

## **Educating Special Needs Students Online**

### **Course Outline**

#### **Course Description**

This course is designed for all educators and related providers who work with students with learning disabilities, attention deficits (with or without hyperactivity), developmental delays, behavior problems or other distinctive disorders. Participants will also gain understanding of students with dyslexia, autism and multiple disabilities. Federal laws will be explored: IDEA, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, along with many required applications to the classroom.

Participants will develop a clinical eye toward all students (with or without an IEP) and will be able to apply classroom accommodations, developmental teaching techniques and designed modifications. Each course participant will organize and complete a case study based on one selected student. We will review symptoms, describe individual deficits and customize an educational plan that will accommodate that student's weakness. That plan will be put into effect and monitored as per course assignment. Various group activities will be utilized to maximize learning and provide interactions among participants.

#### **Objectives**

- Outline the history of special education, including current regulations and developments.
- Distinguish the roles of the classroom teacher and other educators within the parameters of current regulations and developments.
- Appraise recent statistics concerning children with disabilities.
- Assess and recognize developmental delays and procedures that identify students with special needs.
- Examine and recognize the 13 types of disabilities as defined by IDEA.
- Compare and contrast the characterizations of learning disabilities by comparing the particular traits of each type of learning disability.
- Illustrate methods for adapting instruction.
- Compare and contrast numerous behavioral disorders that may be encountered in the classroom environment.
- Evaluate, characterize, and recognize behavior modification plans, and locate resources that are available to assist teachers in designing/utilizing those plans.
- Compare and contrast Section 504 (of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and compare/contrast it with IDEA.
- Appraise and distinguish between autism and other pervasive developmental disorders (PDD).
- Characterize additional disorders and syndromes that he/she may encounter among future students.
- Assess the role of the school-based intervention team in addressing behavioral issues.
- Appraise pre-referral strategies that he/she may adapt for use in his/her classroom.
- Examine the legally mandated timeline for progressing through the special education referral process.

- Locate and research guidelines for referring his/her student(s) to the Committee of Special Education (CSE) in his/her district.
- Appraise the regulations and provisions of the NCLB Act.
- Evaluate the changing roles and accountability practices applicable to all educators under the NCLB Act.
- Compare National Assessment of Educational Progress and Adequate Yearly Progress.
- Interpret how special Education processes are aligned with the NCLB Act.
- Appraise strategies and devise plans specifically aimed at modifying curriculum and instruction for students with special needs.
- Assess alternative teaching methods and strategies which provide adapted instruction for students with special needs.
- Compare and contrast a multitude of approved testing modifications which are designated for accommodating students with special needs.
- Design instruction that incorporates differentiations which characterize accommodations for students with special needs.
- Assess opportunities for educators to form cooperative partnerships with administrators, parents, and primary service providers that will provide the strength and support necessary for maintaining a productive educational environment.
- Evaluate methodologies which promote favorable opportunities for advocating parental support and involvement.
- Distinguish between various service providers who support classroom teachers in catering to students with special needs.
- Appraise opportunities for educators to recognize all students' potential, and to facilitate intervention as is necessary to empower students to achieve success.
- Evaluate means of assessing the particular needs of his/her students, and develop habits that exemplify sensitivity towards students (especially those with special needs) and how to best support them in the educational environment.
- Characterize behaviors/practices that prioritize protection of vulnerable students by comparing various methods/considerations which serve to promote high self-esteem within students, especially those who exhibit waning or non-existent self-confidence.

### **Curriculum Design & Time Requirements**

Educating Special Needs Students is a 13 week 3 credit graduate level or sixty hour professional development course taught online. The teaching methodology behind this course will empower participants with a strong knowledge base while providing them with necessary tools and strategies to identify and teach students with special needs. Participants will apply course curriculum to a student case study that will be developed throughout the modules and presented to instructor as a final project.

### **Hardware & Computer Skill Requirements**

Students may use either a Macintosh computer or a PC with Windows 2000 or higher. Students should possess basic word processing skills and have internet access with an active e-mail account. Students also are expected to have a basic knowledge of how to use a Web browser, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer, Safari, Mozilla Firefox etc.

### **Course Materials**

The required textbook for this course is *Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Educational Needs (Strategies for the Regular Classroom)*, 7th edition, written by Peter Westwood published by Routledge Falmer Press, London and New York. In addition, online readings and web reviews (including journal articles and best practices from the body of educational research) will be assigned during the course to enhance learning.

## **Session Outline**

### **Session 1: Special Education in the Classroom**

**Objective:** To introduce the history of special education including regulations and developments; to define the role of classroom teachers within those parameters

**Contents:**

1. Definition and history of Special Education
2. IDEA law and regulations
3. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
4. Mainstreaming
5. Necessary documents (The IEP and Psychological Report)
6. District/Teacher responsibilities
7. Common integration models

### **Session 2: Eligibility for Special Ed. Services and Possible Categories Therein**

**Objective:** To outline procedures that identifies and assists students with special needs; to review all categories of disabilities

**Contents:**

1. Criteria for eligibility
2. Developmental delays
  1. Physical development
  2. Cognitive development
  3. Communication development
  4. Social/Emotional development
  5. Adaptive development
3. Categories of Disabilities (13)

### **Session 3: Learning Disabilities**

**Objective:** To review the study of learning disabilities; to allow educators opportunities as diagnosticians

**Contents:**

1. Types of Learning Disabilities
2. Classroom teachers as diagnosticians
3. Symptomatic checklist to facilitate educational diagnosis
4. Establishing a profile and developing a clinical eye
5. Group project

### **Session 4: Behavior Problems in the Classroom**

**Objective:** To introduce the full gamut of behavior problems and facilitate plans for improvements

**Contents:**

1. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
2. Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)
3. Conduct Disorder
4. Oppositional Defiant Disorder
5. Childhood depression
6. Section 504 (Of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
7. Medication
8. Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP)
9. Behavior modifications

### **Session 5: Autism and Other Distinctive Disorders**

**Objective:** To review and distinguish the difference between Autism and other forms of PPD; to

outline a plan for a student case study

**Contents:**

1. Autism and PPD (Pervasive Developmental Disorder)
  1. Definition
  2. Criteria
  3. Social issues
  4. Communication concerns
  5. Stereotypical Behaviors
  6. Intervention/teaching method
2. Other distinctive disorders
  1. Tourette's Syndrome
  2. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
  3. Selective Mutism
3. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

**Session 6: The Referral Process**

**Objective:** To provide a timeline for making referrals and establishing criteria within that timeline

**Contents:**

1. School-Based Intervention Team (SBIT)
2. Elementary and Secondary pre-referral strategies
3. The Special Ed. Referral timeline
4. The Committee of Special Education (CSE)
5. Being prepared, developing your file and presenting your case at CSE
6. Voting members and possible outcomes

**Session 7: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)**

**Objective:** To introduce regulations and provisions of NCLB; to review changing roles and accountability for all educators

**Contents:**

1. Facts and mandates
2. Student testing
3. National Assessment of Educational Progress (Nation's Report Card)
4. Adequate yearly progress (AYP)
5. Aligning Special Education with NCLB
6. New requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals

**Session 8: Adapting/Modifying Curriculum**

**Objective:** To provide educators with plans and strategies for modifying curriculum of all special needs students

**Contents:**

1. Alternative ways of teaching
2. Suggestions for academic/related accommodations
3. Testing Modifications: Purpose and Eligibility
4. Modifying the Classroom
5. Practical Academic Strategies
6. Group project

**Session 9: Building Partnerships**

**Objective:** To strategize opportunities for cooperative partnerships that will strengthen and support all educators

**Contents:**

1. Working with parents
2. Administrators lend a hand
3. Getting help from special care providers and support staff
4. Collaborative Teaching
5. Aides and Paraprofessionals

**Session 10: Becoming Advocates**

**Objective:** To offer opportunities for educators to become clinicians and advocates for all students

**Contents:**

1. Developing sensitivity towards the special-needs student
2. Remember to honor the IEP
3. Rebuilding self-esteem
4. Protecting the vulnerable student

**Grading**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Grading Scale</b>	
Talking Points	30	100 - 93	<b>A</b>
Reading Assignments	20	92 - 85	<b>B</b>
Case Study	30	84 - 77	<b>C</b>
Final Exam	20		
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>		

**Student Requirements**

1. Actively participate in all activities.
2. Complete all readings and reaction forms based on those readings
3. Develop a case study based on one selected student with special needs. This study should include academic history, described deficits/disabilities, social and behavioral observations, and relevant, updated testing. In addition, the study will include an educational plan that will accommodate the specific weakness of that student.
4. Pass a final exam.

**Student Academic Integrity**

Participants guarantee that all academic class work is original. Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism (to take ideas, writings, etc. from another and offer them as one's own), is a violation of student academic behavior standards as outlined by our partnering colleges and universities and is subject to academic disciplinary action.

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