



Inclusion:

Working with Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms

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Introduction

Inclusion: Working with Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms was written to help teachers understand concepts and terms related to educating students in inclusive classrooms. The course also helps teachers learn about the continuum of placements school systems can use in providing special education and related services to students with disabilities. Information discussed is also designed to help you understand the federal definition of students entitled to special education services, as well as procedures you can use in determining whether these students can be educated in the regular classroom. The course also identifies and describes the roles and responsibilities of special and general educators in providing special education services to students educated in inclusive classrooms and instructional and classroom management strategies teachers can use to work with these students in the least restrictive environment.

This computer-based instruction course is a self-supporting program that provides instruction, structured practice, and evaluation all on your home or school computer. Technical support information can be found in the Help section of your course.

Course Materials (Online)

Title: *Inclusion: Working with Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms*
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Instructor: Dr. Karen Lea

Academic Integrity Statement

The structure and format of most distance-learning courses presume a high level of personal and academic integrity in completion and submission of coursework. Individuals enrolled in a distance-learning course are expected to adhere to the following standards of academic conduct.

Academic Work

Academic work submitted by the individual (such as papers, assignments, reports, tests) shall be the student's own work or appropriately attributed, in part or in whole, to its correct source. Submission of commercially prepared (or group prepared) materials as if they are one's own work is unacceptable.

Students are required to view/read each screen in each exercise of each chapter. Screens, exercises and chapter content may not be skipped. Students are also required to access and read all content in each course handout. A participant who fails to complete the entire course in the manner intended and as outlined, may have their grade reduced or fail the course. It is the student's responsibility to contact the facilitator, instructor-of-record, or VESi registrar if there is any question as to the manner in which this course is to be completed.

Aiding Honesty in Others

The individual will encourage honesty in others by refraining from providing materials or information to another person with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly.

Violation of these academic standards will result in the assignment of a failing grade and subsequent loss of credit for the course.

Level of Application

This course is designed as an informational course for K–12 regular and special education teachers, administrators, parents, and related service personnel. Information discussed is designed to help you better understand current educational models being used to educate students with disabilities in the general education classroom. This course will allow you to compare and identify how school districts in your own area are implementing inclusion programs, handling current inclusion issues, and some of the practices teachers are using to educate students in inclusive settings.

Expected Learning Outcomes

As a result of taking this course, participants will be able to demonstrate their ability to:

- Explain federal law and regulations and how these affect educators
- Correctly use key terms when communicating with a special education team and guardians
- Use Response to Intervention at an initial level
- Identify characteristics of special needs students
- Apply strategies for effective teaching, including classroom management
- Choose appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations and modifications

Course Description

Information provided in this course has been divided into five chapters, which should be completed in the order in which they are presented in the program. Once you have completed these five chapters, you should have a better understanding of the concept of inclusion and how it came about. You are strongly encouraged to read additional journal articles, books, and research materials outside the course material to gain a better understanding of current issues related to educating students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms.

Chapter 1: The Concept & Federal Definition of Students with Disabilities

This chapter focuses on federal law and regulations, and key terms and concepts. This is foundational knowledge for educators to understand their legal responsibility in teaching all students with special needs. After reading information provided in this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe the federal definition of students with disabilities
- Describe the criteria school systems can use to determine whether a student falls under one of the categories of disabilities
- Describe key concepts/terms
- List and describe federal legislation and court cases that have contributed to the movement toward educating students with disabilities in the classroom
- List and describe the continuum of settings school systems can use to educate students with disabilities
- List and describe characteristics of effective inclusion programs
- List and describe the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion

Chapter 2: Federal Laws & Regulations

Chapter 2 focuses on the federal laws and regulations. It is important that you understand these since they do govern your school and your classroom. Reading and hearing about this information can become overwhelming, so take your time moving through this section. Having a good foundational knowledge of the laws and regulations will help you apply strategies that will be discussed later in the course. After reading the information provided in this chapter, you should be able to:

- List and describe legal procedures and criteria school systems and educators are required to use in evaluating, identifying, and educating students with disabilities, and the special education and related services needed;
- List and describe the provisions specified under IDEA, and the mandate each provision specifies school systems must use in working with students with special needs;
- List and describe the provisions specified under federal regulations and procedures school systems must use in working with students with special needs;
- Describe the special education and related services school systems are mandated to provide to students with disabilities;
- Describe the procedural safeguards parents of students with disabilities are granted under IDEA;

- Describe the civil rights students with disabilities are granted under Section 504, and ADA;
- Describe the purpose of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and an Individualized Family Service Plan and the components or information that needs to be specified in each document;
- List and describe the similarities and differences between regulations for the various education-related acts;
- List and describe procedures school systems are expected to go through at the pre-referral and referral stages;
- List and describe the Response to Intervention (RTI) process, and procedures school systems are expected to go through before a child is referred for an in-depth assessment, for the purpose of determining whether he/she has a disability and/or is labeled as a student with a specific learning disability;
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of teachers, school-based problem solving team members, and the multidisciplinary (IEP) team in identifying and providing special education and related services to students with special needs; and
- Describe procedures special and general educators can use to determine whether students with disabilities can be educated in the general education classroom.

Chapter 3: Special & General Educator Collaboration

This chapter focuses on the impact the movement toward educating students with special needs in the general education classroom has had on the roles and responsibilities of special and general educators, strategies teachers can use to work collaboratively, and procedures teachers can use to determine whether students need accommodations and modifications. After reading information provided in this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe the impact the movement toward educating students with special needs in the general education classroom has had on teachers;
- Describe the role and responsibilities of teachers in terms of educating students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms;
- Define the term “collaboration” and describe different collaborative models special and general educators can use to provide special education and related services to students educated in general education classrooms (e.g. co-teaching);
- List and describe characteristics that must be in place for special and general educators to collaborate successfully; and
- List and describe the steps special and general educators should go through in setting up their own collaborative efforts.

Chapter 4: Differentiated Instruction, Accommodations, & Modifications

Chapter four focuses on why special and general educators need to differentiate instruction and provide instructional and assessment accommodations and modifications for students educated in inclusive classrooms. After reading the information provided in this chapter, you should be able to:

- Specify regulations that mandate that students should be provided with adaptations;

- Define the terms “differentiated instruction,” “curricular adaptations,” “accommodations,” and “modifications”;
- List and describe instructional accommodations and modifications teachers can provide to students educated in inclusive classrooms;
- List and describe the steps special and general educators can use to determine accommodations and modifications students may require in inclusive classrooms;
- Describe steps special and general educators can go through in determining whether a student will or will not participate in state- or district-wide assessment programs; and
- List and describe types of assessment accommodations teachers can provide for students during testing.

Chapter 5: Methods for the Classroom

Chapter five focuses on procedures special and general educators can use to structure their classroom environment and manage students’ behaviors. After reading information provided in this chapter, you should be able to:

- List and describe factors that may result in students’ inappropriate classroom behavior;
- Define “functional assessment” and describe procedures educators can use to evaluate their classroom setting;
- List and describe strategies educators can use to structure their classroom setting and increase students’ appropriate classroom behavior and decrease inappropriate classroom behavior; and
- List and describe the importance of identifying the relationship between students’ behaviors and learning.

Student Expectations

As a student you will be expected to:

- Students are required to view/read each screen in each exercise of each chapter. Screens, exercises and chapter content may not be skipped. Students are also required to access and read all content in each course handout.
- Complete all four section examinations, showing a competent understanding of the material presented. **You must obtain an overall score of 70% or higher, with no individual exam score below 50%, and successfully complete ALL writing assignments to pass this course. *Please note: Minimum exam score requirements may vary by college or university; therefore, you should refer to your course addendum to determine what your minimum exam score requirements are.**
- Complete a review of any section on which your examination score was below 50%.
- Retake any examination, after completing an information review, to increase that examination score to a minimum of 50%, making sure to also be achieving an overall exam score of a minimum 70% (**maximum of three attempts**). ***Please note: Minimum exam score requirements may vary by college or university; therefore, you should refer to your course addendum to determine what your minimum exam score requirements are.**

- Complete all course journal article and essay writing assignments with the minimum word count shown for each writing assignment.
- Complete a course evaluation form at the end of the course.

Examinations

At the end of each course section, you will be expected to complete an examination designed to assess your knowledge. You may take these exams a total of three times. Your last score will save, not the highest score. After your third attempt, each examination will lock and not allow further access. The average from your exam scores will be printed on your certificate. However, this is not your final grade since your required writing assignments have not been reviewed. Exceptionally written or poorly written required writing assignments, or violation of the academic integrity policy in the course syllabus, will affect your grade. As this is a self-paced computerized instruction program, you may review course information as often as necessary. You will not be able to exit any examinations until you have answered all questions. If you try to exit the exam before you complete all questions, your information will be lost. You are expected to complete the entire exam in one sitting.

Writing Assignments

All assignments are reviewed and may impact your final grade. Exceptionally or poorly written assignments, or violation of the Academic Integrity Policy (see course syllabus for policy), will affect your grade. Fifty percent of your grade is determined by your writing assignments, and your overall exam score determines the other fifty percent. ***Refer to the Essay Grading Guidelines, which were sent as an attachment with your original course link. You should also refer to the Course Syllabus Addendum, which was sent as an attachment with your original course link, to determine if you have any writing assignments in addition to the Critical Thinking Questions (CTQ) and Journal Article Summations (JAS). If you do, the Essay Grading Guidelines will also apply.***

Your writing assignments must meet the minimum word count and are not to include the question or your final citations as part of your word count. In other words, the question and citations are not to be used as a means to meet the minimum word count.

Critical Thinking Questions

There are four CTQs that you are required to complete. You will need to write a minimum of 500 words (maximum 1,000) per essay. You should explain how the information that you gained from the course will be applied and clearly convey a strong understanding of the course content as it relates to each CTQ. To view the questions, click on REQUIRED ESSAY and choose the CTQ that you are ready to complete; this will bring up a screen where you may enter your essay. Prior to course submission, you may go back at any point to edit your essay, but you must be certain to click SAVE once you are done with your edits.

You must click SAVE before you write another essay or move on to another part of the course.

Journal Article Summations

You are required to write, in your own words, a summary on a total of three peer-reviewed or scholarly journal articles (one article per JAS), written by an author with a Ph.D., Ed.D. or similar, on the topic outlined within each JAS section in the “Required Essays” portion of the course (blogs, abstracts, news articles, or similar are not acceptable). Your article choice must relate specifically to the discussion topic listed in each individual JAS. You will choose a total of three relevant articles (one article per JAS) and write a thorough summary of the information presented in each article (you must write a minimum of 200 words with a 400 word maximum per JAS). Be sure to provide the URL or the journal name, volume, date, and any other critical information to allow the facilitator to access and review each article.

To write your summary, click on REQUIRED ESSAYS and choose the JAS that you would like to complete. A writing program will automatically launch where you can write your summary. When you are ready to stop, click **SAVE**. Prior to course submission you may go back at any point to edit your summaries but you must be certain to click SAVE once you are done with your edits. For more information on the features of this assignment, please consult the HELP menu.

You must click SAVE before you write another summary or move on to another part of the course.

Instructor Description

Karen Lea holds a Ph.D. in education. Dr. Lea has fifteen years’ experience teaching at the K–12 level and another fourteen years’ experience teaching education courses at the undergraduate and post-graduate level. Currently she is a Lead Program Development Owner at Western Governor’s University. Dr. Lea has been professionally published over fifteen times and has served on over a dozen panels and boards, including serving on the NCATE (CAEP) Board of Examiners.

Contacting the Instructor

You may contact the instructor by emailing karen_lea@virtualeduc.com or by calling 509-891-7219 Monday through Friday. Calls made during office hours will be answered within 24 hours. Phone conferences will be limited to ten minutes per student, per day, given that this is a self-paced instructional program. Please do not contact the instructor about technical problems, course glitches, or other issues that involve the operation of the course.

Technical Questions

If you have questions or problems related to the operation of this course, please try everything twice. If the problem persists please check our support pages for FAQs and known issues at www.virtualeduc.com and also the Help section of your course.

If you need personal assistance then email support@virtualeduc.com or call 509-891-7219. When contacting technical support, please know your course version number (it is located at the bottom left side of the Welcome Screen) and your operating system, and be seated in front of the computer at the time of your call.

Minimum Computer Requirements

Please refer to VESi's website: www.virtualeduc.com or contact VESi if you have further questions about the compatibility of your operating system.

Refer to the addendum regarding Grading Criteria, Course Completion Information, Items to be Submitted, and how to submit your completed information. The addendum will also note any additional course assignments that you may be required to complete that are not listed in this syllabus.

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Course content is updated every three years. Due to this update timeline, some URL links may no longer be active or may have changed. Please type the title of the organization into the command line of any Internet browser search window and you will be able to find whether the URL link is still active or any new link to the corresponding organization's web home page.

Updated 2/19/26 JN



COURSE SYLLABUS ADDENDUM

Important - Please Read - Do Not Discard

It is each student's responsibility to read all course materials, including course syllabus and addendum, and to know and understand the course requirements, exam score minimum requirements, and deadlines. Students enrolled in VESi courses are required to check their email for any communications regarding the course until their final grade is posted with the college or university. Once your course materials are received by VESi and have been reviewed, the GRADE IS FINAL.

Grading Criteria:

You must obtain an overall score of 70% or higher, with no individual exam score below 50%, and successfully complete ALL writing assignments to pass this course. This course requires a minimum overall passing grade of "C-" to receive credit. The average from your exam scores will be printed on your certificate. However, this is not your final grade since your required writing assignments have not been reviewed. Exceptionally written or poorly written required writing assignments, or violation of the academic integrity policy in the course syllabus, will affect your grade. Fifty percent of your grade is determined by your writing assignments, and your overall exam score determines the other fifty percent.

No grade will be submitted for partial completion of course assignments, regardless of partial score. An F will be reported if course is not completed by the end of the term enrolled. Exceptions only apply to those that request an extension (must have extenuating circumstances) prior to course deadline.

Letters will be assigned as follows:

90% to 100%	A
80% to 89%	B
70% to 79%	C
69% - lower	F

Course Completion Information:

Grading will take approximately two weeks from the time your materials are received by the instructor, after which we will submit grades to the college/university weekly. If you have a timeline to meet certain school or state requirements, please keep this time period in mind when planning your course completion dates.

Course Completion Instructions:

- Once you have completed all of the course requirements, follow the instructions from the Complete Course toolbar to submit your materials to VESi's office for processing. You can only submit the course ONE TIME. Be sure that you have completed all requirements and exams.
- Course Evaluation: Please take a moment to fill out the course evaluation which is also found under the Complete Course toolbar.
- Print Certificate: You can print a copy of your course certificate for your records. Print Certificate: You can print a copy of your course certificate for your records.

Accessing your NDSU Transcript:

After the grade for your course(s) is posted, approximately two weeks after the course submission, you can access your NDSU transcript for documentation of course completion and performance.

Instructions are found at this link: [Transcript Instructions | Continued Learning | NDSU](#)

Drops & Refunds:

Once learners have received the course materials, they are no longer eligible for a refund. Appeals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Questions or Concerns:

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding this class to ndsudce@ndsu.edu. Please include the title of the course in your correspondence.