

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
ADVANCED STUDIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**Differentiated Instruction in Secondary Advanced/Gifted Academic Classes
Blended Course**

Instructors:

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Class Dates: January 24 - May 1, 2012

Face-to-Face Classes: 1/24, 1/31, 3/20, 3/27, 4/24, 5/1 from (4:30-7:10). **Your attendance is expected at all six sessions.**

Online Classes: The week of 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28, 3/6, 3/13, 4/3, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24 (allow at least 2.5 hours of time per week). The online week runs Tuesday until the following Monday for Db postings and responses.

Textbook:

Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom (2nd ed.)

Authors: Julia L. Roberts, Ed.D. and Tracy F. Inman. 2009

Additional materials will be made available through Blackboard. If possible, please bring your laptop to class so that you can access the materials.

Additional text materials will be posted through the Blackboard site or accessible through the Fairfax County Public School Virtual Library.

Course Description:

This course focuses on advanced understanding, design, and implementation of differentiated curriculum across content areas for secondary school. It will provide professionals in the field of advanced academic education, regular education, and related fields with the knowledge and skills needed to design and assess effective, high quality differentiated curriculum for secondary school students.

Course Goals and Outcomes:

By the end of this course, participants should be able to articulate and apply advanced vocabulary, principles, and strategies related to:

1. Support for in-depth, advanced differentiation of curriculum;
2. Ways to strategically plan appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction;
3. Models of advanced differentiation of content (what we teach and what students learn);
4. Models of advanced differentiation of process (how students make sense of what they learn);
5. Establishing administrative and parental support for a differentiated classroom;
6. Implementing and managing differentiation in the heterogeneous classroom;
7. Appropriate use of environments to employ a range of instructional strategies to facilitate differentiation;
8. Models of integrated, interdisciplinary advanced differentiation in the secondary school; and,
9. Models of advanced differentiation of products (how students demonstrate what they have learned).

Model of Course Delivery:

Course delivery will be a mixture of **face-to-face** and **online** meetings. Participants will be expected to share curriculum development projects. In addition, students are expected to actively participate in **online discussions** and **small group discussions** regarding advanced differentiation projects and scholarly articles related to differentiation in practice. The instructor will be available outside of class meetings via phone and e-mail.

Grading Scale:

100 = A+, 94-99 = A, 90-93 = A-, 86-89 = B+, 80-85 = B-, 70-79 = C, Below 70 = F

A grade of B- or below is not acceptable for endorsement or graduate coursework.

Class Participation and Attendance Policy:

Class participation and attendance constitutes a major element of the learning experience provided in this class. There will be online class discussions, group assignments, and strategy workshops. Expectations include the following:

- Students will be expected to be prepared for discussion by having read and reflected on assigned readings as identified in the course assignments.
- Students will be expected to work in a collegial manner to assist one another in developing responses.
- Students will be expected to substantively participate in online classroom discussions on a consistent basis as identified by the instructor.

In blended courses, face-to-face presence and online graduate students are expected to show consistent weekly presence in courses for which they have registered. Online participation is important not only to the individual student but also to the class as a whole. Class participation

is a factor in grading. Instructors may use evidence of student's absence from face-to-face sessions and online weekly discussions to support the lowering of a student's grade as stated in the course syllabus (GMU 2006).

If online learning is new to you, think of online sessions as if you were physically attending class at MASON. *You would be here a minimum of 2.5 hours during the week having completed your reading and posting on the Discussion Board (Db). Expect a minimum of an additional 2 -4 hours of work (readings, writing, research, group work, reviewing) per week.* Set aside specific times during your week to focus on EDCI 623, including posting on Db. Waiting until the day before an online session ends to respond is unacceptable at the graduate level.

During online discussions, first answer the question posted in a short and concise manner (2 paragraphs), return to the Db as directed in the syllabus, and respond to at least two other classmates' postings. Responses such as "I agree" or "Good idea" are insufficient to count as in-depth responses; you should elaborate and include further questions to continue the discussion.

College of Education and Human Development Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code. (<http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>)
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. (<http://ods.gmu.edu/>)
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>)
- Students are responsible for the content of course communications sent through their Fairfax County Public School Blackboard. All communication will be done using the email found for each student in the FCPS Blackboard Platform.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance. (<http://caps.gmu.edu/>)
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>)

Schedule of Course Content and Assignments

Date	Class Topics	Assignment
1/24- class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Introduction and Syllabus Overview • Defining the Need for Differentiation • Teaching and Temperament • Pre-assessment Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase textbook • Read the article, "Reconstructing the Vision" • Write a one page personal journal reflection in terms of how you might "construct your house". • E-mail the assignment to your instructor by 1/29 @ 8 PM.
1/31 - class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the Need for Change in Teaching Practice Discussion • Differentiation in Action • Review of Online Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read "Strategies for Managing a Differentiated Classroom" and participate in the Db: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the article and write a response (two paragraphs) on the interest group discussion board by 2/7 2. Then write a one paragraph response to at least two other group members by 2/14 • Participate in the required five out of six strategy workshops (see attached directions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first two workshops must be completed by 2/14 • Start thinking about mid-term presentation (see attached directions)
2/7 - online 2/14 - online 2/21 - online 2/28 - online 3/6 - online 3/13- online	Online Strategy Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-assessment • Flexible Grouping • Questioning Strategies • Differentiated Products • Formative and Summative Assessment • Anchor Activities with Curriculum Compacting 	Online Strategy Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in 5 out of 6 weekly online strategy workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The first TWO workshops must be completed by 2/14 • Read textbook pages and /or articles that are assigned to accompany the strategy workshops • Respond to the strategy workshops as directed on the discussion board Mid-Term Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement two of the differentiation strategies as described in the strategy workshops • Submit lessons with rationale for use and placement of the strategies • Prepare to share at midterm class

Date	Class Topics	Assignment
3/20 - class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-Term Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>Detracking for Excellence and Equity</i> by Carol Corbett Burris and Delia T. Garrity
3/27 - class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiation and Special Populations • Discuss Final Project • Discuss Interest Article 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Interest Articles Db • Write a one paragraph description of your plan for the final project and e-mail it to instructor by 4/24 • Work on final project (due 5/1)
4/3 - online 4/10 - online 4/17 - online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest Articles 	<p>Read the articles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required: <i>Seven Practices for Effective Learning</i> by Jay McTighe and Ken O'Connor • Required: Chose an article of your choice from those listed on Blackboard <p>Participate in the Db:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the article and write a response (two paragraphs) on the interest group discussion board • Then write a one paragraph response to at least two other group members
4/24 - class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grading in a Differentiated Classroom</i> • <i>Expanding the Vision</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on final project
5/1 - class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final project presentation • Course Evaluation 	

Grading: Assignments and Points

"Reconstructing the Vision" Personal Reflection	5 points
Need for Change in Teaching Practice Discussion	2.5 points
"Strategies for Managing a Differentiated Classroom" Db	5 points
Online Strategy Workshop Db (5 points each)	25 points
Midterm Lesson Plan(s) and Rationale	5 points
Midterm Presentation	15 points
"Detracking for Excellence and Equity" Discussion	2.5 points
Final Project Overview and Rationale	5 points
"Seven Practices for Effective Learning" Db	5 points
Interest Article Db	5 points
Final Presentation	25 points

Online Strategy Workshops

On Blackboard, there are six strategy workshops related to differentiation strategies. These workshops involve the following topics:

- Preassessment
- Flexible Grouping
- Questioning Strategies
- Differentiated Products
- Formative and Summative Assessment
- Anchor Activities with Curriculum Compacting

Each workshop includes a PowerPoint presentation and an article or text reference. During the online portion of the course, students should choose to participate in at least five of the six strategy workshops by reviewing the PowerPoint and completing the assignment. After completion of each workshop, students must post on the discussion board a well constructed response (approx. two paragraphs) that answers the following questions:

1. How can you use this differentiation strategy in your classroom?
2. What are the benefits of this differentiation strategy?
3. What are the challenges of the strategy?
4. What are ways that you can manage these challenges?

Students should also respond with a short paragraph to at least **two** other students' postings.

Discussion Board Expectations

Throughout the course you will be asked to participate in a discussion board to extend your understanding of a specific strategy or article. The following provides a guide for how the discussion board postings will be graded.

Exemplary Postings: (5 pts. per strategy or article)

- include an **initial posting of several** paragraphs that address the strategy or article and how it relates to classroom practice
- include **more than two** responses of at least one paragraph to other postings
- are made in time for others to read and respond throughout the course of the online work
- deliver information that is full of thought, insight, and analysis
- make connections to previous or current content
- contain rich and fully developed new ideas, connections, or applications including additional information (documents, articles, websites) related to course content

Proficient Postings: (4 pts. per strategy or article)

- include an **initial posting of several paragraphs** that address the strategy or article and how it relates to classroom practice
- include **at least two** responses of at least one paragraph to other postings
- are made in time for others to read and respond throughout the course of the online work
- deliver information that shows that thought, insight, and analysis have taken place
- makes some connections to previous or current content
- contain new ideas, connections, or applications, but they may lack depth and/or detail

Adequate Postings: (3 pts. per strategy or article)

- include an **initial posting of several paragraphs** that address the strategy or article and how it relates to classroom practice
- include **at least two** responses to other postings
- may not all be made in time for others to read and respond
- are generally competent, but the actual information is limited
- make limited, if any, connections
- contain few, if any, new ideas or applications; often are a rehashing of other posts

Minimal Postings: (1-2 pts. per strategy or article)

- include an **initial posting** that address the strategy or article
- include **minimal** responses to other postings
- was late and did not allow time for others to read and respond
- are limited in content; there is no evidence of insight or analysis

Midterm Project

Course participants are required to implement two of the online workshop strategies in their classrooms prior to the midterm classes.

Be prepared to share the **two authentic strategies** you implemented and bring the **lessons**, along with the rationale for why you used the strategies when you did. Please also include **examples of student work or student participation**. You will present your rationale for using and implementation of the strategies to the class; please supply enough copies for classmates or post them on the Db.



You could also choose to have the group immerse in the strategy if you prefer, or you could have a PowerPoint presentation. You may choose to work on the mid-term project with one other person in your school cohort.

Midterm Presentation Rubric

Points	Expectations	Comments
15-14	<p>Excellent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation is engaging and clearly demonstrates the thoughtful implementation of two differentiation strategies. • Examples of student work or student participation were shared with the class. 	
13-12	<p>Competent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation is clear and demonstrates the implementation of two differentiation strategies. • Examples of student work or student participation were shared with the class. 	
11	<p>Minimal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation demonstrates the implementation of two differentiation strategies, but clarity is lacking. • There were no examples of student work or student participation were shared with the class. 	
10-0	<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation is confusing and does not clearly reveal the implementation of two differentiation strategies. • There were no examples of student work or student participation were shared with the class. 	

Final Project

A final project is required. Class participants may choose from one of the following:



- Create a portfolio of authentic strategies you have implemented within your classroom. This portfolio should be a collection of at least 10 different examples (i.e. a new example of a differentiated pre-assessment). Include clear directions for implementing the strategy, rationale for the use and placement of strategies within the unit(s), and a classroom sample.
- Research and implement a new category of differentiation strategies (i.e. differentiated reading strategies or differentiated games) and create a PowerPoint strategy workshop about that category with two clear examples.
- Create a 10 minute narrated video of differentiation in action within your classroom. Include the lesson plan being demonstrated, rationale for the use and placement within the unit, and a reflection on how it worked in the classroom.
- Create a differentiated unit you plan on teaching in your classroom. Include unit plan, individual lessons, rationale for use of strategies, and product guidelines.
- Create a product portfolio to include 5 differentiated product assignments, including rubrics. For one of those assignments, bring in examples of student work at each level of differentiation.
- Develop a school wide plan for professional development related to differentiation. Your plan should be differentiated for staff and should include all documents to assist teachers with differentiating in their classrooms.
- Create a project related to differentiation of your choice. You must receive approval for this project idea **by April 17** to choose this option.

Your final exam project should be distinctly different from your midterm project. All work should be your own authentic lesson and/or strategy. Be prepared to present your final project on **May 1**.

If your presentation is enhanced with handouts, please make **enough copies for everyone** or **post them in the Final Exam Db prior to class**.

Final Project Rubric

Points	Expectations	Comments
25-23	<p>Excellent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final project clearly represents application and understanding of differentiation strategies within a classroom. • A rationale for why certain strategies were used is presented. • The presentation includes thoughtful reflection on what went well and modifications / adaptations to be made in the future. • If applicable, examples of student work or student participation is shared. 	
22-20	<p>Competent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final project represents application and understanding of differentiation strategies within a classroom. • The presentation includes thoughtful reflection on what went well and differentiation modifications / adaptations to be made in the future. 	
19-18	<p>Minimal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final project represents application of differentiation strategies within a classroom. • The presentation and project are lacking in clarity and understanding of differentiation practices. 	
17-0	<p>Unsatisfactory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final project does not represent application or understanding of differentiation strategies. • The final project seems incomplete. 	