

## Course Syllabus

### **Course Title: Improving Instruction through Strategic Conversations with Teachers**

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**Course Grader:** Robin Bromley

#### **Grader Bio:**

Robin Bromley earned a Master of Philosophy degree and a Master's degree in English literature at Columbia University and her Bachelor of Arts degree from New York University. After nearly two decades in publishing and writing, she is currently teaching at LaGuardia Community College and Kean University. She has also taught at NYU and CUNY and served as assistant director of composition at Columbia College

#### **Course Description:**

How can conversations between instructional leaders and teachers be more effective? In this course, leaders learn to replace ineffective supervisory models with a new model of strategic conversations designed to quickly assess and understand the primary needs of staff. Leaders also learn to conduct classroom walkthroughs, teacher observations, and collect data to determine the will and skill levels of teachers so that they can engage in appropriate strategic conversations. With guests performing the roles of teachers, Dr. Jackson models each of the four conversational types she defines. These illustrations demonstrate how teachers can learn to recognize the impact of their teaching behaviors on student achievement and how leaders can assist them in making the necessary commitment and changes to improve service to students.

#### **Course Objective/Goals:**

After completing this course, educators will know:

- Why strategic conversations are more useful than traditional supervisory feedback
- How to collect data that forms the basis for strategic conversations
- How to assess teachers' will and skill
- How to define the four types of strategic conversations
  - Reflective
  - Facilitative
  - Coaching
  - Directive

After completing this course, educators will be able to apply the following skills:

- Develop a comprehensive plan for conducting strategic conversations with teachers
- Assess teachers to determine their types
- Develop strategies for supporting each of the four teacher types
- Identify priorities for having strategic conversations

#### **Course Outline:**

**Eight Sections Students Will Be Focusing On:**

1. Strategic Conversations for Instructional Leaders
2. Data Collection for Strategic Conversations
3. Teacher Will and Skill
4. Reflective Conversations
5. Facilitative Conversations
6. Coaching Conversations
7. Directive Conversations
8. Staying the Course with Strategic Conversations

**All steps listed under each topic must be completed to receive credit for the course. No partial credit is given.**

### Plagiarism Policy

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the dishonest passing off of someone else’s work as one’s own and includes failing to cite sources for others’ ideas, copying material from books or the Internet, and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult [plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org).

### KDS Rubric for Letter Grade Courses: 3 Credits

#### Percentage of Course Credit

- Reflection questions 25%
- Quizzes 15%
- Midterm 25%
- Final 35%

A: 90 - 100 points

B: 80 - 89 points

C: 70 - 79 points

F: Fewer than 70 points

Component	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
<b>Quizzes</b>	<u>(6 points)</u>  <u>Quizzes:</u>  0-40% correct	<u>(9 points)</u>  <u>Quizzes:</u>  60% correct	<u>(12 points)</u>  <u>Quizzes:</u>  80% correct	<u>(15 points)</u>  <u>Quizzes:</u>  100% correct
<b>Reflection questions</b>	<u>(10 points)</u>  <u>Reflection questions:</u>	<u>(15 points)</u>  <u>Reflection questions:</u>	<u>(20 points)</u>  <u>Reflection questions:</u>	<u>(25 points)</u>  <u>Reflection questions:</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant includes no content from the course in his or her responses</li> <li>-Participant does not address the questions posed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant includes some content from the course, usually appropriate, in his or her responses</li> <li>-Participant answers the questions directly, not always fully</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant includes appropriate content from the course in his or her responses</li> <li>-Participant makes thoughtful comments in direct response to the questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant provides rich detail from the content of the course in his or her responses</li> <li>-Participant makes his or her responses to the questions personally meaningful</li> </ul>
<b>Midterm</b>	(10 points)	(15 points)	(20 points)	(25 points)
<b>Final</b>	(20 points)	(25 points)	(30 points)	(35 points)
	<p><u>Requirements of Assignment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The assignment is substantially incomplete</li> </ul>	<p><u>Requirements of Assignment :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Many requirements met, but a few pieces are missing, while others are underdeveloped—e.g., missing reflection or rubric or scant reflection and vague rubric</li> </ul>	<p><u>Requirements of Assignment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant has fulfilled all the requirements of the assignment</li> </ul>	<p><u>Requirements of Assignment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant has fulfilled all the requirements of the assignment with marked creativity, intelligence, and thoughtfulness</li> </ul>
	<p><u>Form:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plentiful grammatical mistakes</li> <li>-Confusing content</li> <li>-Missing documentation of</li> </ul>	<p><u>Form:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Distracting grammatical errors</li> <li>-Confusing content</li> <li>-Inconsistent or</li> </ul>	<p><u>Form:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participant has written a solid essay or lesson plan, including appropriate detail and in an</li> </ul>	<p><u>Form:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No grammatical errors</li> <li>-Eloquent expression</li> <li>-Proper citation of sources</li> </ul>

	sources	missing documentation of sources	interesting style	
	<p><u>Content:</u> -No main idea and/or main idea is irrelevant to the assignment -No apparent paragraph organization -No supporting evidence for supporting ideas -No evidence in the lesson plan—in objectives, activities, or assessments—that the learner comprehends the course content</p>	<p><u>Content:</u> -The main idea is not clear in the opening paragraph -Relevance to main idea of supporting paragraphs is not always clear -Supporting ideas are only minimally illustrated by examples or quotes -The lesson plan does not show enough evidence that the learner understands the course content. Objectives and/or activities and/or assessments only vaguely apply to the course content</p>	<p><u>Content:</u> -Essay is organized around a thesis or main idea -Paragraphs are organized around ideas relevant to the main idea -Supporting ideas are evident, and usually include illustrating examples and/or quotes -The lesson plan shows evidence of understanding of the course content in its objectives, activities, and/or assessments</p>	<p><u>Content:</u> -Essay is organized around a thesis or main idea -Paragraphs are organized around ideas relevant to the main idea -Supporting points are illustrated with examples and/or quotes -Lesson plan shows evidence of a deep understanding of course content and participant uses that understanding to create opportunities for students to authentically show what they have learned</p>

**KDS Pass/Fail Option: 3 credits**

Passing Requirements

- Grade of “C” or higher

**Texts and/or Other Materials:**

**PowerPoint presentations from resource tab and lecture transcriptions from the transcription tab:**

1. Strategic Conversations for Instructional Leaders
2. Data Collection for Strategic Conversations

3. Teacher Will and Skill
4. Reflective Conversations
5. Facilitative Conversations
6. Coaching Conversations
7. Directive Conversations
8. Staying the Course with Strategic Conversations

**Recommended Reading:**

**Bibliography:**

- Barth, R.S. (2005) "Turning book burners into lifelong learners." In R. Dufour, B. Eaker, & B. Dufour (Eds.) *On common ground. The power of professional learning communities.* (pp. 115-134). Bloomington, Indiana: National Education Service.
- Fried, R. L. (2003). *The skeptical visionary: A Seymour Sarason education reader.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Jackson, R. (2009). *Never work harder than your students and other principles of great teaching.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Jackson, R. (2008). *The Instructional Leader's Guide to Strategic Conversations with Teachers.* Mindsteps Inc.; first edition
- Singleton, G & Linton, C. (2006). *Courageous conversations about race: A field guild for achieving equity in schools.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.