

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**COURSE TITLE:** AIDING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

**COURSE AUTHOR:** DONNA WALKER TILESTON

**CREDITS:** 3 GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CREDITS

### Course Overview

In this course, you will gain the knowledge and skills to work with students with special needs by learning both the current research and a hands-on practitioner's approach to improving classroom strategies. You will explore services schools are required to provide and Dr. Tileston's suggestions for what schools can do to best implement the standards set in federal and state laws. You will have the opportunity to consider systems of thinking and the roles they play in learning, as well as examples of mental models that students may learn to construct in order to increase their ability to recall and organize pieces of information. By the end of the course you will know a variety of tactics to better engage students with emotional, behavioral and attention disorders with the goal to ensure that all students receive a high quality education and become independent and empowered in their learning regardless of their disabilities.

### Author Biography

**Dr. Donna Walker Tileston** has been a leader in education, serving as a teacher, administrator, researcher, writer, software developer, and a national consultant. She is the author of 23 books on educational topics. She has been actively involved in brain research and has published her research under the titles *Strategies for Teaching Differently* (1998) and *Ten Best Teaching Practices: How Brain Research, Learning Styles and Standards Define Teaching Competencies* (2000, 2005). This research led Dr. Tileston to write a bestselling series titled *What Every Teacher Should Know* (2003, 2008). The series has been awarded the Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing by the American Educational Publishers Association and is presently being developed into a series of comprehensive state-of-the-art interactive online courses. Additionally, she has made worldwide presentations on her research. Dr. Tileston received her BA from the University of North Texas, her MA from East Texas State University, and her Ed.D. from Texas A & M University-Commerce.

### Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn about:

- 1) how the brain works and its critical role in learning
- 2) how some cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and attentional disorders are attributed to malfunctions in the brain
- 3) that much of brain research has impacted the current discussions about nature versus nurture, neuroplasticity, and other topics that are related to educating all students

- 4) the importance of the IEP in defining the instruction and other modifications that are to be made for each identified special education student ☐
- 5) the importance of using scaffolding in designing learning activities, cognitive and social, then gradually taking it away so students will become empowered and more in control of their learning ☐
- 6) that meta-analysis available to teachers re-directs their instructional skills to help students learn and process information at a faster rate and also to retrieve information more efficiently ☐
- 7) that meta-analysis available to teachers improves their classroom management skills to help students to gain control over their behaviors, to help them focus ☐
- 8) the increased importance of the concepts of multiple intelligences, and preferred learning styles and modalities in designing learning activities for students with various disabilities ☐
- 9) the increased value in using visuals, mind maps, and other graphics to create order, find patterns, and make connections when teaching students with various disabilities ☐
- 10) setting high expectations for quality products, as well as for behavior, and articulating what is expected before students begin to work ☐

### **Course Outcomes**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) create learning modules in 'small chunks' to better hold students' focus and attention ☐
- 2) vary the classroom learning activities frequently ☐
- 3) model the use of graphics, mind maps, and other visuals, to add organization and structure to the instruction ☐
- 4) plan scaffolding for each unit of study as well as for teaching social skills and include a plan for gradually reducing the scaffolding ☐
- 5) give constant positive and specific feedback for learning activities and their products, for classroom behavior and student's interaction with other students and the teacher ☐
- 6) develop consistency and apply it to all expectations for quality products and classroom behavior ☐
- 7) communicate to students your high expectations and your plan for working together with them toward their success ☐

## Academic Honesty

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own, and includes failing to cite sources for others' ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult [plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org).

<b>Grading Policy</b> (using rubric 1-4 scale system)		<b>Percentage of Course Credit</b>	
Total grade for the course is a culmination of performance grades		Course grade is determined by the following	
<b>A:</b>	3.4 – 4.0	<b>Reflections</b>	15%
<b>B:</b>	2.7 – 3.3	<b>Checks for Understanding</b>	25%
<b>C:</b>	2.0 – 2.6	<b>Mid-course Project</b>	25%
<b>F:</b>	<2.0	<b>Final Capstone Project</b>	35%

In order to complete the requirements of the course, you must complete all course work (e.g., reflections, checks for understanding), including watching all videos and participating in all discussion forums. We do not award partial credit.

## Checks for Understanding and Reflection Rubric

Assessment	Underdeveloped (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
<b>Checks for Understanding</b>	65% or below	66-79%	80-89%	90-100%
<b>Reflection Question</b>	<p>Participant has included little to no content indicating consideration and comprehension of course content.</p> <p>Participant has not addressed the questions posed. Participant has copied from the course transcript without synthesis or analysis.</p>	<p>Participant has included little that indicates consideration and comprehension of course content.</p> <p>Participant has answered most questions directly but some too briefly.</p>	<p>Participant has included appropriate content from the course content and made connections to practice.</p> <p>Participant has made thoughtful comments in direct response to the prompts.</p>	<p>Participant has provided rich detail and supporting examples from the course content and made specific connections to his/her practice.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Participant has made thoughtful comments in direct response to the prompts and created next steps to support his/her learning.</p>

## KDS Learning Design

KDS online courses are based on 50 hours of sustained engagement on a given topic, with opportunities for ongoing training and support.

Instruction (40%) ~20 hours	Coaching (20%) ~10 hours	Practice (40%) ~20 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modeling effective practice through video</li> <li>Interactive activities</li> <li>Readings and Reflections</li> <li>Expert and educator interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expert feedback from online coaches on various components of instruction</li> <li>Facilitation Guide &amp; resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capstone application project</li> <li>Mid-course application project</li> <li>Scenario-based activities and checks for understanding</li> <li>Application Toolkit</li> </ul>

## Course Outline

<p><b>Unit 1</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will explore the comprehensive overview of the laws that govern special education and suggestions for implementing special education programs that meet the standards established by federal and state laws.</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> By the end of this unit, you will be able to assess your school’s or district’s compliance with state and federal laws in administering their special education program and strengthen classroom instruction so that it provides both an equitable and a quality education as it targets the needs of special education students.☒</p> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding</p> <p><b>Reading 1</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schumm, J. S., &amp; Vaughn, S. (1995). Responsible inclusion for students with learning disabilities. <i>Journal of Learning Disabilities, Vol. 28</i> (5), pp. 264-270. Retrieved from <a href="http://digilib.bc.edu/reserves/ed587/moon/ed58745.pdf">http://digilib.bc.edu/reserves/ed587/moon/ed58745.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Key Reflection Question</p> <p><b>Unit 2</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> In this unit, you will examine how the brain works and how understanding its functioning can help you understand how your students learn, as well as what brain research</p>
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has taught us about learning and some strategies that you can use to adapt the findings of that research to their classrooms.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to understand and explain learning problems in terms of the brain’s functioning and apply current brain research to your portfolio of teaching skills to better help students retain and retrieve information.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

### Unit 3

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will explore how the cognitive system of the brain impacts learning, the distinction between declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge, and how to use a variety of organizers, tools that can successfully help students increase their ability to organize and recall information.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able tap into the self-system of the brain and build scaffolding, give meaning to learning, create personal relevance, use a variety of organizers to divide lesson plans into declarative and procedural information.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

### Reading 2

**Reading:**

- Graham, S., Harris, K. R, & Larsen, L. (2001). Prevention and intervention of writing difficulties for students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, Vol. 16* (2), pp. 74-84. Retrieved from <http://www.Idonline.org/article/6213/>

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question

### Unit 4

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will consider the characteristics of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD] and Attention Deficit Disorder [ADD], the ways in which educators may contribute to students’ inability to attend to learning, and how to increase students’ ability to stay appropriately focused on learning and the activities of the classroom.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to recognize the behaviors and characteristics of students with ADHD and ADD, and modify conditions in the classroom and teaching strategies so that it provides a more structured and nurturing environment where students with attention disorders will become more engaged.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

### Unit 5

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will learn how to help students stay on task and finish work at a high level, the distinctions between convergent and divergent thinking, practical ways to manage the classroom, and how to set up structures that help students increase their ability to focus and to attend to learning.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to create connections and personal relevance for students, set goals to maximize learning, provide consistent structures to control

behavioral disorders, use matrixes, rubrics, and other tools to evaluate student progress in learning social skills, and create benchmarks to measure student progress in reaching their learning goals.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

### Reading 3

#### Reading:

- Bausch, M. E., & Hasselbring, T. S. (2005). Assistive technologies for reading. *Educational Leadership*. Vol. 63 (4), pp. 72-75. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec05/vol63/num04/Assistive-Technologies-for-Reading.aspx>

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Mid-Course Project

### Mid-Course Project

#### Description:

The purpose of this project is to design or adapt a lesson plan that addresses the special needs of your students. You will have the opportunity to implement your lesson plan and reflect on your results. Please note that you will receive feedback on your work and be evaluated against the project rubric.

#### Develop or Adapt a Lesson Plan:

Following the strategies and recommendations outlined by Dr. Walker Tileston in the first half of the course, design or modify a lesson for an upcoming curriculum unit that meets the special needs of your students. Since the typical classroom is made up of students from various backgrounds and abilities, including those with learning differences, challenges, attention disorders, and other disabilities, make sure to adapt your lesson plan according to your diverse student population. Begin your project by following these steps:

1. Identify the lesson's learning objective(s).
2. Describe the different types of learners in your classroom and what adaptations they will need to successfully meet the learning objective(s).
3. Determine how you will track the progress of each of your students with special needs. What type of progress or other reporting form will you use? Is there a rubric you prefer that defines the expectations and shows the scoring and your evaluation of each student?
4. Incorporate some course strategies for leveraging background knowledge and/or developing prior knowledge.
5. Explain how you will pre-teach declarative or procedural knowledge, taking into account different learning styles and modalities. If you have students with attention deficit disorder, discuss the strategies you can use to increase their ability to stay focused on learning. Propose various choices of activities you can offer your students.

6. Incorporate mind maps and other graphics and explain how you will use them, and what their importance is.
7. Identify any additional adaptations you will use to meet the unique needs of your students.

**Reflect on Practice:**

Implement your lesson plan in your classroom, and reflect on the results. In your reflection, discuss what went well, what you learned, and outline what you might do differently in the future and the steps you will take to apply these changes. Include specific observations, details, and examples in your response.

When you've completed your Mid-course Project, upload your **Lesson Plan** and **Reflection** to the Evidence tab in the eClassroom

**Alternate assignment (when you're not in a classroom or out for summer):**

Design the lesson plan according to the instructions above and reflect on what you think your students might struggle with on the assignment. Identify what might be missing in the lesson and needs modification.

**Mid-course Project Evaluation:**

Project Component	Underdeveloped (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Quality of lesson plan (50%)	Develops a lesson plan that lacks several critical components.	Develops a lesson plan that lacks one critical component.	Develops a lesson plan that includes all critical components.	Develops a lesson plan that includes clear and concise components and demonstrates planning mastery.



<b>Integration of course strategies (25%)</b>	Demonstrates deficiencies in understanding course strategies and lacks clear explanation on how tools and adaptations will meet the needs of students.	Demonstrates some understanding over course strategies and somewhat explains how tools and adaptations will meet the needs of students.	Demonstrates proficiency over course strategies and explains how tools and adaptations will meet the needs of students.	Demonstrates mastery over course strategies and comprehensive explanations on how tools and adaptations clearly will meet the needs of students.
<b>Reflection on practice (25%)</b>	Provides a narrow reflection on strengths and changes from lesson plan implementation.	Provides a brief reflection on strengths and changes from lesson plan implementation.	Provides a thorough reflection on strengths and changes lesson plan implementation.	Provides a comprehensive reflection on strengths and changes from lesson plan implementation and provides action steps.

## Unit 6

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will examine how the brain controls emotions and the importance of emotions on attention and learning, explore a list of emotional disorders including the symptoms of a range of anxiety and depressive disorders, and how a classroom teacher can help students gain more control over their negative behaviors by creating a positive environment, being consistent, teaching social skills, and involving the parent/caretaker .

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to create a physically and emotionally safe environment where students are comfortable taking risks, establish early interventions when behavior disorders are first observed, as well as set high expectations for every student. ☐

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

## Unit 7

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will consider the characteristics of autism, review the possible causes of autism and the ongoing research on possible treatments, and explore instructional strategies and classroom management strategies that will help students with autism and/or Asperger's succeed in their learning.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to recognize the behaviors and characteristics of students with autism and Asperger's Syndrome, and modify teaching strategies and the classroom environment so that students will become more focused on their learning, more socially engaged with other students, and experience a nurturing environment

for learning and more controlled behavior.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

#### Reading 4

**Reading:**

- Dunlap, G., & Fox, L. (1999). *Teaching students with Autism* (ERIC Digest No. E582). Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED435148). <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED435148leadership/dec05/vol63/num04/Assistive-Technologies-for-Reading.aspx>

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question

#### Unit 8

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will examine the normal stages of children’s speech and language development from birth through adolescence, what the symptoms of specific language disorders are, and specific interventions that will help children with speech and language disorders.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to evaluate students’ language development to measure it against expected benchmarks for their ages and provide appropriate intervention for any children who are presenting language deficits, delays, or other disorders.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

#### Unit 9

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will explore why learning to read is more difficult for children than learning to speak, the systematic steps that must be taught to develop phonological awareness and reading comprehension, and best practices in reading instruction: phonological awareness and reading comprehension.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to evaluate which children require intervention to correct their reading disorders, and use strategies to provide best reading instruction, model best practices, scaffold lessons, ask good questions, and add rigor to classroom instruction.

**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding

#### Unit 10

**Objectives:** In this unit, you will learn what parts of the brain are responsible for math learning, how to diagnose students with problems that affect their mathematical ability, and how to define levels of mastery in mathematics learning with new classroom strategies to strengthen mathematics instruction.

**Outcomes:** By the end of this unit, you will be able to diagnose the nature of mathematics disabilities in the classroom, as well as strengthen mathematics instruction in the classroom by applying such teaching strategies as focusing on vocabulary, using manipulatives, creating patterns, identifying qualitative versus quantitative learners, and teaching to student’ dominant learning modalities.



**Assessments:** Key Reflection Question, Check for Understanding, Final Capstone Project

### **Final Capstone Project**

#### **Description:**

The purpose of this project is to consider how you might adapt your instruction to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities by applying the concepts introduced by Dr. Walker. You will develop curriculum adaptations and tools to monitor student progress, and will also have the opportunity to reflect back on your personal learning goals for this course. Please note that you will receive feedback on your work and be evaluated against the project rubric.

#### **Create Adaptations for Academic Unit:**

Modify an existing curriculum unit and your current instruction plan by applying the concepts introduced by Dr. Walker Tileston in the last five units of the course to meet the needs of students with the following disorders: emotional and behavioral; autism and other disorders in the autism spectrum, including Asperger's syndrome; speech and language disorders; reading disabilities; and learning disabilities in mathematics. Include the following in your adaptation:

1. Identify an upcoming curriculum unit to adapt for students with one or more of the learning disorders listed above.
2. Determine the student(s) and the disability(ies) you wish to target.
3. Describe the learners' presenting symptoms in detail. Discuss how their learning is affected by the disability, the emotional overlay that you observe in the classroom, the student's social affect, and what you know about the relationships in the home. If you have an opportunity to read or utilize an existing IEP for that student, include data that has been gathered for the IEP that may include test scores.
4. Consider the academic unit for which you will modify a lesson and determine if you need to develop separate learning objectives for each of the students you identified. Explain what adaptations students will need to successfully meet the learning objective(s).
5. Determine how you will track the progress of each of your students. Consider the progress or other reporting forms you will use. Consider whether you prefer a rubric that defines the expectations and indicates the scoring and your evaluation of each student for each learning activity.
6. Incorporate specific strategies that you learned in the course for leveraging background knowledge or developing prior knowledge. Explain why this knowledge is valuable in providing instruction to these students.
7. Describe how you will pre-teach declarative or procedural knowledge, taking into account different learning styles and modalities. Propose various choices of activities you can offer your students. Explain why these choices are important and appropriate for the individual students.
8. Describe the learning challenges you are offering each of these students and how you can assess their success.
9. Propose how you would incorporate mind maps and other graphics and explain their use. Explain how they will help your students understand the unit's concepts.

**Reflect on Practice:**

Reflect on your original learning goals for taking this course. Using specific examples, discuss how your experience aligned with the learning goals you set for yourself at the beginning of the course. Describe in detail the next steps you will take to implement what you have learned in your instruction and classroom culture.

When you've completed your Final Capstone Project, upload your **Unit Adaptations** and **Reflection** to the Evidence tab in the eClassroom

**Final Capstone Project Evaluation:**

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Underdeveloped (1)</b>	<b>Basic (2)</b>	<b>Proficient (3)</b>	<b>Distinguished (4)</b>
<b>Quality of adaptations (25%)</b>	Develops adaptations that lacks several critical components and are misaligned to special needs.	Develops adaptations that lacks one critical component and are somewhat related to special needs.	Develops adaptations that includes all critical components and are related to special needs.	Develops adaptations that includes clear and concise components directly related to special needs and demonstrates planning mastery.
<b>Description of learner's needs (25%)</b>	Provides a narrow reflection on students and connection from symptoms to learning is lacking.	Provides a brief reflection on students and how symptoms somehow impact learning.	Provides a reflection on students and how symptoms impact learning.	Provides a comprehensive reflection on students and directly targets how symptoms impact learning.
<b>Integration of course strategies (25%)</b>	Illustrates minimal knowledge of course strategies and develops inadequate strategies for instruction.	Illustrates limited knowledge of course strategies and develops basic strategies for instruction that may reach students.	Illustrates knowledge of course strategies and develops strategies for instruction that reaches identified students.	Illustrates in-depth knowledge of course strategies and develops exemplary strategies for instruction that directly connects and reaches identified students.



<b>Reflection on practice (25%)</b>	Provides a narrow reflection on strengths and changes from taking course.].	Provides a brief reflection on strengths and changes from taking course.	Provides a thorough reflection on strengths and changes from taking course.	Provides a comprehensive reflection on strengths and changes from taking course and provides action steps.	
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