

Description & Application Process
TeachingWorks-Minnesota Fellowship in Practice-Based Teacher Education

November 15, 2018

Overview and invitation

TeachingWorks is an organization at the University of Michigan led by Deborah Loewenberg Ball, dedicated to ensuring that all children have skillful teachers who are committed to and able to support their growth, with a particular focus on promoting equity and social justice through teaching. It is staffed by experienced teacher educators with special expertise in practice-based teacher education. The organization is best known for identifying a set of [high-leverage teaching practices](#) (HLPs) and helping other teacher educators teach those practices to novices. We currently support improvement networks and fellowships in practice-based teacher education in Michigan, Maryland, and California, and we provide shorter-term support and partnership in many other forms to teacher educators in more than 20 states.

Together with the McKnight Foundation, we invite elementary and secondary mathematics and English language arts (ELA) methods course instructors from Minnesota teacher education programs to apply for a special fellowship in practice-based, justice-oriented teacher education. The purpose of the fellowship is to support participants in developing and improving their ability to use practice-based pedagogies of teacher education such as rehearsal, video analysis, and other simulations to create learning opportunities for teacher candidates that intertwine attention to high-leverage practices, challenging K-12 academic content, and equity. Our goal is for all fellows to be able to design and implement these activities with increasing skill by the end of the fellowship, and to have developed some strategies for growing and sustaining practice-based teacher education on their campuses.

The fellowship will begin in spring 2019 and conclude in December 2019. Up to 15 teacher educators will be selected to participate through a brief application process. Fellows will receive a stipend of \$6000 as well as full support to travel to several workshops and convenings in Minnesota and in California.

Fellowship description

The primary work of the fellowship for participating teacher educators will be to collaboratively revise, implement, and study a “unit” of instruction in their fall 2019 methods course. These units, which will last for approximately four class meetings, will focus on the intersection of specific high-leverage teaching practices, K-12 content (drawn from Minnesota policy and cultural contexts), and equity. For example, an ELA unit might focus on using video analysis, peer run-throughs, and rehearsal to prepare teacher candidates to use the high-leverage practices of explaining and modeling content and leading group discussions to teach the literary practice of analyzing and developing an argument about the theme of a text, with attention to the equity considerations involved in using these practices to teach this particular content. The units will begin with baseline assessments of teacher candidates’ knowledge and skill and conclude with summative assessments of the same.

TeachingWorks will provide templates for these units after consulting closely with admitted fellows to learn about their instructional context, their teacher candidates’ backgrounds, and the K-12 students served by their graduates. Fellows will then work both independently and collaboratively to tailor the units to their particular teaching contexts, including the specific needs of their teacher candidates. The purpose of TeachingWorks providing templates for the units is twofold: First, it will make it easier for everyone to analyze, compare, and contrast their instruction and the outcomes for teacher candidates, since we will all be using similar instructional activities and approaches, in relation to similar K-12 content. Second, we hope it will support participants in trying out novel instructional approaches that might be difficult for them to design on their own given the short duration of the fellowship.

TeachingWorks will support fellows’ learning and facilitate collaboration and collegiality through several means:

- Two in-person workshops in Minnesota in spring 2019 (see dates below): At these events, fellows will have the opportunity to analyze and revise the unit templates and to practice using the instructional activities in them, with support from TeachingWorks, and to collaborate with one another on problems of practice. These events are tentatively scheduled for the following dates:
- Attendance at “laboratory” mathematics and ELA methods courses in California, in spring 2019 (see dates below): At this event, TeachingWorks staff members will teach “mini” methods courses, which will last for three consecutive mornings, to teacher candidates in the California State University (CSU), while participants in our Minnesota and California fellowship programs, along with other teacher educators, observe and then collectively analyze and try to improve the learning opportunities provided to the teacher candidates.
- Individual and/or small group coaching calls, in which TeachingWorks staff members will provide opportunities for fellows to seek conversation, collaboration, feedback, and access to specific tools and resources as they plan for and teach their fall units.
- Participation in at least one teacher education “lesson study,” in which fellows will have the chance to observe one another teaching and participate in collective analysis and skill-building.
- A final convening in Minnesota in December 2019, in which fellows will have the chance to share lessons learned, materials developed, and outstanding questions. In this final convening, TeachingWorks will also introduce strategies for working toward programmatic change on participants’ own campuses at this convening.

Who is eligible to apply?

Mathematics or English language arts methods course instructors at either the elementary or secondary level from any teacher preparation program in Minnesota are eligible to apply. Applicants must be scheduled to teach a methods course in fall of 2019 in order to apply, as the fellowship requires and depends upon the teaching of the unit as described above.

What can participants expect?

- To improve their ability to use practice-based pedagogies of teacher education to help novices learn high-leverage practices, including developing or improving skills at using practice-based pedagogies such as video analysis, peer run-throughs, and rehearsal
- To develop strategies for intertwining work on equity and social justice inside of mathematics or ELA teaching
- Access to the workshops, laboratory class, and “lesson study” days described above, including support for travel, food, and housing
- To meet new colleagues and have the opportunity to collaborate with them
- Access to remote one-on-one support from TeachingWorks staff members at least weekly during the fall semester
- Access to rich and numerous materials for training novice teachers, including videos, sample lesson plans, sample instructional activities, and sample assessments
- A \$6000 stipend provided by December 2019

What will be expected of participants?

- To participate in each of the workshops, the laboratory class, and at least one lesson study day as described above, as well as in the final convening
- To participate in collaborative analysis and design of the special unit described above, and to teach a version of the unit in their fall methods course
- To videotape their teaching and share it with TeachingWorks staff members and their peers in the group, and to allow others to observe their work

- To be willing to allow TeachingWorks to share the materials they create in the course of the work with other teacher educators (with attribution to them)
- To administer performance assessments of the focal HLPs as part of the unit, and to share the results with TeachingWorks and the group (for purposes of learning and feedback, not evaluation)
- To secure the necessary permissions for videotaping from their teacher candidates and from any K-12 students who are implicated in videotaping
- To participate in weekly phone calls and other remote interactions during the course of the project
- To share what they learned with colleagues through participation in the December 2019 convening

What will the summer workshops involve?

Each of the workshops in Minnesota in spring 2019 will last 2 ½ days. The first will begin in the morning on Wednesday, May 6 and conclude after lunch on Friday, May 8. The second will begin in the morning on Wednesday, June 19 and conclude after lunch on Friday, June 21. Both workshops will focus on building professional community among fellows and supporting fellows in designing and implementing their special units, as described above. During the workshops, TeachingWorks content experts, led by Deborah Loewenberg Ball, will engage fellows in studying and practicing, with support, the instructional activities in the units and in tailoring the units to their individual instructional contexts, and will share examples of instructional activities and materials, including video, that can be used to teach novices to use the target high-leverage practices.

The laboratory classes, held near Fullerton, CA, will begin with dinner on Tuesday, May 28 and conclude after lunch on Friday, May 31. Fellows, along with other teacher educators from the CSU system, will participate in planning and then observing and analyzing the instruction each day.

How will the program interface with deans, department chairs, and other leaders of teacher preparation programs?

Although this fellowship is principally for methods course instructors, we recognize that sustainable change in teacher education often depends on or benefits from the support and engagement of program leaders. TeachingWorks staff members also have experience and expertise in strategies for making change in teacher education that imply efforts by program leaders, including several focused on comprehensive program redesign, structures for ongoing program improvement, methods of compensating faculty members for time spent on redesign, and ways of enlisting the support of state departments of education. We invite leaders in the programs from which fellows come to attend any and all of the convenings that are part of the program, both to learn about the work that fellows are doing in their methods courses and to investigate specific methods of supporting program redesign. If at least three program leaders attend any given convening, TeachingWorks will provide some programming during the convening specific to them.

Application process and timeline

We seek applicants who are willing and able to meet the project expectations – in other words, individuals who have the time and the inclination to work together and with TeachingWorks to design and implement a new unit in their course that meets the focal goals of the project. In addition, all applicants must be available to attend both of the spring workshops and the laboratory class. We are not necessarily looking for people who already have experience in practice-based teacher education or intertwining attention to social justice inside of math methods – just those who are eager to participate in this particular project and interested in learning and developing practice-based approaches in their math methods course. We seek a diverse group of participating teacher educators who are committed to finding strong ways to integrate attention to equity and social justice into mathematics or ELA teaching.

Part I: Written application (due February 15)

- Please answer the following questions in a short written application (no more than two pages):
 - What interests you about this project?

- To what extent are you already focusing on high-leverage practices or related content knowledge or teacher education pedagogies such as rehearsal, simulated student interactions, and live coaching? What are things you would specifically like to develop, refine, or extend?
 - To what extent are you already working on the intersection of equity or social justice in the context of teaching practices in your course? What would you like to develop more? If you are not already working on this, what interests you about working on it? Please share any preliminary thoughts you have about this.
 - What experiences or interests would you bring to this project?
 - What is likely to be most challenging for you about it?
 - One of the expectations of this project is that participants will share what they learned with others in their program as well as, potentially, with teacher educators elsewhere. Please briefly describe any past leadership experience you have in your program and how you think you would share what you learn with others in the program if you are selected.
 - What is the name of the methods course that you are scheduled to teach in fall 2019? If possible, please indicate which days of the week the course will meet and for how long (for example, "Mondays, 1:00-4:00 p.m.").
- Plans for implementing the unit in your course: Briefly describe the course you teach in which you would try out the unit, and identify where in the course you would do it. If you wish, you may do this by attaching a recent syllabus from the course and annotating the syllabus (you may use Track Changes to annotate directly, or you may simply write comments on a separate document). Whether you choose to write a narrative about how you would change your course or annotate a syllabus, please make comments about what you feel are strengths of the course now and what you would like to try or develop, and why.
 - Letter of support from your dean or department chair: Please provide a letter from your dean or the chair of your teacher education depart that indicates his or her support for your participation in this project, including your attendance at all of the required convenings and events. If possible, the letter should also indicate whether he or she plans to attend any of the Minnesota-based convenings, and if so, which ones. Please make sure that your dean or department chair has read this document prior to writing the letter.

Part II: Skype interview (scheduled between February 25 and March 8)

A small number of finalists will be selected to participate in a Skype interview with TeachingWorks staff members on the basis of the written application.

In the interview, we will ask questions based on the materials submitted in the written portion of the application; the primary purpose will be to understand the applicant's interest in and commitment to the work, and willingness and ability to work on a special unit with members of the project and to commit to the time required.

Final decisions will be made and applicants notified of those decisions by March 15.

All questions and application materials should be addressed via electronic mail to Francesca Forzani (fforzani@umich.edu) and Monique Cherry McDaniel (cherrymc@umich.edu) at TeachingWorks.