This course supports the assessments for NIC1. The course covers eight competencies and represents two competency units.

Introduction

Overview
Students will learn the history of inclusion and develop practical strategies for modifying instruction, in accordance with legal expectations, to meet the needs of a diverse population of learners. This population includes learners with disabilities, gifted and talented learners, culturally diverse learners, and English language learners.

Getting Started
Welcome to Fundamentals of Diversity, Inclusion, and Exceptional Learners! Throughout this course you will be focusing on specific groups of students with special needs. Special needs students include students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, culturally diverse students, and English language learners. Each of these groups requires you to know how to apply practical strategies for modifying your instructional practices to meet the needs of all students in the general education classroom.

The texts and activities in this course are designed to guide you through the process of blending theory and application, knowledge and beliefs, and skills and attitudes. The goal is to help you create learning environments and teaching materials that enable all students to experience academic success.

Watch the following video for an introduction to this course:

Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...": download video.

Teaching Dispositions Statement
Please review the Statement of Teaching Dispositions.

Course Instructor Assistance
As you prepare to demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that we stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, we enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. We are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you. We are fully committed to your success! You can make an appointment with your assigned course instructor by simply using the links provided here. If you are unsure of which is your course instructor, just choose one. These links will take you directly to the course instructor's calendar and will allow you to choose a date and time most convenient for you to make an appointment to talk with him or her. This is an excellent opportunity for you! Take advantage of it early and often!
Competencies and Objectives

Competencies
This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 8 competencies:

• **Competency 648.1.1: Legal Implications of Special Education**
  The graduate applies appropriate policies, programs, accepted practices, and legal requirements to classroom and instructional practices as they relate to special education, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners.

Objectives

  • Recognize key components of public law and policy as they pertain to the education of students with exceptional needs.
  • Recognize how a specified relevant law or current issue influences the field of special education for the treatment of students receiving special education services.
  • Contrast specified laws and policies related to special education for their relevance and application to a given case.
  • Contrast specified laws and policies related to English language learners for their relevance and application to a given case.
  • Select appropriate procedures for due process that pertain to parental rights and special education in a given case.
  • Select appropriate procedures for a referral process in a given case.

• **Competency 648.1.2: Identifying Student Needs**
  The graduate integrates knowledge of characteristics, contexts, and conditions of students in the process to address the needs of multicultural learners, exceptional learners, atypical development, English language learners, and gifted and talented learners and to implement equity pedagogy into their practice.

Objectives

  • Recognize characteristics of students from a variety of cultures.
  • Recognize common characteristics of students who are gifted and talented.
  • Recognize common characteristics of students with intellectual disabilities or who are developmentally delayed.
  • Recognize common characteristics of students with ADHD or Autism Spectrum Disorders.
  • Recognize common characteristics of students with speech, language, hearing, or vision impairments and/or physical, health, and related low-incidence disabilities.
• Match characteristics or eligibility criteria for given students with mild to moderate disabilities with the appropriate categorical area of special needs.
• Match instances of instructional, assessment, and intervention strategies to the corresponding level of Response to Intervention (RTI).
• Select activities, programs, and approaches to accommodate the specific needs of students who are gifted and talented.
• Determine appropriate intervention and instructional strategies for given students with mild to moderate disabilities using a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework.
• Determine how an evaluation of performance versus potential determines a student’s exceptionality, eligibility, and placement in a special education program.
• Determine potential causes or impact on students and families of disproportionality of various sub-groups receiving special education services.

• Competency 648.1.3: Relationships, Partnerships, Advocacy, and Collaboration
The graduate selects appropriate strategies to effectively and ethically engage with students, families, administrators, and other stakeholders in support of the education of diverse learners.

Objectives

• Identify community resources available for families and students with special needs.
• Select appropriate procedures for connecting students and families with community-based resources in a given situation.
• Identify potential ethical implications of professional practice when working with students and families receiving special education services.
• Recognize the importance of using person first terminology.
• Determine appropriate professional and ethical practices in classroom activities and interactions for a given case.
• Determine practices for staying abreast of new developments and opportunities that support the learning of students with exceptional needs. Determine the appropriate use of person first terminology.
• Select strategies to encourage families of students receiving special services to participate in educational processes in a given case. Recommend strategies to establish community partnerships in support of students with special needs.
• Analyze a given case for sensitivity, effectiveness, and professional dispositions in communication and collaboration.
• Identify various strategies that support student voice and student-centered learning.
• Determine an appropriate strategy for integrating student initiated learning experiences in specified ongoing instruction.

• Competency 648.1.4: Instructional Strategies in Special Education
The graduate selects effective and appropriate learning opportunities for the specific needs of diverse learners.

Objectives
• Determine appropriate methods for establishing instructional priority in a given student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
• Adapt a given lesson to align with specified assessment results drawn from current progress monitoring from an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
• Adapt specified instructional methods or materials to facilitate mastery of general education curriculum at the elementary, middle, or high school level for students with different learning needs.
• Recognize examples of accommodation or modification.
• Contrast accommodation and modification.
• Determine students and situations for which accommodation or modification are appropriate.
• Identify appropriate uses of approved accommodations and modifications in regards to standardized testing.
• Modify a given instructional strategy to increase the rate of successful outcomes for students receiving special education services.
• Apply appropriate principles of Universal Design in a given scenario.
• Select instructional strategies that encourage the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills for students receiving special education services.
• Determine the effectiveness of instructional strategies in meeting the requirements of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) in a given situation.

• Competency 648.1.5: English Language Learning
The graduate recommends best practices to plan classroom instruction in a supportive learning environment for ELL students.

Objectives

• Identify the distinct characteristics and needs of students with limited language proficiency.
• Match specified communication methods to corresponding language proficiencies or cultural linguistic differences in students.
• Identify appropriate applications of specified methods of instruction for use when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL).
• Apply components of a theoretical base that supports the development and learning of English language learners (ELL) to particular situations.
• Determine appropriate activities for students' cultural background, learning styles, and language levels.
• Recommend language models, instructional strategies, or resources that facilitate understanding of subject matter for special education students whose primary language is not English.
• Recommend appropriate ELL and content instruction to meet reading and writing needs of students for a given case.
• Recommend procedures for grouping students to meet instructional needs of linguistically and culturally diverse student populations.
• **Competency 648.1.6: Behavioral Intervention Strategies**
The graduate selects appropriate behavioral intervention strategies for students with special educational needs.

Objectives

- Identify key behavioral intervention strategies and likely outcomes.
- Recognize how the theory of reinforcement can be applied to behavior modification for students receiving special education services.
- Select appropriate procedures of Applied Behavioral Analysis in a given scenario to modify student behaviors.
- Select an appropriate behavioral intervention strategy using a given behavioral assessment for a student receiving special education services.
- Select appropriate components for a behavioral intervention plan in a given scenario.

• **Competency 648.1.7: Technology and Accommodations for Students with Special Needs**
The graduate selects appropriate technology tools and accommodations to support the education of diverse learners.

Objectives

- Identify the process for determining accommodations for students with special needs.
- Determine an appropriate process for monitoring the required accommodations of student with special needs.
- Analyze a specific situation or environment to determine appropriate accommodations for and accessibility needs of a given student.
- Match specified communication methods to corresponding language proficiencies or cultural-linguistic differences in students in a given teaching scenario using assistive technologies.
- Recognize how technology tools can be used to support and facilitate Universal Design.
- Recognize appropriate uses of technology for emotional and behavioral disorders.
- Select appropriate technologies for use as assistive devices for given situations.
- Determine appropriate assistive technologies for specific physical disabilities.
- Determine appropriate technologies and applications for students who are gifted and talented.
- Select a specific augmentative, alternative, or assistive technology that lends support and enhances communication for students in a given special education setting.

• **Competency 648.1.8: Assessment Practices**
The graduate selects research-based and data-driven assessment strategies that meet the needs of diverse learners.

Objectives
• Identify a range of assessment challenges faced by students with various special learning needs.
• Identify common assessments appropriate for identifying or qualifying students for special education services.
• Determine accommodations for different testing situations including teacher-made or informal assessments for students who are receiving special education services.
• Determine accommodations for standardized assessments for students who are receiving special education services.
• Select special education assessments for determining instructional and behavioral ability levels that will guide instructional decision making and intervention.
• Select an appropriate individual or group assessment for a given scenario of special education students with diverse language, communication, cognitive ability, or diverse background.

Preparing for Success
The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Learning Resources
The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.

In the following resources, you may read about No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Please be aware that as of December 2015, President Barack Obama replaced NCLB with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This new act reauthorizes the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation’s national education law and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. Although not required for this course, you are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the new act. For additional information, please visit the following links from the U.S. Government and the U.S. Department of Education:

• Webinar recording
• Read about ESSA
• Fact sheet on ESSA
• Transition Letter

Automatically Enrolled Learning Resources

VitalSourceE-Texts
The following textbooks are available to you as e-texts within this course. You will be directly linked to the specific readings required within the activities that follow.


*Note: The video links listed in the text Special Education in Contemporary Society can be accessed at Special Education in Contemporary Society 4 along with other valuable learning resources.*

*These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase a hard copy at your own expense through VitalSource or a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition. The following sites provide instruction on how to create a VitalSource account, use features such as downloading your e-texts for offline use, and purchase a print-on-demand option, if available.*

**VitalSource Navigational Video**

**Print-On-Demand Option**

**Educational Impact**

Educational Impact is an online resource of video training and related worksheets. Educational Impact's videos and worksheets provide you with an opportunity for learning about several important facets of modern education and observing classrooms where specific practices are implemented and problems are addressed.

You will be linked to specific modules within the activities that follow.

**Additional Preparations**

**Study Notes**
Write responses to the questions and prompts throughout the course in your study notes. In addition to those responses, you may want to include more of your own thoughts and feelings. Think about the following:

• Your progress through the course, including any personal misconceptions you discover and correct through your studies
• Ways the activities and projects enhance your learning
• Your reactions to or reflections on the activities in the course
• Notes on topics that you want to remember and refer back to as you prepare for the assessments or begin your future teaching activities

You can also use your notebook as a place to review the material from each chapter of the textbook and answer chapter review questions. Your notebook will be a great study aid for the objective assessment.
As a teacher-in-training, you could consider this note-taking process as a way to begin modeling good study habits for your future students. Your experiences here will help you to become a well-prepared teacher and a reflective educator.

**Live Session Calendar**

**NIC1 Live Events**

This calendar includes all of our live events, including webinars, test reviews, and cohorts. Simply click on any of the offerings to learn more about them. All times listed are Mountain times. Be sure to change the time to your own time zone.

Some students are unable to see the embedded calendar. Click on the calendar title (NIC1 Live Events) to open the calendar in a new window.

**Pacing Guide**

This outline is a guided structure of the topics recommended to complete the learning activities. It is provided as a suggested structure and can be adapted according to your knowledge, skills, and experiences. Use the topics and pacing outline to support your completion of the course within the recommended timeframe.

**Week 1:**

- Competency 648.1.1: Legal Implications of Special Education
- Competency 648.1.6: Behavior Intervention Strategies

**Week 2:**

- Competency 648.1.2: Identifying Student Needs

**Week 3:**

- Competency 648.1.4: Instructional Strategies in Special Education

**Week 4:**

- Competency 648.1.5: English Language Learners

**Week 5:**

- Competency 648.1.7: Technology and Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

**Week 6:**

- Competency 648.1.3: Relationships, Partnerships, Advocacy, and Collaboration
- Competency 648.1.8: Assessment Practices
Legal Implications of Special Education

You have likely heard the terms "No Child Left Behind," The Disability Act of 2004, the IEP process, Section 504, FERPA, The American Disability Act, and others. Throughout the years, special education has gone through many changes as a result of judicial and legislative actions. This section will help you develop a better working knowledge of the legal aspects of education that will affect your classroom practices as you move toward becoming an educator in 21st century schools.

Public Law

This section explores how certain education laws developed and how they are applied in education today.

As a professional educator, you will work with students that require accommodations to experience academic success in your classroom. By developing an understanding of the laws and processes for ensuring that all students receive a quality education, you will be better able to design classroom instruction that meets the needs of a diverse student population.

Concepts and Impacts of Educational Laws

Read

- Pages 43-61 of Chapter 2: "Policies, Practices, and Programs" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Watch

- In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program:
  - Topic A, Reviewing Special Ed Law through the Lens of Common Scenarios, clips 1-13

Do

Name and describe the six major components and guarantees contained in Public Law 94-142.

Explain the impact that the following cases had on education:

- PA Association for Retarded Citizens v. Commonwealth of PA
- Diana v. State Board of Education 1970

Explain the revisions made overtime to Public Law 94-142 in regards to:
• Renaming PL 94-142
• Transition Plans
• Related Services
• Discipline
• IEP Process
• Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers
• Due Process
• Evaluation of Students
• Assessment Participation

Explain how civil rights legislation plays a role in protecting children and adults against discrimination due to a disability.

Compare and contrast the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA.

Compare and contrast a 504 plan and an IEP

FERPA and Due Process

Watch

• In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program:
  • Module 3 Topic E, clips 1-4

Revisit

• Pages 48-49 and 58 of Chapter 2: "Policies, Practices, and Programs" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

You have been selected to make a presentation at a school board meeting to the community and board about due process parental rights for special education students. You have been directed to include the case Winkelman v. Parma in your presentation. Outline the presentation you would make, and explain in a brief paragraph how you would include the case within your presentation.

Treatment of Special Education Students

Watch

• In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program:
  • Topic A-Reviewing Special Ed Law through the Lens of Common Scenarios, clips 22-28
Do

Explain manifestation determination and discuss the proper ways to handle students with conflict.

**Referral Process**

Read

- Pages 23-44 of *Chapter 2: "Collaboration and the Team Approach"* in *Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms*

- Pages 63-70 of *Chapter 2: "Policies, Practices, and Programs"* in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*

Watch

- In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program:
  - Topic A, Reviewing Special Ed Law through the Lens of Common Scenarios, clips 13-21

Do

Revisit the student's stories on Marvin and Jake from your reading.

Identify the steps of the referral process, and explain why and how you would make a referral for Marvin and Jake.

**ELL Laws and Policies**

Read

- Pages 102-107 of *Chapter 3: "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Exceptionality"* in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*

Do

Identify the assessment challenges that come with assessing children who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Describe the assessment safeguards that are provided by PL 94-142 for children who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

**Identifying Student Needs**
As you look at the faces in today's schools, you see a more diverse classroom than ever before. This unit introduces the graduate to "high incidence" disabilities, "low incidence" disabilities, gifted and talented students, students at risk for academic failure, and the concept of equity pedagogy.

**Characteristics and Criteria**

In order to be responsive to changing demographics, you must be able to recognize the characteristics of various diverse populations found within the classroom.

### Intellectual Disabilities

The disabilities covered in this unit are considered *high incidence disabilities*. That is to say, these are the most prevalent disabilities seen in the classroom. The next several activities and reading assignments will build on this activity.

Read

- Pages 139-150 and 164-169 of *Chapter 5: "Individuals With Intellectual Disabilities or Mental Retardation"* in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*

Do

After you have completed the readings, create a chart that allows you to list the exceptionality covered in this and subsequent readings. You should know the following:

- Characteristics, eligibility criteria, and how intellectual disabilities are similar/different than the other exceptionalities in this competency.

### Learning Disabilities and ADHD

Read

- Pages 193-198 and 204-211 of *Chapter 6: "Individuals With Learning Disabilities"* in Special Education in Contemporary Society
- Pages 8-11 and 16-21 of *The Dyslexia Handbook*
- Pages 241-251 of *Chapter 7: "Individuals With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder"* in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Watch

- [What is dyslexia? Kelli Sandman-Hurley TED-Ed](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelli_sandman_hurley_what_is_dyslexia) (5 min)

Do

After you have completed the readings, add the additional exceptionalities to your chart. You should know the following:
• Characteristics, eligibility criteria, and how learning disabilities, dyslexia, and ADHD are similar/different than the other exceptionalities in this competency.

Reflect on the concept of comorbidity with regard to ADHD.

**Emotional Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorders**

**Read**

• Pages 274-281 and 291-295 of *Chapter 8: "Individuals With Emotional or Behavioral Disorders" in Special Education in Contemporary Society*
• Pages 324-328 and 332-338 of *Chapter 9: "Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorders" in Special Education in Contemporary Society*
• Pages 265-268 of *Chapter 14: "Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder" in Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms*

**Do**

After you have completed the readings, add the additional exceptionalities to your chart. You should know the following:

• Characteristics, eligibility criteria, and how emotional disability and autism spectrum disorders are similar/different than the other exceptionalities in this competency.

**Speech/Language Impairments, Hearing/Visual Impairments, and Physical, Health, and Related low-incidence disabilities**

**Read**

• Pages 364-372 and 376-381 of *Chapter 10: "Individuals With Speech and Language Impairments" in Special Education in Contemporary Society*
• Pages 397-403 and 410-413 of *Chapter 11: "Individuals With Hearing Impairments" in Special Education in Contemporary Society*
• Pages 446-450 and 453-459 of *Chapter 12: "Individuals With Visual Impairments" in Special Education in Contemporary Society*
• Pages 488-489 and 494-502 of *Chapter 13: "Individuals With Physical Disabilities, Health Disabilities, and Related Low-Incidence Disabilities" in Special Education in Contemporary Society*

**Do**

After you have completed the readings, add the additional exceptionalities to your chart. You should know the following:
• Characteristics, eligibility criteria, and how speech/language, hearing/visual, and physical, health, and related low-incidence disabilities are similar/different than the other exceptionalities in this competency.

Gifted and Talented Students

Read

• Pages 541-548, 553-554, and 561-569 of Chapter 14: "Individuals Who Are Gifted and Talented" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

After you have completed the readings, add the additional exceptionalities to your chart. You should know the following:

• Characteristics, eligibility criteria, and how gifted and talented students are similar/different than the other exceptionalities in this competency.

Identify activities, programs, and approaches to accommodate the specific needs of students who are gifted and talented.

Teaching in a Culturally Diverse Classroom

Complete

• Cultural and Linguistic Differences: What Teachers Should Know (Star Legacy Module)

Read

• Pages 2-8 of Cultural Identity and Teaching
• Pages 87-93 of Chapter 3: "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

As you work through the activities, identify how teachers can build and present culture in their classrooms.

Recognize characteristics of students from a variety of cultures.

Identification and Intervention

Response to Intervention, or RTI, is a tiered approach to help students who are struggling academically and behaviorally. It is research-based, positive, early intervention that focuses on teaching strategies rather than disciplinary means to promote academic success. As you learn
about the various aspects of RTI, keep in mind that the student's difficulties may be a result of teaching inadequacies either in use now or in the past. You will be expected to be able to differentiate among the various tiers of intervention.

**Response to Intervention: Interventions and Strategies**

Complete

- [RTI: An Overview](#) (IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Read

- Pages 212-214 of *Chapter 6: "Individuals With Learning Disabilities"* in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*
- Pages 30 - 37 of *Chapter 2: "Collaboration and the Team Approach"* in *Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms*

Watch

- In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program on Mastering RTI: A Step by Step Approach:
  - [Module 1 Topic A](#), clips 1-13 (RTI Overview)
  - [Module 2 Topic A](#), clips 1-4 (3-Tiers)
  - [Module 2 Topic B](#), clips 1-15 (Universal Screening)
  - [Module 2 Topic C](#), clips 1-8 (Progress Monitoring)
  - [Module 2 Topic D](#), clips 1-5 (Data Collection)

Do

List the three tiers of response to intervention and identify the instructional, assessment, and intervention strategies to the corresponding tier.

Reflect on how response to intervention serves as part of the referral process for identifying students with exceptional needs.

Explain universal screening, progress monitoring, and data collection when it comes to response to intervention.

**Inclusion Continuum and Service Delivery Models**

The debates over special education services are often confusing and multi-layered. Some educational professionals advocate that all students should be educated according to age rather than academic ability or mental age, while others believe in a continuum of service delivery possibilities. This section investigates some of these debates, discussing special education placements and the impact of disproportional representation on students and families.
Special Education Placements

Read

- Pages 73-81 of Chapter 2: "Policies, Practices, and Programs" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Complete

- IEP Process Simulation:
  - The IEP Process, Part 1: Observation
  - The IEP Process, Part 2: Referral
  - The IEP Process, Part 3: The Meeting

Do

After reviewing this competency's readings and simulations, prepare an explanation for parents explaining how their child’s evaluation performance determined his or her exceptionality, eligibility for services, and placement within the special education program. Consider that you will be part of a team meeting with the parent. How can you support the family and help them to understand this process?

Describe the full inclusion model and identify its key elements.

Disproportional Representation

Read

- Pages 97-112 of Chapter 3: "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

Why do we have underrepresentation and overrepresentation of students who receive special education services? Identify at least two groups of students who are underrepresented and two groups who are overrepresented in special education.

Reflect on the impact of disproportionality on students and families in your community.

Relationships, Partnerships, Advocacy, and Collaboration
Exceptionality changes the dynamics of the family and the interactions that occur within it. Families with children that have exceptionalities often need additional resources and additional parent-professional partnerships. It is important for you as an educator to understand the interactive relationship of exceptionality and the impact it can have on the family.

Community Collaboration

Families are a vital role in the successful education and integration of an exceptional student. Families are often faced with difficult and frustrating decisions when it comes to their children. Often these difficulties create barriers that interfere with a family's ability to contribute to their children's learning. As a classroom teacher, you will be in a position to advocate for partnerships with services and support organizations with your students’ families and with your school and district leaders.

Families and Services

Read

- Pages 113-122 of Chapter 4: "Parents, Families, and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

Visit following websites and develop a list of at least five local resources supporting families and individuals with disabilities that you could provide to a parent seeking assistance for a student in your classroom.

- OSERS
- Center for Parent Information and Resources
- Parent Technical Assistance Center Network

Connecting Families and Services

Read

- Pages 123-136 of Chapter 4: "Parents, Families, and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

Review the information found at the following websites, and specify the different types of procedures presented within each site that help families make connections to resources.

- Support for Parents of Children with Special Needs
After exploring these websites, explain in a brief paragraph what procedures you might create to assist in connecting students and families to community-based resources.

Ethics

As a professional educator you will be exposed to many different situations regarding students, their families, and your peers. Identifying and developing a personal set of professional ethics will help you to establish guidelines that will expand your classroom practices and aid in exercising professional judgment. Ethics ties to topics you have already explored, such as the legal aspects of education, classroom practices, family and community relationships, and student services. What you learned in each of the topics mentioned above will in some way be affected by your ethical choices. Your ethics will influence the relationships you build with your peers, your administrators, your community, and your students and their families.

Ethical Practices

Review

- CEC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards for Special Education Professionals
- SpecialEducator Professional Preparation
- NEA Code of Ethics

Read

- Teachers’ Ethical Dilemma

Reflect

After reading through the list of ethical principles and standards for professional practice, consider the ethical implications of your professional practices and list how they might influence your decisions when working with students and families receiving special education services. Professional practices to consider might include, but are not limited to the following:

- Levels of expectations
- School involvement
- Developing family relationships
- Working with service providers
- Collecting and using data
- Safety
- Advocating for change
- Professional improvement
- Knowledge of laws and regulations

Is it Ethical?
Do

Using the CEC web pages from the previous activity for reference, identify an appropriate response for each of the following scenarios and explain why it is an ethical decision.

- A parent of a special education student attends the same yoga class as you. The parent repeatedly asks about the child's progress in school.
- A group of paraeducators sit together every day at lunch in the main cafeteria. They discuss the students they work with, and the way that the classroom teacher does or does not provide adequate services.
- A student in an ENL program is having some problems in math class. The teacher says she thinks the student is a gang member and that if the school rules regarding gang membership are enforced, the student will drop out of school. In this case, the teacher will not have to provide additional assistance.
- At a dinner party, the school secretary shares with you some highly sensitive information about a student that she read in the student's cumulative file.
- At a professional meeting, a teacher shares with a group of her peers that she doesn't think the school should be wasting tax payers' money on special education students.
- A paraeducator in a general education classroom is given the responsibility of planning for the special education student's daily work and activities.

Compare your responses to those in the following document:

- Is It Ethical?

**Professional Growth and Development**

In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program:

- 22 Components of Great Teaching

Watch

- Module 4 Topic A, clips 4A, 4D, and 4E

Reflect

Why is it important to be aware of new developments and opportunities that support student learning. How will you continue to focus on current practices and developments in special education.

Do

Search the web and list several organizations that offer continuing education opportunities for learning about current practices with special education students, ELL students, and gifted and talented students.
## Language Choices Matter

Consider the principles and examples presented on the following web pages:

- [People First Language](#)
- [Communicating With and About People with Disabilities](#)

### Do

Reword the following statements so they reflect cultural sensitivity and person-first language that puts the person before the disability:

- He is in special education.
- She is confined to a wheelchair.
- He is mentally retarded.
- She is a midget.
- He is a quadriplegic.

Words are powerful tools that reflect the values of society—both prejudices and achievements. Through the use of person-first language, we can make a positive impact on how society views exceptional individuals. In your notebook, rewrite this phone conversation to encompass person-first language:

> Hi Mom! I called to tell you about a new family that moved in to the house next to us. They have two children that will probably go to school with John and Jane this fall. The sad thing is that the boy is in a wheelchair and the girl looks like she has some kind of mental disability. I had hoped that the people moving in would have children that could play with John and Jane.

### Student Voice

The old notion of a classroom in which students sit quietly while the teacher imparts knowledge is rapidly disappearing. The twenty-first century classroom represents an educator’s changing role from the professional who imparts knowledge to the professional who leads, coaches, facilitates, and consults. Within classrooms today, you will encounter diverse learning populations with multiple needs. Through the creation of student-centered learning environments, teachers have the opportunity to meet students’ needs, actively engage students, and create learning opportunities for all students.

### Student Voice

Read

- [TEAL: Student-Centered Learning](#)
- [Benefits for using a student-centered approach](#)
Do

List and explain two strategies that support student-centered learning. Explain how these strategies increase the student voice in classroom learning opportunities.

Choose a strategy that you could use to prepare a basic student-centered activity integrating student-initiated learning experiences.

- What are the benefits of this strategy?
- Why did you choose this strategy?
- How does the strategy encourage student-initiated learning experiences within the activity that you prepared?

Family Relations and Partnerships

As a professional educator, you will participate in case conferences and meetings with families of exceptional children. How you respond and how you choose to work with each family will help determine the relationship and level of participation of the family in the child's education and service provisions.

This section draws on your understanding of the law, your ethics, your understanding of student service provisions, and the individualized process for creating an effective learning environment for an exceptional child.

Family Involvement

Review

- Pages 115-120 Chapter 4: "Parents, Families, and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

List two strategies you could use to encourage families to participate in their children's educational processes. Then prepare and write three sample opening dialogues that you might have with the parents of a student in need of special education services, ELL services, or gifted and talented services.

Note that each of these conversations may require a different approach and differing levels of sensitivity.

- How would you begin?
- How would your frame the student's needs?
- What documentation might you provide to support your conversation?

Communication and Sensitivity with Families
Review

- Pages 121-129 of Chapter 4: "Parents, Families, and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

Explain the stages of emotional response that parents may go through when informed that their child has a disability.

Reflect

What behaviors might they exhibit? Now, consider the family as a whole, and explain what other family members might experience.

Families and Service Providers

Read

- Pages 131-133 of Chapter 4: "Parents, Families, and Exceptionality" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

Prepare a list of what you believe are key personal characteristics of professionals who work with families with exceptional children.

Reflect

What strategies would you recommend to your building administration for establishing partnerships with service providers in or around your community? Explain why you think these strategies might be effective and why are they important.

Instructional Strategies in Special Education

Every student is different. As a teacher, you must be able to recognize when students are having difficulty so that accommodations and/or modifications can be made to the curriculum, instruction, or assessment. In this unit, you will recognize the difference between accommodations and modification, determine when each is appropriate, determine which accommodations and/or modifications to make, and look at several ways to differentiate instruction.

Instructional Strategies

No two students learn the same way. Teachers must be able to individualize instruction for the diverse needs of the students. This unit provides the framework for understanding the differences
between accommodations and modifications, and demonstrates the development of differentiated instruction.

**Accommodation and Modification**

**Complete**

- [Accommodations: Instructional and Testing Supports for Students with Disabilities](IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

**Review**

- Supports, Modifications, and Accommodations for Students
- Assessment and Accommodations

**Do**

Compare and contrast accommodations and modifications. Give at least two examples of each.

Identify examples of accommodations from the following categories: presentation, response, setting, timing/scheduling.

Identify appropriate uses of approved accommodations and modifications in regards to standardized testing.

Do you agree with the concept of adapting the learning environment for students with special needs? Do you think that changes should be made to the curriculum (modifications) for students with special needs? Give an example when a modification is appropriate and when it is not.

**Instructional Strategies across Exceptionalities**

**Read**

From *Special Education in Contemporary Society*:

- Pages 168-180 (Intellectual Disabilities)
- Pages 215-223 (Learning Disabilities)
- Pages 296-303 (Emotional/Behavioral Disorders)
- Pages 338-343 (Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- Pages 381-385 (Speech/Language Impairments)
- Pages 413-419 (Hearing Impairments)
- Pages 463-470 (Visual Impairments)
- Pages 514-519 (Physical Disabilities)
- Pages 557-569 (Gifted and Talented)

**Do**
Reflect back on your exceptionalities chart from competency; Identifying Student Needs. Add an instructional strategies column and identify appropriate instructional strategies for each of the exceptionalities.

**Instructional Planning**

In this unit, you will focus your attention specifically to universal design for learning and differentiated instruction. These planning tools will greatly impact the learning of your exceptional learners. As you are learning about these concepts, consider students who may have IEPs and how these strategies will be part of their educational journey.

**Universal Design for Learning**

Complete

- Universal Design for Learning: Creating a Learning Environment that Challenges and Engages All Students (IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Read

- Pages 89-100 "Principles of Instruction" in Chapter 5: "Adapting Instruction" of Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms

- Pages 30-31 of Chapter 1: "Special Education in Context: People, Concepts, and Perspectives" in Special Education in Contemporary Society

Do

What is UDL and explain its three guiding principles?

How will you use UDL when designing and writing lesson plans for your own class? In your response, think about students with the following exceptionalities:

- ADHD
- Visual and/or Hearing Impairments
- Learning Disabilities in reading, reading comprehension, and/or writing

**Differentiated Instruction & Cooperative Teaching**

Complete

- Differentiated Instruction: Maximizing the Learning of All Students (IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Read
Watch

- For additional support on cooperative teaching, watch clips 1.6-1.8 in the Special Education in Contemporary Society resources website

Do

Compare and contrast universal design for learning and differentiated instruction.

Think about the six strategies for cooperative teaching. Which of these would you feel the most comfortable using on a regular basis? What are the benefits of your choice compared to the others?

Adapting Instruction

Revisit

- Pages 87-100 in Chapter 5: "Adapting Instruction" in Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms
- Pages 338-343 and 381-385 of chapters 9 and 10 in Special Education in Contemporary Society

View

- Sample Plan - Individual Education Program

Do

Select a few instructional strategies that will best meet the needs of the student in the individual education plan. What are some ways you can determine the effectiveness of these strategies?

English Language Learning

It is imperative that educators learn how to communicate effectively and cross-culturally in classrooms where what is communicated, practiced, and perceived greatly affects and impacts students positively. Additionally, it is important to understand the role that culture plays within a multi-cultural school setting because culture as a medium touches and alters all aspects of human life. Acquiring culture is a gradual process achieved after many observations, experiences, and interactions in the classroom with students, parents, and peers. The more you learn about students of diverse backgrounds, the better cross-cultural communicator you will become, and the more likely you are to contribute to positive student-learning outcomes.
Instruction for English Language Learners

English language learners are the fastest growing group of student in the United States today. One out of every five students is learning English as a second (or even third) language. To be successful with these students, you will draw on what you understand about relationships, student growth and development, language development, teaching methods and strategies, and differentiated learning. You live in a global society; as an educator you are called upon to instruct and work with students with different ethnicities and beliefs from those to which you may be accustomed. Understanding cultural diversity will help you work with and respect diverse students and provide guidance more effectively toward academic and personal success.

Characteristics of Students with Limited Language Proficiency

Complete

- [Teaching English Language Learners: Effective Instructional Practices](IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Review

- [Differentiated Instruction: Maximizing the Learning of All Students](IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Read

- Pages 84-98 in [Chapter 3: "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Exceptionality" in Special Education in the Contemporary Classroom]

Watch

In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following program: Teaching the ESL Learner, and watch the following videos.

- [Module 1 Topic A] "Introduction to 'Teaching the ESL Learner'" (13:00)
- [Module 1 Topic B] "Unsheltered/Sheltered Instruction" (23:00)
- [Module 2 Topic A] "Introduction to Sheltered English" (20:00)
- [Module 2 Topic B] "Strategies for ESL Teachers" (8:00)
- [Module 6 Topic A] "Cooperative Learning Strategies" (10:00)
- [Module 6 Topic B] "Activities" (48:00)

Do

Describe the identifying characteristics of a student demonstrating limited language proficiency.
If you were working with a child in the classroom that you identified to be in need of services based upon the characteristics you have described, what would be your next step? Whom would you approach? What immediate assistance could you provide in the classroom?

Compare and contrast the sheltered instruction model and the full immersion model. Determine what are the advantages and disadvantages of each.

**Communicating Effectively With English Language Learners**

Read

- Pages 336-349 in *Chapter 18: "Teaching English Learners" in Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms*

Do

Review figure 18-2 on page 339. Explain the differences between basic interpersonal communication skills and cognitive/academic learning proficiency for this child. Provide a few examples of some of the academic words and phrases that might prove difficult for the English learner.

**Lesson Plan Adaptation**

The diversity of learners in every classroom requires that teachers adapt lesson plans to meet all learning needs. By focusing on learning objectives, teachers can find ways to allow students with various learning styles and exceptionalities to meet learning goals by adapting how they acquire and demonstrate knowledge.

**Adjusting Instruction and Adapting Lesson Plans**

Read

- Pages 262-284 in *Chapter 9: "Accommodating Instruction to Meet Individual Needs" in Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*

Do

- Which methods can be employed for adaptation?

**Grouping Students for Instruction**

As a teacher candidate, you should understand the importance of grouping strategies and know how to implement these strategies in instruction.

Read
Do

- Develop a chart that shows the advantages of each type of group, both heterogeneous and homogeneous.
- Add to your chart how ELL students might best benefit from each type of group.
- Which strategies do teachers use to group students?
- Why do students need to be grouped for instruction?

Instructional Strategies

As a teacher candidate, you should learn how to choose the best strategy to help students achieve objectives.

Read:

- **Chapter 7: "Teaching Strategies for Direct Instruction"** in *Effective Teaching Methods: Research-Based Practice*
- **Chapter 8: "Teaching Strategies for Indirect Instruction"** in *Effective Teaching Methods: Research-Based Practice*
- **Chapter 9: "Questioning Strategies"** in the *Effective Teaching Methods: Research-Based Practice*

Review

- Pages 262-284 in **Chapter 9: "Accommodating Instruction to Meet Individual Needs"**

Do

- How can teachers determine which are the best instructional strategies?
- How can these strategies be identified?
- How can these strategies be implemented to meet the needs of students who are English language learners, hearing impaired, have a specific disability (e.g. reading disability-dyslexia, writing disability-dysgraphia, language disability, etc.), are physically disabled or gifted/accelerated learners?

Behavioral Intervention Strategies
The education of students with emotional and behavioral disorders has historically been controversial, and continues to be a point of discussion in academic settings. As a professional educator, you will draw on your understanding of exceptionalities, learning styles, teaching strategies, assessment, and intervention knowledge to help create and participate in a coordinated system of care for these exceptional children.

**Behavioral Intervention**

As a professional educator, you will be expected to know what service agencies to involve, how to identify the needs of the student, and how to create an environment that helps children experience positive academic outcomes.

This topic investigates appropriate procedures and strategies for creating behavioral intervention plans that meet the needs of the classroom and exceptional students.

**Emotional and Behavioral Exceptionalities**

Read in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*.

- Pages 279-281, 297-309 of Chapter 8: "Individuals With Emotional or Behavioral Disorders"
- Pages 338-339 of Chapter 9: "Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorder"

**Do**

Reflect back on students with emotional and/or behavioral (EBD) exceptionalities. What are some of the ways students with EBD are classified and categorized?

As you read, identify the various intervention strategies discussed in the textbook. Which strategies do you feel comfortable with implementing? Which strategies might be difficult to implement? Consider the following:

- Physical environment interventions
- Academic and instructional interventions
- Behavioral and cognitive interventions
- Behavior principles
- Social skills training, interpersonal problem solving, and conflict resolution
- Applied behavior analysis

**Positive Behavior Support (PBS)**

Read

- Pages 288-290 of Chapter 8: "Individuals With Emotional or Behavioral Disorders" in Special Education in Contemporary Society
• Pages 112-114 of Chapter 6: "Encourage Positive Classroom Behavior" in Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms

Watch

• In the Educational Impact Program Library, go to the following programs on PBS:
  - Module 1 Topic A "Introduction to 'Positive Behavior Support'” (18:00)
  - Module 2 Topic A "PBS-Looking at the Problems and the Solution” (12:00)

Do

Discuss the purpose of the PBS model and its three-tiered approach.

**Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans**

Complete

• Functional Behavior Assessment: Identifying Reasons for Behavior and Developing a Behavior Plan (IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Read

• Pages 271-273 and 293-296 of Chapter 8: "Individuals With Emotional or Behavioral Disorders" in Special Education in Contemporary Society
• Pages 338-339 of Chapter 9: "Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorder" in Special Education in Contemporary Society
• Pages 114-120 of Chapter 6: "Encourage Positive Classroom Behavior" in Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms

Do

Explain in detail the 7 steps of conducting a functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plan.

Based on the opening scenario in chapter 8, what behavioral assessments would you choose to assess Mike's behavior? How would you use a functional behavioral analysis in this scenario? After an assessment, what components of a behavioral intervention plan would you implement?

**Technology and Accommodations for Students with Special Needs**

Today’s educators are often expected to fulfill the role of technology facilitators—who both advocate for and use technology appropriately to enable learning. As an educator, you will be expected to create highly engaging learning environments and facilitate assessment collection, analysis, and record keeping using appropriate technology tools. You will also be expected to communicate with
colleagues, administrators, and families through multiple media. Technology can also be a powerful tool for instruction with diverse classrooms in addition to facilitating appropriate accommodations for exceptional students and students with special needs.

**Accommodation**

This section covers technology available to the general education teacher and explains how accommodations might be made for students with special needs.

**Accommodating with Assistive Technology**

Complete

- [Assistive Technology: An Overview](#) (IRIS Center Legacy Module)

Visit

- [The W.A.T.I. Assessment Package](#)

Read

- [Chapter 5: "Assistive Technology"](#) in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*

Do

Define assistive technology and distinguish the difference between "high-tech" and "low-tech" technology. Give two examples of each.

Identify the differences between assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.

Explain the appropriate process for considering AT, implementing AT, and evaluating AT for exceptional learners. What role can the W.A.T.I. have in this process?

Identify the advantages and disadvantages of technology.

How does assistive technology align with Universal Design for Learning?

**Technology**

Assistive technology, or AT, is a broad term referring to assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices that assist an individual in functioning in society at a more appropriate and independent level. These devices can be as simple as a rubber grip on a pencil or as sophisticated and complex as a motorized wheelchair controlled by the breath of the user. You will examine the world of assistive technology and the role it can play in the educational achievement of all students.

**Assistive Technology**
Read

From *Special Education in Contemporary Society*:

- Pages 186-187 (Assistive Technology and Intellectual Disabilities)
- Page 231 (Assistive Technology and Learning Disabilities)
- Page 314 (Assistive Technology and Emotional or Behavioral Disorders)
- Pages 349-351 (Assistive Technology and Autism Spectrum Disorders)
- Pages 388-389 (Assistive Technology and Speech and Language Impairments)
- Pages 431-437 (Assistive Technology and Hearing Impairments)
- Pages 474-477 (Assistive Technology and Visual Impairments)
- Pages 526-530 (Assistive Technology and Physical Disabilities)
- Pages 577-578 (Assistive Technology and Gifted and Talented)

From *Teaching Students With Special Needs in General Education Classroom*:

- Pages 258-259: Augmentative Communication
- Page 274: Using Pictures in an Augmentative Communication System
- Page 292-293: The Intellikeys Keyboard and Switch Access
- Page 311: Classroom Amplification Devices
- Page 346: Software to Assist Language Learners

Do

Reflect back on your exceptionalities chart from Competency 648.1.2: Identifying Student Needs. Add specific examples of AT for each of the exceptionalities discussed in this course. Add a new column, or added them to your Instructional Strategies column.

Identify specific AT that enhances communication for students with disabilities.

Identify software to assist English Language Learners.

**Assessment Practices**

The right types of assessment can tell you how well students engaged in the curriculum. Many different forms of formative and summative assessments are used to measure student behavior, success, and proficiency. It is essential to understand how assessments are used and how they can facilitate instruction for diverse classrooms and exceptional students.

**Research-Based and Data-Driven Assessment**

From time to time, it is necessary to assess the needs and academic achievement of your students. This section introduces effective research-based assessment strategies appropriate for exceptional learners and students with special needs.
Curriculum Based Assessments

Read

- Page 66 of Chapter 2 in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*
- Online article *What's the Difference between Formative and Summative Assessment* from *Carnegie Mellon University*

Do

Explain the difference between norm-referenced assessments and criterion-referenced assessments.

Understand how to differentiate between formative and summative assessments.

Accommodations and Assessments

Read

From *Special Education in Contemporary Society*:

- Pages 102-107 (Assessment of Culturally Diverse Students)
- Pages 147-150 (Assessment of Intellectual Disabilities)
- Pages 211-214 (Assessment of Learning Disabilities)
- Pages 249-251 (Assessment of ADHD)
- Pages 292-296 (Assessment of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders)
- Pages 336-338 (Assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorders)
- Pages 376-381 (Assessment of Speech and Language Disorders)
- Pages 412-413 (Assessment of Hearing Impairments)
- Pages 458-463 (Assessment of Visual Impairments)
- Pages 507-508 (Assessment of Physical Disabilities)
- Pages 544-547 (Assessment of Giftedness and Talent)

From *Teaching Students with Special Needs in General Education Classrooms*:

- Pages 187-192 (Assessment Procedures of Learning Disabilities)
- Pages 212-215 (Assessment Procedures of Intellectual Disabilities)
- Pages 235-237 (Assessment Procedures of Behavioral Disorders)
- Pages 253-255 (Assessment Procedures of Communication Disorders)
- Pages 266-269 (Identification and Progress Monitoring Procedures of Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- Pages 340 (Identification and Assessment Procedures for English Language Learners)

Do
Reflect back on your exceptionalities chart from Competency 648.1.2: Identifying Student Needs. Review your column representing eligibility criteria and be sure you have the appropriate assessments for qualifying students for special education services.

Identify appropriate assessment strategies for culturally diverse students.

How does a functional behavioral assessment work to reduce problem behaviors in the classroom?

**Standardized Testing Accommodations**

Complete

- [Accommodations: Instructional and Testing Supports for Students with Disabilities](IRIS Center STAR Legacy Module)

Read

- Page 67 of *Chapter 2: "Policies, Practies, and Programs"* in *Special Education in Contemporary Society*

Review

Each state decides what standards to use for its students, so it is important for you to be familiar with the standards adopted by your state. For more information about Common Core or your state's education standards visit [State Specific Requirements](#).

Do

What accommodations do you feel are effective or important for standardized testing situations?

Reflect back on your exceptionalities chart from Competency 648.1.2: Identifying Student Needs. Add an assessment accommodation column and identify appropriate examples of assessment accommodations for overcoming assessment challenges for each exceptionality.

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! The content and activities have prepared you to complete the assessments associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessments, schedule and complete your assessments now.

**Student Support**

WGU values your input! Please submit any feedback you have using the following form:
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Visit the Student Success Center to access a variety of topics that will help you succeed at WGU:

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