll consider the challenges you might face when instituting PBL and create plans for addressing those challenges. We will compare and contrast PBL and adding projects to a classroom assignment. We will also explore the rationale for using PBL. We will address how the components of the "Four Cs" of 21st-century learning—communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity—relate to PBL. After completing the course using the strategies from this course, the student you will be able to know how to implement a Four Cs-focused PBL unit into his or her your classroom and provide reasoning for its use to set your students up for college and career success. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 546 The 4 Levels of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) 3 credits**

Recent educational standards and best practices have put a great deal of emphasis on "rigor" and "college and career readiness." Although important, these concepts can be difficult to define, much less apply to classroom activities. Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) tool can help all teachers, regardless of grade or subject, ensure that students are engaging new concepts at the appropriate level to help them build the knowledge and skills they need to grow. In this course, you will learn how to design lessons that are appropriately complex, rigorous, and engaging for students in the 21st-century classroom. You will review the historical foundations of Webb's Depth of Knowledge, explore the four DOK levels, and use Webb's DOK in conjunction with Bloom's Taxonomy to design lessons. In addition, you will evaluate student objectives, activities, questions, and assessment tasks to ensure that they are appropriately aligned and challenge students at various levels of mental processing. Using the resources and techniques from this course, you will be able to develop lessons that vary in complexity and engage students in deeper levels of thinking. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 547 The What, Why, and How of Universal Design for Learning 3 credits**

Are you looking for ways to engage all students? Do you notice how students learn in different ways, but aren't quite sure how to address all of their needs? Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework that can help you plan lessons that meet the needs of all of your students. Based on brain research, UDL will help you meet the needs of diverse learners by planning lessons that consider the wide variability among learners. In this course, you will examine the brain research behind UDL principles and how you can leverage that knowledge to create deeper engagement and comprehension. After gaining a clear understanding of these principles, you will be able to plan lessons that engage students in making sense of the information presented to them while expressing their knowledge in meaningful ways. You'll learn how to incorporate student choice and technology into lessons while still fulfilling Common Core State Standards. With the knowledge and strategies you learn in this course, you will be able to use UDL to implement your standards, meet your learning objectives, and support all students in your classroom. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 548 Using Anchor Charts: Teaching Tools to Maximize Instruction and Differentiation 3 credits**

Anchor charts are not new, but their purposes and benefits continue to grow. In the past, teachers bought laminated anchor charts to hang on the walls for students to reference occasionally. But now, you can use them as a teaching tool, allowing your students to create their own anchor charts to help them become more engaged and take ownership over their learning. In this course, you will explore best practices for creating anchor charts and their many benefits in academics and classroom management. You'll review the different types of charts and how you can use them, including how to create charts that are interactive (i.e., that students can fill out and change throughout the year). In addition, you'll learn how to design charts for a variety of purposes, such as personal goal setting, making abstract concepts more concrete, creating expectations for group behaviors or projects, and much more. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to work with your students to create personalized, classroom-specific anchor charts to increase their engagement and deepen their learning. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 550 Students are not Customers 3 credits**

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, business models have trickled into education—and not always for the better. The current business trend that's permeating the education world is to view students as customers, which leads to a damaging dynamic in which teachers feel pressured to appease students rather than challenge them. This trend in turn hinders teachers' ability to individualize and personalize the education experience to promote curiosity and a sense of ownership in students. In this course, you will learn how to transform your classroom into a learning environment where you partner with students to help them reach their highest potential. You will develop techniques to build rapport with your students and their parents and create a differentiated curriculum focused on relevance, creativity, and rigor. In addition, you'll learn how to integrate strategies such as Habits of Mind and the design thinking process to help students take ownership of their learning. Finally, you'll create a plan to arrange your physical classroom space to align with your students' learning preferences. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to shift away from a customer service mentality and instead build relationships with your students to design personalized and differentiated learning experiences. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 551 Building your School's Brand 3 credits**

Stories capture our attention. Stories allow us to identify, feel, connect, and remember. Whether the stories come in the form of print, oral, film or social media, the experiences we have through stories impact our identities, beliefs, values, and relationships. This course is designed for administrators, school leaders, and teachers invested in the idea that a school is a community. You will explore how to brand your school and understand the role of all stakeholders in the process. You will examine your school's purpose, beliefs and core values as you reflect on the importance of vision and mission. You will gain an understanding in developing a road map that leads to your school's identity and actions that each stakeholder will and should emulate. The foundations of your school culture will be reflected in the strategies and techniques you design to promote and reflect your school brand. Utilizing strategic planning techniques learned in this course, you will be able to build and promote your brand that will result in a stronger school community and maximize your ultimate goal - student learning. This course is offered through Advancement Courses

**TSTX 552 Jumpstarting Online Assessments 1 credit**

As the move to online learning becomes more prevalent, traditional elements of instruction must also find their way into the online space. Moving assessments online provides a wealth of opportunity to empower student learning, but it presents specific challenges as well. In this course, you'll examine how to effectively map out, design, and leverage a range of assessment types to maximize student learning over the course of a unit. Using educational technology tools, you can develop authentic formative and summative assessments, while tracking students' progress to inform future instruction. Additionally, you'll gain strategies for offering timely, meaningful feedback that fits the format and medium you're working in. Finally, you'll learn how to design online assessments that follow the best practices of accessibility to provide an equitable experience for all learners. By incorporating dynamic, engaging online assessment into your class, you will be able to help your students navigate the online learning space and achieve the same standards as a face-to-face classroom.

**TSTX 553 Summer Learning Strategies: Combatting the Summer Slide 1 credit**

The "summer slide" is all too real. One study by the Northwest Evaluation Association showed that over the summer middle school students may lose as much as 36% of their learning gains in reading and 50% of their school-year gains in math! Although teachers have the best intentions to create great ways for their students to learn over the summer, they are often overwhelmed by the end of the school year and don't have time to put together resources to combat the summer slide. This course offers tools that teachers can quickly and easily implement so that their summer learning suggestions are ready to go long before the end of the year nears. During the course, you'll learn how to increase motivation through student choice and get parents involved so they can support student learning even in the midst of summer travel and vacation plans. You'll also see how you can set up e-mail templates so you can stay in touch with students and parents without having to compose e-mails over the summer. By the end of this course, you'll have a plan and the resources you need to help your students be active learners over the summer and guard against the summer slide.

**TSTX 554 Teaching Early Learners Through Math and Literacy PBL 3 credits**

Math and literacy are subjects that students will study throughout their school careers and use throughout their adult lives. So how can you lay a foundation that will not only help students understand the content, but also grow in their love and enthusiasm for the subjects? For many teachers, the answer is project-based learning. A project-based approach allows children to direct their learning through inquiry, problem-solving, and meaningful real-world applications, to prepare them to take on a lifetime of intellectual challenges. In this course, you will learn how to design lessons for project-based learning, how to differentiate instruction in this approach, and how to effectively assess and measure students' learning. As you plan instruction that encourages hands-on investigation, meaningful research, and engaging activities, you'll learn strategies for building students' autonomy and fostering a growth mindset to help them become independent learners. In addition, you'll learn how to identify students' individual needs and readiness levels so you can plan instruction and involve parents accordingly. With the tools and strategies from this course, you'll be able to build lesson plans that will foster a love of learning in your students during their formative years.

**TSTX 555 A Well-Managed Classroom for 21st-Century Educators 3 credits**

Every school year, one of the biggest challenges teachers face is managing their classroom effectively. After all, for students to achieve their potential, they need to be in a calm, organized, and healthy environment. However, students today bring to the classroom an array of personal struggles that affect their day-to-day learning and cooperation with their classmates and teachers. In this course, you'll develop practical, research-based classroom management techniques tailored to your unique student population. These best practices will help to enhance your students' emotional intelligence and academic achievement, boost their confidence, and equip them with skills that will help them succeed in your classroom and beyond. You'll learn how to build rapport with your students and their parents to create an environment of mutual respect and positive interactions. Finally, together with your students, you will establish routines and expectations that will empower students to take ownership of their actions. With the tools and techniques from this course, you'll be able to build a thriving, positive learning environment for your students—and for you. NOTE: If you have taken the Advancement Courses online courses Classroom Management Strategies for an Organized Classroom or Effective Classroom Management for the 21st Century, we advise you not to take this course, as its contents are similar. You may, instead, take one of our other courses in classroom management strategies.

**TSTX 556 Classroom Management for Online Learning 1 credit**

The online classroom presents a unique and at times challenging environment for keeping students engaged and on task. How can you keep your students focused when you have no control over their surroundings? How can you help your students interact when they're not in the same room? In this course, you'll get the tools you need to create a classroom management strategy specifically for online learning. You'll learn how to create an engaging classroom environment, build community, establish rules and procedures, and create student-centered structures in the online classroom. You'll also plan for different types of interactions (student to teacher, student to content, and student to student), ways to prevent off-task behaviors, and strategies for managing off-task behaviors when they do occur. By the end of this course, you'll be able to confidently build and manage an online classroom to maximize learning for all students.

**TSTX 557 Engaging Students in Online Learning 2 credits**

Engaging students in the online classroom is tough. What's the best way to communicate with students? How do you reach reluctant learners through a screen? How do you plan and make learning fun when everyone's in a different room? In this course, you'll explore several strategies for promoting student engagement online. You'll learn how to use both synchronous and asynchronous learning techniques to build relationships with students and create a strong classroom culture. You'll also investigate what scaffolding looks like in an online setting, including how to use pre-assessments to gauge readiness levels and direct future instruction. Finally, you'll learn how to create and use videos in your class, as well as how to conduct online activities such as discussion boards, reflection logs, project-based learning, e-portfolios, and more. Using the tools from this course, you'll be able to plan fun and interesting online instruction that meets a variety of learning needs.

**TSTX 558 Fostering Cultural Awareness and Inclusivity in the Classroom 1 credit**

If culture is the air we breathe, what happens when you and your students bring 20+ different kinds of oxygen into the room? Truly understanding and embracing another culture is challenging in itself—but how do you apply that understanding to your teaching and help your students be more inclusive as well? In this course, you'll gain concrete strategies for becoming a more culturally responsive teacher and creating an environment of inclusivity where everyone feels valued and welcome. You'll start by understanding your own culture so you can better recognize others' perspectives and address bias in its many forms (implicit, explicit, unconscious, and conscious). In addition, you'll learn how to promote self-reflection and social-emotional awareness in yourself and your students, and how to help your students become more compassionate, sensitive classmates and human beings. After participating in this course, you'll be able to approach instruction with an awareness of your own biases and will be more adept at fostering inclusion and better meeting the needs of your learners.

**TSTX 559 Leadership and School Law 3 credits**

This course provides an overview of legal concepts and issues relevant to today's school leaders. An examination of the sources of school law, legal issues applicable to school processes, and examples of timely school law challenges will help school leaders understand and address the complexity of legal issues within today's schools.

**TSTX 560 Student Accountability in Online Learning 1 credit**

With the abrupt shift to online learning in 2020, many teachers were left without their usual strategies for helping students stay motivated and take responsibility for their learning. To effectively hold students accountable, whether online or in person, we must first make them active participants in the learning process. This course shows you how. In this course, you'll learn to harness the power of authentic learning experiences to help students see how their learning is meaningful and connected to the real world. You'll learn the importance of developing students' executive functioning skills to foster independent learning and investigate ways to create classroom spaces and curricula that are inviting and engaging. In addition, you'll explore ways to get families involved and build support systems that empower students to learn. Finally, you'll assess your school and classroom practices to ensure they are equitable for all learners, and that they motivate students to achieve their highest potential. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to put students in the driver's seat by teaching them to manage, measure, and be excited about their own learning.



**TSTX 561 The Seven Domains of a Teacher Leader 2 credits**

The term teacher leadership can be defined as “the set of skills demonstrated by teachers who continue to teach students but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere” (Danielson, 2006, para. 1). As you journey through the process of becoming a teacher leader for your school community, you will be guided through the seven domains of teacher leadership. These domains are designed to develop teacher leaders who will be challenged to reflect continuously upon leadership skills; coaching and mentoring; analysis of assessment and data to impact instruction; strategies for closing the achievement gap through instructional best practices; the need to address equity and diversity in schools; and collaborative efforts to include colleagues, parents, and the community in comprehensive efforts for school improvement. Through each domain, you will become integrally involved in ongoing reflective practice as teacher leaders in your classrooms, schools, and communities. Reflective teacher leaders use the world of practice, knowledge of pedagogy, knowledge of the learner, and knowledge of content to personally evaluate their effectiveness. This continuous process provides teacher leaders with a basis for self-evaluation that results in leadership development for school improvement. By the end of this course, you'll be equipped to make a meaningful impact on your school's improvement efforts and create a more equitable learning environment for your students.

**TSTX 562 Let's Play! Creating a Playful Classroom 3 credits**

Listen, y'all. Before we even start this course, we want you to know that we fully understand you are busier than a woodpecker in a lumberyard and you have more standards to cover than a sinner has confessions. Yes, you. You, high school teacher. You, middle school brave soul. You, preschool educators. We created this for all y'all. Transitioning to a playful classroom will be the sugar in your tea. Once you get a taste, you won't wanna drink it (teach it) any other way. During this course, you will embark on a hands-on, experience-oriented journey designed to help you reframe your concept of play. • Do you know your play personality? • Do you know how your brain responds to play? • Can you explain what play looks like in the learning environment? Just hold your horses—you will! Throughout the course, you'll learn how to create playful instructional experiences for your unique classroom community. You'll be able to make the case for play in your classroom, explore the connection between play and creativity, understand the role of trust and relationships in play, and get to know the playful mindset. Using techniques from this course, you will transform your classroom into one that is meaningful, relevant, and most of all, fun!

**TSTX 563 The Art of Delegation A School Leader's Guide 3 credits**

Delegating. On the surface, it seems like a surefire way to make your life easier. But for school leaders, delegating presents a host of questions and challenges. What tasks can you delegate? Who can you trust with important items that must be done on time and with great accuracy? How much oversight should you provide without becoming a micromanager? In this course, you'll examine the concept of delegation through the lens of a school leader. You'll learn why delegating is essential to staying healthy, preventing burnout, and growing in your career. After exploring the difference between delegation and allocation, you'll consider how to decide when it's appropriate to delegate, what kinds of tasks you can delegate, and who you should delegate to. In addition, you'll review the rewards and challenges of delegating, as well as how to oversee tasks you've given to others. By the end of the course, you'll be able to delegate in a way that both empowers your staff and propels you toward becoming a more successful leader.

**TSTX 564 Networking to Strengthen School Leaders 1 credit**

Education can be a lonely profession. School leaders have to make tough calls and smooth over difficult situations every day, often without anyone to commiserate with or bounce ideas off of. The word “networking” often brings to mind awkward introductions at a conference, but when done correctly, networking connects you with mentors, collaborators, and friends who thaw your sense of isolation and guard you from burnout and stagnation. In this course, you'll explore both the personal and professional dimensions of networking. On the professional front, you'll learn how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of your current network; how to find or build professional networks that will challenge and encourage you; and why networking benefits not only you, but also your school as a whole. You'll also see how networking benefits you personally to become a more inspired, passionate school leader who feels supported and has the bandwidth to support others as well. Using the techniques from this course, you'll be able to build a network of fellow educators who will strengthen your leadership skills and reawaken your passion for your job.

**TSTX 565 Maximizing Teacher Success Through Small Group Collaboration 1 credit**

Research shows that peer collaboration is one of the most meaningful forms of teacher learning. After all, no one understands what it is like to be in the classroom day in and day out like your fellow teachers. Collaborating in tailored learning communities not only helps you deepen your relationships with other teachers but also encourages meaningful growth and development. So, what do these groups look like? And, how do you make the most of them? In this course, you will explore the value of professional learning communities (PLCs) for teacher improvement and student learning. You will investigate how to cultivate and manage these communities and also examine strategies for improving communication and dealing with confrontation if it arises. Finally, you will explore how to effectively leverage the online space for flipped professional development (PD) in small groups in order to maximize your teacher development. Using the techniques from this course, you will be able to form and manage productive, growth-oriented groups for better collaboration among your peers. Note: If you have taken the Advancement Courses online course Fostering Teacher Collaboration within Small Groups, we advise you not to take this course because its contents are similar. You may, instead, take one of our other courses in leadership.

**TSTX 566 Cultural Competency in Special Education 3 credits**

Becoming a culturally competent educator is one of the best ways to respond to the unique needs of a diverse classroom. To become culturally competent, you must first seek to understand the impact of culture on students' learning, including the intersection of special education and other aspects of students' culture. Only by identifying the biases and needs associated with this unique culture can you find the right teaching strategies to best respond to your students. In this course, you will learn about cultural competency as a whole, as well as its implications in the special education classroom. You'll identify inequities often present in special education and the factors that lead to them, including disproportionality and overrepresentation of certain student populations. In addition, you'll explore specific teaching strategies and lesson plans you can use to foster a more positive, culturally responsive environment. Finally, you'll examine how to involve families and the school community to become more culturally competent to enhance students' experience in the special education classroom. By the end of this course, you will have the self-reflection and pedagogical skills you need to continually grow and respond to the needs of your special education students.

**TSTX 567 Enliven Your Lesson Plans: Escape Rooms and Web Quests 1 credit**

Teachers are in a constant competition for their students' attention. As technology continues to touch every part of our lives, students' ability to remain focused in class seems to be decreasing. However, rather than going to war against things we might consider distractions, educators should instead use these technologies to their advantage to reach 21st-century learners. Escape rooms and WebQuests combine inquiry, story, puzzles, and riddles to get students excited and motivated to learn. In this course, you will explore how escape rooms and WebQuests can increase active learning and engagement in your classroom. Through active learning, your students will not only gain a deeper understanding of key academic concepts, but also practice critical thinking skills that will help them in later life. You'll develop well-rounded lesson plans that incorporate escape rooms and WebQuests to reinforce your curriculum standards. In addition, you'll explore myriad resources and platforms that can help you build active learning experiences in a way that is accessible and meets the needs of all students. By using the elements of critical thinking and task-oriented challenges, escape rooms and WebQuests can foster the excitement and engagement all teachers want to see from their students. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.

**TSTX 568 From Free to Funded—Supplementing Your Classroom Resources 1 credit**

You want to give your students the best, but maintaining a classroom and providing creative learning experiences can be expensive. Schools have a finite set of resources, and while educators can often stretch limited resources to do amazing things, that doesn't mean they don't want more for their students! In this course, we will discuss all things funding. You'll begin by exploring a variety of grants available across grade levels and subject areas (spoiler alert: there are tons!), and we will break down specifically how to write effective grant applications. Then you'll take a look at other government and community resources, as well as common school funding pathways. In addition, you'll learn about modern digital funding options, including how to successfully use crowdfunding sites and other fundraising events and activities. Finally, you'll take a deep dive into the vast array of free tools available and how you can leverage them meaningfully in the classroom. Using the strategies from this course, you will be able to maximize your efforts to create priceless learning experiences even when faced with limited time and resources. This course is offered through Advancement Courses.