

# Special Education Package (40 Hours)



The courses in this online PD package help teachers gain confidence in integrating and teaching students with special needs in the classroom. The package includes tools to help teachers make classroom adaptations, modify lesson plans, tests and assignments, and communicate effectively with students who have special needs.

**The Special Education Package includes 4 self-study courses (10 hours each) for a total of 40 hours of professional development.**

- Communication in the Integrated Classroom
- Differentiated Instruction
- Integrated Classrooms
- Special Education and Behavioral Health

# Communication in the Integrated Classroom



## Standards:

This course aligns to the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content and Teachers Facilitate Learning.

This course is designed to help teachers communicate effectively with students with disabilities. PECS and Picture card communication are a couple methodologies that are explained. It also provides teaching strategies to build communication skills.

The autism section is aimed at preparing educational professionals to integrate students with autism, modify the environment, and provide interventions within the classroom. The course explores the various changes that are seen in the brain and cognition in students with autism.

The course contains tips, tools, and templates that teachers can use to apply the concepts into their instruction.



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# Communication in the Integrated Classroom

## Course Outline

### **SECTION A: Assistive Communication for Every Classroom**

#### **LESSON 1: Introduction to Assistive Communication**

- Defining Assistive Communication and exploring its benefits and function
- Identifying the laws advocating for and supporting the use of Assistive Technology
- Understanding Assistive Communication, its purpose, and the three types of Assistive Communication devices used in the classroom
- Identifying the four categories of Assistive Communication Technologies

#### **LESSON 2: Low-Tech Strategies for Communication**

- Exploring the six phases of the Picture Exchange Communication System method and its application
- Understanding American Sign Language and its use in the classroom
- Practical application of the Picture Exchange Communication board and Topic rings/wallets in the classroom
- Identifying the four main types of Communication cards effective in the classroom

#### **LESSON 3: High-Tech Strategies for Communication**

- Exploring the different high-tech strategies and their uses for improving communication and learning in the classroom
- Computer modifications and adaptations enabling students with disabilities to achieve academic excellence
- Practical application of the devices with regard to Physical, Visual, Communication and Learning disabilities
- Identifying the smartphone applications that can enable communication

#### **LESSON 4: Implementing Assistive and Alternative Communication in Classrooms**

- Understanding the role of the teacher and the Assistive Communication team with regard to Assistive and Alternative communication
- Exploring the process of implementation and classroom observations of Assistive and Alternative Communication in the classrooms
- Defining the Multi-modal approach to communication and the three Levels of communication
- Exploring the strategies aiding and facilitating communication, group work, assessment, and homework

# Communication in the Integrated Classroom

## Course Outline

### SECTION B: Introduction to Autism

#### LESSON 1: Overview

- Definition
- Symptoms and other similar conditions
- Therapies
- Labeling neurodevelopmental disorders
- The brain in Autism Spectrum Disorder

#### LESSON 2: Social Skills in ASD

- Social skills and related challenges.
- Theory of the mind
- Teaching non-verbal learners
- Verbal processing, echolalia, perseveration, and scripting
- Abstract language, eye contact, empathy, spatial terms, and pronouns

#### LESSON 3: Expressions of Autism

- Sensory hyposensitivity and hypersensitivity
- Splintered development, perseveration, and stress
- Part-to-whole or whole-to-part thinking
- The lack of social motivation and imagination in children with ASD
- Extraordinary abilities

#### LESSON 4: ASD in School

- Neurological differences in children with ASD
- Central Coherence Theory
- Classroom physical environment
- Teaching materials and strategies
- Behavior management strategies
- Working with parents and team



10 Hours  
of Learning



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# Differentiated Instruction



## Standards:

This course aligns to all of the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

Examine 21st century student and educator strengths in this research-based course packed with strategies, resources, and tools.

In the first part of this course, you will learn about the various types of learners and how you can adapt your teaching to accommodate every learner.

In the second section, you will learn specifically about gifted learners and how you can support their learning needs.

By the end of this course, you will have a greater understanding of the various learning styles and will be equipped with ideas and strategies to reach and support every student.



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# Differentiated Instruction

## Course Outline

### Section A: Accommodating All Learners

#### LESSON 1: Every Learner Learning

- Teaching and learning
- Accommodating all learners
- About the brain
- Introduction to learning styles
- Teacher as a learner
- The Paragon Learning Style Inventory (PLSI)

#### LESSON 2: Who Are Our Students? Teaching Across Types

- Characteristics of today's youth
- Aspects of physical and cognitive access to the general curriculum
- Academic learning styles and students' skill development as it aligns with age
- The concept of perception and differences in perception
- How to build a win-win pedagogy based on the 5 principles
- Strategies to employ when the teacher's learning style conflicts with students' styles
- Thinking styles

#### LESSON 3: Technology

- Media as a flexible tool to reach all learners
- Recent research on technology and traditional models of delivery
- Traditional media versus digital media
- Digital media and how it can be used to customize materials and methods
- Technology timeline

#### LESSON 4: Theories and Strategies

- Components of multiple intelligences
- Activities to develop each type of intelligence
- Bloom's taxonomy, differentiated instruction, and informal learning
- Hemisphericity and activities that can stimulate both left and right sides of the brain
- The 4-quadrant model

# Differentiated Instruction

## Course Outline

### Section B: Differentiation of Gifted Learners in the Classroom

#### LESSON 1: Characteristics

- Who gifted learners are
- Types of gifted learners, including academic, linguistic, and artistic learners
- Qualities of gifted learners

#### LESSON 2: Personal, Social and Cognitive Needs

- The personal, social and intellectual needs of gifted learners
- Differentiation and how it can be implemented, including aspects process and assessment
- Independent learning and curriculum compacting for gifted learners

#### LESSON 3: Special Populations

- Twice exceptional students and how they require additional support
- Indicators of twice exceptionality and strategies that can be used to teach this special population

#### LESSON 4: Practical Strategies

- Several practical strategies that can be used while working with gifted learners and special populations
- Pre-assessment in teaching gifted learners
- Strategies such as H.O.T.S, Morning Minute, Learning contracts and tiered instruction



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# Integrated Classrooms



## Standards:

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It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

Teaching each student in a classroom effectively is never easy. It is next to impossible to find a classroom full of students with the same needs, learning levels, and abilities. This course explores practical strategies that can add a much needed element of flexibility in teaching presentation, student expression, and meaningful engagement.

In the first section, teachers learn how to teach children who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Carrying this forward, the UDL framework presented in the second section shows how a single teaching approach has very limited results in student learning, highlighting the need for a new curricular approach.



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# Integrated Classrooms

## *Course Outline*

### **SECTION A: IEPs: Documentation and Implementation for Teachers**

#### **LESSON 1: Introduction**

- Research
- Common special education terms
- Understanding IDEA and IEP
- Understanding Section 504
- The special education process

#### **LESSON 2: The IEP Team**

- Setting up the IEP team
- Roles and responsibilities of IEP team members and the IEP team process
- Typical IEP meeting
- Preparing for an IEP meeting

#### **LESSON 3: Developing a Standards-based IEP**

- Components of a standards-based IEP
- Standards-based annual goals and post-secondary goals
- Student assessment and progress
- Identifying special education services
- Year-end evaluations

#### **LESSON 4: Translating IEP goals**

- Models of school-based interventions
- Classroom accommodations and modifications
- Barriers to effective use of accommodations
- General types of accommodations
- Effective teaching strategies/instructional accommodations
- Testing, timing, and grading accommodations

# Integrated Classrooms

## Course Outline

### SECTION B: Accommodations through UDL

#### LESSON 1: Basics of UDL (Universal Design of Learning)

- The meaning and need for UDL to meet both teacher and student needs
- Designing comprehensive curriculum and effective assessments
- The basic principles of UDL and their implementation
- Using UDL to meet the varied needs of students by differentiated instruction

#### LESSON 2: Flexible Methods of Presentation

- Possible barriers to optimal student learning and strategies to overcome them
- Audio-visual and textual strategies of providing multiple options for perception
- Using variety in language, mathematical expressions, and symbols
- Essential strategies in ensuring successful comprehension, maximum transfer, and generalization of learning

#### LESSON 3: Flexible Methods of Expression

- Effective strategies to successfully engage and challenge students
- Ensuring that the expected physical engagement with the learning environment does not pose barriers for differently-abled students
- Offering alternatives for students to express themselves
- Using the UDL framework to scaffold the skills needed to demonstrate students' executive functioning

#### LESSON 4: Flexible Options for Engagement

- Providing multiple opportunities so all students are engaged in the classroom
- Strategies to create a positive classroom environment
- Ensuring that the primary goal is enhanced student learning, but eliminating distractions and irrelevant activities
- Promoting students' self-regulation by teaching them personal coping skills, self-assessment, and reflection techniques



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# Special Education and Behavioral Health



## Standards:

This course aligns to the INTASC Standards including Learner Development, Learning Differences, Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Assessment, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to all of the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Diverse Learners, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.

Through this course, teachers explore behavioral health training that is culturally responsive and trauma and evidence informed. Teachers also gain an increasing awareness of practices relating to educating students with disabilities in the classroom, including Child Find and inclusive learning environments.

The first section of this course presents a basic understanding of warning signs of early-onset mental illness in children and adolescents.

The second section focuses on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Teachers are provided with a variety of tips, adaptations, and classroom strategies.



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# Special Education and Behavioral Health

## Course Outline

### **SECTION A: Recognition of Early-onset Mental Health Illness in Children & Adolescents**

#### **LESSON 1: Introduction to Mental Illnesses**

- An overview of the prevalence, nature, causes, and experience of mental illnesses
- Understanding effective treatments and the role and limitations of medication
- The application of behavioral therapy and other creative therapies under the umbrella of Cognitive Behavior Therapy to target the root of the problem
- The stigma associated with mental illnesses and ways to combat it
- The educational implications of the evaluation and treatment of mental illnesses

#### **LESSON 2: ADHD, ODD, and Anxiety in the Classroom**

- Understanding the manifestations of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) in the classroom and ways to manage behavior effectively in this context
- The common signs, treatments, and classroom strategies to deal with ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder) and CD (Conduct Disorder)
- The various subtypes within Anxiety Disorders, their treatment, and classroom applications

#### **LESSON 3: Other Mental Health Conditions in Children**

- Symptoms and warning signs of OCD, Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, PTSD, etc.
- Treatments
- Classroom applications and strategies

#### **LESSON 4: The Team**

- Working with parents
- The role of mental health professionals
- The IEP process
- Understanding assessments and assignments

# Special Education and Behavioral Health

## Course Outline

### SECTION B: Understanding ADHD

#### LESSON 1: Introduction

- Definition of and challenges of ADHD
- Causes of ADHD
- Strengths of students with ADHD
- Prognosis and treatment of ADHD

#### LESSON 2: Core Issues in ADHD

- The ADHD brain and how the changes in the brain cause deficits
- Challenges in ADHD and strategies that may be used to overcome them, especially in the areas of attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity
- Strategies that are useful in working with students with ADHD including instruction sheets, classroom seating, movement breaks, and rules
- Dealing with anger and addictive behavior in students with ADHD

#### LESSON 3: Associated Issues in ADHD

- Issues seen in ADHD, including issues in organization, motivation and social skills
- How teachers may help students to organize their schoolwork and complete it
- How to motivate students with ADHD
- How to support students with ADHD so they can build positive friendships

#### LESSON 4: Accommodations

- Classroom accommodations that can help a student with ADHD learn and perform well
- Modified seating and lighting
- How a classroom schedule and organization can support learning
- Adapting homework, visual aids, and assessments in order to help a child with ADHD cope with the curriculum



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