

**George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Elementary Education**

**EDCI 545 – Assessment and Differentiation (3 cr)
Fall 2009**

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T 4:30 – 7:10 (September 1 – December 15)
Room 136, Innovation Hall**

Course Description

This course provides a research-based introduction to differentiated instruction for children in grades K-6. The emphasis in this course is on the assessment of learners and differentiation of instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Prerequisites: Admission to the program, and taken in program sequence.

Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

This course addresses the following GSE priorities: research-based practice and diversity. It is designed as an integral component of the new Elementary Program for teachers of grades K-6, and meets new state and national guidelines and standards including Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC).

Student Outcomes

1. Students will be able to discuss current, validated research underlying the theory, principles, and practices of differentiated instruction.
2. Students will be able to identify and explain the core principles of differentiated instruction and the ways in which these principles inform and guide all aspects of instructional implementation.
3. Students will be able to apply the core principles of differentiation when planning and assessing lessons.
4. Students will be able to discuss the interdependent relationship between assessment and instruction in a learning environment.
5. Students will be able to identify formal and informal assessment tools to collect data on the readiness, interests, and learning profiles of students as the basis for differentiation before and during instruction.
6. Students will be able to identify and discuss strategies for assessment and grading in a differentiated classroom.
7. Students will be able to generalize course content to reflect how the multicultural, special needs, gifted students and other diverse populations within classrooms have their needs met via the application of the skills, strategies, and knowledge of this course.

Nature of Course Delivery

This course includes multiple instructional strategies. Individual session formats will vary and may include lecture, small group/ large group discussion, hands-on, interactive work, student presentations, and cooperative learning.

Standards

INTASC

3 Diverse Learners

7 Planning

8 Assessment

Required Texts

Tomlinson, C. A. (2005). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed ability classrooms* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Airasian, P. W. and Russell, M. (2008). *Classroom assessment concepts and applications* (6th ed.). NY: McGraw Hill.

Required Articles

Barton, P.E. and Coley, R. J. (2008/2009). Measuring the achievement elephant. *Educational Leadership*, 66(4), 30-34.

Carolan, J. & Guinn, A. (2007). Differentiation: Lessons from master teachers. *Educational Leadership*, 64(5), 44-47.

Chappuis, S. & Stiggins, R. J. (2002). Classroom assessment for learning. *Educational Leadership*, 60(1), 40-43.

Hasselbring, T. S. & Bausch, M. E. (2005/2006). Assistive technologies for reading. *Educational Leadership*, 63(4), 72-75.

Lord, L., Hurley, & Rule, A. (Eds.) (2003). *Activities for differentiated instruction addressing all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and eight multiple intelligences*. ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED475517. Available at http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED475517&_ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=eric_accno&accno=ED475517

Munk, D. D. & Bursuck, W. D. (2003). Grading students with disabilities. *Educational Leadership*, 61(2), 38-43.

Ronka, D., Lachat, M. A., Slaughter, R., and Meltzer, J. (2008/2009). Answering the questions that count. *Educational Leadership*, 66(4), 18-24.

Schomaker, M. (2008/2009). Measuring what matters. *Educational Leadership*, 66(4), 70-74.

Short, D. & Echevarria, J. (2005). Teacher skills to support English language learners. *Educational Leadership*, 62(4), 8-13.

Tomlinson, C.A. (2003). Deciding to teach them all. *Educational Leadership*, 61(2), 7-11.

Willard-Holt, C. (2003). Raising expectations for the gifted. *Educational Leadership*, 61(2), 72-75.

Other articles to be provided.

Assignments:

ALL ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICLY BY THE DUE DATE. Assignments that contain multiple grammar and spelling errors and/or typos will be returned, without grading, to be edited by the student.

Course Assignments

Learning Profile and Interest Inventory

10%

The learning profiles and interest inventory is an opportunity for you to engage in a bit of self-study. When considering your elementary education years, what kind of learner were you? What were your interests, your preferred methods of instruction and assessment? What were your best learning modalities and preferred methods for exhibiting your learning? What were your strengths and weaknesses as a learner in the various domains of study?

Evaluation

Your profile and interest inventory will be evaluated for the depth and quality of your description, including interests, learning preferences, testing preferences, and inclusion of learning strengths and weakness. See attached rubric.

Modifying Lesson Plans

20%

As a professional educator in a diverse classroom, it is important for you to develop the ability to see possibilities for differentiation in any lesson. Given an existing plan and a description of the learners for whom the lesson is intended, you will revise the lesson in a manner that will differentiate content, process, product, assessment, and learning environment where appropriate. Be sure your revisions address the objectives as well as the diverse needs of your students. Please include a rationale for the modifications and support with course readings and class discussions where possible.

Evaluation

Your modified lesson plan will be evaluated based on the appropriateness of the modifications for the diverse learners in the classroom as well as the quality of the rationale presented. See attached rubric.

Designing a Differentiated Task

15%

The nature of the task is an important element of lesson planning. Some tasks lend themselves well to differentiation, whereas others do not. In this assignment, you will be asked to design a task, based on a learning objective of your choice that allows you to differentiate instruction well. After describing the learning objective and the task, please also describe how this task allows for differentiation. Possible task designs include (but are not limited to):

Tic-Tac-Toe Board

R.A.F.T. (role, audience, format,

topic)
Independent learning centers
Study circles

Jigsaw groups
Group or individual projects

Evaluation

Your differentiated task will be evaluated for description of task and learning objective, ease and effectiveness of differentiation, and suitability of task to meeting learning objectives. See attached rubric.

Situated Task (Course Performance-Based Assessment)

30%

The performance based assessment for this course involves an integration of differentiation and assessment competencies learned during the course. This PBA involves two parts: a unit plan that includes formative and summative assessments, and a description of two different students with particular learning needs and a detailing of how the lesson in the unit plan will be differentiated for these two students. The official description of the assessment follows, and the rubric is included at the end of the syllabus.

Students will choose two special needs K-6 students (i.e. ESOL/ELL, Learning Disability, ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome, Autistic, Other types of disabilities, Gifted) and...

1. Gather information about the students and their special needs. You will create interview questions for the students and available experts. The interview will be a casual conversation that takes no longer than five minutes depending upon developmental level of the child. Talk to school specialists and experts in the field if they are willing. Further your research by reading text materials and online information. Find out what strategies will work for these students.

If you do not have direct access to students, then find out what strategies tend to work well for students with this special need. You will write a description of the students, outlining their special need and research based plans for lesson adaptations for special needs, citing research to support plans.

2. Research indicates that curriculum alignment of the intended, implemented, and attained curriculum leads to increases in student learning. You will outline a unit (~ 1 week) being taught for this project and your plan for adaptations in instruction and assessment for special needs students. The unit overview (~ 2 pages) will consist of:
 - Description of Students in Class - In a very brief overview, describe the audience for which the unit of study is designed.
 - Theme - This is the topic for the unit of study.
 - Unit Objective - This is the overall objective for this theme/unit.
 - Sub-objectives - List 2-5 sub-objectives for the unit.
 - Standards of Learning for VA Public Schools

- List approximately 3 standards from the Standards of Learning that this unit addresses.
- Assessment Plan Overview - Summarize the multiple forms of assessment that will be embedded in the unit. There should be clear connections among the unit objectives, sub-objectives, and what is assessed. Describe how the students' learning will be assessed both formatively and summatively.
- Adapted Activities - Include a brief description of where the adapted activities that you have developed fit into the unit. Adaptations for the unit will be described in the individual student case studies.

Differentiation Resource Binder

15%

Using a hard-copy or electronic format, gather and organize resources for differentiating and assessing instruction for your students. Examples of things to include are articles, websites, lesson plans, templates, test formats, online or print-based resources, and other materials that will be useful to you in the classroom as you design assessments and differentiated activities for your students.

Evaluation

Your resource binder will be evaluated according to its usefulness to you in your classroom, its organization, and the variety of resources.

Class Participation

10%

In order to take full advantage of our in-class discussions and to exercise the dispositions of an effective educator, teacher candidates must be present and engaged. In this regard, repeated tardiness and or absences will result in a reduction of the candidate's class participation grade as well as a mandatory conference with the instructor. The rubric for class participation is included at the end of the syllabus.

The instructor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus as needed throughout the semester.

Grading Scale

Grading Scale

A = 94-100%

A- = 90-93%

B+ = 87-89%

B = 80-86%

B- = 77-79%

C = 70-76%

College of Education and Human Development Statement of Expectations:

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Assignments	Due electronically by beginning of class
9/1	Introductions Syllabus and assignments Description of differentiated Instruction Self-study intro and design of class template	Reading: Tomlinson Ch. 1 & 2,	
9/8	Theoretical/Research Background for Differentiated Instruction Bloom's Taxonomy Multiple Intelligences	Reading: Tomlinson Ch. 3 & 4	
9/15	Essentials of a differentiated instruction learning environment The learner-centered classroom	Reading: Tomlinson Ch.5, 6 & 7 Tomlinson article	Learning Profile and Interest Inventory
9/22	Differentiating Content Meeting student needs with varied depth and complexity of content	Reading: Tomlinson Ch. 8, 9, 10, & 11 Carolan article	
9/29	Differentiating Process Flexible grouping, varying pace, interest-based learning	Reading: Tomlinson Ch. 12 Lord article	
10/6	Differentiating Product Grading differentiated work	Reading: Tomlinson Ch. 13 & 14 Hasselbring article	Due: Modifying Lesson Plan #1
10/13	Strategies for working with English as a Second Language (ESL) learners Guest Speaker	Munk article Willard-Holt article	
10/20	Strategies for working with Special Needs students Assistive technology Guest Speaker	Reading: Tomlinson Ch. 11, 12 Lord article	Due: Modifying Lesson Plan #2
10/27	Introduction to Assessment The Purpose of Assessment	Reading: Airasian Ch. 1 & 2 Short article	
11/3	Gathering Assessment Evidence Understanding and Selecting Assessment Tasks Designing Assessment Tasks	Reading: Airasian Ch 3 & 4 Chappuis article	
11/10	Assessment During Instruction Developing formative assessments	Reading: Airasian Ch 4	Differentiated Task

11/17	Summative Assessments	Reading: Airasian Ch 5	
11/24	Teacher-made Tests Performance Assessments	Reading: Airasian Ch 8 Schomker Article	
12/1	Grading	Reading: Airasian Ch 9 & Appendix D	PBA
12/8	Understanding Standardized Assessments Guest Speaker	Reading: Airasian Ch 10 Barton article	Resource Binder
12/15	Review of resources Sharing resource binders		

Learning Profile and Interest Inventory Rubric

Criteria	Meets Requirements (3 points)	Meets Partial Requirements (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Completion	All key elements are included and covered in-depth.	All key elements are included, but some are covered in-depth while others are not well developed.	One or more key elements are missing or no key elements are covered in-depth.
Interests	Interests are well defined. It is clear how these interests impacted learning style.	Interests are defined. Although tied to learning style, it is not clear how these interests impacted learning.	Interests are not well defined. They are not tied back to learning styles or the connection is not well developed.
Strengths	Three or more strengths are discussed. These are connected back to learning style.	One or two strengths are discussed and connected back to learning style.	No strengths are discussed or they are not connected back to learning styles.
Weaknesses	Three or more weaknesses are discussed. These are connected back to learning style.	One or two weaknesses are discussed and connected back to learning style.	No weaknesses are discussed or they are not connected back to learning styles.
Learning Styles	Learning style is clearly defined and supported by all of the various aspects of the paper.	Learning style is defined and somewhat supported by parts of the paper.	Learning style is vague and not clearly defined. It is not well supported by the rest of the paper.

Modifying Lesson Plans Rubric

Criteria	Meets Requirements (2 Points)	Meets Partial Requirements (1 Point)	Needs Improvement (0 Points)
Consistency	Lesson Plan demonstrates consistency with instructional methods taught in the course. The differentiation strategy used is clearly stated and used appropriately.	Lesson Plan demonstrates some consistency with instructional methods taught in the course. The differentiation strategy is used appropriately, but not named or named incorrectly.	Lesson Plan does not demonstrate consistency with instructional methods taught in the course. It is not clear what differentiation strategy is being used. It is not explained well and not named.
Rationale	Rationale for modifications is clear and compelling. It is supported by three or more course readings. The rationale explains why the strategy is needed and why this is good teaching.	Rationale is clear, but not very convincing. It is supported one or two course readings. The rationale explains why the strategy is needed, but not why this is good teaching.	Rationale is not clear or convincing. It is not supported by any course readings. The rationale does not explain why the strategy is needed or why this is good teaching.
Specification of Differentiation	There is evidence of differentiation of two or more of the following areas: content, process, product, and learning environment. The differentiation is appropriate.	There is evidence of differentiation of one of the following areas: content, process, product, and learning environment. The differentiation is appropriate.	There is no evidence of differentiation of any of the following areas: content, process, product, and learning environment or the differentiation provided is not appropriate.
Assessment Plan	The assessment plan is appropriate for the learning objectives. They are well matched. The assessment plan is appropriately differentiated for various learners.	The assessment plan is appropriate for some of the learning objectives, but not all. The assessment plan is differentiated for some learners, but not all.	The assessment plan is not appropriate for the learning objectives. The assessment plan is not appropriately differentiated for various learners.
Apply Knowledge	There is extensive evidence that the student is able to apply knowledge gained in readings and in class.	There is some evidence that the student is able to apply knowledge gained in readings and in class.	There is no evidence that the student is able to apply knowledge gained in readings and in class.

Designing a Differentiation Task Rubric

Criteria	Meets Requirements (2 Points)	Meets Partial Requirements (1 Point)	Needs Improvement (0 Points)
Completion	All aspects of the task are included.	One of the task items is missing.	More than one item of the task is missing.
Appropriateness	The various aspects of the task are appropriate and activities are compatible with each other. Students are doing the same quantity of work no matter which activity they chose.	Majority of the aspects of the task are appropriate. Activities are compatible for the most part. However, one of the activities requires less work than the others.	Few or none of the aspects of the task are appropriate. Activities are not compatible. Two or more of the activities require less work.
Feasibility of Implementation	The task as outlined is easy to implement. It needs no modifications.	The task as outlined could be implemented, but it will need some minor modifications.	The task as outlined is not easy to implement. It will need major modifications.
Evidence of Differentiation	There is clear evidence of differentiation. The task demonstrates thoughtful consideration of the different elements and learning needs of students.	There is some evidence of differentiation. The task demonstrates consideration of the learning needs of the students.	There is no evidence of differentiation. The learning needs of the students were not considered.
Spelling and Mechanics	There are no spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors. This could be handed to students as is.	There is one error. It will need to be corrected before handing it to students.	There are two or more errors. This should be proofread and corrected before handing to students.

SCORING RUBRIC FOR PBA –Differentiated lesson and assessment rubric

Criteria	Exceeds Requirements (A) 5 Points	Meets Requirements (A -, B+) 2-4 Points	Needs Improvement (B, C) 1 Point	Weight
Objectives INTASC Standard 7	The objectives clearly state what students will do during the lesson. The objectives clearly state the content/essential understandings of the lesson. The objectives are tied to state/national standards. The objectives are tied to the assessment; this information is provided in the assessment section of the report.	The majority of the objectives state what students will do during the lesson. The majority of the objectives are tied to state/national standards. The majority of the objectives are tied to assessment and it is clear how the objectives are assessed.	No objectives are stated or inappropriate objectives are used. Objectives are not distinguishable from state/national standards. Few of the objectives are tied to the assessment. It is not clear how objectives will be assessed.	x .05 =
Materials INTASC Standard 7	A list of materials used during the lesson is provided. A copy of the materials is included with the lesson. A variety of materials are used in each lesson (manipulatives, technology, etc.). Appropriate materials are selected for the concepts being taught. The lessons do not <i>overuse</i> worksheets.	A partial list of materials used is provided. A copy of some of the materials is provided. There is a lack of variety of materials used. Most of the materials are appropriate for the concepts being taught, but some need more modifications.	No list of materials is provided or materials chosen are not appropriate for the concepts being taught. The materials chosen do not reflect differentiation. The lesson <i>overuses</i> worksheets.	x .05 =
Procedure INTASC Standard 7	The lesson is substantive in length, breadth, and depth. The procedures thoroughly and completely outline what the teacher will do during the lesson; How did you present the lesson? The procedures thoroughly and completely outline what the students will do during the lesson. Estimated times for each phase are provided in parentheses. The procedures are in a bulleted list, approximately 1-2 pages in length. Any questions or content the teacher uses during the lesson are included in the procedures. The procedures include an introduction for activating prior knowledge. The procedures include a plan for closing the lesson and checking for understanding.	The lesson is adequate in length, breadth, and depth. The majority of the procedures outline what the teacher will do during the lesson, but parts are vague and unclear. The majority of the procedures outline what students will do during the lesson, but parts are vague and unclear. Estimated times are provided, but seem unreasonable (either too short or too long). There is a lack of teacher questions. The procedures include either an introduction for activating prior knowledge or a plan for closing the lesson and checking for understanding, but not both.	The lesson is not adequate in length, breadth, or depth. It is not clear what the teacher will do during the lesson. It is not clear what the students will do during the lesson. Estimated times are not provided. No questions or content the teacher uses during the lesson are included in the procedures. The procedures do not include an introduction for activating prior knowledge or a plan for closing the lesson and checking for understanding.	x .25 =
Differentiation Gearing up and gearing down	A list of adaptations for individual students is included. Specific	A list of adaptations for individual students is included. Specific	A list of adaptations for individual students is not included. General	x .30 =

<p>INTASC Standard 3</p>	<p>information must be provided on individual students in the class and the accommodations made for those children. (General comments are not appropriate for this requirement.) There is evidence of differentiation for both ends of the spectrum (Gifted and Struggling students). Differentiation goes beyond student interest.</p>	<p>information must be provided on individual students in the class and the accommodations made for those children. (General comments are not appropriate for this requirement.) There is evidence of differentiation at one end of the spectrum (Gifted and Struggling students), but not both. Differentiation focuses mostly on student interest.</p>	<p>comments about the class and accommodations are made (i.e. "For the ESL students, I will..."). There is no evidence of differentiation or the teacher relies on specialists to handle the differentiation (i.e. ESL teacher, Special Education teacher).</p>	
<p><u>Assessment / Work Samples</u> INTASC Standard 8</p>	<p>The assessment rubric used during the lesson is described in approximately ½ -1 pages. The description of the assessment is clear enough that another person could conduct the assessment. The assessment describes what the teacher does to assess the students. The assessment describes in detail what the students do to demonstrate their understanding of the concept. At least 3 samples of the assessments that exemplify three levels of performance (high, medium, low) (i.e., written work, drawings, worksheets, photographs, checklists, anecdotal records) are included.</p>	<p>The assessment rubric is used is included, but not discussed. The description of the assessment is a little vague, but could be implemented by another. The assessment describes what the students will do, but there is a lack of detail provided. At least two samples of the assessment that exemplify three levels of performance are included.</p>	<p>No assessment rubric is included. The description of the assessment is unclear. Another person could not implement the assessment. The assessment does not match with the lesson or objectives. It is not clear what the students will do to demonstrate their understanding. Less than two samples of the assessments that exemplify three levels of performance are included or not all three levels of performance are included.</p>	<p>x .35 =</p>