

Course Syllabus

BIS 4306.0W1 Strategies for Diversity in Education

Teacher Development Center
The University of Texas at Dallas

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Course Information

Course

BIS 4306.0W1
Strategies for Diversity in Education
Fall 2015

Professor Contact Information

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virtual office hours, by appointment

About the Instructor

I am in my third year teaching for the Teacher Development Center. My areas of expertise include differentiation, gifted education, special education, secondary curriculum, universal lesson design, professional development and teacher workshops. I am pleased to be offering this course (largely about differentiated instruction) to the students at UTDallas as I was a student here myself years ago. I have my MA from UTDallas and my teaching certification from the TDC. I also have a PhD in Education: Curriculum and Instruction and spent ten years in the secondary classroom as an English teacher. I train teachers and administrators nationally for a company called Pieces of Learning, specializing in differentiated instruction.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites for this course, but participants should be enrolled in education courses through the TDC with intentions of taking the teacher certification exam at some point. This course is built around the domains for assessment for the TExES Teacher Certification.

Course Description

This course is a comprehensive look at instruction in the classroom, K-12. We will spend our time learning the basics of effective differentiation, implementation techniques, differentiated instruction for special populations (special needs, gifted, twice exceptional, 504, ESL, etc.) and will practice applying this knowledge to lessons we create.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Standard 1.3 Teachers design lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners, adapting methods when appropriate.

- Teachers differentiate instruction, aligning methods and techniques to diverse student needs.
- Teachers plan student groupings, including pairings and individualized and small-group instruction, to facilitate student learning.
- Teachers integrate the use of oral, written, graphic, kinesthetic, and/or tactile methods to teach key concepts

Standard 1.6 Teachers consistently check for understanding, give immediate feedback, and make lesson adjustments as necessary.

- Teachers monitor and assess student progress to ensure that their lessons meet students' needs.
- Teachers provide immediate feedback to students in order to reinforce their learning and ensure they understand key concepts.
- Teachers adjust content delivery in response to student progress through the use of developmentally appropriate strategies that maximize student engagement.

Standard 2.1 Teachers demonstrate the belief that all students have the potential to achieve at high levels and support all learners in their pursuit of academic and social-emotional success.

- Teachers purposefully utilize learners' individual strengths as a basis for academic and social-emotional growth.
- Teachers create a community of learners in an inclusive environment that views differences in learning and background as educational assets.
- Teachers accept responsibility for the growth of all of their students, persisting in their efforts to ensure high levels of growth on the part of each learner.

Standard 2.2 Teachers acquire, analyze, and use background information (familial, cultural, educational, linguistic, and developmental characteristics) to engage students in learning.

- Teachers connect learning, content, and expectations to students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests in meaningful contexts.
- Teachers understand the unique qualities of students with exceptional needs, including disabilities and giftedness, and know how to effectively address these needs through instructional strategies and resources.
- Teachers understand the role of language and culture in learning, and know how to modify their practices to support language acquisition such that language is comprehensible and instruction is fully accessible.

Standard 2.3 Teachers facilitate each student's learning by employing evidence-based practices and concepts related to learning and social-emotional development.

- Teachers understand how learning occurs and how learners develop, construct meaning and acquire knowledge and skills.
- Teachers identify readiness for learning and understand how development in one area may affect students' performance in other areas.
- Teachers apply evidence-based strategies to address individual student learning needs and differences, adjust their instruction, and support the learning needs of each student.

Standard 3.3 Teachers demonstrate content specific pedagogy that meets the needs of diverse learners, utilizing engaging instructional materials to connect prior content knowledge to new learning.

- Teachers teach both the key content knowledge and the key skills of the discipline.
- Teachers make appropriate and authentic connections across disciplines, subjects, and students' real world experiences. [top](#)

Standard 4.1 Teachers create a mutually respectful, collaborative, and safe community of learners by using knowledge of students' development and backgrounds.

- Teachers embrace students' backgrounds and experiences as an asset in their learning environment.
- Teachers maintain and facilitate respectful, supportive, positive and productive interactions with and among students.
- Teachers establish and sustain learning environments that are developmentally appropriate and respond to students' needs, strengths, and personal experiences.

Standard 5.1 Teachers implement both formal and informal methods of measuring student progress.

- Teachers gauge student progress and ensure student mastery of content knowledge and skills by providing assessments aligned to instructional objectives and outcomes that are accurate measures of student learning.
- Teachers vary methods of assessing learning to accommodate students' learning needs, linguistic differences, and/or varying levels of background knowledge.

Standard 5.3 Teachers regularly collect, review, and analyze data to monitor student progress.

- Teachers analyze and review data in a timely, thorough, accurate, and appropriate manner, both individually and with colleagues, to monitor student learning.
- Teachers combine results from different measures to develop a holistic picture of students' strengths and learning needs.

Standard 5.4 Teachers utilize the data they collect and analyze to inform their instructional strategies and adjust short- and long-term plans accordingly.

- Teachers design instruction, change strategies, and differentiate their teaching practices to improve student learning based on assessment outcomes.
- Teachers regularly compare their curriculum scope and sequence with student data to ensure they are on track and make adjustments as needed.

Required Textbooks

Required Texts

Tomlinson, C. (2001). How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms. Alexandria, VA. ASCD. ISBN: 0-87120-512-2

Dweck, C. (2008). Mindset: The new psychology of success. New York, NY. Ballantine Books ISBN: 978-0-345-47232-8

Suggested Course Materials

- Additional readings will be offered throughout the course and will be provided in the course room.

Textbooks and some other bookstore materials can be ordered online through [Off-Campus Books](#) or the [UTD Bookstore](#). They are also available in stock at both bookstores.

Course Policies

Makeup Exams

I offer windows for completion of exams and as such there are no make-up exams for this course. You will have one full week to complete any exam for the class. Extenuating circumstances should be reported to me prior to the deadline for the assessment.

Extra Credit

I do not offer extra credit but do offer great opportunities to earn many points in the course.

Late Work

I will accept late work, but only for two days. I give all assignments a full week for completion and submission, so once we have past that window, the assignments should no longer be submitted for grading. If you anticipate any personal issues or unforeseen circumstances arise, please contact me immediately. Waiting until the deadline or beyond it will not earn my favor in extension requests.

Class Participation

Students are required to login regularly to the online class site. The instructor will use the tracking feature in eLearning to monitor student activity. Students are also required to participate in all class activities such as discussion board, chat or conference sessions, journal reflections and assignments.

Virtual Classroom Citizenship

The same guidelines that apply to traditional classes should be observed in the virtual classroom environment. Please use proper netiquette when interacting with class members and the professor.

Policy on Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The university is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty, which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the UTD eLearning Help Desk:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/elearninghelp>, 1-866-588-3192. The instructor and the UTD eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

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Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important [technical requirements](#) on the [Getting Started with eLearning webpage](#).

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Course Access and Navigation

This course was developed using a web course tool called eLearning. It is to be delivered entirely online. Students will use their UTD NetID account to login at: <http://elearning.utdallas.edu>. Please see more details on [course access and navigation information](#).

To get familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#).

UTD provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The services include a toll free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service. Please use this link to access the UTD eLearning Support Center:
<http://www.utdallas.edu/elearninghelp>.

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Communications

This eLearning course has built-in communication tools which will be used for interaction and communication. Some external communication tools such as regular email and a web conferencing tool may also be used during the semester. For more details, please visit the [eLearning Tutorials webpage](#) for video demonstrations on numerous tools in eLearning.

Interaction with Instructor

The instructor will communicate with students mainly using the Announcements and Discussions tools. Students may send personal concerns or questions to the instructor using the course email tool. The instructor will reply to student emails or Discussion board messages within 3 working days under normal circumstances. Please keep in mind that you are interacting with an actual person. It can be easy to grow frustrated and to vent in an email, but be advised that a more articulate and deliberately constructed email can garner your desired response much better than a rant or a message full of errors. Treat it as though we are talking face to face. 😊

You will be responsible for discussions throughout the class. You should offer an initial response to the prompt and then follow with a thoughtful and constructive response to at least two of your classmates.

Student Resources

The following university resources are available to students:

UTD Distance Learning:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/elearning/students/cstudents.htm>

McDermott Library:

Distance Learners (UTD students who live outside the boundaries of Collin, Dallas, Denton, Rockwall, or Tarrant counties) will need a UTD-ID number to access all of the library's electronic resources (reserves, journal articles, ebooks, interlibrary loan) from off campus. For UTD students living within those counties who are taking online courses, a Comet Card is required to check out materials at the McDermott Library. For more information on library resources go to:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/library/distance.html>.

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Student Assessments

Grading Information

Module	Task	Day/Date	Points
	Growth Mindset and Differentiation	1 week Aug 24 - Aug 30	
1	Discussion 1.1 Introductions and Class Goals	Aug 26	20
1	Journal 1.1 Reflection on Mindset	Aug 27	30
1	Discussion 1.2 Share mindset quiz results and discussion implications	Aug 29	20
1	Journal 1.2 What impact can/will your mindset have on your own instruction and classroom?	Aug 30	30
1	Quiz on Mindset	Aug 30	25
	Defining Differentiation	1 week Aug 31 - Sep 6	
2	Discussion 2.1 How do you define differentiation?	Aug 31	20
2	Journal 2.1 Responding to Tomlinson videos and literature	Sep 2	30
2	Discussion 2.2 Myths v Reality about Differentiation and Impact on Teaching	Sep 4	20
2	Quiz on introduction to differentiation	Sep 6	25
	Content, Process, Product	3 weeks Sep 7 – Sep 27	
3	Journal 3.1 Reflection on content differentiation	Sept 11	30
3	Journal 3.2 Reflection on process differentiation	Sept 12	30
3	Journal 3.3 Reflection on product differentiation	Set 13	30
3	Discussion 3.1 Which seems to be the easiest entry point for you in implementing differentiation?	Sept 15	20
3	Discussion 3.2 Ideas from clips	Sept 18	20

3	Assignment 3.1, 3.2, & 3.3 Submit a mini-lesson differentiated three times, with one version differentiated for content, one for process and one for product.	Sept 25	100
3	Quiz over differentiation, strategies	Sept 27	25
	EXAM #1	1 week Sep 28 – Oct 4	250
	Differentiation and RTI	1 week Oct 5 – Oct 11	
4	Discussion 4.1 Response to Doug Fuchs video	Oct 6	20
4	Journal 4.1 In your own words, what is RTI?	Oct 7	30
4	Discussion 4.2 Correlations between RTI and Differentiation	Oct 8	20
4	Assignment 4.1: Powerpoint demonstrating how RTI and DI are connected, how they reinforce each other and what this means to the classroom. Cite all sources.	Oct 11	100
4	Quiz over RTI and RTI correlates with DI	Oct 11	25
	Differentiation and Special Education	2 weeks Oct 12 – Oct 25	
5	Discussion 5.1 Special education law	Oct 17	20
5	Assignment 5.1: Powerpoint and mini-lesson highlighting the information about a specific learning disability and how differentiation can improve the learner experience	Oct 22	100
5	Journal 5.1 Reflection on Module 5 assignment	Oct 23	30
5	Quiz over special education and instruction	Oct 25	25
	Differentiation for Gifted Learners	2 weeks Oct 26 – Nov 8	
6	Discussion 6.1 What do you know about gifted learners?	Oct 28	20
6	Assignment 6.1 Powerpoint and mini-lesson for gifted learner. Cite all sources.	Nov 4	100
6	Journal 6.1 Reflection on assignment differentiation for gifted learners	Nov 5	30
6	Quiz of gifted learners and instruction	Nov 8	25
	Exam #2	1 week Nov 9 – Nov 16	250
	Thanksgiving Break	Nov 23 – Nov 27	
	Final Course Project Mock classroom: Participants will populate a hypothetical classroom with diverse learners and will then design a full lesson that is differentiated to meet the needs of all the children in the class. Participants will write a short research essay demonstrating mastery of vocabulary and concepts associated with differentiation. Participants will create a powerpoint to present their process, findings and differentiation through this process.	Nov 30 – Dec 11 *Due date is December 11th	400
	Participation and End of Course survey (40 points each)		80
		Total Points =	2000

Weights/Values of Tasks

Discussions (10)	(200 pts)	10 %
Journals (9)	(270 pts)	13.5 %
Module Quizzes (6)	(150 pts)	7.5 %
Assignments (4)	(400 pts)	20 %
Exams (2)	(500 pts)	25 %
Final Project (1)	(400 pts)	20 %
Participation and Survey	(80 pts)	4 %
Total	(2000 pts)	100%

Grading Scale

Scaled Score	Letter Equivalent
1940 - 2000	A+ (97% - 100%)
1860 - 1939	A (93% - 96%)
1800 - 1859	A- (90% - 92%)
1740 - 1799	B+ (87% - 89%)
1660 - 1739	B (83% - 86%)
1600 - 1659	B- (80% - 82%)
1540 - 1599	C+ (77% - 79%)
1460 - 1539	C (73% - 76%)
1400 - 1459	C- (70% - 72%)
1340 - 1399	D+ (67% - 69%)
1260 - 1339	D (63% - 66%)
1200 - 1259	D- (60% - 62%)
1199 and below	F (59% and below)

Grading Policy

As previously stipulated, I will not accept late work without communication beyond a two-day window. I expect participation on journals, discussions, assignment, quizzes, exams and the final project.

Accessing Grades

Students can check their grades by clicking “My Grades” on the course menu after the grade for each assessment task is released.

Assignments

The 4 assignments for this course revolve largely around designing mini-lessons to demonstrate new understanding of differentiation. You will differentiate a mini-lesson of your choosing (create one or find one online) by content, process and product. You will then differentiate according to special education needs and gifted learners’ needs. You will also be asked to communicate your new understanding of those two subpopulations as well as your new knowledge and depth of understanding about RTI. This demonstration will be in the form of a power point presentation highlighting key elements of those subpopulations and the RTI model. Each assignment is worth 100 points and the feedback you receive will be imperative your success on the exams and on the final project.

Assignment submission instructions

Locate the assignment in your eLearning course. You will submit your assignments in the required file format with a simple file name and a file extension. To submit your assignment, click the assignment name link and follow the on-screen instructions to upload and submit your file(s). For additional information on how to submit assignments, view the [Submitting An Assignment video tutorial](#).

Please Note: Each assignment link will be deactivated after the assignment due time. After your submission is graded, you may go to My Grades on the course menu and click the score link to check the results and feedback.

Participation/Discussions

I am looking for thoughtful, original responses to your colleagues and in response to the prompt given. I want to see you thinking carefully and completely on these topics and then interacting in an elevated academic way with your peers. We do not get to see each other in a classroom, so these discussions are your opportunity to show what you know and to receive other ideas from people who present different viewpoints on our content. This is our community and it is a critical part of our online learning environment. Be appropriate. Be insightful. Be prompt and all will go well. 😊

Online Tests/Quizzes

There is a quiz at the end of each module of study. These quizzes are **teaching tools** and as such, you have an unlimited amount of attempts at them before the module closes. However, once the module is complete, the quizzes are closed and you must move on. I do not want these quizzes to be punitive—I want them to guide and direct your reading and to ensure you are walking away from this class with the understandings I feel you need to be a productive differentiating teacher in a classroom.

You can access quizzes/exams by clicking the quiz/exam link on the designated page. Each quiz is timed, and the number of attempts allowed within a scheduled time window will be specified. Please read the on-screen instructions carefully before you click “Begin”. After each quiz is graded and released, you may go to My Grades page, click the quiz and the score link of the quiz to view your graded submission.

Mid Term and Final Examinations

These exams will both be hypothetical scenarios and will require research, lesson design and presentation of information. You will be given a variety of tasks, asked to cite your sources and will simply download a word document to get the exam questions. You will create your own word document and upload it in the exam link, as you would any other assignment. No special sessions required, no timed assessment in the online course. Those modes are not conducive to the kind of learning or work we are doing.

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Academic Calendar

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		Total Points =	2000

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Academic Integrity

The University has policies and discipline procedures regarding academic dishonesty. Detailed information is available on the [UTD Judicial Affairs](#) web page. All students are expected to maintain a high level of responsibility with respect to academic honesty. Students who violate University rules on academic honesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

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Course Evaluation

As required by UTD academic regulations, every student must complete an evaluation for each enrolled course at the end of the semester. An online instructional assessment form will be made available for your confidential use. Please watch for the email notification at your UTD email inbox with course evaluation access information towards the end of semester.

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University Policies

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

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