This course supports the assessments for PX52. The course covers 4 competencies and represents 7 competency units.

**Introduction**

**Overview**
Assessment and IEP (individual education plan) development are intimately related. Assessment anchors the IEP, informs the teacher of the need for future lesson plan development, and provides data that will be used to adjust the IEP as students meet expectations and goals.

The material covered in this course is extensive and is designed to prepare you to apply your knowledge as you work with students who have mild to moderate disabilities in a wide variety of possible situations, all with an emphasis on cross-categorical inclusion. You need to become fluent in your understanding of the 13 disability categories, assessment, curriculum, and instruction. The learning environment will be your focus throughout your studies.

You will find that becoming competent in assessment, curriculum, instruction, and management will give you the confidence and ability to deliver quality instruction to your students. Competence in these areas also provides the collaborative insight to work effectively with colleagues and the ability to manage the paperwork requirements of special education.

Watch the following video introduction for this course:

**Competencies**
This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 4 competencies:

- **Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures**
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized) and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.

- **Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation**
  The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

- **Competency 631.2.3: Policies and Procedures**
  The graduate utilizes state statutes, policies, and procedures, and the federal regulations of IDEA in professional and ethical practices, and can apply theoretical constructs to special education in tracing the each students with disabilities from pre-referral through post
secondary and community-based options including screening, transition, and record maintenance.

- Competency 631.2.4: Counseling and Collaboration
  The graduate is able to establish partnerships with other members of the school and the community, promotes positive school-home relationships, and encourages families’ involvement in their children’s education by correctly using the terminology that enables one to communicate/collaborate and counsel with parents/guardians; other regular and special education teachers; school administrators and special service personnel such as physical, occupational, communication and speech therapists; and the students themselves.

Teaching Dispositions Statement
Please review the [Statement of Teaching Dispositions](#).

Course Mentor Assistance
As you prepare to successfully demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course mentors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course mentors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course mentor is the key to their success. Course mentors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you’re studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don't work out on your first try, course mentors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You should expect to work with course mentors for the duration of your coursework, so you are welcome to contact them as soon as you begin. Course mentors are fully committed to your success!

Preparing for Success

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

Your 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.

Enroll in Learning Resources

You will need to enroll in or subscribe to additional learning resources as a part of this course.
You may already have enrolled in these resources for other courses. Please check the "Learning Resources" tab and verify that you have access to the following learning resources. If you do not currently have access, please enroll or renew your enrollment at this time.

*Note: For instructions on how to enroll in or subscribe to learning resources through the "Learning Resources" tab, please see the "Acquiring Your Learning Resources" page.*

**UWillTeach**
The UWillTeach courses contain modules, quizzes, assessments, videos and directed questions to help you gain competency throughout the Special Education domain. Enroll for this resource through the Learning Resources tab. You should receive an e-mail from UWillTeach that will have your log-in information. Keep this e-mail since you may need it in the future for reference.

You will access material from the following courses:

- Course 1: Foundations in Special Education
- Course 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners with Exceptional Learning Needs
- Course 3: Assessment for Instructional Planning and Decision Making
- Course 9: Collaboration and Instructional Planning in the IEP Process

**Purchase Learning Resources**

**CD-ROM**
You will need to purchase the following CD-ROM for use in this course. You may purchase the CD through a retailer of your choice.


**Automatically Enrolled Learning Resources**

You will be automatically enrolled at the activity level for the following learning resources. Simply click on the links provided in the activities to access the learning materials.

**VitalSource E-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: These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase hard copies at your own expense through a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.

Other Learning Resources

You will use the following learning resources for this course.

Online Learning Resources
The websites for the NICHCY, IRIS Center, and Special Connections do not require registration. You may access these resources at any time.

- NICHCY.org
- Special Connections
- The IRIS Center

WGU Library E-Reserves
This course utilizes resources located in the WGU Library E-Reserves, with articles available for you to download. For instructions on how to access WGU Library E-Reserves, see the "Accessing WGU Library E-Reserves" page.

Special Education Resource Manual
As you are learning about special education, you should begin to work at applying the knowledge you are gaining. A great way to start is by creating a "Special Education Resource Manual," a dynamic document outlining special education and the IEP process to share with parents of students. This "Special Education Resource Manual" can be used as an additional study guide and for possible inclusion in the appendix section of your Demonstration or Field Experiences Teacher Work Sample (TWS).

As you continue to work through other assessments you will want to add sections to this manual to create a complete document. This is a great document to showcase your ability to articulate what you know to those non special education professionals (an important skill for all special educators!)

Suggested Table of Contents:

- Section 1: Overview and Legal History
- Section 2: FAPE (definition, providing FAPE and things to consider)
- Section 3: Child Find and Students with Disabilities
- Section 4: Roles and Responsibilities of Special Educators
- Section 5: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities
- Section 6: Special Education Process
- Section 7: LRE, IEP, and Service Delivery
- Section 8: Curriculum and Instruction
- Section 9: Behavior and Discipline
Special Education Vocabulary Glossary
Special education has a specialized vocabulary that will eventually become very natural to you. To facilitate this internalization, you will expand the glossary of terms you started in other related courses of study.

As you come across new terms or acronyms through your readings or discussions with others, add them to your glossary of terms. Make your definitions short but meaningful. In this course, you will want to become familiar with the terms in the Glossary of Terms.

Assessing Students with Special Needs

Learning how to administer assessments is an essential skill. Assessments can focus on academic, behavioral, physical, or developmental factors.

Special educators must be able to observe, collect, record, and interpret information about students to help identify disabilities.

Introduction to Assessment and Evaluation in Special Education

Evaluation begins the special education process. All children who are suspected of having a disability must have a full, individual evaluation to determine if they meet the definition of a child with a disability under IDEA 2004.

This evaluation must take place and be completed before a student can receive special education services for the first time, also known as initial placement.

The evaluation process is federally mandated with requirements outlined in the special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The law identifies how children are referred for special education evaluation and what an initial evaluation must contain.

It is important for you to identify the federal eligibility categories and basic criteria that must be met. There is more to eligibility than determining if a student has a disability. Students require special education services due to the adverse impact the disability has on academic or functional performance. You will be learning about assessment and IEP development issues for each of the IDEA eligibility categories:

- autism
- deafness
- deaf-blindness
- developmental delay
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment
- mental retardation
• multiple disabilities
• orthopedic impairment
• other health impairment
• specific learning disability
• speech or language impairment
• traumatic brain injury
• visual impairment, including blindness

This topic addresses the following competencies:

• Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation
  The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

Initial Evaluation for Special Education Services

Read the following chapters in Assessing Students with Special Needs to get an overview of the assessment process and the IEP process.

• chapter 1 ("Special Education Assessment")
• chapter 2 ("The Assessment Process")

You may want to refer back to these chapters throughout this course.

On the NICHCY website, re-read the section "Evaluating Children for Disability" (You should have read this while studying for Foundations of Special Education, Law and Legal Issues). Pay close attention to the areas on written notice, informed consent, and what must occur for initial evaluation.

Steps in the Assessment Process and IEP

For students to be referred to special education for services, they must first go through testing to determine if they are eligible. Once identified positively, students receive an individualized plan outlining their needs as determined by the assessments.

The IEP is meant to help parents/guardians and teachers know how best to work with the student, how the student best learns, how the student will demonstrate this learning, and how the teacher, staff, and student will work together to help the student learn better.

This topic addresses the following competencies:
• Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation
The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

Special Education Process From Evaluation to IEP Development

On the NICHCY website, read the sections of "IDEA-the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" that pertain to evaluation and IEP development, parental consent, evaluations and reevaluations, additional procedures for identifying children with specific learning disabilities, individualized education programs, and development of IEP.

It is important to review the actual law so that you can become familiar with the wording and reference notations.

Add definitions to your glossary.

Eligibility Process

Open the Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs CD and work through the following:

• section 1 ("Introduction to the IEP Process")

Special Education Resource Manual

As you go through this section answer the following questions in your special education resource manual:

• What are the best ways to obtain student and parent input?
• What are the best ways to understand the student’s disabilities?
• How will the teacher and IEP team stay close to other students' learning processes while accommodating the special needs student?

Make sure you have an accurate flow chart of the special education evaluation process in your special education resource manual.

Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures

In this section you will learn how to administer assessments appropriately, and you will focus on answering questions regarding academic, behavioral, physical, and developmental concerns.
The ability to observe, collect, record, and interpret information about students with disabilities will be addressed.

Also, understanding measurements is essential to understanding assessment. Understanding of statistics, accuracy, and test effectiveness will be explored.

As a future special education teacher, you will look at these procedures to determine the advantages and disadvantages of each measurement tool.

**Basic Concepts of Measurement**

Focus on the basic concepts of measurement and the key measurement concepts of basic statistics to understand the effectiveness of tests and evaluation procedures.

Pay attention to criterion- and norm-referenced measurements and their uses, advantages, and disadvantages.

Notice how the validity and reliability of tests relate to a test’s effectiveness, and how the use of practical measurement concepts can aid in selecting and evaluating assessments.

Note the interpretation of standard scores, intelligence quotients, letter grades, and procedures for reporting the results of assessments.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures**
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized) and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.

**Basic Concepts in Assessment**

Read the following chapters listed below from *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*:

- chapter 1 "Understanding Assessment"
- chapter 2 "Response to Intervention"

Read the following chapters from *Assessing Students with Special Needs*:

- chapter 3 ("Selection of Assessment Tools")
- chapter 4 ("Standardized Tests")

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

Pay close attention to the graphs, figures, and tables provided in each text, as they often provide samples of tests, classroom work, or practical application of the material you are learning.

Identify the basic measurement concepts and use of assessment in special education.

Selecting Assessments

Read the following chapter from Assessing Students with Special Needs:

- chapter 5 ("Classroom Assessment")

Practice thinking and processing assessment information like a special education teacher.

Try talking through the decision-making process for selecting the appropriate evaluation instrument as if you were explaining it to parents/guardians. Practice explaining this in plain language.

Find a study partner, a friend, or a peer and see if you can explain things clearly and without using educational jargon. Make sure you have included all of the points necessary to bring about understanding of the different assessment tools.

Understanding Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are central to understanding assessment. During this section, you will address fairness in testing and assessment.

Fairness in assessment indicates that assessment methods are equitable, free of bias, adapted for students with disabilities, sensitive to diverse groups, and considerate of contemporary views of growth and development, aptitude, cognition, learning, behavior, and personality.

You will also understand the need for exam adaptation.

Types of Validity

Validity refers to whether a test measures what it is intended to measure. The validity of a test is constrained by its reliability. The validity of a test is important in special education because there must be confidence that the test is measuring what it has been created to measure.

Keep the following questions in mind as you complete this section:

- What is the test intended to reveal?
- What indicates a measurement instrument is valid and reliable?

This topic addresses the following competencies:
• Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized)
  and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability,
  and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling
  conditions.

Interpreting Assessment Results

Read the following chapters from *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*.

  • chapter 3 ("Assessment Framework")
  • chapter 4 ("Involving Families")
  • chapter 7 ("Test Interpretation and Report Writing")

As you are reading the above texts, review the definition of statistics. Create flash cards and other
study strategies to help you remember the different terms associated with the following:

  • distributions
  • measures of central tendency
  • measures of variability
  • standard deviation

Use the illustrations of test distributions to aid you in understanding scores and the use of test
scores. The charts and graphs will assist you in visualizing test scores and the associated terms
used for different types of distributions.

Read the section on report writing in the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs*
CD. Read the sample reports, and pay close attention to the way the reports were written and how
the test scores were reported, interpreted, and summarized. Think about ways you could use the
reports to determine curricular and instructional needs of students. Choose three of these sample
evaluations you will use later to develop into IEPs.

Assessing Students for Different Needs: Curricular and Instruction

The goal of this section is to come up with effective teaching strategies based on assessment
results.

The ability to observe, collect, record, and interpret information about students with disabilities will
also be addressed.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

• Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized)
and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.

**Conducting an Assistive Technology Assessment**

Access and read the following articles:

- "Tools for Evaluation: Assistive Technology Tools Kit"
- "Assistive Technology and the IEP"
- "The Assistive Technology Planner: From Research to Implementation"

The "Tools for Evaluation" will have links on the bottom. The Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative is an excellent reference for all things related to assistive technology.

"Accessing the General Education Curriculum" will give you ideas about making adaptations to curriculum and how this impacts students in the state- and district-wide assessment systems. Make note of the difference between *accommodations* and *modifications*.

**Curriculum**

Teachers must examine their curriculum, delivery, assessment methodology, etc. to make sure they are efficient before automatically assuming students who don't do well have a disability.

When you have students who are struggling, it is sometimes easier to say, "This student must have a learning problem," rather than, "Is the curriculum appropriate for this student?" or "Has this student had adequate exposure to the curriculum he or she is being asked to work on in this classroom?"

When students do have a disability, designing accommodations is a great way to make sure students have adequate exposure to the same material as their non-disabled peers. When working with students with special needs you should:

- focus on what the student can do,
- accommodate and modify before changing the activity,
- use the least-obtrusive adaptation first, and
- use age-appropriate materials, goals, and activities at all times.

The following are the nine types of adaptations (* items are modifications)

- quantity: number of items
- output: learner response
- participation: learner involvement
- time: task or test completion
- level of support: amount or type
- input: information delivered
This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized) and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.

Special Education Resource Manual

Write up a short paragraph about the involvement of students with disabilities in the state- and district-wide assessment system. Make sure you describe alternate assessment for students who cannot be assessed using the traditional state assessments.

Assessment Throughout the Curriculum

This section is designed to help you understand intelligence and developmental assessments. The focus will be on general considerations when assessing intelligence and developmental issues.

This section will also focus on understanding the types of behavior measured by intelligence, developmental, behavioral, and academic tests.

Intelligence and Developmental Testing

Intelligence testing is required by federal special education regulations to confirm or rule out the presence of mental disabilities as well as to establish an IQ for the purposes of diagnosing a learning disability.

Developmental assessments consist of tests that measure the performance of young children, traditionally from birth to age six. These tests look for normal delays in several areas of development. Understanding this type of testing and the issues that sometimes occur will provide you with confidence and improved understanding as you enter into the evaluation and assessment phase of special education.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized) and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.
Assessing Intelligence and Development

Read the following chapters from *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*.

- chapter 16 ("Cognitive Development")
- chapter 9 ("Behavior")
- chapter 17 ("Young Children")

As you read, consider the following:

- the language used when working with students with intellectual disabilities
- distinction issues students may face throughout their lifetime
- guidelines for teachers in the use of intelligence tests-test meaning, interpretation, and use with students who have special needs
- intelligence test guidelines for teachers
- the focus-point interpretations of various tests, reviews, and summary forms
- comprehension checks, computer-administered intelligence testing, and diversity features
- procedures for assessing students from culturally- and linguistically-diverse backgrounds (an increasingly important topic due to the growing number of bilingual students in schools and society)
- requirements for administering intelligence tests
- controversies that have historically been raised or are currently being raised regarding intelligence testing

Investigate the following four types of developmental assessment instruments mentioned in your reading:

- screening tests,
- diagnostic scales,
- readiness tests, and
- specialized measures.

Read the following chapter in *Assessing Students with Special Needs*.

- chapter 7 ("Intellectual Performance and Adaptive Behavior")

Pay close attention to the table "Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Cognitive Abilities." Become familiar with the common developmental assessments in use today. Pay attention to the purpose and the descriptions of each.

Assessing Academic Achievement and Behavior

Measuring academic learning is one of the main functions of special educators. This section will help you understand the following concepts so you will know what questions to ask and how to answer them for each student you are assessing.
• What is the purpose of the assessment?
• Is this assessment a formative or summative evaluation?
• Is this to determine eligibility or to make short-term instructional plans?
• Is this assessment going to be used to determine long-term programming?
• Will this be based on curriculum-based measures?
• Will you be using frequent progress monitoring or just infrequent benchmarking?

The ability to assess behavior and social skills is also vital for special educators. Having assessment data to determine what skills to teach and how to teach them is vitally important. It is important that you spend time learning about behavioral and social skill assessment and instruction and how they are included in the development of the IEP.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

• Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures
  The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized) and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.

Observing and Other Informal Assessments

Read the following chapters in Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs.

• chapter 5 ("Reliability and Validity")
• chapter 6 ("Developing Technical Skills")

Assessing Academic Performance

Access the following from the Special Connections website:

• "Assessments"

Read the information on assessments (Curriculum Based Assessment/Measurement, Data-Based Decision Making, Assessment Accommodations, Grading).

Work through the case studies to help you to apply the information and see samples of the different types of assessments.

Focus on the definition of achievement assessment, on the types of behaviors measured by achievement tests, and on the use of achievement tests and measures to meet student needs. Concentrate on the current issues surrounding the assessment of achievement.

If you are in the classroom, practice using miscue analysis, cloze procedures, and running records to evaluate reading performance.
Simulate construction of teacher-made informal reading inventories.

Examine the procedures for planning, building, and using portfolios in ways that ensure reliable appraisal of student performance.

Examine specific portfolio assessment processes, scoring systems, reporting procedures, and conferences. Make note of how to conduct a curriculum-based assessment using group achievement tests and using individual and multiple-skill achievement tests.

**Assessing Behavior and Social Skills**

Read the following chapter in *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*:

- chapter 15 ("Performance-Based, Authentic, and Portfolio Assessments")

Read the following chapter in *Assessing Students with Special Needs*.

- chapter 9 ("Classroom Behavior and Behavioral Disorders")

As you read the chapters above, pay attention to the different kinds of observation and recording used in behavior-data collection.

Know the difference between anecdotal, event, duration, interval, time sampling, latency, and other recordings.

Read and know the components of a functional behavioral analysis.

Understand the difference between indirect and direct observations.

Review the types of instruments used to assess behavior.

**Assessing Other Skills**

As a special educator, you will be asked to assess or become familiar with assessment results from many areas of student development. Understanding what is being assessed and how these assessments impact the student in the everyday classroom is essential to providing instructional support and accommodations.

As you become more familiar with these areas, you will start to identify many areas in which modifications can be made to help students succeed in their education goals.

Understanding how language, reading, writing, math, and behavior or social skills impact everyday life can determine whether you are successful at providing a free and appropriate public education for each of your students.

This topic addresses the following competencies:
Competency 631.2.1: Psychoeducational Testing Practices and Procedures
The graduate is capable of administering and interpreting a variety of formal (standardized) and informal assessments and achievement tests (according to research design, reliability, and validity) used in the evaluation procedures for children with a variety of disabling conditions.

Language
Read the following chapter in *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*:

- chapter 12 ("Written Language")

Read the following chapters in *Assessing Students with Special Needs*.

- chapter 12 ("Writing")
- chapter 13 ("Oral Language and the Assessment of English Learners")

Reading
Read the following chapter from *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*.

- chapter 11, ("Reading")

Read the following chapter in of *Assessing Students with Special Needs*.

- chapter 10 ("Reading")

Math
Read the following chapter in *Assessment of Children and Youth With Special Needs*.

- chapter 14 ("Mathematics")

Read the following chapter in *Assessing Students with Special Needs*.

- chapter 11 ("Mathematics")

Behavior
Read the following chapter in *Assessment of Children and Youth With Special Needs*.

- chapter 9 ("Behavior")

Overall Performance
Read the following chapter from *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*.
Instruction

Assessing students with different learning disabilities can be a challenge. However, the goal of this section is to use the assessment information to help develop strategies that lead to providing the student with an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, skill, and understanding in all areas of education.

Instructional Implications and Strategies for Learning Challenges

Special education and general education teachers need to be prepared to differentiate instruction and provide accommodations or specially designed instruction to students with disabilities.

In this section you will have the opportunity to make decisions about accommodation provisions for students and to learn about universal designs for learning in content areas. Making instructional decisions for students is the basis of the IEP. This section helps prepare you for this important job.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation**
  The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

Learning Challenges: Classroom Implications

Work through the following modules from the UWillTeach website:

- lessons 1 & 2 in module 3 ("Assessment Processes: From Screening through Instructional Decision Making") from Course 3: Assessment for Instructional Planning and Decision Making
- lesson 1 in module 3 ("Individuals with Disabilities: Learning and Instructional Implications") from Course 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners with Exceptional Learning Needs

In these modules you will learn about instructional issues that arise from learning disabilities and look at possible solutions to these problems.

Think like a special educator:

- How would this work in the classroom?
• What kinds of activities might a teacher use to put these strategies into action?

**Instructional Planning**

At the Special Connections website, view the following section:

- "Instructional Accommodations"
- "Universal Design for Learning"

This section discusses how to plan for students with special needs using universal design, a concept that attempts to ensure accessibility through design. Pay attention to how this concept uses the design of instruction and curriculum as a way of life and not as a last minute add on.

**Instruction for Different Learning Needs**

Whether the problem is reading, writing, math, or accommodations for instruction in general, there are instructional strategies or remedies for every situation. Sometimes the answer for a student with special needs is really good teaching, which is helpful for all students.

The activities in this next section are designed to help you broaden your teaching toolbox and should not be seen as simply just for students with disabilities.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation
  The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

**Instruction Tools**

On the Special Connections website, view the following section:

- Instruction: Teacher Tools

Work through as many of these case studies as you can.

**Study Buddy Idea**

You have the opportunity to e-mail your answers to the questions to either yourself or to a peer so that you can check your understanding. This is a great way for you to work with a study buddy and get feedback on your answers.
The IEP Process: Putting It Together

This section will help you understand the power of the IEP and how it relates to assessment, curriculum, and instruction.

Managing the Learning Environment

In the following activity you will explore the procedures for assessing students with disabilities in inclusive settings and review how service delivery, instructional intervention, and data collection are all related to evaluation and assessment.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation
  The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

Response to Intervention

Explore the following modules from the Iris Center:

- Classroom Assessment (Part 1): An Introduction to Monitoring Academic Achievement in the Classroom
- Classroom Assessment (Part 2): Evaluating Reading Progress
- RTI (Part 1): An Overview
- RTI (Part 2): Assessment
- RTI (Part 3): Reading Instruction
- RTI (Part 4): Putting It All Together
- RTI (Part 5): A Closer Look at Tier 3

The IEP: What Makes an Effective IEP

The IEP is mandated by IDEA and guides instructors to meet the individual needs of each student related to the previously identified disability. The purpose of an IEP is to set reasonable goals for the student and to state the services that the school district will provide for each student with an IEP.

The learning resources in this section will help give you a clear understanding of the effective development and implementations of IEPs. You will understand how to interpret assessments.
Creating an Effective IEP

In the following activity you will learn more about creating an effective IEP.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.3: Policies and Procedures
  The graduate utilizes state statutes, policies, and procedures, and the federal regulations of IDEA in professional and ethical practices, and can apply theoretical constructs to special education in tracing the each students with disabilities from pre-referral through post secondary and community-based options including screening, transition, and record maintenance.

IEP Process: What makes an IEP Effective

Review the following module from course 1 - Foundations in Special Education on the UWillTeach website:

- module 2 ("Current Issues and Professional Practices: Still Evolving")

Review sections 1 and 5 from the Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs CD.

Add any new terms to your glossary.

The IEP Process, Development, and Implementation

Implementing an IEP for a student starts with the assessment process and continues with the implementation process.

The IEP needs to be revised yearly, per IDEA, but the team may review and revise the IEP more often than once a year.

Either the legal guardians or the school can request an IEP meeting to revise a student's IEP. For example, the student may not be making progress toward the IEP goals, and the teacher or parents/guardians may become concerned. On the other hand, the student may have met most or all of the goals in the IEP and new goals need to be written. In either case, the IEP team would meet to revise the IEP.

Development of an IEP

At the beginning of each school year, the special education teacher must take steps to make sure that all recommendations from the IEP team are implemented.

If the student will be spending part of the day in a regular classroom, the special education teacher and regular education teacher need to collaborate on how to provide all services listed in the IEP. If
a student requires materials that are in an alternate format, the materials must be ready to give to the student at the same time the rest of the students receive their materials.

It is also the special education teacher's responsibility to inform each individual included in the IEP of his or her responsibilities and inquire if there is anything the special education teacher can help with for this implementation.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.2: IEP Development and Implementation
  The graduate relates the various issues of assessment (e.g., cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) to the presentation and data analysis for instructional planning, conferences, and decision making, and in determining assessment data required in the development of an IEP. In this process, the graduate utilizes federal and state policies, statutes, and regulations, in developing, managing, and implementing educational programs based on individual student needs.

**Development of an IEP**

Review the following module from course 1 - Foundations in Special Education on the UWillTeach website:


Read the following module from course 9 - Collaboration and Instructional Planning in the IEP Process on the UWillTeach website:

- module 2 ("Developing Standards-Based IEPs")

After completing this activity, research the areas in which you felt you were weakest. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What roles do the general and special education educators play in determining accommodations?
- What are some general guidelines teachers should follow for making good accommodations decisions?
- What are three ways assessment accommodations can be made for students with disabilities, and why are they important?
- Why are alternative assessments needed for a small percentage of students with disabilities?

**Required IEP Components**

Review the following in the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs* CD to help you review the components of an IEP:

- sections 1, 3, 4, and 5.
What are the components of an IEP? Identify some of the unique needs for the following disabilities:

- behavior
- ELL
- hearing impairment
- visual disabilities
- disabilities requiring assistive technology (both devices and services)

**Determining Present Levels of Performance**

Go to the following section of the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs* CD:

- section 4

Read through the questions and introduction first. You will then print out the form, "Present Levels of Educational Performance" located under the IEP forms section of "Customizable Forms." Complete the form for Marty.

**Developing IEP Goals**

Go to the following section on the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs* CD.

- section 2 ("Writing Goals")

Read through all the material about formulating effective goals. Also read and view the video clips about Darius and Allison.

When you have finished, take the quiz provided and answer the follow-up questions.

**Time to Write an IEP**

Review the following sections in the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs* CD to make sure you understand all the aspects of an IEP:

- "What Is an IEP?"
- "How Is a Student's Eligibility Determined?"
- "Who Creates the IEP?"
- "What Are the Goals of the IEP?"
- "What Are the Components of an Effective IEP?"

Using the evaluation reports and the customizable IEP forms on the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs* CD, choose three evaluations. Read through the evaluations, and choose which IEP forms you will need for each student.
Complete the forms as if you were doing an actual IEP for a student. This will not only prepare you for your future work writing IEPs, but it will also help you internalize and understand the workings of the IEP.

Take your time as you use the information on the evaluation form to complete the present levels of performance, family and health history, and other information. Fill in any missing information, such as teacher name, with your name.

This is a great time to have a study buddy or friend to help you or to provide feedback.

Try to write goals from the evaluation report, if you do not have enough measureable information, go ahead and make up what you think are suitable goals, following what you have read about goals.

Post questions you may have about this activity on the message board.

**Observing IEPs**

On the *Developing Effective Individualized Education Programs* CD, watch the videos of the IEP meeting. While you are watching these, take note of the way the school personnel address the family, pace the meetings, involve the parents, and include all components of the IEP.

Ask yourself if there are things you would do differently. Are there things that the teacher would do differently if

- the student were present at the meeting,
- the student had multiple needs,
- the parents were of a different culture,
- the parent had more questions, or
- there were an advocate at the meeting?

Observing and thinking like a special educator will help you to understand how students with exceptional learning needs are served.

**Collaboration and Counseling**

Special educators are not the only professionals who work with students with special needs. In fact, there are any number of other professional and paraprofessionals who work together to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are met. There are prep-referral teams, evaluation teams, and IEP teams, each serving different purposes. The role of special educators in all of these teams is unique because they are often called upon to help coordinate the services of all the professionals involved in the education of students.
Each team of professionals differs depending on the purpose of the team and the unique needs of the student the team is focusing on at the time. This is the very foundation of special education; services are as unique and individualized as the student.

This section is designed to help you explore ways to manage these different roles and to provide resources for you to turn to when you are called upon as an expert.

**Professional Teams**

Possible members of any professional team may include parents/guardians, general education teachers, a school psychologist, a speech and language pathologist or speech therapist, an occupational therapist and/or a physical therapist, a school nurse, or an administrator.

If the student has other specific needs, the team could include other professionals like an adaptive physical education teacher, a paraprofessional, a social worker, a school counselor, an orientation and mobility specialist, and an interpreter.

Coordinating the services of professionals takes collaboration, organization, and communication skills. It is important for special educators to be prepared to manage this role of coordinator effectively and efficiently.

Additionally, special educators may be called upon to collaborate in other ways. With general education teachers, special educators may collaborate by co-teaching in inclusion models, acting as consulting teachers, or by providing staff development to small- or medium-sized groups of teachers. This means special educators are often viewed as instructional resources.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 631.2.4: Counseling and Collaboration**
  The graduate is able to establish partnerships with other members of the school and the community, promotes positive school-home relationships, and encourages families’ involvement in their children’s education by correctly using the terminology that enables one to communicate/collaborate and counsel with parents/guardians; other regular and special education teachers; school administrators and special service personnel such as physical, occupational, communication and speech therapists; and the students themselves.

**Collaboration With Teams**

Review the following module from course 1 - Foundations in Special Education on the UWillTeach website:

- module 3 (“Defining Oneself As a Professional: How You Contribute”)

**Counseling and Collaboration with Parents**
Working with parents/guardians is such an important part of special education that it is part of the law. Parents/guardians have a right to be part of the special education process, and special educators must find ways to help parents/guardians be a substantive part of their child's special education.

This section of the course will provide ideas and resources to help you create a rapport with parents/guardians. Creating a collaborative environment in which the school-based team and family work effectively can be very rewarding, but also very challenging.

As you study, you will review communication strategies and resources you can use to help you involve parents/guardians in the development of IEPs and in the progress of their child.

You will also learn strategies for increasing success in the classroom and in developing meetings and other opportunities for creating effective teams, which include the parents/guardians of each of your students.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- Competency 631.2.4: Counseling and Collaboration
  The graduate is able to establish partnerships with other members of the school and the community, promotes positive school-home relationships, and encourages families' involvement in their children's education by correctly using the terminology that enables one to communicate/collaborate and counsel with parents/guardians; other regular and special education teachers; school administrators and special service personnel such as physical, occupational, communication and speech therapists; and the students themselves.

**Involving Parents**

Read the following article:

- An Innovative Model for Parent-Teacher Partnerships

Focus on how to define the term *family* and how to identify the important issues in communicating with the family.

Develop a flyer that would inform families of the role of families in the assessment process, as outlined by the federal law IDEA.

Read the following chapter in *Assessment of Children and Youth with Special Needs*:

- chapter 17 ("Young Children")

Focus on research-based practices and issues to consider in responding to families, especially diverse families.
Develop a strong foundation for understanding families and ways to develop strong parent-professional partnerships to facilitate the education of students with special needs.

Plan a parent conference to explain the considerations involved in assessing young students when identifying special needs.

Create a parent letter explaining the IEP process without using educational jargon.

Understanding the Professional Role
Growing Professional Knowledge

Time to turn your attention towards you as a special education professional. You will spend the rest of your career meeting the professional and ethical standards established for special educators. The lesson helps you look at pursuing local, state, and national Professional Development Opportunities, specifically the code of ethics and standards for special education professionals developed by the Council For Exceptional Children.

Understanding the Professional Role

Review the following module from course 1 - Foundations in Special Education on the UWillTeach website:

- module 3, lesson 3 ("Understanding Yourself as an Evolving Professional")

Special Education Resource Manual

As you go through this lesson answer the following questions in section 4 of your special education resource manual:

- What are the best ways to stay current in the profession?
- What professional publications are available to special education professionals?
- What professional organizations are available to special education professionals?

Final Steps

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has 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.

The WGU Library
The WGU Library
The WGU Library is available online to WGU students 24 hours a day.

For more information about using the WGU Library, view the following videos on the WGU Channel:

Introducing the WGU library

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

Searching the WGU library

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

Center for Writing Excellence: The WGU Writing Center

If you need help with any part of the writing or revision process, contact the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE). Whatever your needs-writing anxiety, grammar, general college writing concerns, or even ESL language-related writing issues—the CWE is available to help you. The CWE offers personalized individual sessions and weekly group webinars. For an appointment, please e-mail writingcenter@wgu.edu.

Feedback

WGU values your input! If you have comments, concerns, or suggestions for improvement of this course, please submit your feedback using the following form:

- [Course Feedback]

Accessibility Policy

Western Governors University recognizes and fulfills its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and similar state laws. Western Governors University is committed to provide reasonable accommodation(s) to qualified disabled learners in University programs and activities as is required by applicable law(s). The Office of Student Accessibility Services serves as the principal point of contact for students seeking accommodations and can be contacted at ADASupport@wgu.edu. Further information on WGU's Accessibility policy and process can be viewed in the student handbook at the following link:

- [Policies and Procedures for Students with Disabilities]