

## **Rutgers Gifted Education Certificate Program**

**15:294:533:T1 Curriculum and Instruction for the Gifted**

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**Instructor: Jessica Manzone**

**Email: [jmanzone@usc.edu](mailto:jmanzone@usc.edu)**

This course is designed to 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, task and product demands, strategies, and assessments for gifted learners, based on their characteristics and needs. Strategies for adapting, remodeling, and aligning the school curriculum in each core content area will be shared. Major strategies that have proven effective with the gifted will also be presented, including inquiry models, independent and collaborative group work, and question-asking. The course will enable participants to develop a scope and sequence, an IEP, and connected lesson plans for gifted students at relevant stages of development. It will address NCATE Gifted Teacher Education Standards 4, 5,6, 7,and 8.

### **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 to individualize for gifted learners with special needs as well as cluster groups of gifted learners.
6. Plan curriculum for relevant content areas and grade levels across at least three years.
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.

**Subject Matter Content Topics:**

1. General curriculum theories
  - a. Academic rationalism
  - b. Social reconstruction
  - c. Cognitive process
  - d. Personal relevance
  - e. Technology
2. Curriculum issues in the education of the gifted
  - a. Exemplary practices
  - b. Current curricular models in gifted education
    - 1) Content mastery model
    - 2) Process/product skill model
    - 3) Concept model
  - c. Resource materials in curriculum for the gifted
  - d. Differentiation in the regular classroom
3. Evaluation of existing curricula
  - a. Sources of curricular materials
  - b. Systematic appraisal of instructional and technical components of published curricula
4. Adaptation and enrichment of existing curricula for the needs of gifted learners.
  - a. Acceleration of content
  - b. Compression (diagnostic-prescriptive format)
  - c. Reorganization according to higher order skills and concepts
  - d. Infusion and application of thinking skills
  - e. Integration of issues and themes
  - f. Modification of assignments and evaluative procedures

5. Utilization of key instructional strategies
  - a. Inquiry
  - b. Problem-solving
  - c. Higher order questioning
6. The process of curriculum design
  - a. Analysis of student characteristics
  - b. Assessment of needs and feasibility
  - c. Conceptualization of goals, scope, and sequence
  - d. Development of objectives, activities, and matching instructional procedures
7. The process of curriculum development
  - a. The planning and design process
  - b. The curriculum writing tasks
  - c. Organizing for curriculum development
  - d. Field testing
  - e. Curriculum implementation
  - f. Curriculum evaluation
  - g. The role of instructional leadership

### **Illustrative Course Activities**

1. Problem-solving group activities
2. Discussion of text topics
3. Case studies of gifted students
4. Critiques of curriculum products
5. Review of exemplary curriculum materials

### Minimal Student Requirements

1. Successfully participate in classroom discussions and activities.
2. Review and evaluate existing curricula in respect to the appropriateness for gifted learners.
3. Develop an IEP for a gifted student.
4. Develop a scope and sequence of student outcomes for gifted learners across one skill strand (e.g. research, higher level thinking, problem solving).
5. Design an original curriculum unit of limited scope for gifted learners.

### 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.

1. **Scope and Sequence:** Students will develop a scope and sequence of goals and objectives for learning key process skills for gifted programs K-12. Potential topics for the scope and sequence assignment include critical thinking, creative thinking, research, problem solving, and metacognition. Student papers will consist of coordinated listings of objectives at grade level clusters K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 for each major learning goal. Assignments will be assessed based on identification of relevant goals and objectives, developmental appropriateness of organization of objectives, and alignment and progression of objectives across the K-12 span.
2. **Individual Education Plan (IEP):** Students will develop a one-year IEP for a special needs (LD, ADD, underachieving, highly gifted) gifted student that contains goals, outcomes, and assessment approaches in academic, aesthetic, creative, and social/emotional dimensions. Plans will be assessed based on relevance to case study data, appropriateness for the student profile, and feasibility for implementation.
3. **Curriculum Evaluation:** Students will complete an evaluation of an existing curriculum document for its general quality and appropriateness for gifted learners. Students will fill out an evaluation form listing criteria for general curriculum features, specific content area features, and elements of differentiation for gifted learners. Students will also 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 evidence of thorough review through key examples cited to support evaluation; on reference to major principles of appropriate curriculum for the gifted; and on practicality and coherence of recommendations for use.
4. **Curriculum Unit:** Students will develop a curriculum unit of 10 lessons that could be taught over a 3-6 week period and organized around an interdisciplinary concept and utilizing a higher level process

focus and assignment of generative products to support content learning. Units will include the following features: a description of rationale, purpose, and target audience, including discussion of appropriateness for gifted learners; an outline demonstrating organization of unit topics; a discussion of prerequisites for students; a curriculum framework citing goals and objectives reflecting concept, process/product, and content emphases; a discussion of major instructional strategies employed; descriptions of key activities supporting objectives; discussion of evaluation procedures and sample pre and post instruments; and listings of key resources and extension ideas. 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-evaluate their products, using the evaluation criteria given, and submit their self-evaluation with their unit.

5. **Pre-Assessment:** 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.

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\*May be used as a course text at the discretion of the instructor.