

## Teaching English as a Foreign Language: Elementary School Practicum

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### Course Description:

This independent study course offers students an opportunity to engage in immersive teaching practice at an elementary or high school level in Prague. The teaching practice course adheres to the standardized procedures mandated for pre-service teacher education within the Czech Republic's educational framework, as stipulated by governmental guidelines for Czech universities.

The pre-service teacher in training (=the student) works with a supervising teacher at the school. The practice consists of initial lesson observations and a total of minimum 20 contact hours in class, followed by regular joint reflections between the student and teacher after each teaching session. Throughout the practice, the supervising teacher will complete an observation protocol for each class session taught by the student. At the conclusion of the practice, the teacher will provide an overall assessment of the student's teaching performance.

The student will maintain a 'Teaching Practice Journal' documenting the hours spent in teaching and reflections on each session. This journal will serve as a basis for discussions with the practice supervisor (Dr. Převrátilová)

The course requires reading of selected chapters relating to language teaching/learning and intercultural communication.

**Pre-requisites:** This course is aimed at students with a major/minor in education or languages. Students with other majors/minors will be considered on one-to-one bases.

**\*Note: Due to the limited number of seats and the independent nature of the course, please contact UPCES via email for more information.**

## Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:

This independent study provides a hands-on teaching experience, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting, refine teaching skills, and engage in reflective practice under the guidance of experienced educators.

## Course Requirements:

- **Lesson Observations:** The student will observe a minimum of **three** lessons taught by the supervising teacher and reflect on them.
- **Teaching Sessions:** The student is required to take an active part a minimum of two 45-minute teaching sessions per week at the designated school, the expected total is **twenty** (plus lesson preparation time and lesson reflections).
- **Reflection Sessions with the Supervising Teacher:** Following each teaching session, a reflection session with the supervising teacher is mandatory. These sessions aim to discuss the taught material, pedagogical approaches, challenges faced, and strategies for improvement.
- **Practice Journal:** The student will record details of each teaching session and subsequent reflections in the Practice Journal to facilitate discussions with the practice supervisor.
- **Reflection Sessions with the UPCES supervisor:** These sessions aim at discussing and reflecting the process of teaching practice throughout the semester.
- **Selected Reading Reflections**

## Grading Policy:

The student must complete all the course requirements satisfactorily. This includes conducting the required number of lesson observations, teaching sessions, and reflection sessions; maintaining a thorough and reflective practice journal; receiving satisfactory evaluations from the supervising teacher and practice supervisor; and reflecting on selected reading. The student must also demonstrate growth in teaching practice and the ability to reflect critically on their experiences.

The student will receive a failing grade if any of the course requirements are not met. This includes failure to complete the required number of teaching sessions, inadequate participation in reflection sessions, poorly maintained practice journal, or receiving unsatisfactory evaluations from the supervising teacher or practice supervisor.

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	97-100	Excellent Work
A	93-97	Outstanding Work
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	Good work
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	Work that is significantly below average
D	63-66	
D-	60-62	
F	0-59	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for passing the course

#### **UPCES Academic Integrity Policy**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are not tolerated. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the development of knowledge and learning is encouraged at many stages of the learning process. While we value technology for educational purposes, we also value originality and the retainment of knowledge, and thus using AI for assignments and examinations, even if rephrased, is strictly prohibited and considered an academic integrity violation, unless the instructor explicitly allows for it in the context of evaluated work

#### **UPCES Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy**

The UPCES program in Prague promotes a diverse learning environment where the dignity, worth, and differences of each individual are valued and respected. Discrimination and harassment, whether based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or other legally protected characteristic, are repugnant and completely inconsistent with our objectives. Retaliation against individuals for raising good faith claims of harassment and/or discrimination is prohibited.

#### **UPCES Diversity Policy**

UPCES fully embraces diversity and strives to create a safe and welcoming environment for students from all backgrounds. Prague is a wonderfully diverse community and UPCES is no different. All students should feel at home while studying abroad and UPCES will do its utmost to make sure that becomes a reality. Although unique challenges may arise, we believe that students from all walks of life will encounter wonderful opportunities for enrichment as they explore a new culture while studying abroad.

## **Weekly Schedule:**

### **Week 1**

#### *Orientation Week*

UPCES Orientation and Lecture Series

Weekly schedule will be determined individually. Weekly workload is expected as follows:

- Contact hours at elementary school – 3 hours
- Home preparation, including journal reflections – 3 hours

Reflection Sessions with the UPCES supervisor will be scheduled during midterms (week 6 or 7) and finals period (week 14).

### **Readings:**

Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2008). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. Routledge.

Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How languages are learned* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.

Piller, I. (2017). *Intercultural communication: A critical introduction*. Edinburgh University Press.

Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., & McDaniel, E. R. (2012). *Communication between cultures*. Cengage Learning.

Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning teaching: The essential guide to English language teaching*. Macmillan Education.

Spencer-Oatey, H., & Franklin, P. (2009). *Intercultural interaction: A multidisciplinary approach to intercultural communication*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Swan, M., & Smith, B. (2001). *Learner English: A teacher's guide to interference and other problems*. Cambridge University Press.

Ur, P. (2012). *A course in English language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.