

Rutgers University
Graduate School of Education/Continuing Studies

Course Number: 15:294:533
Semester: Fall 2013
Course Title: Curriculum and Instruction for the Gifted
Credit Hours: 3

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Online consultations scheduled upon request

Schedule:

August 21	9:00 – 12:00 and 1:30 – 3:30
August 22	9:00 – 12:00 and 1:30 – 3:30
Online activities	
September 20	5:00 – 8:30 p.m.
September 21	8:30 – 12:00
Online activities	
October 18	5:00 – 8:30 p.m.
October 19	8:30 – 12:00

Course Description

This course will provide educators with the basic frameworks for developing curriculum for gifted learners from K-12. It will feature a design model that engages participants in articulating goals, outcomes, content, task and product demands, strategies, and assessments for gifted learners, based on their characteristics and needs. Methods for adapting, remodeling, and aligning the school curriculum in each core content area will be shared. Major models and strategies that have proven effective with the gifted will also be presented, including inquiry models, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, questioning, and independent and collaborative group work.. The course will enable participants to develop a scope and sequence, a plan for differentiation, and connected lesson plans for gifted students at relevant stages of development. The course addresses NCATE Gifted Teacher Education Standards 4, 5 6, 7,and 8.

Course Text

VanTassel-Baska, J. & Stambaugh, T. (2006). *Comprehensive curriculum for gifted learners* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Additional readings will be made available in class or online.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Apply general and specific theories of curriculum to gifted education.
2. Evaluate research on major curriculum models and interventions for gifted and special needs learners.
3. Apply a given curriculum model for purposes of differentiation.
4. Apply systematic procedures for evaluating and modifying existing curricula to meet the needs of gifted learners.
5. Differentiate curricula for whole class and cluster groups of gifted learners as well as those with special needs.
6. Plan a scope and sequence for relevant content areas and grade levels.
7. Apply high level inquiry-based instructional strategies to the teaching of gifted students.
8. Modify existing curriculum in the classroom to make it more appropriate for gifted students.
9. Design performance-based assessments for gifted students.
10. Design a differentiated curriculum unit for use with gifted students, using a predetermined process.

Overview of Course Activities

This course is taught in a hybrid format, with sessions both face-to-face and online. The course includes substantial readings and discussions, group problem-solving activities, case studies of gifted students and instructional groups, and reviews and critiques of curriculum products and materials.

Minimal Student Requirements

1. Attend class and successfully participate in classroom discussions and activities.
2. Complete all assignments and specific product requirements, demonstrating insight, accuracy, and coherence based on a professional understanding of the nature and needs of gifted learners.
3. Use course readings, discussions, and class activities to support product requirements.

Student Product Requirements

- 1. Curriculum Review and Evaluation:** Students will review and complete an evaluation of an existing curriculum document for its general quality and appropriateness for gifted learners. Students will evaluate content area features, process and product dimensions and elements of differentiation related to nature and needs of gifted learners. Students will submit a summary of the results of their review with recommendations for whether the document should be used as written with gifted students, used with some modifications, or not used. Assignments will be assessed based on supporting comments and references to major principles of appropriate curriculum for the gifted.
- 2. Conceptual Framework:** Students will select a topic for a curriculum unit appropriate for gifted learners and develop a curriculum framework, including a concept map based on key and overarching concepts, related standards of learning, and specific generalizations identified from the discipline and the overarching and specific unit concepts. Assignments will be assessed based on comprehensiveness and cohesive presentation of a topic suitable for a unit of 2-4 weeks and connections to learning standards, content and concept generalizations, and student outcomes.
- 3. Models and Strategies:** Students will select two instructional models and/or strategies appropriate for use in the grade level and content area used in the conceptual framework. Students will complete a brief summary guide (no more than two pages) describing one of the models or strategies as a handout for a novice teacher in support of classroom use. Students will then develop a brief lesson plan using the same content and selected models/strategies in the lesson. The lesson must include anticipated student outcomes for content and process and use the student product as a means of assessing outcomes. Lessons will be presented during class on September 20 and 21.
- 4. Curriculum Unit:** Students will work with a partner to complete the development of a curriculum unit that could be taught over a 2-4 week period. Units will include a conceptual framework citing goals, objectives, and student outcomes, incorporate use of high level processes, and assigning products to support authentic learning. Include major instructional strategies and brief descriptions of key activities. Define evaluation procedures and sample pre and post instruments. List key resources. Describe adaptations of the unit for general education, cluster grouping, and total class of gifted learners. Units will be assessed based on satisfactory completion of all sections, reflection of key principles for teaching gifted learners, and attention to general and content-specific curriculum features, including careful alignment of objectives, activities, and assessments. Students will self- and peer-evaluate their units, using the evaluation criteria given, and submit these evaluations with their units.

Formative and Summative Course Evaluation Strategies:

All student evaluation is based on accuracy, clarity, and creativity of thought. Accuracy addresses the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the material; clarity addresses the writing style, organization, and flow of ideas; and creativity speaks to the uniqueness of the ideas and degree of insight.

Students will complete a pre-assessment at the beginning of the course to demonstrate their entering knowledge of processes of curriculum development and methods for differentiating strategies and materials for gifted learners.

Attendance Policy

Students are required to attend all face-to-face classes on time and for the entire class. Emergencies and highly unusual circumstances should be discussed in private with the instructor to ensure satisfactory continuation in the course. Excused absences (for emergencies, religious observance, or serious needs) will involve make-up work agreed upon by the instructor and student or a lowering of the participation grade points. Online sessions and activities are also required and participation points are awarded via documentation of the student's active engagement in these sessions.

Professional Expectations

Students are expected to engage in class activities in a professional manner, demonstrating respect for all students and for the instructional process. Students are expected to offer their ideas and opinions while also considering the diverse views of others as enriching the process.

- Students fully engage in the class activities without distracting self or others.
- Students use electronic media ONLY for class work and as appropriate for the defined activity.
- All cell phones have the "silent" mode engaged and are put away during class time.

Accommodations for Disabilities

Students requiring accommodations related to disabilities will be provided all necessary supports and accommodations. In such circumstances students should communicate their needs in advance to the instructor in coordination with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services to ensure that they receive appropriate supports.

Student Products and Course Evaluation

Assignment	Percent	Points	Due Date
Attendance/Participation	15%	30	Ongoing
Curriculum Review	10%	20	August 29
Conceptual Framework	15%	30	September 13
Models and Strategies	20%	40	September 20
Curriculum Unit	40%	80	October 19
	100%	200	

Grading

A = 93 – 100
B+ = 87 – 92
B = 81 – 86
C+ = 77 – 90
C = 70 – 76
F= Below 70

Schedule of Classes and Readings

Session	Topics	Key Questions	Readings/Assignments (Complete prior to class date)
One Aug. 21 A.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of course • Gifted learners and curriculum needs • Theoretical perspectives • Evaluation of Materials 	<p>Why adjust curriculum for gifted learners?</p> <p>What has been done in the past?</p> <p>What research supports curricular modifications?</p> <p>What do gifted learners need?</p>	<p>VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 1</p> <p>Kaplan, S. <i>Myth 9: There is a single curriculum for the gifted.</i> (2009)</p>
Two Aug. 21 P.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophical Perspective • Curriculum Design • Curriculum Development • Delivery Models • Standards and Gifted Education 	<p>What are the essential elements in the design?</p> <p>What models exist for curriculum?</p>	<p>VanTassel-Baska, Ch.2, 3</p> <p>Rakow, S. <i>Standards-Based vs. Standards-Embedded Curriculum</i> (2007)</p>
Three Aug. 22 A.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Development Models • Curriculum Components • Scope and Sequence • Curriculum Analysis • Evaluation of Curriculum 	<p>What key components are essential? How can curriculum products align with general education?</p>	<p>VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 4, 5</p> <p>Saunders-Stewart, Gyles, & Shore. <i>Student Outcomes in Inquiry Instruction</i> (2012)</p>
Four Aug. 22 P.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Modifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Critical Thinking ○ Creative Thinking 	<p>How can the curriculum support effective high order student thinking?</p>	<p>VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 16, 17</p> <p>Matusevich, O'Connor, Hargett. <i>The non-negotiables of academic rigor.</i> (2009)</p> <p>Curriculum Review due Aug. 29</p> <p>Conceptual Framework due September 13</p>

Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language Arts ○ Social Studies ○ Mathematics ○ Science 	What modifications support advanced learning in different content areas? What are the benefits of interdisciplinary learning?	VanTassel-Baska, Ch.6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14 Weber, Boswell, Smith. <i>Defining Rigorous Outcomes for Gifted Learners</i> (2008)
Six Sept. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Model and Strategies for Modified Curriculum 	What models and which strategies are especially effective for use in the curriculum?	VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 18, 19 Models and Strategies Summaries & Presentations
Seven Sept. 21	Differentiated Curriculum In general classroom Special populations	How might new or existing curriculum be differentiated for gifted learners?	VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 13, 15 Models and Strategies Summaries & Presentations
Eight	Assessment of gifted learners Differentiation in the classroom	How will we know students have grown in content, process, and product? What is the student's role in assessment?	VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 20 21
Nine Oct. 18	Questioning Inquiry Student-generated options		VanTassel-Baska, Ch. 11, 12, 19 Unit Drafts Due
Ten Oct. 19	Unit Refinement Peer editing Modifications Sharing		Units Finalized Completed Units due by October 26

References

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