



University of Michigan Provost's Teaching Innovation Prize

2010 WINNER



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Learning and Teaching the Disciplines through Clinical Rounds (The Rounds Project)

Innovation Description

This project borrows the idea of rounds from medical and nursing training and applies it to the process of preparing secondary school history and social studies teachers. Over three semesters, teacher candidates work in a professional program that integrates discipline-specific literacy, history/social science content and high-leverage teaching practices while they "rotate" through a series of carefully scaffolded and closely supervised clinical experiences.

Traditionally, would-be teachers acquire disciplinary content in LSA, encounter pedagogical theory in SOE, and struggle to interweave the two during unstructured field placements. This fragmented approach does not reliably prepare teachers who can help create major gains in student learning across a school year.

Five innovative changes have increased the coherence of the Social Studies Teacher Education Program:

- New assessment tools make visible beginning teachers' levels of understanding and performance;
- Discipline-specific sections added to the core literacy instruction course create cohorts among pre-service teachers;
- A transparent and spiraling curriculum has emerged as faculty share central concepts, course readings, and assignments; and visit each other's classrooms;
- All instructors (GSIs, lecturers, & clinical faculty) from courses constituting the program meet weekly; and
- Rotating field placements allow preservice teachers to observe five different teachers who excel at specific aspects of teaching across a range of socioeconomic settings.

This method of training yields skilled beginning teachers who are prepared to teach complex academic subjects to all students.

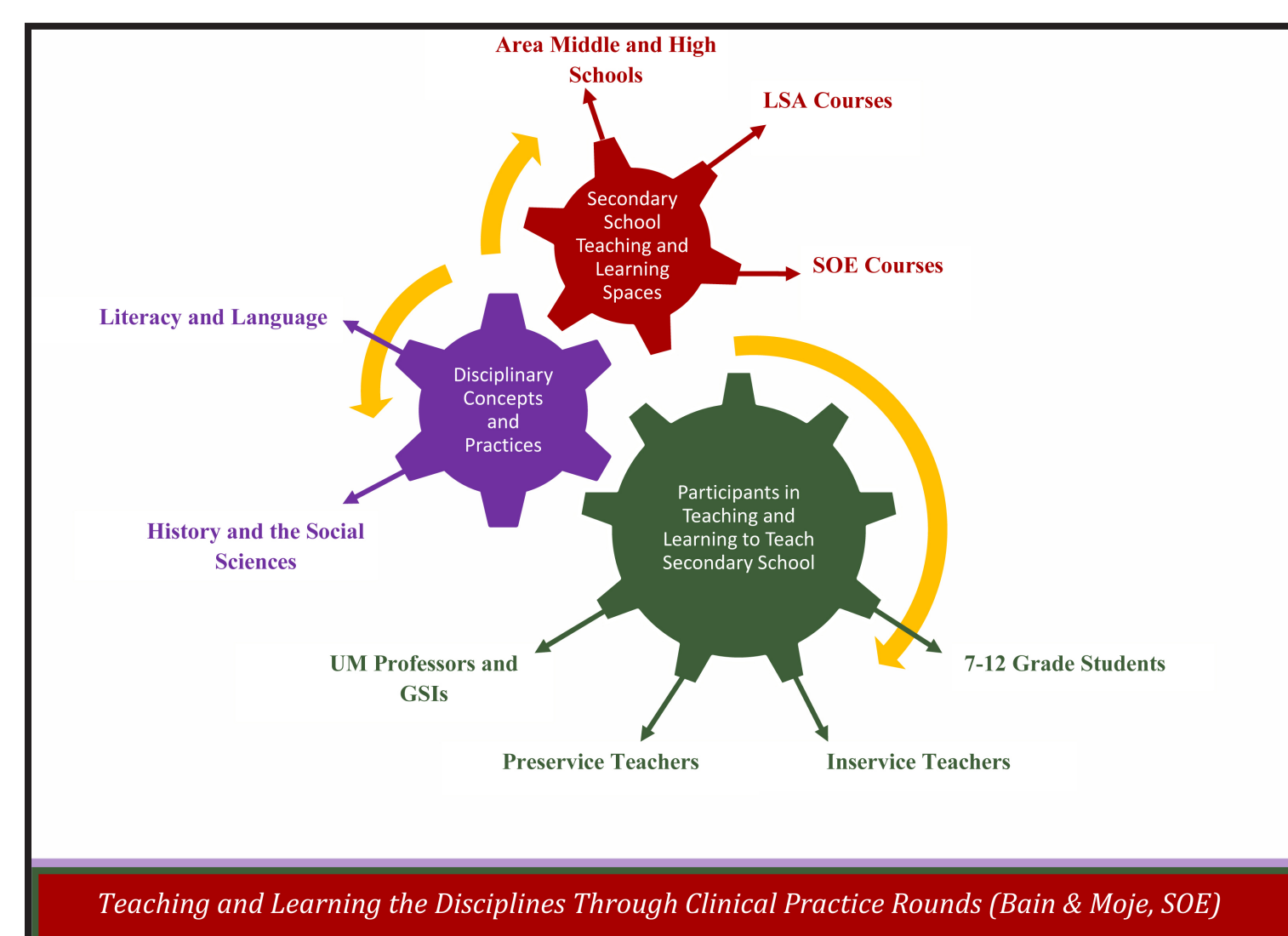
Student Comments

"In my first semester, I visited two A.P. U.S. history classes (on opposite ends of the socioeconomic spectrum), an ESL U.S. history, and a 9th grade U.S. history class. My second semester I was able to have experience in a 7th grade world geography classroom, a 10th grade economics class, and an A.P. government class. Where other student teachers were forced to read in order to fathom an environment different from their single classroom, I could draw from experience."

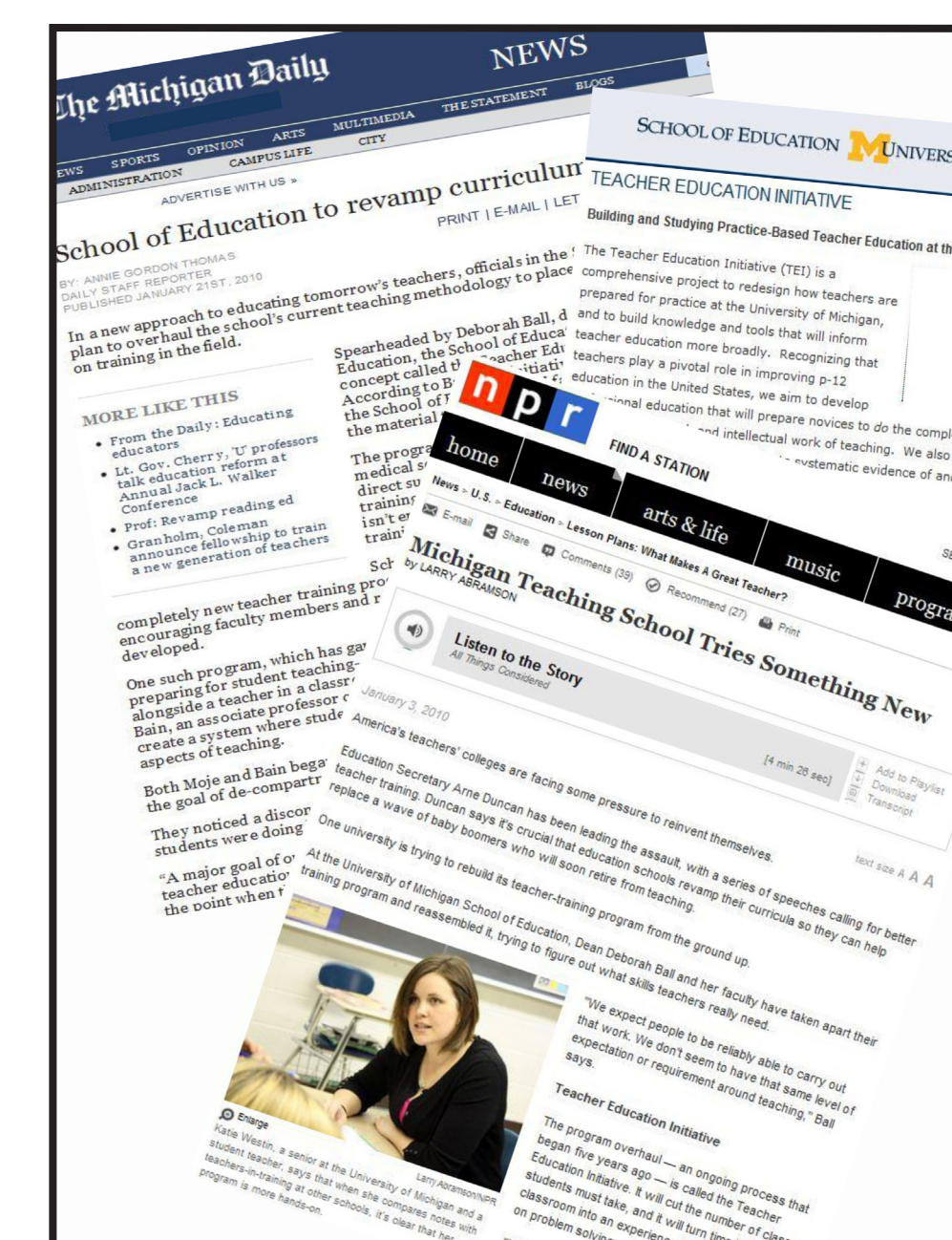
"Simply focusing on literacy in the social studies program is an innovative idea in itself. As increasing standards and classroom management are seen to limit a teacher's ability to **add** more lessons, the classes I have been involved in have been designed to **include** literacy and content **together**, equally and at the same time. . . . [This project] showed how to design a lesson that not only focused on literacy and historical content, but also student motivation and engagement. The basic format is to create historical questions for students to answer using texts that give multiple perspectives. Students create their own knowledge, rather than teachers telling them what knowledge to have."

"It's been immensely beneficial: now that I'm actually doing my full-time student teaching, I've been able to immediately get up in front of a class and have the confidence that I needed in order to focus on working out my lesson plans and interacting with the students and really developing as a teacher."

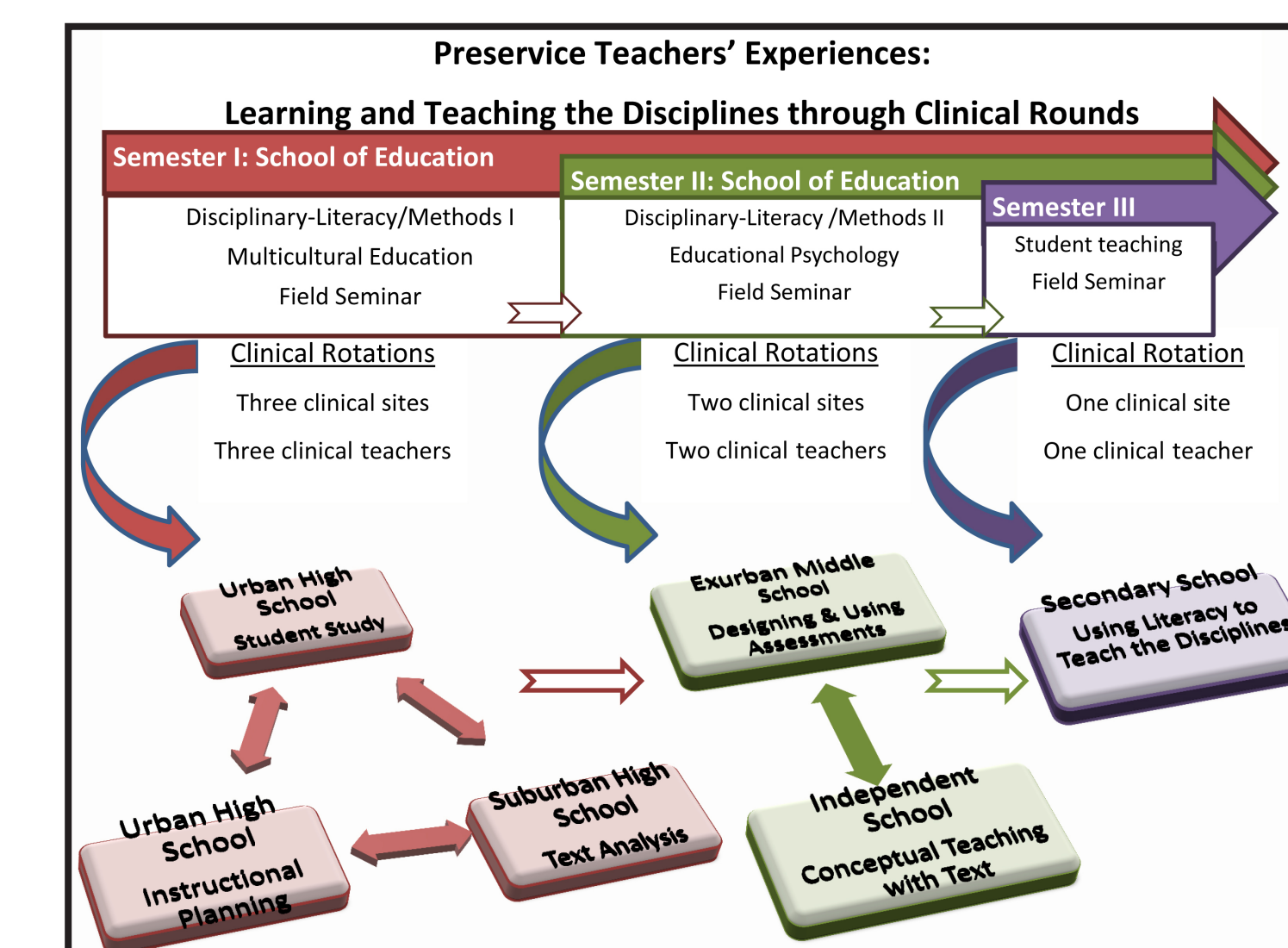
Examples of Teaching Innovation



Rounds Project framework: interconnected participants, practices, and spaces



National and local attention to the Rounds Project and the School of Education's Teacher Education Initiative



Preservice teachers' experiences working across three semesters and rotating through six clinical practice sites

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