



EDU 2050 Teaching and Supporting Students with Diverse Characteristics & Needs

Instructor: Nina F. Weisling, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: before/after class; W and R 1:30-3:30 PM / F 9:30-11:30 AM; *by request*

Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Class Location: LH 411, online/Schoology *as needed*



Course Description

This methods course prepares preservice general educators to effectively teach and support learners with diverse characteristics and needs in the context of the general education classroom. Characteristics of learners with learning and behavioral differences, including those eligible for special education services, are addressed, with additional content on the impact of cultural and language differences on learning. Participants will apply principles of differentiation and universal design in planning whole-class and small-group instruction that involves the integration of technologies and strategy instruction. A field-based project is required.

Course Texts

Required: Karten, T. (2017). *Building on the Strengths of Students with Special Needs: How to Move Beyond Disability Labels in the Classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

[\[Click on link to access unlimited e-books available via Hedberg Library free.\]](#)

Some of the specific standards we will address in this course are listed below.

Student Learning Outcomes:	WI Teaching Standards	Danielson Standards	Council for Exceptional Children Standards	Carthage Student Learning Outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify, describe, and apply culturally responsive instructional and behavioral support strategies for fostering ALL students' engagement and positive behavior. 2. Define, describe, distinguish between, and apply principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated instruction (DI). 3. Describe and differentiate the key characteristics of common learner differences, including cultural considerations, as well as their common and unique educational, social, and behavioral needs. 4. Apply knowledge of individual student and whole class needs, interests, cultural assets, and academic and behavioral characteristics, as well as UDL and DI, to design a student-centered lesson plans. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> #1 Pupil Development #2 Learning Differences #3 Learning Environments #7 Planning for Instruction #8 Instructional Strategies #9 Professional Learning and Ethical Practice 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> #1 Planning & Preparation #2 Classroom Environment #3 Instruction & Assessment #4 Professional Responsibilities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> #1 Learner Development & Individual Learning Difference #2 Learning Environments #5 Instructional Planning and strategies #7 Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Diverse approaches to knowledge -Communication -Self-knowledge, personal ethics, & civic engagement -Disciplinary expertise

If a student can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn.

~ Ignacio Estrada, Indigenous Educator

Major Course Assignments: To show what you're learning (as well as to model effective practices and help build your teacher toolkits!) we will engage in a wide range of different types of assignment. Each assignment will be reviewed and/or modeled in class and have a 1-page handout distributed in-class and available online.

Assignments		% of Final Grade
INDIVIDUAL	Field* Assignment: Given 10 field hours or videos, students will view each and identify specific examples of Universal Design for Learning in each.	10%
GROUP	Group Popular Media Exploration Choices 1-3: In small groups, students will discuss, analyze, and produce a related product based on (1) a Young Adult novel with a main character with a disability, (2) a movie or documentary centered around the experiences of a character with a disability, and (3) television show featuring a person with (or implied as with) a disability.	20%
INDIVIDUAL	IRIS/AFIRM Modules 1-3: Some of our session modules will have a list of extension, external modules listed (there will be a total of 10+, a full list will be provided under the assignment description on Schoology). Students must select any <i>three</i> that they would like to complete across the semester, uploading their earned certificate as demonstration of completion.	20%
INDIVIDUAL	Diverse Learning Graphic Organizer: As we work through the latter half of the class, our focus shifts to understanding some of the many ways students exhibit different learning needs. As students work through the related readings, videos, etc. they will be asked to complete a graphic organizer and submit in lieu of a final.	25%
VARIED	Participation: Most class sessions will include <i>at least</i> one application activity for you to engage with and show your understanding of the content so far along with "HW" between sessions. Examples: Discussions, Jig Saws, Anchor Chart, Infographic, weekly task, MTSS activity, IEP activities, UDL application, etc.	25%

Grading Scale					
Scale	Rule	Scale	Rule	Scale	Rule
A+	98-100	A	93-97	A-	90-92
B+	88-89	B	83-87	B-	80-82
C+	78-79	C	73-77	C-	70-72
D+	68-69	D	63-67	D-	60-62

1. Learning is designed to allow you multiple, flexible methods of showing what you know.
2. Assignments are designed to have real-world application that prepares you for your future work as teachers.
3. Grades are earned by *showing your mastery of the learning* NOT by doing the work the "right" way.

Learning Accessibility: We *all* learn in different ways and are more/less successful depending on our learning circumstances. ***I am committed to your success and am prepared to hear about/make accommodations for any learning needs you have.*** The Carthage **Director of Learning Accessibility** offers a variety of services and accommodations to students based on appropriate documentation, nature of disability, and academic need. At the start of the semester, students should (1) meet with **Diane Schowalter, Director of Learning Accessibility, in Hedberg Library (x5802; dschowalter1@carthage.edu)** to discuss reasonable accommodation and (2) communicate with individual faculty members from whom accommodations are sought as soon as possible.

Policies & Supports

Attendance & Work Completion: Coming to class and being well-prepared is critical to your (and your peers'!) learning. In-class activities are designed assuming you've done the readings and are ready to apply them in discussion, role plays, etc. In addition to our face-to-face class meetings, you can expect to spend 2-3 hours each week engaged in additional work for class (e.g. readings, assignments, writing, group work, etc.).

And yet, I recognize that life happens! So:

All **assignments** are due, completed, by the assigned deadline (even if you are absent). If you know you are going to need additional time on an assignment, please obtain approval from the instructor *prior* to the due date. Late work *without* prior permission will be subjected to a deduction.

Please come to every class on time and prepared. If you are ill, suspect you've been exposed to COVID, or have an emergency that requires you to **miss class** or the field, please (a) make every effort to attend class online and (b) communicate with your instructor (email and text) and your cooperating teacher/carpool as relevant. After the first absence, you will be asked to provide an annotation of all assigned readings, and may be asked to complete additional make-up work.

Finally, if there is ever anything going on in your life that is interfering with your ability to keep up with class, please reach out to me. You need share only what you feel comfortable with, but alerting me will help me support you better. *You are not in this alone!*

Academic Success and Health: Good health can help you achieve academic success. The Health and Counseling Center (HCC) supports students by addressing physical, mental, and emotional well-being. All services are free, confidential, and provided by experienced and licensed professionals. Services are available to all full-time, undergraduate students.

TARC 2240 | 262-551-5710 | Website: <https://www.carthage.edu/campus-life/health-counseling/>
Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:00pm

Health Services are available during walk-in hours (M-F, 8:30am-1:00pm) for assessment and treatment of minor illness and injury. Diagnostic testing, complimentary over-the-counter medications, and referrals to off-campus providers are all available to students.

Counseling Services are available by appointment and during walk-in hours (M-F, 11:30am-1:00pm). Students see counselors to discuss a wide variety of topics: depression, anxiety, relationship concerns, stress management, indecision about a major or career path, and academic concerns. HCC also supports students who are feeling suicidal or who are in crisis.

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 / Emotional Support TEXT Line: Text "HOPELINE" to 741741

NAMI Non-Emergency Line: 1-800-448-3000 or look to <https://www.nami.org/find-support/nami-helpline>

Tech Tips: In addition to posting *all* non-text readings and assignments on Schoology, this class uses Google Drive *through* Schoology for several major and minor assignments. To maximize success I recommend:

- Using Chrome to access Schoology or work on your Drive assignments for this class (when possible).
- Syncing Schoology to Drive early: <https://support.schoology.com/hc/en-us/articles/201001883-How-do-I-use-the-Google-Drive-Resource-App->
- Technology Help: Hedberg Library Information Desk (help@carthage.edu) or 262-551-5950.
- If you are able, please *always* bring headphones & your computer to in-person classes.

Masks: Everyone's health and sense of safety is important to me. We will wear masks covering our noses and mouths at all times in class. Everyone should feel free to step out for a mask break as need.

Your Peers: Your peers can be a tremendous source of support, especially if you are unclear on something OR you are absent from class. Find at least three peers with whom you can exchange contact!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If you need help (additional time or accommodations, etc.) please reach out sooner rather than later.

Office Hours: These are optional windows of time when you can meet with me to discuss the material being presented in class, ask for help, seek clarification, follow up on aspects of the class you find compelling or confusing, and/or discuss other related interests or concerns you may have. I welcome you to come alone or in small groups, with or without an appointment. YOU are expected to drive the “agenda” so come prepared! While I have specific hours posted, we can also set up appointments for other times.

Reasons to come to office hours:

- One-on-one interactions and individualized support can lead to higher student achievement (Kim & Lundberg, 2016).
- You need clarification or have questions about the course syllabus, assignments, rubrics, feedback, grades, course content; get personalized support or work through an issue or concern.
- Get tips and strategies for studying and/or completing assignments.

Ways to maximize your office hours visit:

- Review materials (readings, handouts, notes, syllabus, Schoology) and talk to peers to ensure your concern has not been addressed elsewhere.
- Where possible, have specific questions prepared; come with what you need (syllabus, computer, etc.)
- Where possible, set up an appointment and be on time (text/email if you are late/need to cancel/reschedule).
- Be honest and brave! This session is *all about helping you be successful*. Ask all your questions!
- Be prepared to answer questions – to help uncover the root of your concern and/or help understand where you got “stuck,” I will often answer your question with a question! In addition, I may ask you questions to help you think differently and/or to ensure you have what you need to be successful.
- At the end, summarize what we discussed to make sure we have a shared understanding of next steps.

(Some of) What You Can Expect From Me:

- Respond to emails, texts, calls within 24-48 hours (text is preferred)
- Opportunities and an open invitation to provide feedback *that I will actively respond to and incorporate into my teaching practices*
- Regularly updated calendar and Schoology pages
- Availability to hear you out and support you
- Grade and return work within 1-2 weeks*

“If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.”
~ Albert Einstein*