

Course Syllabus

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| Course: | EDZU 9051 <u>Reading and Writing Strategies for Students With Special Needs</u> |
| Credit Hours: | 3.0 credits / 45 hours |
| Instructor: | Aimee Keller |

Course Description

This course will focus on specific Reading and Writing strategies that effectively support students with special needs in and out of the regular classroom. Regular and special educators will learn how to meet the requirements of the IEP while still incorporating Common Core Standards to the programming of the special education student in the areas of Reading and Writing. The class will review how to identify/assess struggling readers, remediate and implement the most effective strategies to better support programs and services of our students with special needs. This class is open to all grade levels.

Course Goals

To Know

1. What is a Reading/Writing disability?
2. How to identify struggling readers or writers.
3. What specific strategies are effective for struggling readers or writers?

To Understand

1. Requirements and expectations through the Common Core Standards as they apply to Reading and Writing and special education students.
2. How to integrate specific strategies that address the individual Reading and/or Writing needs of our students with special needs.
3. How to apply knowledge of effective Reading and Writing strategies to meet the specific goals outlined in Individualized Education Plans (IEP) of students with special needs.

and To Be Able To

1. Identify current implications of struggling readers and writers in that classroom, as it pertains to the new Common Core expectations.
2. How to apply the specific Reading/Writing strategies in the classroom to meet the educational needs of our students with special needs.
3. Discuss the areas of Reading and Writing with regards to special education students in a professional manner (i.e. disabilities, remediation and interventions)
4. Create positive and effective change in the services we provide for students with special needs,

specifically in Reading and Writing.

Course Outline

- I. The Basics to Reading and Writing Disabilities
 - i. Student Introductions and expectations of course
 - ii. Reading and Writing Disabilities
 - How are reading and writing disabilities related?
 - Compare and contrast reading difficulties and reading disabilities
 - Identify useful strategies to help students with these diagnoses and classifications
 - iii. Common Core and Reading & Writing standards
 - What do the CCSS say about Reading and Writing in Special Education?
 - Identify main changes made to Reading and Writing goals.
 - Identify responsibilities placed upon educators to create success in Reading and Writing
 - Identify how these changes affect students with special needs.
 - iv. Implications
 - Relate and discuss implications of struggling readers/writers in the classroom while teachers try to meet new Common Core expectations.
 - Discuss how to implement effective interventions and strategies, while still meeting goals and maintaining compliance of students' Individualized Education Plans.
 - Identify positive and negative implications of new ELA standards on students with special needs.
- II. The Various Facets of Reading and Writing: Identification through Intervention
 - i. Reading Programs Used in Special Education
 - Review and relate the Orton-Gillingham model and the Balanced Approach to reading.
 - Discuss and relate the Multi-sensory approach in supporting to students with special needs.
 - ii. Identification & Evaluation
 - Identify and discuss several ways to identify and evaluate struggling readers.
 - Review and discuss use of informal and formal checklists, assessments, running records and observation.
 - Create a checklist or assessment that can be used in the classroom to identify struggling readers and specific weaknesses.
 - iii. Emergent Readers
 - Observing emergent readers. What is phonological awareness?
 - Identify struggling emergent readers. Compare and contrast phonological and phonemic awareness.
 - Discuss and utilize interventions that are effective with struggling emergent readers
 - Create a mini lesson highlighting early literacy strategy helpful with struggling emergent readers.
 - iv. Word Recognition Difficulties
 - Observing/Identifying students experiencing difficulties with word recognition skills

- Effective strategies that support students with word recognition weaknesses.
 - Create a fact sheet that could be used for Staff development outlining specific strategies that increase word recognition in students with this specific weakness in reading.
- v. Fluency Weaknesses
- How to observe and accurately assess difficulties with fluency skills.
 - Read and identify effective strategies that support students with fluency weaknesses in Reading.
 - Use strategies such as increasing sight word fluency or repeated reading to target fluency weaknesses in students.

III. Comprehension & Writing Needs

- i. Comprehension Weaknesses & Interventions
 - How to determine/assess if a reader struggles with comprehension.
 - How are phonics and comprehension related? How does that affect the other?
 - Identify effective strategies that support students experiencing difficulties with comprehension by creating an informal assessment.
 - In light of CCSS, identify weaknesses with narrative and expository text that contribute to student comprehension.
- ii. Writing Difficulties & Interventions
 - How to assess if there are major areas of weakness with writing skills
 - Effective strategies that support to students with writing difficulties in students classified with Learning Disabilities and ADHD.
 - Compare and contrast the weaknesses in writing in LD and ADHD students.
 - Compare and contrast the strategies used to support and improve writing skills in students with LD and ADHD.

IV. Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Making Reading Count

- i. Writing Weaknesses and Interventions for Students with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia
 - Effective strategies that support to students with writing difficulties in students diagnosed with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia.
 - Compare and contrast the weaknesses in writing in dyslexic and dysgraphic students.
 - Compare and contrast the strategies used to support and improve writing skills in students with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia.
- ii. Targeting the Problem
 - Explore the fundamentals of targeting reading difficulties in students with special needs.
 - Students will select an area of difficulty and navigate through a source to identify the problem/weakness, outline interventions for parents to use at home and identify interventions for teachers to implement at school in order to effectively support a student with weaknesses in this area of reading.
- iii. Making Reading Count
 - Students will explore and analyze to understand what reading experts suggest and believe are the most effective strategies that support all students with reading difficulties.
 - Students will analyze the ramifications of limited vocabulary on comprehension.

- Students will break down the "stumbling blocks" to comprehension and how gaining more extensive vocabulary may be the key to "experiencing reading" and making reading count.
- Identifying techniques and strategies (i.e. imagery, etc.) that enhance comprehension and reading overall.

Methods of Instruction

Teachers enrolled in this course will evaluate various sources to reflect on current practices used to support students with reading and writing needs. They will communicate with other teachers on the effects of Common Core implications on the strategies we can offer to students with these specific learning needs. They will complete article and reflective pieces. They will create and customize their own Reading and Writing strategies and mini lessons that assess their abilities to understand the specific reading and writing needs special needs students may encounter in our schools today. They will develop their own Mini Lessons that assess their complete understanding of the various facets of Reading and Writing and the learning needs of special education students.

Students will connect with each other throughout the course within forums and various other types of online feedback options built into each class.

Methods of Assessment

All in-service students must complete all of the readings and assignments. All students working for a “B” for the course must complete all of the readings and assignments. They must also develop a “Mini Lesson” (2-3 pages) addressing a specific area of weakness in the area of Reading and Writing. In this assignment, students will suggest a form of assessment, remediation and intervention strategies that best support struggling readers/writers in their classroom. All graduate students working for an “A” in the course must complete the following: Students will complete all of the assigned readings and assignments. Students will develop the “Mini Lesson” described above. Students will also develop a classroom teacher’s guide of “Effective Reading and Writing Strategies for Students with Special Needs”. The guide should include all the strategies discussed throughout the course.

Instructors are online each day of the course and correspond with students through the course itself, feedback on assignments, e-mail, and by phone.

Time Validation

| Assignment | Time (in hours) |
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| Students will review resources outlining relationship between learning disabilities and reading disabilities. Students will view documents that establish successful strategies that support reluctant readers and students with reading disabilities. | 1.50 |
| Students will outline and describe different types of learning disabilities and reading disabilities. Students will compare and identify similarities between reading difficulties and reading disabilities. Students will identify strategies to help children with learning disabilities read more effectively. | 1.50 |
| Students will view resources and respond to the main changes made to Reading and Writing in Special Education, in light of CCSS. Students will research the main changes made to the goals in Reading and Writing. Students will create an Open House summary that could be used as an informative tool for parents, outlining these changes. | 3.00 |
| Students will read and analyze discussions by authors suggesting how to tie IEPs to Common Core. Discussion and analysis of various view points will be made and students will carefully review the positive and negative effects of CCSS on Reading and Writing goals. | 1.50 |
| Students will use information from resources to discuss the positive and negative implication of the CCSS on Special Education. Students will discuss challenges, strategies and ideas to help educators develop more effective IEPs. | 1.50 |
| Students will review resources to compare and contrast various reading approaches used in education. Students will review the Orton-Gillingham, Balanced Approach and Multisensory programs. | 3.00 |
| Students will read and analyze resources clearly identifying specific methods for assessing students with reading and writing weaknesses. Students will create an informal assessment that can be used to determine a specific weakness in a struggling reader. | 3.00 |
| Students will review resources identifying the key to identifying struggling emergent readers. Students will analyze and read resources outlining the key differences between phonological awareness and phonetic awareness. | 1.50 |
| Students will compare and contrast the phonological awareness and phonetic awareness. Students will discuss the importance of these elements in emerging readers. Students will create a culminating activity targeting either area of weakness through its identification or intervention. | 1.50 |
| Students will review resources discussing the importance of early literacy strategies as a form of early intervention for struggling emergent readers. Students will review resources identifying strategies that help struggling readers with phonetic weakness (ie. word family | 1.50 |

wall, etc.)

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| Students will create a mini lesson targeting early literacy intervention strategies. Students will highlight a specific strategy outlined in the resources provided to introduce reading to early readers. | 1.50 |
| Students will review and analyze resources identifying word recognition weakness in students with special needs in this area of reading. Students will also analyze specific word recognition instructional strategies that support readers with significant weaknesses in this area of reading. The relationship between phonics and word recognition will also be explored. | 3.00 |
| Students will view resources outlining how to identify weaknesses in fluency in our students with special needs. Students will view sources offering instructional strategies and activities that specifically support students with fluency weaknesses. | 1.50 |
| Students will analyze sources to create a targeted activity focused on increasing fluency abilities in students with special needs. Students will focus increasing exposure to sight words or strategies mainly focused on "repeated reading" interventions. | 1.50 |
| Students will review and analyze resources outlining various facets of comprehension that maybe weak in students with special needs. Students will identify the various "types" of reading disabilities and comprehension weaknesses in readers with special needs. Various instructional strategies to identify specific weaknesses in comprehension will be addressed. Students will develop an informal assessment that may be utilized to identify weaknesses in comprehension of narrative and expository texts, in light of CCSS. | 3.00 |
| Students will review resources identifying various interventions that can be used in the classroom to increase comprehension before, during or after reading. Retelling, story maps, story frames, directed reading and other strategies will be discussed to comprehensively analyze the various interventions that can be utilized with students that have special needs. Students will develop a unique activity to be used for increasing comprehension in students with special needs in this particular area of reading. | 3.00 |
| Students will review and analyze sources outlining the similarities and differences in writing weaknesses in students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD. Students will compare and analyze which reading and writing strategies support students with LD and ADHD. | 3.00 |
| Students will review and analyze sources outlining the similarities and differences in writing weaknesses in students with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia. Students will compare and analyze which strategies improve writing skills in students with Dyslexia and Dysgraphia. | 3.00 |
| Students will explore the fundamentals of targeting reading difficulties in students with special needs. They will select a specific area of weakness and navigate through a source to identify the problem/weakness, outline interventions for parents to use at home and identify interventions for teachers to effectively support a student with this weakness in reading. | 3.00 |

Students will explore and analyze resources to understand what reading experts suggest and believe are the most effective strategies that support students with reading difficulties. Students will analyze the ramifications of limited vocabulary on comprehension. Students will break down the "stumbling blocks" to comprehension and explore how gaining extensive vocabulary may be the key to "experiencing reading" and making reading count. Various techniques and strategies (i.e. imagery, etc.) that enhance comprehension and reading overall will be discussed. 3.00

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| Total Time | 45.00 |
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