

ON-DEMAND COURSE

# BUILDING A MORE STUDENT-LED CLASSROOM

30 Continuing Education Hours



## Overview

Teachers are working tirelessly - planning, supporting, adapting - all to meet the diverse needs of their students. But despite their best efforts, the outcomes don't always match the energy invested. The result? Rising exhaustion, mounting frustration, and a system that too often falls short for both students and educators.

This course is about shifting the load: from teacher-led to student-led learning, from compliance to ownership, and from isolation to agency. Grounded in UDL and blended learning, this course walks educators through 10 key workflow shifts outlined in *The Shift to Student-Led*, offering practical strategies, research-based insight, and flexible design structures to transform classrooms into spaces where learners thrive—and educators breathe easier.



## Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe the rationale for shifting from teacher-led to student-led learning.
- Apply UDL and blended learning frameworks to support learner agency and autonomy.
- Evaluate current instructional practices and identify opportunities for student-led redesign.
- Implement workflow shifts to promote metacognition, authentic assessment, and collaboration.
- Create tools, routines, and systems that support sustainable student-led learning.

## COURSE INSTRUCTOR



### Katie Novak, EdD

Chief Education Officer

Katie Novak, EdD, is a seasoned educator, global keynote speaker, instructor at the University of Pennsylvania, and a leading voice in UDL and MTSS. She brings her expertise to life on *The Education Table* podcast - ranked in the top 5% of podcasts worldwide - and as a best-selling author of 16 books, with over 300,000 copies sold across the globe. Known for bringing clarity, courage, and contagious energy to every room. Katie lives by one rule: Do it with purpose, do it with heart, and make it fun along the way. [View full bio.](#)

## REQUIRED TEXT

*The Shift to Student-Led* by Katie Novak, EdD and Catlin Tucker.

[Group pricing](#) is available for 10+ books (\$15/book).

All other readings, videos, and tools will be provided in the course platform.

### COURSE OUTLINE

Review the course outline below. Within each lesson, you will complete the following activities:

- Begin by watching, reading and/or listening to the video lessons.
- Dive deeper into the content. Review readings, videos, and resources - the key is to self-differentiate. Choose what works best for you and helps you better understand the content and engage with the lesson.
- Try it out: Put your learning into action.
- Reflect on your learning.
- Check for understanding: complete a, low-stakes quiz to reinforce key concepts from this lesson.

## 1

### Module One:

#### Why Student-Led Learning Isn't Just Good for Students—It's Good for You

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Why This Shift Matters
- Lesson 2: Foundations for Student-Led Learning
- Lesson 3: Pick Your Path in Blended Learning

##### Objectives

- Identify the connection between teacher workload, burnout, and traditional instructional models.
- Understand how Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and blended learning support learner agency.
- Reflect on current teaching practices and explore initial pathways toward student-led instruction.

##### Essential Question

- Why do we need to shift the cognitive load in classrooms, and how do UDL and blended learning support that shift?

## 2

### Module Two

#### From Content Delivery to Student Discovery

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Rethinking the Transfer of Information
- Lesson 2: Designing for Discovery
- Lesson 3: Empowering Students as Explorers

##### Objectives

- Reflect on how traditional information delivery can hinder engagement, critical thinking, and ownership.
- Explore strategies that empower students to uncover, research, and make meaning of content.
- Begin redesigning a current lesson or unit to shift from teacher-delivered to student-discovered learning.

##### Essential Question

- How can we design learning experiences that shift students from passive receivers of information to active discoverers and meaning-makers?

### 3

#### Module Three: From Teacher Talk to Student Voice

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Shifting the Discussion Dynamic
- Lesson 2: Reading for Connection
- Lesson 3: Planning for Full Participation

##### Objectives

- Examine the limitations of whole-group, teacher-led discussions, and isolated reading tasks.
- Learn how to structure small-group discussions where students co-construct meaning and deepen understanding.
- Implement strategies that turn reading into a collaborative, connected experience.

##### Essential Question

- How can we design learning routines where students lead discussion and make deeper connections through collaborative reading and dialogue?

### 4

#### Module Four From Private Work to Public Purpose

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Why Audience Matters
- Lesson 2: Designing for Real-World Feedback
- Lesson 3: Sharing Student Work with the World

##### Objectives

- Reflect on how audience impacts motivation, quality, and purpose in student work.
- Learn strategies for helping students share their work beyond the classroom.
- Design opportunities for students to receive feedback from authentic audiences.

##### Essential Question

- How can we design learning experiences where students create work that is seen, valued, and connected to real audiences?

### 5

#### Module Five From Passive Practice to Active Ownership

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Reimagining Review and Practice
- Lesson 2: Making Formative Assessment Student-Driven
- Lesson 3: Building Metacognitive Habits

##### Objectives

- Understand how traditional review and formative assessment often reinforce dependency and passive learning.
- Explore strategies for helping students create their own practice tools and monitor their understanding in real time.
- Design structures that support student reflection, metacognition, and strategic decision-making.

##### Essential Question

How can we help students design their own practice and use formative assessment as a tool to reflect, self-adjust, and drive their learning?

### 6

#### Module Six: From End-Product Feedback to Feedback That Fuels Learning

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Feedback During the Learning Process
- Lesson 2: Teaching Students to Give and Use Feedback
- Lesson 3: Shifting to Self-Assessment

##### Objectives

- Shift feedback from a post-performance judgment to a formative process that drives learning.
- Explore strategies for embedding feedback loops during learning, not just after it.
- Support students in self-assessing their work and identifying specific next steps for growth.

##### Essential Question

- How can we design routines that embed feedback and self-assessment throughout the learning process, so students build awareness, confidence, and agency?

### 7

#### Module Seven From Progress Reports to Student Ownership of Growth

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: Shifting the Communication Paradigm
- Lesson 2: Coaching Students to Reflect and Prepare
- Lesson 3: Building a Culture of Student-Led Communication

##### Objectives

- Reflect on traditional approaches to parent communication and the limitations of teacher-controlled progress updates.
- Explore strategies for helping students reflect on their progress, set goals, and communicate directly with families.
- Design tools and structures that empower students to lead conversations about their learning.

##### Essential Question

- How can we empower students to take ownership of their learning journey and communicate their growth to families and other stakeholders?

### 8

#### Module Eight From Teacher Product Design to Student-Led Inquiry

##### Lessons

- Lesson 1: What Makes a Project Truly Student-Led?
- Lesson 2: Scaffolding Student Inquiry
- Lesson 3: Reflecting and Looking Ahead

##### Objectives

- Understand the difference between teacher-assigned projects and truly student-driven inquiry.
- Learn how to scaffold student-led project-based learning that promotes autonomy, curiosity, and real-world connection.
- Reflect on your journey toward student-led learning and identify next steps for sustaining momentum.

##### Essential Question

What does it take to support students in designing, managing, and reflecting on meaningful, student-led projects?

# COURSE SYLLABUS

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### TECHNOLOGY

Courses are entirely online. To access them, you'll need a compatible web browser like Chrome or Firefox. For an optimal experience, we recommend using a desktop or laptop computer with a word processing tool or reader (i.e. Microsoft Word, Libre, or Google Docs). While our course platform is mobile-friendly, a larger screen will provide the best viewing and interactive experience. If you need personal assistance or have technical questions, you can [contact us](#).

Novak Education is in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).