

Course Assignments

Completing each of the course assignments is necessary to meet the requirements for the course. Your instructor will look at completion as well as the quality of each assignment as a means of evaluating your learning within the course. Each assignment is due before midnight at the end of the week. That means students have an entire week, plus the weekend to complete each assignment. Some assignments will take longer than a week, so students will need to plan ahead.

In the spirit of collaboration and team work (the focus of the course!), some of the assignments are collaborative in nature. Students will need to problem solve and use effective communication and planning to accomplish tasks in an online environment. The course syllabus provides suggestions for ways to communicate with other students.

PPT Quizzes

<http://vista8.kent.edu>

Points: 5 quizzes worth 2 points each

Taking a course in an online environment means that students need to take on a great deal of responsibility for their own learning. The instructor will post Power point presentations within the weekly pages to support student understanding of the weekly content and readings. Students will be required to view the Power point presentations (and listen to the accompanying voice over) and then take a quiz. The quizzes will be available in the course vista space. Each quiz will have 4 questions worth .5 points each.

Reading Reflections

<http://www.blogger.com/home>

Points: 5 Reflections worth 2 points each

First, students will need to set up a blog using the URL listed above, provide the instructor with your blog address and an invitation to view the blog. NOTE: if students created blog for another class, or have one for another reason, students may choose to use the blog they already have. Second, students will be held accountable for completing the required reading for each week. Reading reflections will include using a personal blog to reflect on the weekly readings. Students must answer the following questions:

1. Reflect on any personal experiences or past knowledge you have related to the weekly readings/content. What part of the reading “touched home” for you?
2. What did you learn from the reading that you didn’t know before, surprised you, or sparked your interest? List at least three things.
3. How can you take your list of new information and apply it in a professional setting. Specifically, how can it support your professional roles and responsibilities as a special educator currently or in the future?

Panel Discussion

Points: 5

Weeks 3 and 4 are reserved for a panel discussion related to effective meeting, conflict resolution, and communication skills. The term “panel discussion” is used, because each student/group of students will serve as the experts on one specific topic. During week 3, students will sign up for one topic/chapter and then will be responsible for teaching that content to the rest of the class. The panel discussion will be a collaborative project. Students will need to work together to design a presentation of the content for the rest of the class. Your presentation should include:

1. A handout for the class including (a) key points and information related to your content and (b) additional resources or sources of information where students can go to learn more about your topic
2. Two short answer questions for the students to answer related to your topic

Online Discussions

<http://vista8.kent.edu>

Points: 3 discussions worth 5 points each

Collaborative reflection and discussion is an integral part of the course. Students are expected to engage in online group discussions three times throughout the semester. Directions and prompts for the group discussions will be posted in vista. In general, each student is required to post an original answer to the discussion questions and two responses to other students. An original answer to the discussion questions should be well thought out, research-based answers that include (a) support from the course readings, (b) support from at least one outside source, (c) APA citations and references to evidence your support, and (d) thought provoking ideas and questions to spark discussion. Responses to other students should include (a) statements that are supported by personal experiences and/or research, (b) statements that go beyond agreement or disagreement and show evidence of critical thinking. Back and forth dialogue is encouraged!

Picture Project

Points: 5

The consultative model can be described in a number of ways and includes various roles and responsibilities. Using the readings provided, as well as additional resources, students are expected to develop a “picture” or diagram of the consultative model. Pictures should include a representation of the consultative model as well as depiction of common challenges and solutions. Pictures can take many forms so originality and creativity is encouraged.

Web Quest

Points: 10

Week 13 is reserved for a web-quest. By definition, a web quest is an assignment where most (if not all) of the content is retrieved from the world wide web. The web quest will be a collaborative assignment where students/groups of students will take on a specific role and be required to read, research, and prepare to play that role in a group discussion/activity during

week 13. Students will need to sign up for web quest groups during week 11. Specific direction will be posted in vista.

Professional Development Plan

Points: 15

Students are expected to develop **a plan** to present a 2-hour in-service focusing on a professional area of choice. Students will not actually present the in-service. The assignment is focused on the ability to design a high quality professional development experience for other professionals.

Thus, the topic of choice does not have to be something for which students have expertise. The grade for the assignment will be focused on whether the plan integrates (a) what we know about high quality professional development and (b) what we know about adult learners.

The following topics should be addressed in your plan:

- Purpose of In-Service
 - Topic
 - Target audience
 - Goals of training
- Organization
 - Learning environment
 - Time considerations
 - Materials needed
 - Cost
 - Presentation formats
- Presentation Outline and/or Agenda
 - Ways to involve participants
 - Order of topic discussion
 - Resources for participants
- Evaluation Methods are Discussed
 - Assessing audience understanding of topic
- Rationale
 - Why you chose this topic, presentation design, and audience
- References/Resources

The required components of this assignment include:

- Professional Development Plan
- **Written Reflection**

Choice Projects

Points: 2 choice projects worth 15 points each

Select two activities to complete from the list below

Option 1:

COLLABORATION and TEAMING CRITIQUE FROM OBSERVATION:

Choose an assessment, programming, transition, or departmental team meeting to observe in your practicum or work setting, or at an area agency or school. Choose a team whose meeting agenda focuses on child development and/or related educational issues. The team you choose may include yourself, as long as you are able to be observant of the collaborative styles that take place during the meeting.

As you observe the team meeting, take notice of the behaviors and interactions within the meeting and make judgments about team effectiveness. Specifically, evaluate it with respect to the characteristics of an effective collaborative team, looking at team purpose, process, communication, dynamics, decision making, etc.

Make sure to relate all items referenced in your paper to information you have read and presented in class on the topic. Make sure to include appropriate citations to support your ideas using APA 5th edition guidelines.

Your **3-5 page written assignment** (*general guideline – may extend beyond 5 pages*) should contain the following:

- Description of the teaming situation that you observed
- Critique of the team meeting
- **Written Reflection** about your experience.

Option 2:

RELATED PROFESSIONAL OR PARAPROFESSIONAL INTERVIEW:

Choose a related services provider (e.g. speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, respiratory therapist, physical therapist, adaptive physical education teacher, school psychologist) or a paraprofessional (e.g. classroom assistant, individual aide) who works or has worked with young children with disabilities. Develop a set of questions to ask the individual during an interview.

The interview should explore the following areas:

- Job Title and Description
- Opportunities for Collaboration with others – be specific about teaming participation and opportunities to engage in Consultation, Co-Teaching, and/or Coaching; fully explain using definitions and characteristics of these approaches as described in class
- Describe Staff Development Needs identified by the individual

Make sure to relate all references in your paper to information you have read and presented in class on the topic. Make sure to include appropriate citations to support your ideas using APA 5th edition guidelines.

Your **3-5 page written assignment** (*general guideline – may extend beyond 5 pages*) should contain the following:

- List of the Interview questions
- Narrative summary of the information gained from the interview
- **Written Reflection** of your experience and the information obtained

Option 3:

REVIEW OF AN INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT OR TRANSITION PLAN

Review an interagency agreement or transition plan from early intervention to preschool services or from preschool to kindergarten. Provide a written document no less than 3 pages including the following information:

- Involvement of all agencies/individuals who created the interagency agreement/transition plan
- What is the role of all individuals involved in the interagency agreement
- What are the provisions of the interagency agreement/transition plan
- Interview at least two individuals or members from the different agencies involved with the plan/agreement include the following information, but do not limit the interview to these elements
 - Identify what the individual think are strengths of the interagency agreement/transition plan
 - Identify what the individuals think are the weakness of the interagency agreement/transition plan
 - Identify the individuals involvement and experience with the interagency agreement/transition plan
 - Identify the individuals involvement in the development of the interagency agreement/transition plan
- Include a personal reflection about the interagency agreement/transition plan

Make sure to relate all items referenced in your paper to information you have read and presented in class on the topic. Make sure to include appropriate citations to support your ideas using APA 5th edition guidelines.

Your **3-5 page written assignment** (*general guideline – may extend beyond 5 pages*) should contain the following:

- Written document including all information
- List of interview questions and summary of interview
- **Written Reflection** of your experience and the information obtained

Option 4:

DEVELOP OR REVISE A TRANSITION PLAN

Develop or revise a transition plan that support children moving from birth to three services or from preschool to Kindergarten. Provide a written document that encompasses the critical elements that are outlined below.

- Minimum critical elements represented in transition plans
 - Procedures outlined for gathering and sharing information
 - Outlined responsibilities and role of all team members (service providers, family members, participating agencies)
 - Responsibility for assessment (if applicable to the transition process)

- Determining eligibility for services (if applicable)
- Convening the multidisciplinary conference
- Writing the IFSP or IEP and completing other important documentation
- Selection of most appropriate program option
- Supporting the family through the transition
- Focusing on the strengths and interests of the family and child
- Timing of transition events
- Transfer of records
- Orientation and training of staff as appropriate (to carry out transition plan)
- Post-placement communication
- Evaluating the transition
- Focus on Family Strengths
- Tailor practices to individual needs
- Form collaborative relationships
- Ensures children receive the services they need
- Long term implications

You will turn in the following items:

- Clear description of the intended purpose and use of the transition plan
- Written document including all of the above information
- Resource list of where you obtain information to support the elements within the document (APA 5th Edition citation procedures are required)
- **Written Reflection**

Option 5:
INCLUSION INTERVIEW

Interview a professional involved in an inclusive setting in an early intervention center-based program, a preschool setting, or a kindergarten-third grade setting. Develop a set of questions to ask the individual during an interview.

The interview should explore the following areas:

- Job Title and Description
- Information about inclusive setting, development of the inclusive programming, individuals involved
- Ways in which collaboration takes place in regard to the implementation, development, monitoring of the inclusive environment

Make sure to relate all items referenced in your paper to information you have read and presented in class on the topic. Make sure to include appropriate citations to support your ideas using APA 5th edition guidelines.

Your **3-5 page written assignment** (*general guideline – may extend beyond 5 pages*) should contain the following:

- List of the interview questions
- Narrative summary of the information gained from the interview

- **Written Reflection** of your experience and the information obtained

Option 6:

INCLUSION SETTING OBSERVATION

Choose an inclusive setting in an early intervention center-based program, preschool classroom, or kindergarten through third grade setting to observe.

As you observe the inclusive setting, take notice of the how the individuals in the classroom support the inclusive environment, how effective is the implementation of this setting, how collaboration takes places, models of collaboration that you observe, how the individuals in the classroom overcome barriers encountered, how the inclusive setting benefits all of the children present, how are the needs of all students meet in this environment.

Make sure to relate all items referenced in your paper to information you have read and presented in class on the topic. Make sure to include appropriate citations to support your ideas using APA 5th edition guidelines.

Your **3-5 page written assignment** (*general guideline – may extend beyond 5 pages*) should contain the following:

- Description of the inclusive setting
- Critique of the inclusive setting
- **Written Reflection** about your experience

Option 7:

ITINERANT TEACHER TOOL KIT

Choose an inclusive setting in an early intervention center-based program, preschool classroom, or kindergarten through third grade setting to observe. After your observation, develop a “tool kit” suitable for use by an itinerant teacher in that environment including the following documents:

- A handout or game that can be given to the classroom teacher as a gift
 - Remember to consider the needs of the classroom teacher as you develop your activity. Prepare a written document to accompany your activity explaining why you chose this item and why the teacher may want to use it (i.e. what are the benefits for the teacher?)
- Two brief informal strategies for embedding while you are engaged with children in the classroom
 - Embedding strategies can be developed to promote social skills, behavior, or another area of concern. Your written document should include a reflection on how these strategies might be challenging to implement in the observed classroom and why. What coaching or collaborative skills might you need to use in order to be successful?
- A record keeping form that would be used during each visit as an itinerant teacher
 - Itinerant teachers need to keep track of field trips, vacation schedules, meal and nap schedules, contact numbers, child goals, etc. Consider what kinds of things

you might need to record, or what notes you might need to make for yourself in advance (e.g. goals or lessons for the child) when visiting this classroom.

You will turn in the following items:

- Description of the setting
- Teacher activity
- Two embedding strategies
- Record keeping form
- **Written reflection** of each component

Make sure to relate all references in your paper to information you have read and presented in class on the topic. Make sure to include appropriate citations to support your ideas using APA 5th edition guidelines.

WRITTEN REFLECTION GUIDELINES

While completing the reflective portion of a written assignment, keep in mind these guiding questions:

- ✓ Does my reflection show evidence of **metacognitive thinking** (thinking about my own thinking)? Have I re-thought my perspective, posed further questions?
- ✓ Does my reflection show evidence of **interpretation/evaluation/analysis** of situations that I have observed or topic(s) that I have reflected upon?
- ✓ Have I **supported** my thoughts or observations with information from class readings, discussions, lecture, activities, etc?
- ✓ Have I discussed **personal reactions** to my observations or the topic(s) that I have reflected upon? Does my reflection show **depth of thought/emotion/insight**?
- ✓ Have I discussed the “**personal meaningfulness**” of my reflections?
- ✓ Have I discussed a topic or thought from **more than one perspective**?
- ✓ Have I supported my reflective statements with **anecdotal accounts** of situations or observations that relate to the topic(s) that I have reflected upon?

Total Points

PPT Quizzes (5 @ 2pts ea)	10
Reading Reflections (5 @ 2pts ea)	10
Panel Discussion	5
Online Discussions (3 @ 5pts ea)	15
Online Activity	5
Web-Quest	10
Professional Development Plan	15
Choice Projects (2 @ 15 pts ea)	30
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Total Points	100