

EDUC 5400: Learning, Development, and Individual Differences in Gifted Education

Course Instructor:

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Office Hours: TBD

Class Hours: TBD

Dates: TBD

Classroom: TBD

Course Description and Outcomes

In this course, designed for K-12 teachers, participants will be exposed to the wide range of advanced knowledge and performance levels manifested by gifted and talented learners. Definitions of giftedness as well as intelligence are explored. Many attributes, characteristics, traits, and idiosyncratic behaviors associated with being gifted, are presented, and discussed. This class serves as an overview for the remaining coursework leading to the USOE endorsement in Gifted and Talented. While an historical perspective of giftedness is provided, teachers will become acquainted with the most common means of identifying and serving high ability learners. This course provides a foundational and critical background understanding upon which all remaining courses will build.

Course Objectives:

One way to consider "gifted" is to imagine giftedness as a personality type. Gifted students can have very intense likes, dislikes, and predispositions that make for some challenging times for teachers of the gifted. Gifted learners are markedly different from their same-aged, same-grade, and same-experienced peers.

- **Objective #1:** Understand how language, culture, economic status, family background, and other factors influence learning – particularly those identified as gifted and talented and use that knowledge to develop respect for diversity across learners.

- **Objective #2:** Use understanding of development, individual differences, and cognitive and affective characteristics to respond to gifted students' individual and collective needs.
- **Objective #3:** Understand how foundational knowledge, historical/current issues, and individual differences influence professional practice and the educational well being of individuals who are considered gifted.

Required Text and Course Material

Growing Up Gifted: Developing the Potential of Children at School and at Home., Pearson; 8th edition (April 18, 2012), **ISBN-10**, 0132620669, **ISBN-13**, 978-0132620666

Assignments

Annotated Bibliography of an Article in the Field of Gifted* 25% of grade

This assignment helps you dig into a single piece of research (of interest to you) in the field of gifted education. It allows you a small view of what is going on in the field and what some of the issues are when it comes to meeting the needs of gifted learners. It is useful to look at one aspect of the range of issues up close and "under the microscope" to appreciate how vast the area of gifted education can be. The purpose of this assignment is to become familiar with the literature and research in the field of gifted education.

Write a "Perfectionism Paper" * 10% of grade

The process of this investigation and summary paper is designed to expose you to a lesser known, but very real and important attribute of gifted learners. While not all gifted people are perfectionists; there are many who find perfectionism to be somewhat debilitating in both their formative years and in their adult lives. Knowing about this phenomenon and trying to address it in school can really help our gifted learners both in the short and long term. The purpose of this assignment is to acquaint the learner with an insidious force most often associated with gifted students - perfectionism.

Characteristics and Traits Project* 10% of grade

This assignment acquaints you with the major characteristics and traits associated with students who are considered gifted. These attributes can help identify potential gifted learners, or they can help explain why and how gifted students behave the way they do. The purpose of this assignment is to help you become familiar, in an operational way, with the many characteristics gifted students can possess. Few gifted learners will ever manifest all these characteristics, nor do they need to show certain combinations to be identified as gifted. Rather, becoming familiar with the signs of giftedness, teachers will be better prepared to recognize high ability learners, and to ascertain their unique needs. Choose from this list (or propose your own) format for sharing/submitting this information - PowerPoint, Prezi, PowToon, Paper, Table, Annotated Listing, Reader's' Theater, Short Story, Poem, Annotated Picture Display, Podcast etc.

Emotional and Social Needs Presentation* 15% of grade

The purpose of this assignment is to learn to recognize the emotional and social needs of the gifted. Learners will be able to: appreciate the vast array of emotional needs of the gifted population, spot certain social and/or emotional needs unique to the gifted and develop a presentation suitable for professional development in schools on the topic at hand. Read about the emotional and social needs of gifted learners, list 5 of them, and focus on just 2 in your presentation. Using Prezi or PowerPoint, develop 8-10 slides of information to delve into your 2 chosen emotional and/or social needs that need to be addressed for success with gifted students. Be sure to list the 5 needs from which you chose the 2 that you wished to focus on in more detail.

Examining the Construct Creativity*

10% of grade

The purpose of this assignment is to develop insight into one's own creative abilities and thinking processes. When we begin to understand how creativity functions in our own lives, we are much better equipped to consider how creativity can be nurtured in the lives of our students. Learners will be able to: delve into the construct of creativity, delineate between different types/kinds of creative processes, and nurture creativity in all their students - most especially the gifted. Read about the idea (construct) creativity, then: 1) examine the way you express your creativity (we are all creative in some way or measure), 2) identify how you best express yourself creatively, 3) prepare a way to express how you embrace, manifest, or use, creativity, 4) express that in a creative way (e.g., poem, story, video, pictures and so forth).

Understanding Unique Differences Using the Creative Process

10% of grade

The creative process in learning, teaching, production, or appreciation is sometimes undervalued in educational systems that are primarily concerned with achievement through measurements and tests. However, when teachers and students alike are allowed to be creative, achievement, productivity, and affect all seem to rise. Many gifted individuals cannot help themselves when it comes to creativity. For example, drawings on papers that were not asked for, extra pictures/discussion or "semi-related" artifacts on an assignment, projects and items brought from home that were not intended to be part of the task etc., are all ways in which gifted students express themselves in a creative way. The first step in adding creativity to the instructional or curriculum process is to appreciate the place and value that the creative process holds for individuals. To gain such appreciation one must observe with fresh eyes. Therefore, this assignment asks you to observe creativity that occurs around you in everyday contexts. The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to observe creativity in everyday contexts. It may be in your classroom, among your colleagues, associated with decisions from administration, or examples from the community at large. The fact is creativity in some form is all around us whether we choose to acknowledge it or not. By observing the creative process and the attendant effects, creativity will become a more legitimized, valid, and real form in the teaching-learning process; and when that occurs, gifted learners will have greater opportunities to realize their respective potential in school settings.

Dabrowski's Theory and the Overexcitabilities in Gifted Learners*

10% of grade

Steps for Success on the Assignment

- 1) Choose one overexcitability from your learning about Dabrowski.
- 2) Explain what that overexcitability means - define and discuss that particular intensity.
- 3) Give tangible examples of how you might deal with that overexcitability by a student. In other words, give some strategies to help cope with that behavior in your particular educational setting.

- 4) Give strategies on how to teach the individual about that overexcitability. For example, how would you help the student cope with that behavior in the short and long-term?
- 5) Say why this overexcitability is important to you. Why this one over the others? What is your best or most important takeaway from this course?
- 6) Submit and congratulate yourself!

Weekly Discussion Threads

35% of grade

Each week you will be given a choice of prompts that reinforce course concepts and invite an active and in-depth discussion of the topics to enhance understanding. Your initial prompt needs to be a minimum of 200 words that addresses the prompt in a complete way. You will also need to respond to 2 of your colleagues in the thread and each of those responses must be a minimum of 150 words. The purpose is to appreciate multiple perspectives on the same issue and to collect new ideas on the topics at hand. Below is an example from week #1, Discussion #1

Please respond to one the following two prompts as your original posting for this week.

1. [How has the concept of giftedness changed over time?](#)
2. [What sorts of trends in gifted education have you read about, observed, or discussed with colleagues?](#)
3. [What did you find most interesting about your article, and how does that information affect what you think about gifted learners](#)

* A detailed description and rubric for these assignments can be found on Canvas.

Late assignments

Assignments will not be accepted unless previously approved by the instructor. Late assignments will be deducted 15% if a week or more late, without prior authorization from the course instructor.

Other Grading Policies

Cheating: Please refer to the Academic Catalog or the Student Handbook for the University's statement on academic honesty. It is your job to know whether you are breaking the rules. If you have questions or concerns about the Policies and Procedures in the Student Handbook, please ask! I will not tolerate plagiarism and cheating. Dishonest assignments will receive a zero on the first offense and repeat offenders will receive an F for their grade in the class. In addition, all cheaters and plagiarizers will be reported to the office of the dean of students regardless of whether it is your first offense.

Grading Scale

A 94-100%	A- 90-93.9%
B+ 87-89.9%	B 84-86.9%
B- 80-83.9%	C+ 77-79.9%

C 74-76.9%	C- 70-73.9%
D+ 67-69.9%	D 64-66.9%

This grading scale will be used to determine letter grades at the end of the semester. For major assignments, the percentage of the final grade designated for each assignment has been determined based upon the expected amount of effort and care required to complete the assignment.

It is your responsibility to regulate your learning. If something is unclear, it is up to you to take steps necessary to correct the situation. You must attend to the purposes of the assignments and activities. You must self-monitor your comprehension. You must identify and access resources that will clarify and strengthen your knowledge. Don't expect to simply absorb knowledge, you must take the initiative and make the effort to incorporate new understandings into what you already know.

Class sessions are predominantly interactive with a heavy emphasis upon collaboration. It is imperative for you to attend all class sessions. It is your responsibility to communicate to the instructor when class attendance is not possible. You will be allowed to miss one class session before your absences begin to affect your course grade.

Attendance Policy

Classes will be conducted weekly during the semester. Class attendance is mandatory. Except in the case of an emergency, absences must be cleared ahead of time through an instructor. Please note that more than one class absence may negatively impact the student's final letter grade, regardless of whether the student has cleared the absence(s). Additionally, all course assignments must be completed to an acceptable standard as determined by the course instructors. Failure to meet these requirements may result in a reduction in letter grade or removal from the course.

Tentative Schedule (Check Canvas for updates)

Date	Topic	Assignments and Reading
Week One	Historical Timeline, Trends, and Research in the Field	Assignment #1 Discussion Thread #1
Week Two	Nature of Giftedness, Idiosyncrasies, Tendencies, and Propensities of Gifted Students	Assignment #2 Discussion Thread #2
Week Three	Characteristics, Traits and Intensity of Gifted Learners, 2E Students	Assignment #3 Discussion Thread #3
Week Four	Social, Emotional Needs, Understanding Gifted Behavior	Assignment #4 Discussion Thread #4
Week Five	What is Creativity?	Assignment #5 Discussion Thread #5
Week Six	The Creative Process in the Classroom - Nurturing Creativity	Assignment #6 Discussion Thread #6
Week Seven	Finding, Interpreting, and Recognizing Traits and Characteristics of the Gifted	Assignment #7 Discussion Thread #7
		Specific weekly reading(s) are delineated in the canvas course

Course Policies

Statements Required in Course Syllabi

Per SUU [Policy 6.36](#)

COVID Website: <https://www.suu.edu/coronavirus/>

Thriving Thunderbirds: If you find yourself struggling with mental health issues, please visit <https://www.suu.edu/mentalhealth> for resources.

Important syllabus statements related to ATTENDANCE and current COVID-19 conditions

What should I expect in the classroom this semester?

The following are general guidelines for the classroom environment.

- **Class Attendance is Required:** If you are registered for a Face-to-Face, Synchronous Remote, or Hybrid course, attendance is required. If you are ill, you may request a faculty member record the class and share it with you, or you may request other reasonable accommodations. Your instructor will work with you to develop a plan for completing coursework. *In order for you to receive academic accommodations and ensure that your request is communicated to faculty, you **must** submit this [self report form](#).*
- **Course [delivery modalities](#) are posted online for each course, but may be modified in response to emerging COVID conditions:** SUU is employing every effort to maintain a learning environment that is engaging and safe. The course modality listed when you registered for courses should remain for the semester; however, due to COVID conditions, the delivery of modality for a specific course may change during the semester. Normally, these changes will be short term or in some cases longer. When such a modification is needed, faculty members will work with their department chair and/or dean and the students to maintain an effective learning environment.

(optional) ZOOM ETIQUETTE: If your instructor utilizes the Zoom online conference system, you will need to have a way to communicate (a webcam, a microphone, a smartphone/landline, or using chat within the Zoom app). We will adopt the same rules and norms as in a physical classroom (take notes; participate by asking and answering questions; wear classroom-ready clothing). For everyone's benefit, please:

- Join the course in a quiet, distraction free location;
- Be aware of your background if you have video enabled;
- Mute your microphone or phone unless you are speaking;
- Close browser tabs and software not required for participating in class; and
- Remember that SUU classes are in the Mountain Time zone.

The success of this class will depend on the same commitment to learning we all typically bring to the physical classroom.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent (see [SUU Policy 6.33](#)). You are expected to have read and understood the current SUU student conduct code ([SUU Policy 11.2](#)) regarding student responsibilities and rights, the intellectual property policy ([SUU Policy 5.52](#)), information about procedures, and what constitutes acceptable behavior.

Please Note: The use of websites or services that sell or generate essays is a violation of these policies; likewise, the use of websites or services that provide answers to assignments, quizzes, or tests is also a violation of these policies.

ADA STATEMENT: Students with medical, psychological, learning, or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations, or auxiliary aids will need to contact the [Disability Resource Center](#), located in Room 206F of the Sharwan Smith Center or by phone at (435) 865-8042. The Disability Resource Center determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

If your instructor requires attendance, you may need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this attendance policy. Please contact the Disability Resource Center to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT: In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the mySUU portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at <http://www.suu.edu/emergency>.

HEOA COMPLIANCE STATEMENT: For a full set of Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) compliance statements, please visit <https://www.suu.edu/heoa>. The sharing of copyrighted material through peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing, except as provided under U.S. copyright law, is prohibited by law; additional information can be found at <https://my.suu.edu/help/article/1096/heoa-compliance-plan>. You are also expected to comply with policies regarding intellectual property ([SUU Policy 5.52](#)) and copyright ([SUU Policy 5.54](#)).

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT: Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work, and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

(optional) SUUSA STATEMENT: As a student at SUU, you have representation from the SUU Student Association (SUUSA) which advocates for student interests and helps work as a liaison between the students and the university administration. You can submit T-Bird Squawks feedback by going to <https://www.suu.edu/suusa/voice>. Likewise, you can learn more about SUUSA's Executive Council at <https://www.suu.edu/suusa/executive-council> and about all of SUUSA's Student Senators at <https://www.suu.edu/suusa/senate>. If you have any specific concerns regarding any of your courses, please contact the SUUSA VP of Academics at: suusa_academicsvp@suu.edu.

(optional) Thriving Thunderbirds: If you find yourself struggling with mental health issues, please visit <https://www.suu.edu/mentalhealth> for access to valuable resources.

Mental health is essential for your academic success. SUU provides resources, support, and services to address mental health issues at every level of concern. We are committed to helping all [Thunderbirds Thrive](#).

If you need assistance navigating any of the resources, please contact [Counseling and Psychological Services](#), the [Dean of Students' Office](#), or the [Health and Wellness Center](#).

Note: This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for the course. Please note that the instructor(s) may modify it at any time with reasonable notice to students. The instructor(s) may also modify the schedule at any time to accommodate the needs of the class. Should you have any questions or concerns about the syllabus, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor(s) for clarification.