

Practicum Reflection Paper

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I was given the opportunity to work along side Ms. Gause at Oscar Smith High School for my practicum experience. Throughout my time at OSHS, I observed the teaching and management styles of Ms. Gause for Health and Physical Education. I also observed two outside classes: Drivers Education and Calculus.

While observing these teachers I witnessed some strengths and challenges presented by them and their school. Ms. Gause exhibited outstanding classroom management skills. She was personable and approachable by her students, so they were quick to cooperate during class. Very few incidences happened during her instruction time, which allowed for more activities. All the P.E. teachers worked cooperatively and respectfully with one another. They seemed to be friends and good colleagues. They do group exercises together outside of work, so they know each other very well. They also cooperate very well when planning out which activities and units will be taught. (i.e. one teacher will teach one skill/game, while another teacher will teach a different skill/game). This allows for adequate equipment for each class.

There were very few challenges I observed from Ms. Gause and the school. Open gym was one I witnessed a few times. There was a substitute for a few days, so all the teachers agreed to do open gym. The students played the same games every day or chose to sit out. If they want to keep open gym a part of their curriculum, maybe they can change the activity choices every so often. This would allow for students to experience new activities and be more excited for gym. Another challenge I witnessed numerous times were non-dressers in gym. Non-dressers occurred everyday and seem to just sit and converse with others that weren't dressed out. Some students say they were not prepared for class (i.e. not having a lock for their locker, not having clothes or shoes, or just choosing not to dress out). A solution to this problem could be to assign paperwork to these students. This will give them participation points, rather than zeros for the day. These

assignments could be on the rules of the game or health assignments from their previous or current unit.

While having the opportunity to teach both Health and PE lessons to Ms. Gause's students, I learned some new skills. I learned you can never be over prepared for class. It's better to have extra assignments or activities set aside in case of extra class time. My first health lesson did not take as long as I had intended, so there was about 15 minutes left of class before the bell. Students didn't do any work and it became a little chaotic. But the next day I planned an extra assignment just in case, and it worked! Then in PE I learned to assign students to help clean up equipment after activities. Transition time was much shorter and allowed me to instruct more, rather than clean up.

Although I learned a few new skills, I still had some challenges in the classroom that I need to improve on. Projecting my voice is still hard for me when teaching in the gym. There were about 3 classes in the gym at one time. The noise level gets very loud because of this. Next time I teach I will bring the class in closer to me and furthest from the noise. When I talk, I will speak louder for everyone to hear. Another skill that was a tad challenging was making sure students didn't leave class for long periods of time. This happened in the health classroom and gym. One student went to the bathroom for about the whole class period during health and two students left the gym area we were working in, to play with other classes in the gym. Next time I teach I will recognize these students and keep a closer eye on them. When they ask to leave class, I will emphasize their allotted time and establish a punishment if they exceed that time.

Overall, my experience at Oscar Smith High School was very fulfilling. Ms. Gause was an outstanding teacher to work with. She gave me a lot of insight and few tips and tricks for when I start teaching.