Reaching At-Risk Students and Underachievers
Online Participant Syllabus

Course Description

Participants in this course will learn how to build academic success for at-risk students by developing student resilience, designing active learning experiences, motivating underachievers, and fostering social emotional skills. Participants will explore strategies for reaching students of poverty and students with ADHD, and learn how to work effectively with at-risk students and their parents.

Course Prerequisites

Participants enrolled in this course are required to hold a baccalaureate degree. This course is recommended for K-12 educators and administrators. No prerequisites are required for this course.

System Requirements

- Computer with word processing software
- Internet access connection
- Online video viewing capabilities/Adobe flash player
- Software capable of reading PDF files
- Software capable of viewing PowerPoint presentations

Text Books/Supplemental Reading

There is no textbook required for this course. Refer to weekly reading assignments and additional resources within each Milestone to support course content.

Global Goals of the Course

Upon completion of the course, the learner will be able to:

1. Develop resilience skills that build academic success in at-risk students.
2. Integrate active learning experiences that engage at-risk students.
3. Design activities that develop social emotional skills and motivate underachievers.
4. Develop an action plan for reaching students in poverty.
5. Develop an action plan for reaching difficult students and parents.

Instructional Objectives

The learner will deepen existing knowledge of content and apply professional expertise to the skills and strategies contained in this course by meeting the following instructional objectives:

Milestone 1: Students At Risk

1.1   Investigate theories for students at risk.

1.2   Examine the characteristics of at-risk students.
1.3   Establish the essential needs of at-risk students in the classroom.
1.4   Evaluate alternative and support programs for at-risk students.

Milestone 2: Student Resilience
2.1   Investigate the roots of resilience.
2.2   Make correlations between student resilience and at-risk students.
2.3   Explore strategies that build student resilience.
2.4   Analyze the skills of self-directed learners.
2.5   Utilize strategies that build resilience and academic success in at-risk students.

Milestone 3: At-Risk Students and Kinesthetic Learning
3.1   Compare and contrast the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles.
3.2   Investigate the characteristics and strategies of kinesthetic learning.
3.3   Discuss correlations between at-risk students and kinesthetic learning.
3.4   Integrate kinesthetic activities into teaching and learning.

Milestone 4: ADHD and Active Learning
4.1   Investigate the signs and symptoms of students with ADHD.
4.2   Discuss the myths and facts of students with ADHD.
4.3   Distinguish between kinesthetic learners and students with ADHD.
4.4   Examine the characteristics and strategies of active learning in the classroom.
4.5   Integrate active learning experiences that engage at-risk students.

Milestone 5: The Underachievers
5.1   Investigate the underlying causes of underachievement.
5.2   Distinguish among the various types of underachievers.
5.3   Discuss how attribution theory correlates to underachievers.
5.4   Evaluate interventions and courses of action for underachievers.
5.5   Utilize select strategies to motivate underachievers.

Milestone 6: Social Emotional Learning
6.1   Investigate social and emotional learning core competencies.
6.2   Discuss the importance of social emotional learning for at-risk students.
6.3   Explore strategies for teaching social emotional skills.
6.4   Design social emotional activities that support at-risk students and underachievers.

Milestone 7: At-Risk Students and Poverty
7.1   Investigate key risk factors for students in poverty.
7.2   Discuss the effects of poverty on teaching and learning.

7.3   Explore strategies for teaching with poverty in mind.
7.4   Develop an action plan for reaching students in poverty.

Milestone 8: Reaching Difficult Students and Parents

8.1   Investigate strategies for working with difficult students.
8.2   Investigate strategies for working with difficult parents.
8.3   Investigate strategies for involving at-risk families.
8.4   Develop an action plan for reaching difficult students and parents.

Teaching Methodology and Delivery Model

Teaching methodologies used in this course are specifically designed to maximize learning in a guided, graduate-level, online distance-learning model. Each course facilitator is trained and/or experienced in facilitating graduate-level online courses as well as the specific content and skills of this course.

1. Online methodologies include instructor/expert presentations, directed skill practice, asynchronous class and group discussions using threaded discussion questions, peer evaluation, self-evaluation, portfolio development, and the synthesis of new knowledge and skills in designing grade-specific lesson plans or other educational applications of knowledge and skills.
2. The course is taught in a supportive learning environment with teacher-participant interaction and feedback. Class participants interact with other professionals via the Forum by replying to existing posts as well as creating new threads on topics of their choice.
3. Content focuses on the presentation of advanced concepts linked to instructional strategies which accommodate learning needs of a diverse student population.
4. Course content, activities, and assignments are organized into "milestones" that participants complete during the 8-week span of the course. Course content is intended to cover material equal to 45 seat hours of instructional time.
5. Class participants actively construct their own learning and make it personally relevant by acquiring and applying course knowledge/skills to their own teaching situation.

Learning Assessment

Formative assessment of learning objectives for this course is conducted informally throughout the course via discussion, critiques, peer- and self-evaluations, journal entries, instructor feedback, small-group sharing and activities requiring participants to make sense of new knowledge and/or skills within their realm of teaching. Additionally, three formative assessments are embedded within the course. Summative assessment for the course occurs in the form of a final project which requires each participant to synthesize class content and apply it within the teacher's specific teaching environment.

Topics Agenda
Milestone One: Students at Risk

Investigate the theories for students at risk (educational, psychological, and sociological); examine the characteristics of at-risk students; examine the essential

needs of at-risk students (competence, belonging, usefulness, potency, and optimism); establish and meet students' needs in the classroom; compare and contrast alternative and support programs for at-risk students

Milestone Two: Student Resilience
Investigate the roots of resilience in students; make correlations between student resilience and at-risk students; discuss strategies that build student resilience; explore instructional practices that foster competence, belonging, usefulness, potency, and optimism; analyze the skills of self-directed learners (self-motivation, self-management, self-modification, and self-monitoring); make correlations between self-directed learning and student resilience; develop and utilize strategies that build resilience and academic success in at-risk students

Milestone Three: At-Risk Students and Kinesthetic Learning
Compare and contrast the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles; investigate the characteristics of kinesthetic learning; explore strategies that support kinesthetic learning; evaluate the importance of kinesthetic learning; discuss correlations between at-risk students and kinesthetic learning; integrate kinesthetic activities into teaching and learning

Milestone Four: ADHD and Active Learning

Investigate the signs and symptoms of students with ADHD; discuss the myths and facts of students with ADHD; distinguish between kinesthetic learners and students with ADHD; discuss the misdiagnosis of students with ADHD; define active learning and make comparisons to the kinesthetic learning style; make correlations between active learning and at-risk students; examine active learning strategies in the classroom; integrate active learning experiences that engage at-risk students

Milestone Five: The Underachievers
Investigate the underlying causes of underachievement; discuss correlations to at-risk students; distinguish among the various types of underachievers (distant, passive, dependent, defiant, and gifted); discuss how attribution theory (situational and personal) correlates to underachievers; evaluate strategies, interventions, and courses of action for underachievers; integrating select strategies into teaching and learning to motivate underachievers

Milestone Six: Social Emotional Learning
Investigate social and emotional learning core competencies (self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making); discuss the importance of social emotional learning for at-risk students; make social and emotional correlations to student resilience and underachievers; explore strategies for teaching social emotional skills (self-directed learning and growth mindset); design social emotional activities that support at-risk students and underachievers

Milestone Seven: At-Risk Students and Poverty
Investigate key risk factors for students in poverty; discuss the effects of poverty on diversity, the achievement gap, motivation, and readiness to learn; explore strategies for teaching with poverty in mind; develop an action plan for reaching students in poverty

Milestone Eight: Reaching Difficult Students and Parents
Investigate strategies for working with difficult students; investigate strategies for working with difficult parents; make correlations to at-risk students; make correlations to parents of at-risk students; investigate strategies for involving at-risk families; develop an action plan for reaching difficult students and parents

Final Projects

In keeping with best instructional and assessment practices, this course requires participants to demonstrate synthesis and application of course knowledge in an applied final project linked to the instructional objectives of this course. Assessment of the project should not be limited to the quantity of work submitted but should carefully consider the quality and intellectual value of the work.

Final summative projects are due and will be submitted to the instructor within the 8 weeks of the allotted class time. Unless the instructor states otherwise, all papers are expected to be properly formatted electronically.

Participants taking professional development unit (not-for-credit) courses must attend all scheduled class sessions and complete all formative assignments. However, they will be exempt from completing the final summative project unless otherwise noted. Proof of seat hours will be presented to the participants after completing course reflection via the student portal and all hours are met.

Grading

Throughout the course, participants will engage in both formal and informal formative and summative assessments. Points are assigned based on a four-point criterion rubric specifically delineated for each assessment that can be further defined as follows:

Distinguished: The assessment is highly imaginative; demonstrates critical thought; is unique; shows substantial application to one's own teaching or professional position; *goes above and beyond requirements;* is creative; demonstrates both breadth and depth of knowledge of transition-related subject matter; shows individual's personality; is professional in presentation and appearance; and demonstrates considerable effort. The assessment is exceptionally completed and demonstrates clear understanding of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Distinguished" on the course rubric.

Proficient: The assessment is well-organized and complete; is effectively and clearly presented; demonstrates clear understandings; applies what has been learned to the author's own classroom situation; clearly shows connections; is detailed; and is thoughtful and supported with ideas. A thoroughly completed assessment demonstrates that the participant shows awareness of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Proficient" on the course rubric.

Basic: This is the lowest passing grade. The assessment meets minimum requirements; includes general information but lacks descriptive detail; shows limited application to teaching/learning; and lacks originality. This denotes work that does not meet **all** aspects of standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Basic" on the course rubric.

Unsatisfactory: The assessment is missing evidence or information; is sloppy and poorly organized; demonstrates only surface understandings; shows no evidence of application to the author's own teaching situation; is poorly written; and does not meet minimum standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Unsatisfactory" on the course rubric.

The assessments for this course are weighted as follows:

Participation and Reflection	30%
Formative Assessments	30%
Summative Assessments	40%

Academic Honesty and Integrity
All participants are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the participant receiving a zero for that assignment or paper.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance
In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, participants who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the first session. Reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

Attendance
Participants will have 8 weeks from the time of their first date of login to complete the course. It is the expectation that participants will post initial responses to Forum discussion questions by Thursdays. In addition, participants are to respond to at least two other participant posts by Sundays. Projects are only due in specific Milestones.

Forum postings, assignments, and assessments must be completed by due dates specified within the course.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy

Participants are expected to keep pace with assignments and expectations. If a situation arises in which an assignment cannot be completed, the participant is expected to make arrangements with the instructor for the timely submission of such work. Failure to complete all work in this time frame will result in an **incomplete** or a grade of **F** for the work, depending on the reason for the delay.

University Compliance

Course content and instruction are bound by policies associated with the university granting academic credit for the course. Such polices include, but are not limited to: academic integrity and honor codes, institutional objectives and grade grievance procedures. These policies are located within the official academic catalogs which can be accessed through the university's official website.