



**EDCI 597: Differentiated Instruction  
Mesquite ISD Cohort  
Course Syllabus for Spring 2013**

According to State of Texas HB 2504, this course syllabus must be submitted for review prior to the course's scheduled start date. Therefore, the instructor has the right to modify this syllabus and course calendar at any time between submission for publication and the first day of class. Furthermore, the instructor has the right to modify the syllabus at any time during the course itself provided that (1) such changes do not increase expectations or requirements beyond a reasonable equivalent and (2) students are given ample notification.

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**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Dates and Times:**

All classes meet on the following dates from 4:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the Leadership Room of the MPLX Center: January 24, February 28 and May 2.

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

Your course text book is required for the course. You may order this book from Amazon or another location or borrow a copy from a peer or your campus. Please have your text available the first class meeting.

Heacox, Diane (2012). Differentiating instruction in the regular classroom: How to reach and teach all learners. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing Inc.  
ISBN: 978-1575424163.

**Course Description:**

Differentiated Instruction is a special topics course designed to explore the literature and current practices in differentiating instruction in elementary classrooms. The primary objective of this class is for students to advance their professional knowledge, skills and practice for effective teaching through differentiated instruction.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Through your experiences in this class you should be able to:

1. Articulate the definition and critical components around which differentiated instruction is designed, i.e., readiness, interest, learning styles, and affect/environment.
2. Utilize formal and informal assessment data to plan instruction that is differentiated based on analyses.
3. Demonstrate differentiation in the three areas for which differentiation is appropriate: content, process, and product.

4. Use differentiated instruction in a way that accommodates diversity among learners, i.e., cognitive abilities, learning styles, socioeconomic and family factors, readiness, learning pace, gender, cultural influences, and confidence.
5. Write reports of differentiated instruction with several components: TEKS/TAKS/STAAR objectives to be covered; assessment strategies for those objectives; analyses of results; plan of action for differentiating instruction; results of instruction; and effectiveness of the plan.
6. Understand and utilize the elements of reflection via writing and verbal presentation.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. During each of the three units, you will work on various combinations of assignments; worksheets, activities, asynchronous threaded discussions, readings, literature searches, etc.

- 1. Class Attendance.** Our class will meet face-to-face three times during the semester. See the Course calendar for those dates. Each class counts as two classes because it meets for five hours. Attendance at all class meetings is required and essential to your success in this experience. Students are expected to be on time and actively participate. The rules of the University regarding class attendance will be followed in this course. The university policy on excused absences is explained in the 2004-2012 Catalog and includes: (a) participation in a required or authorized university activity; (b) illness that is verifiable; (c) death in the immediate family; (d) obligation at a legal proceeding in fulfilling responsibility as a citizen; and (e) other reason as determined by individual faculty to be excusable. Although you are urged to notify faculty in advance, in the event you are not able to attend class, such notification does not constitute an excused absence. The consequence of one absence is a reduction of one letter grade in the course; two absences will result in a reduction of two letter grades; missing all three classes will result in an "F" in the course. In the event of any absence, you are responsible for obtaining class materials/assignments/notes from your colleagues and/or via *eCollege*.
- 2. Participate Appropriately.** A noticeable trait of master teachers is the way in which they actively pursue and interact with their own learning journey. Your faculty will make a subjective judgment as to the overall quantity and quality of your class participation. Commit yourself to active learning by demonstrating the attributes of inquisitiveness, questioning, searching, struggling for answers to your questions, and contributing your own professional knowledge to the rest of the class. We expect that you will evaluate and modify your goals, your practice, and your aspirations over the cohort journey.
- 3. Adhere to the Code of Conduct.** "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." In a program such as this, you are always working and interacting with others during classes. In that regard, you are expected at all times to behave in the same manner that you would expect your students to behave in your classroom. Please refrain from side conversations as they distract others and interrupt your learning. All cell phones and text devices should be silenced during class time. If you must make/receive a call or text during class, please step out of the classroom.

**4. Participate in a small-group discussions via threaded discussions throughout the semester. (Student Learning Objective 1, 6)**

During the first class meeting you will be divided into small groups of about 4-6 students each. You will read half of the text by the second class and the rest of the text before our final class. You will participate in threaded discussions about your reading. Threaded discussions are designed to encourage communication about your learning, share your personal experiences with DI, and discuss the pros and cons of the text and DI in general.

Assessment Method: Threaded discussions will be evaluated against a rubric designed to assess both the quantity and quality of your contributions. Your responses will be evaluated using the following rubric: (1) Quantity of your initial response; (2) Quality of your initial response; (3) Quantity of your responses to your team members and (4) Quality of your responses to your team members.

**5. Submit Four Differentiated Instruction Logs. (Student Learning Objective 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)**

Four logs are required. Each log emphasizes a particular strand of differentiated instruction: readiness for learning, interest, learning style, and affect/environment. Logs are due to eCollege based on the schedule of assignments. A copy is also brought to class for sharing. Each DI log has six components which are identified and briefly explained below:

- **Learner Objectives.** Identify the TEKS/TAKS objectives you are going to cover in the lesson.
- **Assessment.** What you did to assess the particular component of differentiation; content, interest, learning styles, affect & environment. Attach a copy of the assessment instruments you used.
- **Analysis.** Results of the assessment, what you learned about the need to differentiate and the kinds of groupings you created as a result.
- **Lesson Strategies.** Your plan for instruction and how you differentiated based on your analysis of the assessment.
- **Results.** What happened as a result of differentiating instruction? What worked ... for the students ... for the teachers? What didn't work? What could be done differently in the future?
- **Reflection.** What did you learn about assessment? About differentiating instruction?

Assessment Method: Your Differentiated Instruction Logs will be submitted via eCollege and evaluated using the rubrics provided, i.e., examples of application logs previously done by former students in this class.

**8. Rubric. (Student Learning Objective 4)**

You will submit via eCollege an example of a rubric that you have created and/or used that supports differentiation of the evaluation of products.

Assessment Method: Your rubric will be submitted via eCollege for evaluation and feedback.

**9. Culminating Activity. (Student Learning Objective 6)**

During the final class your group will be given time to prepare and present something to the rest of the class that represents your significant learning during the semester.

Assessment Method: Your group presentation will be evaluated based on the presentation requirements.

**10. Final Reflection. (Student Learning Objective 6)**

Within a few days of our final class, based on the Schedule of Assignments, you will submit via eCollege a final reflection paper on what you have learned during the semester. In your paper you will discuss what you have learned, how it has affected your beliefs and practices, and what you plan to do in the future as a result.

Assessment Method: Your paper will be word processed and submitted to eCollege.

**11. Additional Assignments.** There are a few assignments that you may be asked to do and bring to class. These are typically inventories or surveys that we ask you to fill out about yourself, your learning style, interests, & practices.

**GRADING**

All assignments are graded on a scale of from 5 (highest grade) to 0 (lowest grade) based on the following criteria:

**5 - Exceptional – Exceeds Minimum Expectations in All Areas Addressed.** Well above average in thought, language structure, and word choice; extremely well organized; shows thorough understanding and assimilation of concepts; excellent sense of unity; polished transition between concepts or thoughts; frequent sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; quality word choice that may be unusually striking, vivid, or creative; virtually free of errors.

**4 - Above Average – Meets Minimum Expectations in the Majority of Areas Addressed and Exceed Expectations in Some Areas.** In general command of thought, sentence structure, and word choice; organized; shows some understanding of concepts; good sense of unity; good transition between concepts or thoughts; some sentence variation which adds to flow and unity of paper; good word choice that may be vivid or striking; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; few if any errors.

**3 - Average - Adequate in some Areas and Inadequate in Others.** Problems in some of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organized and formatted appropriately; good unity, sequence, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**2 – Below Average - Inadequate in Several Areas.** Problems in several of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**1 – Unacceptable - Inadequate in Many Areas.** Problems in many of the following areas: depth of thought; ability to elaborate and provide sufficient detail; sentence structure, word choice, grammar, and spelling; organization and formatting; unity, sequencing, and transitions; writing that demonstrates a level of maturity expected of graduate students; in need of instruction.

**0 - Not Submitted or Not Accepted By Instructor.**

## FINAL GRADE IN THE COURSE

Your Final grade in this course is based on your performance on all of the requirements and expectations for the class. Some assignments carry more weight than others. Once the final grade is calculated, it is then adjusted by (1) absence and (2) participation evaluation. Assignments, along with weights and final point values, include the following:

### Determination of Final Grade.

#### First

Grades on individual assignments are numerical and based on the table below. Grades are recorded in the eCollege grade book.

Product	Pts. Per Assign	Number Projects	Total Pts. Possible
Differentiated Instruction "Application Logs"	10	X 4	40
Threaded Discussions & Responses	10	X 2	20
Rubric	5	X 1	5
Culminating Activity	5	X 1	5
Final Reflection Paper	5	X 1	5
Additional Assignments	5	TBA (1-3)	1-15
Total Points			75-90

#### Second

Numerical grades are recorded in eCollege and available to you when you click on "Gradebook." eCollege also calculates a "percentage score" based on the assignments completed to date and also based on the total number of assignments for the semester. The most important percentage is the one based on assignments completed to date.

#### Third

At the end of the semester, numerical scores are converted to percentage based on the total assignments for the semester. Instructors use percentage scores to calculate a preliminary final grade on a scale of 91-100% (A), 81-90% (B), 71-80% (C), 61-70% (D), etc. The preliminary final grade is then adjusted upward for participation, enthusiasm, cooperation, and general code of conduct; adjusted downward for attendance, lack of participation, lack of withitness, and other factors that might apply.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

**Internet Connection.** Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

**Word Processor.** MS Word is the recommended word processor for eCollege

**Operating Systems.** Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

**Browser Testing.** It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘my Courses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:  
<https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

### **How is the eCollege Course Organized?**

This course is organized around three live class meetings and three eCollege units of study. If you look on the left side of screen when you go to the course, you will see a link for Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3. If you click on Unit 1, several other links will appear. Each link under Unit 1 is an assignment that is due sometime during that unit. You can click on any of the links and you will be able to read all of the details for each assignment.

### **What is the Schedule of Assignments?**

At the beginning of each assignment it will tell you to go to the “Schedule of Assignments” to see due dates. The Schedule of Assignments is a link by that name located above the Week 1 link in a separate section titled “Course Home.” If you click on Schedule of Assignments, you will see the course assignments and due dates.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### **Questions about the course, assignments, syllabus, etc.**

Contact me via email any time 24/7. If you have not received a response within 48 hours, or if you have a more urgent need to contact me, please call me.

### **Submitting Assignments:**

All assignments are submitted through the eCollege Dropbox. All assignments have due dates and penalties are assessed for late work. I use the “Schedule of Assignments” to record every assignment along with the date and time each is due.

### **Announcements:**

Announcements are posted often during the semester on the course home page. In some cases I will also send the same announcement to you via the eCollege email system.

### **Email Correspondence**

**From me to you:** All emails from me will be sent to your University email account, not your work or home email. Therefore, it is important to go to Leo Mail often.

**From you to me:** Always send emails through the eCollege course email system or directly to me at my university email address provided on the first page. Both addresses are the same.

**Emergencies:**

Call me at home. Phone number will be announced via Cohort Meeting.

**eCollege Student Technical Support:**

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by the following means:

- **Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
- **Help:** Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES****Course/Department Specific Procedures/Policies:****Late Work.**

Specific dates and times are established for every assignment. Grades for work not submitted when due are automatically reduced beginning immediately upon exceeding the deadline. For example, assignments typically have a midnight deadline. If you exceed that midnight deadline, your work is automatically reduced by one numerical grade. For each 24 hours period thereafter, the grade is reduced again by one. No work is accepted after three days and a grade of "0" will be recorded. Work cannot be made up and extra work is not allowed to compensate for missing or later work. The final authority on time is the time recorded on your assignment by the eCollege clock.

**Appeal of the Final Grade.** (13.99.99.R0.05 Student's Appeal of Instructor's Evaluation, Effective September 1, 1996. Revised December 15, 1999, Revised February 8, 2007)

The final grades awarded by faculty members are their expert judgment concerning student performance. Students challenging a final grade must show that the instructor's judgment was unfair based on:

- a) some basis other than performance, or
  - b) standards different from those applied to other students in the same course section, or
  - c) a substantial, unreasonable, and unannounced departure from previously articulated standards or the syllabus.
1. Students who believe their grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor.
  2. If no satisfactory resolution is reached with the instructor, or if the instructor is unavailable, the student shall appeal to the department head. A grade appeal must be initiated in writing with the department head (or dean if the department head is the instructor) within six months of the last day of the semester in which the grade was awarded. The department head will examine the student's appeal to determine whether the student has established an apparent case of unfair academic evaluation as described in section 1. If the student has not established

a case that appears to have merit, the department head will so inform the student and the instructor without delay.

3. If the case has merit, the department head will secure, from all parties, written statements and other such information as he or she deems helpful and will issue his or her findings and remedies, if any. In so doing, the department head will be guided by the principle the burden of proof lies with the student.
4. For additional information regarding the appeal of a final grade above that of the department head, please consult the latest version of the graduate catalog or contact the Head of the Department, Curriculum and Instruction, at 903-886-5537.

### **Academic Integrity/Honest Statement**

This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: (1) turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor without obtaining permission from this instructor in advance; (2) turning in another person's work, in part or in whole, as your own; (3) copying from professional works without citing them; and (4) any form of cheating on exams. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course, or brought before a higher level of governance for possible dismissal from the university.

### **University Specific Procedures:**

#### **ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

#### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

#### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook). Use of cell phones, texting or email devices during class is forbidden. In the event of an emergency, students should excuse themselves from the classroom to receive/make a communication and should return to class as soon as possible.