



AI in Special Education and English Language Learners

Graduate Course

Teacher Education Institute ©

Course Description

This 3-credit online graduate course prepares educators to use artificial intelligence responsibly to improve access, engagement, communication, and instructional planning for students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Across ten Sessions, participants examine how AI can support teacher-designed chatbots and avatars, lesson planning and IEP drafting, mathematics, science, literacy and speech, art and music, history and social studies, family communication, oral language development, and executive functioning and self-regulation. The course emphasizes ethical and legally sound practice, including privacy, teacher oversight, cultural responsiveness, accessibility, and the principle that AI should scaffold learning rather than replace professional judgment, human relationships, or student thinking.

Objectives:

1. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
2. Explain how AI can increase access, communication, and engagement for students with disabilities and English Language Learners while preserving rigor and teacher oversight.
3. Evaluate AI tools for accessibility, developmental appropriateness, cultural responsiveness, privacy, and ethical classroom use.
4. Design AI-supported lessons and scaffolds aligned to grade-level standards, IEP goals, language-development needs, and inclusive instructional practice.
5. Use AI appropriately to support drafting, organization, differentiation, and feedback without allowing AI to make instructional, legal, or high-stakes decisions.
6. Create family-facing and student-facing supports that improve understanding of routines, expectations, language practice, and school-home communication.
7. Apply AI strategically across content areas including mathematics, science, literacy, speech, art, music, history, and social studies.
8. Design supports that promote executive functioning, self-regulation, independence, and student voice rather than dependence on technology.
9. Reflect on the educator's role in monitoring accuracy, bias, safety, privacy, and equity when implementing AI in inclusive settings.

Curriculum Design:

AI in Special Education and English Language Learners is a 3 credit graduate level or forty-five hour professional development course taught on weekends or over five full days.

Course Materials

- No single textbook is required. All readings, videos, websites, and Session resources are provided in the course shell.
- Core framework: ABCs of AI / The ABC of AI guidance for teachers and families.
- Selected articles and videos on AI, accessibility, literacy, family engagement, and ethical classroom use.
- Teacher-facing and student-support tools referenced across Sessions may include SchoolAI, MagicSchool AI, Diffit, Brisk Teaching, NotebookLM, Curipod, Snorkl, Canva for Education, D-ID, HeyGen, Synthesia, Khanmigo, CK-12 Flexi, Labster, Story.com, Book Creator, Microsoft Immersive Reader, Soundtrap for Education, Goblin Tools, and related approved tools.
- Reliable internet access, word processing software, presentation software, and the ability to access web-based educational tools.

Session Outline

Session One: : AI chatbots and avatars for family and student communication

Content:

1. Creating AI chatbots and avatars to support students and families; communication guardrails; teacher oversight; language access.

Session Two: AI for lesson planning and IEP development

Content:

1. Using AI to support lesson planning and IEP development while maintaining legal, ethical, and individualized decision-making.

Session Three: AI for mathematics instruction

Content:

1. Using AI for mathematics instruction to reduce language and processing barriers without reducing mathematical thinking.

Session Four: AI for science instruction

Content:

1. Using AI to support science vocabulary, visual modeling, inquiry access, and family communication in science.

Session Five: AI for literacy, phonics, and speech

Content:

1. Using AI for literacy, phonics, and speech instruction while preserving decoding, student voice, and authentic language practice.

Session Six: AI for art and music instruction**Content:**

1. Using AI in art and music to increase creative access, communication, and inclusive participation.

Session Seven: AI for history and social studies instruction**Content:**

1. Using AI to scaffold history and social studies through timelines, source access, vocabulary support, and disciplinary thinking.

Session Eight: Helping parents understand AI**Content:**

1. Helping parents understand how AI can support children with disabilities and diverse learning profiles without replacing human relationships.

Session Nine: AI for speaking, listening, and oral language practice**Content:**

1. Using AI to support English Learners and students with speaking difficulties through low-pressure listening and speaking practice.

Session Ten: Executive functioning, self-regulation, and independence**Content:**

1. Using AI to support executive functioning, self-regulation, routines, task completion, and independence

Student Requirements

1. Participation: Actively participate in all course activities, reflections, and applied assignments.
2. Reading assignments: Complete all assigned Session readings, websites, videos, and linked resources.
3. Application: Demonstrate the ability to use AI tools thoughtfully, ethically, and instructionally in inclusive educational contexts.
4. Professionalism: Submit original work that reflects graduate-level writing, analysis, and responsible use of AI.

Course Evaluation

Course evaluation is based on the successful completion of all participation requirements, reflections, applied projects, and the final integration project according to the grading scheme above

Assignment	Points	Grading Scale	
Class Participation	30	93-100	A
Class Assignments	50	85-92	B
Final Project	20	77-84	C
Total Points	100		

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.