

Step Into Humanities Teaching

Course helps humanities students explore what it's like to be a teacher



Elizabeth Dutro is teaching the inaugural semester of Step Into Humanities Teaching

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Undergraduate students majoring in humanities and social sciences now have a new opportunity to explore what it is like to be a teacher. The School of Education enrolled 16 students in its first Step into Humanities Teaching (EDUC 2050) course this semester.

"The Step Into Humanities Teaching class counts toward the school's Education Minor and can also serve as a gateway course for our Teacher Education program for both elementary and secondary English or social studies," explained Associate Professor Elizabeth Dutro, who is teaching the new class. "Students spend time in local public school elementary classrooms, observing exceptional teachers and interacting with kids. Then, our students collaborate in teams to plan and teach two lessons focused on supporting the public school students' engagement and comprehension of read-aloud texts that supplement the classroom curriculum."

The class is akin to the Step 1 and 2 courses in the CU Teach program, but only one Step course in humanities is offered. The class provides an opportunity for undergraduates to get an introduction to teaching with a humanities focus. Like the CU Teach Step courses, the humanities class is also a one-credit course.

Learning goals include:

- Begin to build complex understandings of learning and what it means to teach
- Conceptualize the kinds of dispositions, commitments and relationships necessary to support equitable educational opportunity for students
- Start to develop a keen observational eye in order to learn from time spent with elementary school students and experienced teachers
- Learn and implement one model of lesson design for supporting students' engagement with and deep understanding of text
- Engage in self-critique and respond to feedback in order to reflect on and hone teaching practice

In pursuit of these goals, students work within a reflection group throughout the semester. Group members provide a forum for debriefing practicum experiences, share in-class writing/reflections and give feedback on lesson ideas and practice.

An integral part of the course is the time spent in the host teachers' classrooms. "The teachers were chosen carefully and have enthusiastically agreed to welcome CU's students into their classrooms," said Dutro. "These host teachers provide positive models for our students. We are fortunate to have fantastic classroom teachers involved and a committed, enthusiastic group of undergraduates from across campus in our first iteration of this course." ■

Education Minor enrollments meet expectations

The School of Education's new Education Minor is enjoying a steady enrollment, with 19 accepted enrollees as of spring semester and more students in the queue awaiting approval for 2013.

"Our Education Minor offers a set of courses that challenges and engages. The enrollments in these courses are what we expected and with the addition of a few more new courses, we hope to round off our Education Minor listing," said Professor Dan Liston, co-director of the Education Minor with Professor Rubén Donato. "The number of students enrolled in the minor is growing and with

our continued efforts we hope to see a steady and satisfying increase."

The Education Minor, launched fall semester, offers the opportunity for students to investigate careers in education that go beyond the classroom teaching setting. The minor consists of two tracks: teaching and learning, and foundations and policy. After completing the requirements for the minor, students might take their training and apply it to jobs in the Peace Corps or youth centers, for instance.

For additional information, contact Dan.Liston@colorado.edu or Ruben.Donato@colorado.edu. ■

Total Enrollment for All Students Taking Education Minor Courses

COURSE TYPE	SEMESTER	
	FALL '11	SPR '12
STEP	59	72
ED MINOR TRACK	40	67
Grand Total	99	139