

**Where**

University of Washington

**Who**

Dr. Carly Roberts, Assistant Professor

**What**

Lesson study is a collaborative planning process that engages teams of teachers in iterative cycles of collaborative planning, teaching, observation, and analysis.

**Purpose**

The purpose of lesson study is to deepen teachers' knowledge of their students, curriculum, and pedagogical knowledge for teaching. Because the complete lesson study cycle includes observation and analysis, lesson study is also a promising approach to improving the effectiveness of teachers' instruction.

**Description**

When coupled with subject-matter content (e.g., methods course for teaching reading, or a professional development innovation designed to improve teachers' knowledge for teaching secondary science), lesson study can be tailored to meet the learning needs of teachers from a wide array of experiences (novices to teacher leaders), disciplines, (math, science, literacy) as well as teachers of different student groups (grade levels, students with disabilities, English learners).

Dr. Roberts has embedded the use of lesson study within the coursework of both undergraduate and master's level preservice teachers. Within a typical semester or quarter-length course, candidates are able to engage in as many as three complete, collaborative lesson study cycles. Lesson study begins by teaching candidates about the features of lesson study and discussion regarding how the lesson incorporates effective instruction and its potential impact on student learning. First, the candidates are introduced to video examples of teachers engaged in lesson study, thus modeling the process for the candidates. Through modeling and coaching, the candidates learn how to engage in productive talk concerning instruction and what to watch for when they are observing a peer during the lesson study process. In addition, support is provided during the candidates' collaborative planning and analysis through the use of a lesson-planning framework and debriefing guide. These tools are essential in supporting the teacher candidates in successfully moving through the lesson study process. (An in-depth description of process and forms can be found in Roberts, Benedict, Kim, & Tandy, in review.)

Next, candidates are supported in deepening their understanding of research-based instructional practices through coursework instruction. Immediately following the

introduction of new content and instructional practices, Dr. Roberts schedules her candidates to engage in a lesson study cycle. Using the collaborative planning framework, the candidates plan a collective lesson that integrates the research-based content covered in the course.

After the candidates have completed the collaboratively planned lesson, they participate in a practicum experience and teach the lesson. These lessons are recorded for later analysis by the group. The candidates watch the video independently in preparation for debriefing by using a data collection instrument to support the documentation of teachers' instructional behaviors and student behaviors.

During the subsequent course meeting, the lesson study teams reconvene to discuss the data collected, analyze the effectiveness of their collaboratively developed plan, and determine whether or not the students' instructional needs were met. Using an observation and debriefing form, the candidates discuss how the lesson impacted student engagement and learning. In addition, the team considers strengths and areas for improvement in the candidates' use of research-based practices. After engaging in this step, Dr. Roberts requires the candidates (if times allows) to reteach the revised lesson for further skill development.

#### Impact

Dr. Roberts believes that lesson study supports her candidates in preparing to enter the teaching field, not only by deepening their knowledge and improving their implementation of research-based practices, but also by teaching them how to collaborate effectively and to talk in productive ways about their teaching and its relationship to student learning.