



## **Gifted Students: Meeting Academic, Emotional, and Social Needs Online Participant Syllabus**

### **Course Description**

This course is designed to promote an awareness of intellectual giftedness, its description, and characteristics of gifted and talented students. Participants will examine characteristics of gifted students, myths and perceptions, as well as curriculum and best practices associated with gifted education. Participants will be provided multiple opportunities to engage in discussions and activities that refine and define strategies and practices focusing on meeting the comprehensive needs of gifted and talented students.

### **Course Prerequisites**

This course is intended for K-8 teachers who are interested in learning about research-based practices and theories associated with gifted and talented populations of students. Participants must hold a baccalaureate degree.

### **System Requirements**

- Computer with word processing software
- Internet access connection

### **Text Books/Supplemental Reading**

No textbook is required for this course. Critical reading of assigned articles and supplementary materials is embedded throughout the course. Assigned and recommended readings are listed in each milestone.

### **Global Goals of the Course**

The global goals of this course include learning opportunities that will deepen an understanding of concepts, content, skills, and research-based theories and strategies commonly associated with gifted education.

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

1. Apply research-based information designed to define giftedness
2. Identify myths and perceptions relating to gifted and talented learners
3. Design teaching strategies that include higher level thinking skills and project-based learning
4. Understand the importance of differentiated instruction as a means of meeting

- the learning needs of gifted and talented students
5. Identify the characteristics of gifted and talented students
  6. Implement curriculum compacting
  7. Understand how RtI relates to gifted and talented students
  8. Align gifted education services within the general education classroom

### Instructional Objectives

By the conclusion of the course, participants 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:

1. Reflect on the meaning of giftedness
  - 1.1 Explore the meaning of giftedness
  - 1.2 Examine the National Association of Gifted Children's Glossary of Gifted Terms
  - 1.3 Examine cognitive and affective needs of gifted and talented students
2. Identify myths and perceptions relating to gifted and talented learners
  - 2.1 Identify top ten myths in Gifted Education
  - 2.2 Understand ways to address gifted students' learning needs
  - 2.3 Review the importance of engaging high achievers
  - 2.4 Discuss how you would describe the nature and needs of gifted students
3. Obtain an understanding of higher order thinking skills and their importance in the learning environment for gifted and talented students
  - 3.1 Participate in video assignments focusing on higher-level thinking skills and project-based learning
  - 3.2 Review components of a teacher toolbox for gifted and talented students
  - 3.3 Demonstrate understanding of concepts presented in the course during Milestones 1-3
4. Acquire a working knowledge of differentiated instruction as it pertains to the learning needs of gifted and talented students
  - 4.1 Participate in discussion posts addressing differentiated instruction for gifted and talented students
  - 4.2 Demonstrate understanding of differentiating by product, process, and content
5. Examine characteristics of gifted and talented students
  - 5.1 Review common characteristics of gifted and talented students
  - 5.2 Compare profiles of gifted learners
  - 5.3 Read literature which summarizes learning strategies
  - 5.4 Demonstrate understanding of concepts presented in the course

- while emphasizing key ideas from Milestones 4-5
6. Review components of curriculum for gifted and talented students
    - 6.1 View video addressing: curriculum compacting, independent, and anchoring activities
    - 6.2 Review other learning opportunities for the gifted and talented
    - 6.3 Explore gifted curriculum guides and education models
  7. Recognize the need to provide support addressing social and emotional needs of gifted students
    - 7.1 Review points from interview with a twice-exceptional gifted student
    - 7.2 Participate in discussion post addressing social and emotional learning needs
  8. Understand methods that align gifted education services with general education
    - 8.1 Participate in discussion post synthesizing course material
    - 8.2 Read assigned articles and passages addressing the learning opportunities that exist in collaboration between gifted and general education services
    - 8.3 Demonstrate understanding of key concepts presented throughout the course
    - 8.4 Explore RTI options for the gifted and talented students

### 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: Introduction and Course Overview**

This milestone will provide participants the opportunity to become familiar with the syllabus, course introduction, and components of online learning within the content of the curriculum as it relates to meeting the academic, emotional, and social needs of gifted students. Participants will unravel the definition and essential elements of gifted education.

#### **Milestone Two: Myths and Perceptions**

Milestone 2 will allow participants to explore myths and perceptions commonly associated with gifted education and giftedness in students. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with their peers to share experiences regarding perceptions and communications with stakeholders about giftedness. Engaging the high achiever and nature of meeting the needs of gifted and talented students are among the topics included in this milestone.

#### **Milestone Three: Higher Level Learning Opportunities for Gifted and Talented Students**

During Milestone 3, participants will review aspects of higher level thinking skills and the need to provide challenge and rigor to all students, including students identified as gifted and talented. Participants will be introduced to project-based learning and strategies designed to increase teachers' effectiveness in planning, teaching, assessing, and refining learning opportunities for gifted and talented students.

#### **Milestone Four: Differentiated Instruction for Gifted and Talented Students**

Milestone 4 offers participants a variety of learning opportunities including: videos, discussions, and assignments focusing on differentiating instruction for gifted and talented students. Expectations include evidence that the participants understand what is

categorized as differentiating by product, process, and content.

### **Milestone Five: Characteristics of Gifted/Talented Students and Twice Exceptional Students**

Participants will explore characteristics of gifted youth and profiles intended to serve as a component in the identification of giftedness. Learning strategies based on gifted children characteristics will be discussed and explored. Twice Exceptional Gifted students will be reviewed and learning profiles/strategies will be studied as discussion postings to promote networking between all enrolled in the course.

### **Milestone Six: Curriculum for Gifted Education**

Specific strategies such as curriculum compacting, independent study and anchoring activities will allow all participants to reflect on current teaching practices while determining the need to expand learning opportunities specifically with the gifted students in mind.

### **Milestone Seven: Services That Meet Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Students**

Discussions and assignments will focus on the specificity of social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students. There will be an emphasis on educating colleagues, parents, and the community in support of the unique set of needs commonly associated with gifted and talented learners.

### **Milestone Eight: Aligning Gifted Education Services with General Education**

Participants will discover ways to align gifted educational services with general education initiatives. The importance and relevance of RtI for gifted and talented students will be explored during assigned readings and discussions. They will reflect on practices currently existing in schools and classrooms and evaluate the effectiveness of maximizing teaching and learning opportunities in a manner that meets the learning needs of all ability learners including gifted and talented students. Students will evidence their ability to synthesize key concepts highlighted throughout the course.

### **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 projects are due and will be submitted to the instructor within the allotted class time. Unless the instructor states otherwise, all papers are expected to be properly formatted electronically.

Participants taking courses for professional development unit (not-for-credit) must follow the same Participation Expectations as posted in the course syllabus. Participants will complete readings and tasks as outlined in the Task List. Forum Postings are also required. However, participants will be exempt from completing the Formative and Summative assignments unless otherwise noted. Proof of seat hours will be presented to the participants after completing the state required course evaluation located on the student portal.

## 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 policies 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.

### Alignment to National Association of Gifted Children Pre-K-Grade 12 Standards

The 2010 Gifted Programming Standards have been developed focusing on student

outcomes. This common set of standards helps to promote consistency for quality services addressing the needs of gifted and talented students.

### **Alignment to the Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching**

The *Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching* is designed to provide educators with a structure for analyzing and assessing teacher practice and in constructing techniques to strengthen that practice.

### **Compliance with National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)**

The NBPTS represents the highest level of professional achievement in the continuum of teacher professional development.

### **Compliance with Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards for Teachers**

InTASC is guided by the basic premise that an effective teacher must be able to integrate content knowledge with the specific strengths and needs of students to ensure that all students learn and perform at high levels.