

Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education
CG-EDUC-546: Creating Inclusive Learning Environments
Sandra Gold M.Ed
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Contact Information:

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Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to identify the social/emotional and academic needs of neurodiverse students in inclusive Jewish settings. The first part of the course will focus on identification of children with special needs and the assessment process. Different trends and issues in education surrounding service delivery models will then be explored. The final portion of the course will focus on what schools and teachers can do to work with families to create inclusive, tolerant environments for all children.

Essential Course Questions

1. What classifies a child as having special needs?
2. How can educators in Jewish settings implement different educational models to create successful learning environments?
3. What are the characteristics that make an environment inclusive?

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to discuss principles of educational assessment for neurodiverse populations.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics and effective application of different models of collaboration and delivery.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of strategies for increasing positive behaviors and promoting social integration of children with special needs in general education settings.
4. Students will examine a class or school's overall accessibility for diverse populations and present an improvement plan

Required Texts:

Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008.

Additional required readings will be available electronically.

Course Scheduling:

Each week of coursework usually begins on Wednesday at 12:00 am EST and concludes the following Tuesday at 9 pm EST with adjustments made for holidays if needed. I

Assessment:

Students will be assigned readings on a weekly basis and should expect to participate in either discussion board questions that will foster dialogue amongst the class participants or in individual assignments designed to allow for opportunities to apply new concepts and skills.

Assignments:

1. Students will participate in and comment on classmates' postings on discussion boards. (40 %)
2. Each student will interview either a parent of a child with special needs or a professional working in the field. (10 %) **Due- March 6**
3. Each student will either critique a classroom management system or create a plan for managing behavior in an informal setting (10 %) **Due – April 17**
4. Each student will develop a teacher resource kit of materials that promote an inclusive environment (20 %) **Due – May 1**
5. Each student will assess their current settings in terms of overall inclusiveness and draft an improvement plan. (20% of grade) **Due – May 15**

Course Accommodations for Disabilities:

Hebrew College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in programs. Accordingly, if a student has a documented disability, and as a result, needs a reasonable accommodation to attend, participate or complete course requirements, then he or she should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. For further information, see the Student Handbook at http://hebrewcollege.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook.pdf.

If you require course accommodations because of a documented disability or an emergency medical condition, please email your instructor as soon as possible. We are happy to work with you on any issues you have to ensure that you can participate fully in the class and complete the course requirements. Please do not wait until the assignments are due for a retroactive accommodation, but discuss the situation with your instructor before you experience difficulty.

Course Structure:

Unit 1 – Identification

Week 1 - February 6 What is Special Education?

The process for identifying children with special needs and to begin providing support is a lengthy one. What does this mean in terms of day schools and / or after school religious programs that are not always fully a part of this process.

Key Questions:

1. Who are we talking about when we say children with special needs?
2. How do you define inclusion?
2. What about children found ineligible for services?

Readings:

- ⑩ A Parents Guide to Special Education- Federation for Children with Special Needs
- ⑩ Categories of Disabilities under IDEA - NICHCY, the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
- ⑩ Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. chapter 17

Assignments:

Discussion Board

Interviews with either a parent of a child with special needs or professional working in the field. Due week 4

Week 2 - February 13 Pre-referral

Before students are referred for special education testing, the pre-referral process takes place. This process can look differently in different schools and towns. The goals, however, should be the same-to implement strategies to that help a child be successful and to document the progress.

Key Questions:

1. How can pre-referral work in your setting?

Readings:

- Before Special Ed- How Pre-referral works. Stump, Colleen
- A teacher's reflection on the pre-referral process
- <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/preref/#content>

Assignment

Discussion Board/ Case Studies

Week 3 - February 27 Assessment

A classroom teacher needs to understand the differences and purposes of standardized tests and classroom based assessments in order to best use the information they provide about a student's learning.

Key Questions:

1. What information can a teacher get from a standardized assessment?
2. What information can teacher get from a classroom based assessment?
3. How can a teacher design assessments that are useful for a diverse group of learners?

Readings:

- Valencia, Sheila W. "Understanding Assessment: Putting Together the Puzzle." *Current Research in Reading/Language Arts*
- Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. Chapters 20 and 21 look at examples of assessments

assignment:

Discussion Board

Unit 2 – Service Delivery

Week 4 - March 6 Roles

Inclusion can only work successfully when **everyone** in a school system buys into the idea. Everyone needs to work together and have common goals.

Key Questions:

1. What roles do teachers, special educators, parents, students and other school personnel play in creating and maintaining a successful inclusive environment?
2. How do you define successful inclusion?
3. How can regular education teachers and special education teachers work as a team?

Readings:

- Fiori, Lindsay. "Special Education Regular Classrooms." *The Journal Times* 17 Sept. 2010:
- Case Study: Libby
- Henderson, Bill. "Champions of Inclusion." *International Journal Of Whole Schooling* 3 (2006)
- "6 Co teaching Models for the Inclusive Classroom", *Teaching Tolerance*
- Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special*

Optional Reading:

Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. chapter 13

Assignment

Discussion Board

Introduce final project- Developing a Teacher Resource Kit

Due- Interview

Week 5 – March 13 Models of Service delivery

The benefits of inclusion for both typical learners and children with special needs are very clearly documented. Yet, just like there is no one strategy that works for all learners, there can not be a hard and fast rule about how to service children. Deciding when and how to provide push in services versus pulling children out of their classroom for servicing is a challenging topic.

Key Questions:

1. What are situations in your classroom when you feel push in is the best approach?
2. Are there situations where you feel pull out would be the best way to serve the student? Why?
3. What support would help you as the teacher make this successful for all students?

Readings:

- Kasa, Christi, and Julie Causton-Theoharis. "Strategies for Success: Creating Inclusive Classrooms That Work."
- Dwight, Valle. "The Inclusion Paradox." Great Schools, Jan. 2010. Web.
- Schwartz, Stanley. "Working Together: A Collaborative Model for the Delivery of Special Services in General Classrooms." California State University
- Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. chapters 14, 18, 39

Assignment:

Discussion Board

Unit 3 – Social emotional Learning (SEL)

Week 6 - March 20 What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

In addition to schools being aware of student differences and working towards making learning accessible to all learners, schools need to address social needs. Making sure that all students feel safe and can grow socially is an equally important component of creating an inclusive environment.

Key Questions:

1. What are the benefits of social emotional learning?
2. What skills do students need in order be socially competent?

Readings:

- Weissberg, R. P. & Cascarino, J (2013). Academic learning + social-emotional learning = national priority. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95 (2): 8-13.
- <http://www.edutopia.org/keys-social-emotional-learning-video>
- A Comprehensive Skill Building Approach to Jewish Values: Social and Emotional Learning and Caring Early Childhood Classrooms by Jeffrey S. Kress and Maurice J. Elias

Assignments:
Discussion Board

Week 7 – March 27 Character Education

Character education refers to teaching students about the traits they need to get along in society. In terms of a school setting, it is those core values that we need to teach our students to embrace in order to create a positive learning environment.

Key Questions:

1. What are those key core traits that are important for schools to teach?
2. How do you teach character?

Reading:

- Lindy, Elaine. "Three Ways to Make Values Last at Your School." *Education World*. N.p., Nov. 2014.
- Elkind, David, and Sweet Freddy. "How to Do Character Education." *Goodcharacter.com*. N.p., Sept. 2004.
- Borba, Michele. "5 Steps to Teaching Any Character Trait." *Education World*
- <http://www.kansas.com/news/local/education/article1340986.html> (Buddy Bench)

Assignments:
Discussion Board

Week 8 – April 3 Classroom Management Systems

Teachers often use behavior management systems to create a climate within their own classroom. This week we're going to think about those systems from the point of view of the child who learns differently, finds socialization challenging or has behavior issues.

Key Questions:

1. What are the components of a successful behavior management system?
2. Which systems help to create an inclusive environment without creating more barriers?

Readings:

- Elias, Maurice. "What Is the Secret to Effective Classroom Management." Edutopia, Mar. 2014.
- Schibstead, Evantheia. "How to Develop Positive Classroom Management." Edutopia, Nov. 2014.
- Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. chapter 45

assignment:

Choose one- Critique a classroom behavior management plan or design a behavior management plan for an informal learning setting

Week 9 - April 10 PBIS

PBIS stands for "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports." PBIS is a structure for making sure that all students can be successful at school—academically, socially, emotionally and behaviorally. PBIS looks at all aspects of a school life, establishes clear behavioral expectations and actively teaches those expectations to all of its students.

Key Questions:

1. What are the characteristics of a school wide PBIS plan?
2. How does PBIS connect with a core values approach to education?
3. How does PBIS work together with a teacher's classroom behavior system?

readings:

- PBIS for Beginners (www.pbis.org)
- PBIS and the Law (www.pbis.org)
- PBIS Example 1 and 2
- Rethinking PBIS- a principal's reflection
- Explore the rest of www.pbis.org to learn more about the approach (optional)

assignments:

Discussion Board

Behavior Management critique or plan

Week 10 – April 17 Merging PBIS and SEL Competencies and Jewish Settings

SEL and PBIS both believe that students learn best in a safe and well-managed learning environments.

Key Questions:

1. How do the principles of SEL and PBIS work together to improve behavior ?
2. How do SEL and PBIS help create positive environments for all children?
3. How do these concepts work together with a Jewish learning environment?

Readings:

Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. Code of conduct page 323

Assignments:

Discussion Board

Due- Behavior management plan or critique

unit 4 – Inclusivity

Week 11- May 1 Evaluating Current Setting

Accessibility can refer to the physical setting, curriculum and/or philosophy of a school.

Key Questions:

1. How can a school be evaluated in terms of it's accessibility?
2. How can a school go about improving its inclusiveness?

Required Reading:

- Russell, C. L. (2008). How Are Your Person First Skills? A Self-Assessment. *Teaching Exceptional Children* 40(5), 40-43.
- Maryland Coalition For Inclusive Education Quality Indicators For Inclusive Building Based Practices 2011
- DOE-Inclusive Practice Tool: What To Look For—School-Level Administrator
- Christensen, Shelly. "Inspired by Moses: Disability and Inclusion in the Jewish Community." *Tikkun Magazine*, 20 Oct. 2014. Web.
- Simon, Sara Rubinow., et al. *V'Khol Banayikh: Jewish Education for All: a Jewish Special Needs Resource Guide*. Tora Aura Productions, 2008. chapters 5 and 9

Assignment:
Discussion Board
Share Teacher Resource Kit

Due :
Teacher Resource Kit May 1
Improvement plan May 15

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OPTIONAL TEXT:

Friend, M., & Bursuck, W. (2011). Including Students with Special Needs: A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers (6th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

SUPPLEMENTAL JOURNALS:

Exceptional Children
Journal of Special Education Intervention in School and Clinic
Journal of Learning Disabilities
Teaching Exceptional Children
Learning Disability Quarterly

WEB SITES:

General Sites

[.http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_wrd/wrd.html](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_wrd/wrd.html)

Planning:

<http://www.idonline.org>

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/iepguide/index.html>

Validated Practices:

<http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>

<http://www.brains.org/hottopics.htm>

Behavior and Social Skills:

<http://www.interventioncentral.org>

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS AND JOURNAL ARTICLES

Berry, R. A. W. (2006). Teacher talk during whole-class lessons: Engagement strategies to support the verbal participation of students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 2, 211-232.

Bos, C. S., & Vaughn, S. (2006). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems* (6th ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon, an imprint of Pearson Education.

Cohen, L., & Spenciner, L. J. (2005). *Teaching students with mild and moderate disabilities: Research-based practices*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patall, E. A. (2006). Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987-2003. *Review of Educational Research*, 76, 1-62.

Edyburn, D. L., Higgins, K., & Boone, R. (Eds.) (2005). *The Handbook of Special Education Technology Research and Practice*. Whitefish Bay , WI : Knowledge by Design Publications.

Evertson, C., Emmer, E. T., & Worsham, M. E. (2006). *Classroom management for Elementary teachers* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, an imprint of Pearson Education.

Good, T., & Brophy, J. (2007). *Looking in classrooms*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, an imprint of Pearson Education.

Haager, D., & Klinger, J. K. (2005). *Differentiating instruction in inclusive classrooms*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Salend, S. J. (2008). *Creating inclusive classrooms: Effective and reflective practices* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall, an imprint of Pearson Education.

Schwarz, P. (2006). *From Disability to Possibility: The Power of Inclusive Classrooms*. Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH.