

Sample Statements Made at the End of EDUC 425A that Demonstrate Students Perceived Changes in Skills, Knowledge, and Dispositions

Reflection Prompt: In 200 words or so, please share the following: How has this class changed the way that you think about second language teaching? Second language learning? Second language learners?

Excerpt from Sample 1:

"I am going to teach at a Lutheran school, probably in my home city of Chicago, after graduation. So I may have some non-English speakers, even in my content area class. I think the biggest change that was made in me by this class was that I became less scared of having these kind of kids in my class. There are definitely good and bad ways to teach them, and I will now have methods to use that are good! If anything, this class perhaps renewed my love for teaching the English language to native English speakers, making them better writers and comprehensive readers. I think that cultural diversity is something to be celebrated and not pushed down or "fixed." We are privileged to live in a country where people who don't know the language can go to school for free and learn it."

Excerpt from Sample 2:

"This course has really helped me to understand a whole lot more about how ELL kids live, how they are different than normal students and also I learned A LOT about how they learn and how to teach them. Had I not had this class, I would have never learned anything about how to give the necessary extra help to ELLs that they need."

Excerpt from Sample 3:

"This class has significantly changed my perspective regarding second language teaching, second language learning and second language learners. It is clear that we as teachers cannot treat ESL students in the same manner as native speakers of English. Differentiated instruction and the idea that 'fair is not equal' will definitely have a new place and new meaning in the classroom. It's important to

remember that we should not label ESL students as being stupid, slow or automatic trouble makers. Instead, we should view them in light of their strengths, their cultures and their differing backgrounds.

There are many strategies and approaches to second language teaching that can be taken away from this class....There are numerous methods for teaching and practicing reading, writing, listening and speaking skills (which I have now stored away in my own toolbox)....The SIOP model was also very helpful, as it gave me a number of ideas and guidelines for creating an effective learning environment and an effective lesson plan for ELL (and all) students.”

Excerpt from Sample 4:

“This class has dramatically changed the way I perceive and interact with English language learning students. At the beginning of the semester, I had no idea how to teach students who did not understand English. I honestly thought that they simply sat in class and tried to grasp the concepts because it would be difficult to teach them English while teaching the rest of the students who are native English speakers. Through this class, I understand that there are a variety of ways in which teachers can scaffold concepts in lessons for ELL students to better practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills...

This class has tremendously influenced my thoughts on second language teaching and learning in a positive way. I have learned that there are strategies for making every student successful in my classroom and I feel prepared to teach ELL students in my classroom. I am equipped with a toolbox of various methods in ELL teaching and am excited to experiment with them in my future classroom.”

Excerpt from Sample 5:

“Before this class I was scared to think that I could have a student in my class who didn’t know English. It is still a little scary, but I know that I have plans and models to guide me as I teach those students. I know that I can also contact someone from this class if I have questions of clarification or help with ideas. I have learned many models to help me develop lessons for classrooms with mixed students of ELL and English speaking students. I know that learning a second language is different than how I learned English. I know techniques that can help me teach English to students of other languages. I’m no longer unprepared to teach second language learners. I know that culture and background play a huge part of learning; I can’t expect an ESL student to understand American culture. I will have to meet them where they’re at and I will always remember i+1.”