

Teaching Portfolio

My approach to teaching and mentoring connects to my research focus on *leadership for equity and diversity*, and is evidenced through my teaching goals, responsibilities, evaluations, and results. Teaching represents 40% of my appointment and since Fall 2014, I have taught in these programs in the WSU College of Education: professional Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.), Master's in Educational Leadership (M.Ed.), Master's in Curriculum and Instruction (M.Ed.), and the Principal and Superintendent Certification Programs. My course evaluations have been excellent, with a range of 4.33 to 5.0 for "overall course quality."

A. Goals

My central goal in teaching for *leadership for equity and diversity* is for my students to advance equity and culturally responsive education in their daily work as current and future leaders in PK-20 education. I accomplish this by focusing on four key concepts in my teaching: (1) Understanding of self and positionality; (2) Respect and recognition of diversity; (3) Critique of systemic inequities; and (4) Tools to examine and address inequities. *Table 1* illustrates how these concepts align with existing scholarship on equity-oriented and culturally responsive leadership in education (including my own published articles, which I incorporate in my courses) and my teaching innovations.

Table 1. Alignment of teaching concepts, informing scholarship, and classroom teaching practices

Teaching for Leadership for Equity & Diversity		
Key concepts	Research informing teaching practice	Teaching Innovation in Classroom Practice
(1) Understanding of self and sociocultural positionality	Camicia (2005), Brown (2006), Marshall & Oliva (2006), Kruse, Rodela, & Huggins (2018) , Santamaria & Jean-Marie (2014), Theoharis (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational autobiographies* Online reflective class engagement questionnaires*
(2) Respect and recognition of diversity	Bertrand & Rodela (2018) , Cooper (2009), Gooden & Dantley (2012), Ishimaru (2013), Khalifa, Gooden, & David (2016), López, González, & Fierro (2010), Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez (1992), Rodela (2016) , Rodela & Rodriguez-Mojica (2019) , Rodela, Rodriguez-Mojica, & Cochrun (2019) , Vossoughi & Rodela (2018) , Yosso (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature reviews Examinations of theories & drafting theoretical frameworks
(3) Critique of systemic inequities	Brooks & Rodela (2018) ; Capper et al. (2006); Dantley & Tillman (2006); Furman (2012); McKenzie et al. (2008); López (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature reviews Snapshot Ethnographies (observational protocols of school routines) Analyses of educational policies
(4) Tools to examine and address inequities	Capper & Young (2015), Cruz (2011), Green (2017), Oakes & Rogers (2006), Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-De'Alessandro (2013), Rodela & Tobin (2017) , Skrla, McKenzie, & Scheurich (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examination of school, university, & community data (e.g. equity audits)* Analyses of school/district/program mission, vision, & core values Climate surveys / stakeholder questionnaires Family & Community Engagement Plans Analyses of leadership cases*

*Described in "Teaching Innovation" section of portfolio.

(1) Understanding of self and positionality: I define "positionality" as our socioeconomic and cultural positions and identities (Camicia, 2005). These identities include our lived experiences, work positions, personal and familial relationships, and how these experiences and relationships shape our understanding of the world, as well as how others see and position us. For my students—all current teachers or administrators—it is imperative for them to examine their own positionalities, in order to engage in critical reflection on their core values, leadership practices, and organizations (Santamaria & Jean-Marie, 2014). I encourage students to investigate how our sociocultural positionalities influence our interactions and interpretations of course readings. Our positionalities can provide strength and insight, but they also highlight areas of implicit bias or "blind spots" (i.e. the educational issues or concerns we might ignore).

(2) Respect and recognition of diversity: An essential value in my teaching is respect for all students and recognition of diverse experiences. Having students examine their own positionality is the first step towards being

responsive to diversity in their organizations. The second step is encouraging them to learn from the children, young adults, families, students, and staff in their organizations, seeing these stakeholders from a strengths-based perspective (Auerbach, 2009; Yosso, 2005). I push students and myself to think of alternative perspectives, especially ones we disagree with. Doing so allows us to acknowledge the voices that are missing from decision-making spaces in schools, and consider ways to open these dialogues and spaces (Bertrand, 2014; Bertrand & Rodela, 2018; Ishimaru, 2013).

(3) Critique of systemic inequities: Critical Race Theory (CRT; Ladson-Billings, 2016; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) informs both my research and teaching. CRT teaches us that educational leaders must have a deep understanding of the historic inequities present in systems they lead (Capper, 2015; Howard, 2010). This means they must learn the history of racism, classism, heteronormativity, sexism, xenophobia, and other structural inequities, which have marked how schools and universities were created in the U.S. This knowledge allows them to critique the current inequities in our systems today and combat persistent deficit ideas about low-income students of color and their families and communities (Ullucci & Howard, 2015; Vossoughi & Rodela, 2018).

(4) Tools to examine and address inequities: After examining their positionalities, learning about diversity in their organizations, and critiquing broader inequities, my students are eager to “change the world!” But, they often are left with questions about how to create change in their schools, districts, or universities. I engage students in learning critical equity leadership tools such as using equity audits (Capper & Young, 2015; Green, 2017; Skrla, McKenzie, & Scheurich, 2009), climate surveys (Thapa et al., 2013), or snapshot ethnographies (Cruz, 2011) to inform their decision-making. We also critique hierarchies in decision-making spaces they lead, which often delimit student, family, or community leadership (Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013; Cooper, 2009; Fernández & López, 2017; Ishimaru, 2013, 2017; Welton & Freelon, 2018). I describe four of these tools in the “Teaching Innovation” sub-section of this document.

B. Responsibilities

My teaching responsibilities include my WSU Educational Leadership course load as well as graduate student advising, mentoring underrepresented graduate and undergraduate students, and professional development in the broader community. I teach primarily in our WSU Educational Leadership Programs, including:

- **Professional Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.),** which is a statewide program. My students access class via WSU’s Academic Media Services (AMS) system. This means a majority of my students attend class via videoconferencing from one of our WSU campuses or a remote school district site (e.g. in rural areas over 1.5 hours from a WSU campus or research extension center). I have taught and developed the syllabi for two required courses in the Ed.D. program: *EdAd 512 Leadership Studies for Social Justice* and *TL 589/CSSTE 533 Race, Identity, and Representation*.
- **Master’s in Educational Leadership (M.Ed.),** out of the WSU Vancouver campus, with students in-person with me on our Vancouver campus or via AMS at our WSU Puyallup Extension Center and the Tukwila School District near Seattle, WA. I have taught and developed syllabi for *EdAd 507 Social Foundations of Education* and *TL 589/CSSTE 533 Race, Identity, & Representation* as a Master’s-focused course.
- **Principal Certification Program,** out of the WSU Vancouver campus with students in-person, in Puyallup, or Tukwila. I have taught both the beginning course in the program *EdAd 589 Leadership Development Seminar* and their final course *EdAd 583 Community and Communications*, which are both aligned to state and national leadership preparation standards.
- **Superintendent Certification Program,** which meets in person once a month at different locations in the state including the WSU Pullman, Spokane, and Vancouver campuses as well as once a year at the State Capitol in Olympia. I taught the “Social Justice Strand” for two years in the program.

I have also taught one class in our Master’s in Curriculum and Instruction program at the WSU Vancouver campus. Table 2 details my courses, number of students, teaching context, and average course evaluations.

Teaching Innovations Informed by Research. As outlined in Table 1, four key concepts guide my teaching practice. Under each of these concepts are teaching innovations focused on improving my students’ abilities to lead for equity and diversity. In my courses, I teach primarily graduate students, therefore a foundational aspect of my courses is preparing doctoral and Master’s students to engage in comprehensive reviews of the existing research literature as well as deep examinations of theories. For example, in *EdAd 512 Leadership Studies for Social Justice*, I often teach students in one of their first doctoral classes and for some students, my course is the first formal class they have attended in 10-15 years. A critical assignment in this class is a “Theoretical Synthesis of Leadership and Equity Concepts” in which students conduct a literature review of key leadership theories and write their own theoretical

frameworks with key definitions related to equity and education. Students produce a draft of the assignment, receive feedback, then resubmit multiple times as they improve their papers. These scholarly skills are essential to student success in graduate programs. In addition to assignments like literature reviews and theoretical frameworks are more innovative teaching practices aimed at supporting students developing leadership skills in their work contexts. For purposes of space, I highlight these four key course innovations that cut across my classes:

- **Use of educational autobiographies:** A critical first assignment in nearly all my courses is for students to engage in deep reflection on their own experiences of schooling. By writing an “Educational Autobiography,” students describe their upbringings, how their families were involved in their education, and how they encountered difference and diversity in their educational pathways. I inspire students to critically examine assumptions they have about education as well as culturally and linguistically diverse communities they may have limited personal experiences with, but now serve in their schools or universities.
- **Online reflective class engagement questionnaires:** As mentioned previously, a majority of my students are not physically present in the classroom and instead access class via WSU’s AMS system. Because of this, it can be hard to gauge students’ active participation (especially for students reluctant to speak in class). One way I have sought to increase student engagement is by developing an online questionnaire where students reflect on key concepts in the course, current learning goals, and share with me how I can support their learning. Students complete these “Reflective Class Engagement” questionnaires about three times during the semester. They serve as both vital reflective learning tools as well as formative evaluations for me to improve their course experience.
- **Examinations of school, university, and community data:** I engage students in assignments analyzing critical data from their schools, districts, or college programs. Using tools such as “equity audits,” students examine data on achievement (e.g. test scores, graduation rates), discipline rates, or equitable access to Advanced Placement or Special Education programs (Skrla, McKenzie, Scheurich, 2009). They consider the racial, income, and gender demographics of these data to interrogate inequities in their systems. Additionally, using research on community engagement (Green, 2017) and organizing (Oakes & Rogers, 2006), students construct “asset maps” of organizations, churches, or businesses in their local communities for potential partnerships. I seek to make our classroom a laboratory for them to explore key inequities or equity opportunities in their daily work as leaders.
- **Analyses of leadership cases:** Another key innovation I have championed in partnership with other colleagues in our WSU Educational Leadership Program is increased use of leadership cases in my courses. In particular, using research-based, peer-reviewed cases from one of our field’s most respected journals *The Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, I have facilitated discussions of racial tensions, homophobia, trauma, and other critical equity issues in my classes. Also, students have been inspired to write their own cases for publication or use them in their work contexts to lead professional development with their staffs.

An additional embedded innovation within all my courses is the use of technology to provide equitable access for all my students, particularly students who have different abilities such as my Deaf students or students who are blind or have visual impairments. In a talk given to UNESCO, Linda Darling-Hammond said, “excellence without equity is not excellence; it’s privilege. Equity without excellence is tokenism.” Just as I push my students who are practicing teachers, principals, district leaders, and higher education administrators to combat deficit perspectives and strive for excellence for *each and every student*, I too must live this in my practice. Our WSU AMS videoconferencing system as well as use of Blackboard learning platforms present unique challenges to ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all students, particularly students with different abilities. I often use Zoom videoconferencing, online chat platforms, closed-caption videos, shared online documents for notetaking, and other platforms to create a classroom community that lives outside of the classroom space or time. I also work directly with our American Sign Language interpreters and WSU’s Access Center (for students with disabilities) to make sure my students have equal and equitable access to all my course materials as well as one-on-one meetings with me.

Graduate Student Advising. Mentoring and supporting students is critical service work that strengthens my research and courses. I am chairing and have chaired 6 doctoral candidates in the Educational Leadership Doctorate (Ed.D). I have been a committee member on 9 doctoral committees (Ed.D.-Educational Leadership, Ph.D.-Cultural Studies & Social Thought in Education), chair of 2 Master’s committees (M.Ed.-Educational Leadership), and a committee member for 38 Master’s committees (M.Ed.-Educational Leadership, M.Ed.-Curriculum and Instruction).

Mentoring Underrepresented Students. Another aspect of my student mentoring is related to my positionality as a Latina professor of color, which is discussed in my *Context Statement* as well. There are additional teaching activities I engage in that do not fit under traditional teaching or service roles, but they require substantial time and energy to support students. Every year I spend considerable time with students from different backgrounds

and campuses. These do not include brief 15-minute meetings in my office, but longer and more involved interactions over the semester or years. For example, over the 2015-2016 school year, a Latino graduate student seeking to be a principal was experiencing challenges with appropriate mentoring in his administrative internship at a local school district. Because the student trusted me and could speak to me in Spanish, his native language, he sought informal mentoring from me to help him navigate the difficult political environment he found himself in. Essentially, he had a different approach to leadership that did not fit into the traditional middle-class American frame, yet was deeply responsive to the large immigrant population in his school. Another example is mentorship of undergraduate students of color at WSU Vancouver who have sought out mentoring while dealing with racially hostile environments in their classes or navigating communication with other professors. These forms of mentoring are “informal,” but extremely vital for student persistence and to diversify the higher education and the K-12 educational profession.

Professional development in the local and national educational community. As a community-engaged scholar and aligned with WSU’s land-grant mission, I respond to the needs of our local region in SW Washington, the Portland Metropolitan area, and the broader Pacific Northwest through professional development workshops offered, and nationally through guest lectures. Since Fall 2014, I have led 14 professional development workshops across the Pacific Northwest, including a series of workshops on equity and culturally responsive education in the Bethel School District with approximately 50 educators in 2016 and a yearlong partnership with an elementary school in the Evergreen School District engaged in learning about addressing equity and racism as a whole staff (about 40 participants for 7 sessions in 2018-2019). I have also been an invited guest lecturer (online and in person) for programs in Bilingual Education, Special Education, and Educational Leadership at Georgetown University, University of Oregon, Santa Clara University, and University of Texas at San Antonio (see *Curriculum Vitae*). These represent critical teaching outreach and are essential to my research focus on *leadership for equity and diversity*.

D. Evaluations

Table 2 details my classes, number of students, teaching context, and overall rating of course quality. A key aspect of my courses not easily captured by evaluation metrics is the classroom culture. As described above, I seek for students to critically examine their own positionalities and beliefs about equity and education. In accomplish this, I must create a learning environment where students feel safe to share their diverse perspectives. This impact is best evidenced in student comments in the course evaluations. For example, “The learning environment was very safe. An amazingly reflective class. Dr. Rodela created a powerful learning environment” (CCSTE 533, Summer 2018) and “she does a good job creating a safe space for students to discuss difficult issues” (EdAd 512, Fall 2016) (*Supporting Document-Course Evaluations*). A supportive, inclusive culture is something I strive for in every course I teach.

Table 2. Courses Taught and Evaluations

Semester	Course*	Total students	Teaching Context**	Overall rating of course quality
Spring 2019	EdAd 583: Community & Communications	23	3 AMS sites	5.0
Fall 2018	EdAd 512: Leadership Studies for Social Justice	23	9 AMS sites	5.0
Fall 2018	EdAd 589: Leadership Development Seminar	11	Face-to-face in Vancouver	4.9
Summer 2018	CSSTE 533: Race, Identity, & Representation (formerly TL 589)	13	4 AMS sites	5.0
Spring 2018	EdAd 583: Community & Communications	13	Face-to-face in Vancouver	5.0
Fall 2017	EdAd 512: Leadership Studies for Social Justice	18	8 AMS sites	4.9
Fall 2017	EdAd 589/EdAd 521: Leadership Development Seminar (cross-listed course and co-taught with Sharon Kruse)	33	3 AMS sites	4.9
Summer 2017	TL 589: Race, Identity, & Representation	14	3 AMS sites	5.0
Spring 2017	EdAd 589: Leadership Development Seminar	11	2 AMS sites (all students located in Tukwila)	4.9
Spring 2017	EdAd 583: Community & Communications	18	Face-to-face in Vancouver	4.8

Fall 2016	EdAd 512: Leadership Studies for Social Justice	24	4 AMS sites	4.8
Fall 2016	EdAd 581: Politics in Education (Superintendent Program)	22	Face-to-face in Spokane & Vancouver	4.6***
Spring 2016	EdAd 583: Community & Communications	17	Face-to-face in Vancouver	4.97
Fall 2015	EdAd 512: Leadership Studies for Social Justice	17	8 AMS sites	4.98
Fall 2015	EdAd 587: Seminar in School Administration (Superintendent Program)	25	Face-to-face in Spokane & Vancouver	4.69***
Summer 2015	EdAd 507: Social Foundations of Education	16	2 AMS sites	4.71
Spring 2015	EdAd 507: Social Foundations of Education	16	Face-to-face in Vancouver	4.8
Spring 2015	EdAd 587: Seminar in School Administration (Superintendent Program)	25	Face-to-face in Olympia, Spokane, & Vancouver	4.33***
Fall 2014	EdAd 512: Leadership Studies for Social Justice	13	4 AMS sites	4.68
Fall 2014	EdAd 587 Seminar in School Administration (Superintendent Certification Program)	24	Face-to-face in Pullman, Spokane, & Vancouver	4.45***
Overall mean across courses taught				4.82

*All courses are three credit courses; **Teaching context provides information on the teaching format, including AMS and the number of sites, including WSU sites (Pullman, Spokane, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, Everett, Puyallup) and non-WSU sites where students connect from their school districts.; ***Individualized evaluations not available for the Superintendent Program prior. These evaluations are program level evaluations for the team of 3 clinical faculty members, 2 adjuncts, and myself teaching in the program.

D. Results

Two areas that speak to my impact on advancing *leadership for equity and diversity* are related to my mentorship of graduate students and contribution to the scholarship of teaching.

Student successes. Two of my Ed.D. students have won prestigious national awards in our field, which I nominated and sponsored them for: (1) Lori Hunt, who defended and graduated in Spring 2019, was a Barbara Jackson Scholar (2016-2018), which is a competitive University Council of Educational Administration program (UCEA) providing mentorship to exceptional doctoral students of color; (2) Cathy Woods, who will defend her dissertation in Fall 2019, was a Clark Scholar (2017), which is a competitive UCEA program for exemplary doctoral students who receive mentorship and attend a dissertation workshop at the American Educational Research Association conference. I look forward to continuing to support student achievement in these and other national scholarship programs.

Contributions to the scholarship of teaching. Teaching current and future educational leaders has inspired several publications, which offer indispensable learning opportunities for graduate students and critical teaching resources to my field. I have co-authored several publications with WSU graduate students. Ed.D. student Jack Tobin's final project in my course *Leadership Studies for Social Justice* resulted in a published leadership case article (Rodela & Tobin, 2017). Principal preparation students Alison Cochrun, David Haines, and Solina Journey co-authored a piece with me currently under review for the *Journal of Education Human Resources* on the 2016 Presidential Election's impact in local schools. Alison Cochrun also co-authored another article on Latinx educational leadership (Rodela, Rodriguez-Mojica, & Cochrun, 2019). My publications in *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership* (Rodela & Tobin, 2017; Kruse & Rodela, in press) are important to highlight because this peer-reviewed journal offers vital teaching resources to our field, and are often used in principal preparation or graduate classes around the country. I look forward to continuing to write with students and contribute to the scholarship of teaching in my field.

In summary, teaching has played an integral part of my broader research focus on *leadership for equity and diversity*. This synergy has strengthened my focus and broader contribution as a scholar to the field of Educational Leadership as well as WSU's land-grant mission and the College of Education's strategic priorities and goals.



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