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## **EDU 691: NATURE AND NEEDS OF THE GIFTED LEARNER COURSE SYLLABUS**

**DEPARTMENT: ELC**

**3 CREDIT HRS.**

### **I. TITLE: NATURE AND NEEDS OF THE GIFTED LEARNER**

### **II. COURSE DESCRIPTION.**

A course to provide opportunities for experienced teachers and teacher trainees to develop knowledge and awareness of the characteristics and needs of gifted children and youth, and provides the individual student with opportunities to apply general educational principles for the gifted and talented to total educational concerns.

### **III. PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of this course is the acquisition of a research knowledge base on theories of intelligence; and the characteristics, identification and special needs of gifted students. Through an analysis of the dynamics of giftedness and the unique educational needs of this population, teachers will learn to integrate and apply this knowledge base and to become an advocate for appropriate gifted education policies and procedures.

### **IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Each of the behaviors indicated below are referenced to the Kentucky Teacher Standards (KTS) and to the Council for Exceptional Children/National Association for Gifted Children (CEC/NAGC) Standards and are understood to be reflective of, but not limited to, those behaviors advocated by the Kentucky Educational Reform Act Initiatives.

The CEC/NAGC Standards addressed in this course are as follows (see Appendix A for specific criteria under each standard):

- ❖ Standard 1: Foundations
- ❖ Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners
- ❖ Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences
- ❖ Standard 8: Assessment
- ❖ Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practices

As a result of their participation in this course, students will grow as Reflective Decision-Makers and will be able to:

1. Describe indicators of gifted potential and behaviors in students and explain various definitions used in identifying the gifted population for educational services. (KTS 2;

CEC/NAGC 1, 2, 8)

2. Analyze major philosophies, theories, models, and research supporting giftedness and talented education with a historical perspective. (KTS 1; CEC/NAGC 1)
3. Describe and analyze developmental differences (cognitive, social-emotional, and physical) and learning needs and patterns among gifted individuals at all critical stages of development. (KTS 5; CEC/NAGC 3)
4. Articulate the complexities of the current trends, issues and policies involved in the definition of giftedness and intelligence and the services provided to the gifted at local, state, and federal levels. (KTS 1,2; CEC/NAGC 1, 2)
5. Identify the dynamics of family influences and other cognitive and affective developmental variables that impact to the development of giftedness – including domain-specific areas of giftedness, cultural diversity, poverty, twice-exceptionality, English as a second language, and other indicators of important distinction of learning. (KTS 3; CEC/NAGC 1,2)
6. Identify characteristics and special needs of gifted students and to be able to describe and evaluate teaching and learning experiences to create effective learning environments for these students. (KTS 2, 3, 4; CEC/NAGC 2, 3, 8)
7. Examine multiple measures and procedures for identifying gifted students consistent with legal, ethical and practical policies and procedures in schools. (KTS 5; CEC/NAGC 8).

The *COE Conceptual Framework* and the *Theme of Educator as Reflective Decision-Maker* are addressed in this course by urging students to consider the gifted student's abilities and needs, reflect on how to best serve those needs, collect data regarding instructional interventions, reflect upon the implications of those data, and thus make informed decisions about future instruction.

The theme of *Diversity* is explored in the course through planning multifaceted instructional and assessment options. Students learn to assess and plan for the learning and achievement of all learners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, learning styles, or exceptionalities.

*Technology* is addressed through the provision of current web resources in the area of creativity and gifted education, use of technology in teaching and learning activities in the course, and through Blackboard-enhanced instruction.

The ESPB Themes – *Diversity, Assessment, Literacy/Reading, and Gap Achievement* are analyzed and discussed as students research, write and prepare professional programs to fully explore the topic.

## **V. CONTENT OUTLINE**

### **Understanding Gifted Education and Talent Development (Objectives 1-4)**

- Gifted Education and Talent Development:
- The Concepts of Intelligence, Giftedness, Talent, and Talent Development
- The Origins and Growth of Giftedness
- Social-Emotional Development and Giftedness
- Creativity: Integrated Thinking and Being

### **Educating the Gifted Student at School (Objectives 5-7)**

- Assessment and Identification of Gifted Students
- Optimizing Learning: Using Brain Research in Elementary and Secondary Classrooms
- Optimizing Learning: Strategies and Modifications for Elementary and Secondary Gifted Learners
- Culturally Responsive Teaching and Giftedness
- Exceptionality, Underachievement, Gender and Giftedness

### **Effective Programs and Services for Gifted Learners (Objectives 4 and 6)**

- Program Models, Structures and Organizations for Elementary and Secondary Gifted Learners
- Effective Programs for Gifted and Talented Education

## **VI. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

1. Chapter and other readings, class or online discussions
2. Students will read assigned chapters from the course textbook and other sources and prepare them for class or online discussions and related activities. (Objectives 1-7)
3. Students will collaborate with peers through group problem solving and sharing of resources.
4. Students will research articles and online resources regarding gifted education.

## **VII. FIELD AND CLINICAL EXPERIENCES**

Teachers will use “jot downs” and other identification activities in their classrooms and schools to engage in *Action Research*, and to share their observations and findings in class and on online discussion forums. Teachers will take care to **protect** the privacy and identity of the students that they discuss.

## **VIII. RESOURCES**

Textbook  
 Online course materials  
 Professional journals  
 Resource people  
 Instructional materials  
 Electronic software  
 Others as available and needed

Internet

## **IX. GRADING PROCEDURES**

### **Assessments:**

#### **1. Reflective Research Paper (CEC/NAGC Standard 1)**

Students will write a reflective position paper (4-5 typed, double-spaced pages) that reflects upon and synthesizes issues and ideas regarding the following criteria in the CEC/NAGC Standard 1:

K1	Historical foundations of gifted and talented education including points of view and contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds.
K2	Key philosophies, theories, models, and research supporting gifted and talented education.

#### **2. Article Abstracts Research (CEC/NAGC Standard 2)**

Students will read, abstract and synthesize three research articles that address the following criteria from CEC/NAGC Standard 2:

K1	Cognitive and affective characteristics of individuals with gifts and talents, including those from diverse backgrounds, in intellectual, academic, creative, leadership, and artistic domains.
K2	Characteristics and effects of culture and environment on the development of individuals with gifts and talents.
K3	Role of families and communities in supporting the development of individuals with gifts and talents.
K4	Advanced developmental milestones of individuals with gifts and talents from early childhood through adolescence.
K5	Similarities and differences within the group of individuals with gifts and talents as compared to the general population.

#### **3. Action Research Case Study (CEC/NAGC Standards 3 and 8)**

Students will develop a case study of a student that demonstrates their knowledge and skills in the following CEC/NAGC criteria:

##### CEC/NAGC Standard 3

K1	Influences of diversity factors on individuals with exceptional learning needs.
K2	Academic and affective characteristics and learning needs of individuals with gifts, talents, and disabilities.
K3	Idiosyncratic learning patterns of individuals with gifts and talents, including those from diverse backgrounds.
K4	Influences of different beliefs, traditions, and values across and within diverse groups on relationships among individuals with gifts and talents, their families,

	schools, and communities.
S1	Integrate perspectives of diverse groups into planning instruction for individuals with gifts and talents.

#### CEC/NAGC Standard 8

K1	Processes and procedures for the identification of individuals with gifts and talents.
K2	Uses, limitations, and interpretation of multiple assessments in different domains for identifying individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from diverse backgrounds.
K3	Uses and limitations of assessments documenting academic growth of individuals with gifts and talents.
S1	S1 Use non-biased and equitable approaches for identifying individuals with gifts and talents, including those from diverse backgrounds.
S2	Use technically adequate qualitative and quantitative assessments for identifying and placing individuals with gifts and talents.
S3	Develop differentiated curriculum-based assessments for use in instructional planning and delivery for individuals with gifts and talents.
S4	Use alternative assessments and technologies to evaluate learning of individuals with gifts and talents.

#### **4. Professional Development Packet (Standards 1, 2, 3, 8, 9)**

Students will develop a Professional Development Packet to be shared with colleagues in their school or district. In addition to synthesizing learning from the course, this project responds to the following CEC/NAGC criteria:

S3	Encourage and model respect for the full range of diversity among individuals with gifts and talents.
S4	Conduct activities in gifted and talented education in compliance with laws, policies, and standards of ethical practice.

#### **5. Course Participation (Standards 1, 2, 3, 8, 9)**

Students will participate in online discussions and group activities in a **substantive** and **timely** manner.

#### **Assignments and Points:**

Reflective Position Paper.....	20 pts.
Article Abstracts .....	20 pts.
Action Research Case Study... ..	20 pts.
Professional Development Packet.....	30 pts.
Course Participation .....	10 pts.

**Total..... 100%**

**A = 92-100 %**

**B = 82-91 %**

**C = 72-81 %**

**D = 66-71 %**

**E = Below 66 %**

#### **X. ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Participation and achievement are closely related and affect the learning of all. Students are expected to devote an appropriate amount of time each week to the course reading and activities. **Failure to do so jeopardizes the learning of not only the individual, but his/her group and the class as a whole.** See the Attendance Policy in the current MSU Graduate Bulletin.

#### **XI. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY.**

**All work, although (as is all our knowledge) based on the knowledge of others, must be the student's own work. Cheating, plagiarism, or other academic dishonesty is clearly a violation of academic standards and university policy.** See the Academic Honesty Policy in the current MSU Graduate Bulletin.

#### **XII. TEXT AND RESOURCES**

Text: Barbara Clark, Growing Up Gifted, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson, Merrill, Prentice Hall, 2008.

See Bibliography (Appendix B)

Other resources will be shared during the semester.

#### **XIII. PREREQUISITES.**

None

#### **XIV. STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.**

*Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or other provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities.*