



Empowering Novice Special Educators

Course Syllabus

Course Description

The purpose of this professional development course is to provide support for new special educators in order to provide them with the tools they need to be successful in this challenging field. Participants will learn the basics of special education practices including the varying programs offered within the special education spectrum, special education laws, and the various types of educational disabilities. They will also gain an understanding of how to effectively create and develop an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), and administer/interpret an educational assessment. Participants will engage in hands-on activities and discussions in order to collaborate in developing educational plans that best meet the needs of their students. In addition, participants will take a deep dive into the instructional piece in order to examine how to differentiate instruction to reach and teach all learners and exceptionalities. This course will provide participants with a diverse toolkit of strategies needed to navigate the challenging but rewarding world of special education.

This course enhances classroom teaching effectiveness and supports improved student outcomes by introducing new knowledge in special education laws, instructional differentiation, IEP development, behavior management, assistive technology, and inclusive practices to support diverse learners.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Examine Special Education laws and various disabilities including learning disabilities, ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disabilities, and emotional and behavioral disabilities.
2. Explore the purpose, components, and implementation of IEPs for students with special needs.
3. Examine strategies for adapting curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet the diverse needs of students in inclusive classrooms.
4. Explore an overview of assistive technology tools and resources to support students with disabilities in accessing the curriculum and achieving academic success.
5. Develop techniques for promoting positive behavior and managing challenging behaviors in students with special needs.
6. Examine effective collaboration strategies between general education and special education teachers to support students in inclusive settings.
7. Understand the importance of partnering with families and community stakeholders in supporting the academic and social-emotional development of students with special needs.



8. Develop strategies for identifying and assessing students with disabilities, including formal and informal assessment methods, observation techniques, and the use of standardized tests.

Modules

- Module 1: Introduction to Special Education, Quiz 1
- Module 2: Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs), Quiz 2
- Module 3: Differentiated Instruction, Quiz 3
- Module 4: Assistive Technology, Quiz 4
- Module 5: Behavior Management in Special Education, Quiz 5
- Module 6: Collaboration and Co-teaching, Quiz 6
- Module 7: Family and Community Engagement in the IEP Process, Quiz 7
- Module 8: Assessment and Evaluation, Quiz 8

Grading:

Each quiz must be passed at an 80% or higher (three attempts allowed).

Format

This is a self-paced, asynchronous (no required live meetings) course. Throughout the PD course, you will find it helpful to take notes along the way to assist with the quizzes. Within each module, you will find reflection assessments that are not graded but will help in your journey through the course. There is an interactive forum in the course to help you connect with peers and instructors, share ideas, and collaborate on best practices throughout your learning journey.