EDCI 597: Differentiated Instruction  
Mesquite ISD Cohort  
Course Syllabus for Summer 2015

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.

Instructor: Dr. Becky Sinclair  
Office Location: Education South #228, Commerce, Texas  
Office Phone: 903-468-3237 [Home phone will be provided during first class meeting.]  
Office Fax: 903.886.5581 (EDCI Office)  
University Email Address: Becky.Sinclair@TAMUC.edu

### COURSE INFORMATION

**Dates and Times:**  
All classes meet on the following dates in the Board Room of the MPLX Center: June 10 (4:00-6:00), 17 (2:30-4:30) and 22 (2:30-5:30).

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**  
Your course textbook is required for the course. You may borrow this book from your campus faculty library or a former MISD Cohort member or purchase it from an online source. Please have your text available the first class meeting.


**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/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 unit, you will work on various combinations of assignments; worksheets, activities, 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. 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 2010-2015 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 practices, and your aspirations over the cohort journey.
3. **Small Group Discussions & Readings. (Student Learning Objective 1, 6)**

During the first class meeting you will be divided into small groups. You will complete your text and additional course reading assignments according to the Course Calendar and participate in threaded discussions about your reading via eCollege. 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.

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

Four differentiated instruction logs are required. Each log emphasizes a particular strand of differentiated instructed: readiness for learning, interest, learning style, and affect/environment. Specifics about these assignments will be provided in eCollege. Logs are due to eCollege based on the Course Calendar. A copy might also be brought to class for sharing, as instructed by the teacher.

**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).

5. **DI Creative Product Project. (Student Learning Objective 2, 3, 6)**

There are many ways students can demonstrate their learning other than traditional pencil and paper assignments. In addition, there are many types of rubrics that teachers can create to assess student learning. During the first class meeting, you will be given information about a type of assessment (non-traditional). According to the Course Calendar and additional information provided online, you will:

- Locate a lesson plan in your MISD curriculum that currently has a traditional assessment.
- Revise the lesson plan to incorporate the non-traditional assessment you were provided during you first class meeting.
- Create a sample of your non-traditional project. This can be made by a child under your supervision or yourself.
- Create a rubric to assess student learning for your revised lesson plan. Sample rubrics will be provided in eCollege.
- Present your non-traditional assessment, lesson plan and rubric to the class. Specific instructions will be provided in eCollege.

**Assessment Method:** You will receive one grade for your lesson plan and presentation and a second grade for your sample project and rubric. Grades for these activities will be evaluated based on the requirements.
6. Participation 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 complete about yourself, your learning style, interests and practices. Completion of these activities will be reflected in your course participation evaluation.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Pts. Per Assign</th>
<th>Number Projects</th>
<th>Total Pts. Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differentiated Instruction “Application Logs”</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>X 4</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaded Discussions &amp; Responses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>X 2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI Creative Product Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lesson Plan Revision &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>X 1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sample Project &amp; Rubric</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>X 1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. Thus, the “average” indicated in the eCollege gradebook is not necessarily your final course grade.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Internet Connection. Reliable internet access/connection – high speed recommended.

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.
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.

How is this eCollege Course Organized?
This course is organized around the live class meetings and 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 Course Calendar?
At the beginning of each assignment it will tell you to go to the “Course Calendar” to see due dates. The Course Calendar is a tab by that name located above the Week 1 tab, in a separate section titled “Course Home.” If you click on Course Calendar, 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:
Most assignments are submitted through the eCollege Dropbox. All assignments have due dates and penalties are assessed for late work. If you experience a technical problem which prevents you from submitting your assignment into Dropbox, you are expected to contact the Technology Help Desk (open 24/7). All Help Desk reports receive a “report number” and information about the issue. If a technology issue causes you to submit your assignment late, email your assignment directly to my email address, explain your technology issue in the message and include the Help Desk report number. Your assignment must be emailed to me within an hour to verify that your assignment was completed on time.
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 MISD and university email accounts. Therefore, it is important to check your email often.

From you to me: Always send emails directly to me at my university email address provided on the first page.

Emergencies:
Call me at home. This 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: Call (903) 468-6000 to contact a Tech Support Member on-call in Commerce. If Commerce does not answer, then call 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

Late Work.
Specific dates and times are established for every assignment. No late work is accepted without extenuating circumstances approved by the instructor. Students who feel they have an extenuating situation must contact the instructor prior to or during the due date about the circumstance. Work cannot be made up and extra work is not allowed to compensate for missing or later work.

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). In a course 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. 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.

Academic Integrity/Honest Statement
This course demands a high level of scholarly behavior and academic honesty on the part of students. 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. Examples of academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, 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.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, visit the following websites:

- [http://www.plagiarism.org/](http://www.plagiarism.org/)
- [http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html)

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
Student Disability Resources & Services

University Non-discrimination Policy Statement
A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Appeal of the Final Grade.
1. 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.

2. Students who believe their grade to be unfair must first discuss the matter with the instructor.

3. 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.

4. 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.

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.