

Elementary Education Curriculum Block I A: Diversity and Learning

Component Courses: M320 – Diversity & Learning Teaching Every Child Field Experience

Block I Overview:

This introduction to the profession of teaching will challenge students to re-examine their beliefs and assumptions about learning and teaching. Given exposure to constructivist learning activities and inquiry, the students reflect on how learning occurs for them personally, as well as how children develop their concepts and beliefs. Half of this block delves deeply into the math and literacy development of children aged five to eight. The other half immerses students into discussions of difference, diversity, equity and fairness that enable them to understand the complexity of supporting all learners. For many students, this may be a semester of disequilibrium and frustration as they move beyond their current beliefs and attempt to develop a viable professional stance toward learning and teaching. Students will specifically experience working with children in the primary grades.

Block IA Description	Key Content	Assessment Questions	Possible Assessment or Field Experience Tasks
<p>In this block, students are introduced to educational psychology, multicultural education and special education as they examine the role of teachers in 21st century schools.</p> <p>Students learn about child development, learning, motivation and assessment. They also learn about human difference and socially constructed practices and beliefs. Students are invited to reflect critically on their awareness and knowledge and to develop attitudes and beliefs consistent with and supportive of multicultural education and inclusion. They also practice and develop competence in communicating and collaborating with instructors, colleagues, students, families, and others.</p> <p>By the end of the block, students should be able to consider the complexity of a student's individual differences and have the appropriate advocacy skills to support <u>all</u> learners.</p>	<p>Psychosocial, cognitive, and moral development</p> <p>Behavioral and cognitive theories of learning and motivation</p> <p>Standardized testing and assessment</p> <p>Influence of teacher expectation and gender biases in the classroom</p> <p>Historical and contemporary concepts of disability and special education—conceptual, legislative, litigative</p> <p>Disability as a form of diversity</p> <p>Types of special needs and disabilities</p> <p>Learning styles, cultural pluralism, and classroom/curriculum strategies that respond to all students</p> <p>Communication and collaboration skills</p> <p>Technology as a tool for accessing resources and networks</p>	<p>How does learning occur?</p> <p>What is known about patterns of development and multiple dimensions of learning?</p> <p>What aspects of children's learning are observable and how do these inform teaching?</p> <p>What motivates children to learn and develop?</p> <p>How does a theory of learning and motivation inform teaching decisions?</p>	<p>Analysis of audio or video recordings—Review a series of interactions with children and discuss the quality of learning going on, applying the principles of learning theory.</p> <p>Interviews with families.</p> <p>Observe special education and general education classes and make comparisons.</p> <p>Dialogue Journals—Each student has a partner for the semester, and they exchange a journal as they reflect on the questions and experiences of the coursework</p> <p>Interview Project – Students tape record interviews with a variety of people about their understanding of diversity's impact on teaching and learning. Each student writes a compare/contrast analysis of three interviews and concludes with personal insights.</p>

Recommended reading: Snowman, J., & Biehler, R. F. (2000). *Psychology applied to teaching*. (9th ed.), Houghton Mifflin Company.
 Nieto, S. (2000). *Affirming Diversity*, Longman Publishers; Kozol, J. (1996). *Amazing Grace*, Harper Perennial; Friend, M. & Bursack, W. (1999). *Including Students with Special Needs: A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers*, Allyn & Bacon. Videos: *Brown Eye*, *Blue Eye*; *F.A.T. City*; *Skin Deep*; *Good Morning Miss Toliver*.