



The Learning Tree Professional Development Network, LLC
Course Syllabus

Course Title: Closing the Achievement Gap

Credits: 3 credits

Class Type: Accelerated Fully Online

Participants taking this course for PDPs are required to complete ONE discussion board post, ONE written response, and a modified (to a lesser degree) final assignment in order to earn a Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved certificate.

Participants taking this course for CEUs are required to complete ONE discussion board post, ONE written response, and a written reflection on an educator's professional accomplishment and growth resulting from participation in the course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce participants to best practical and applicable instructional methodologies and strategies for closing the achievement gap. Participants will research current factors for the achievement gap and identify best practice strategies for supporting the closure of the achievement gap. Course topics will include highly qualified teachers, rigorous curriculums, educator professional development, culturally competent classrooms, behavioral and emotional management, communication with families, creating positive schools, and student supports, including enrichment, progress monitoring, and extended school days and years. Best instructional practices and course concepts will be discussed with regard to closing the achievement gap. Understanding by Design and Response to Intervention models will be research and applied to closing the achievement gap.

COURSE PREREQUISITES: None

LEARNING GOALS:

GLOBAL GOALS OF THE COURSE:

1. Critique and synthesize current research and theories on closing the achievement gap.
2. Critique, synthesize, and interpret current research and theories on best instructional classroom practices for closing the achievement gap.
3. Synthesize and apply principles of best instructional classroom practices for closing the achievement gap.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

1. Design and implement an effective classroom management plan, meeting the needs of all learners.
2. Identify, critique, synthesize, and implement effective general education instructional methodologies.
3. Implement essential facets of Understanding by Design and Response to Intervention to meet the needs of diverse learners.

4. Develop measurable outcomes for closing the achievement gap.
5. Select and implement adaptations, accommodations, interventions, and modifications for all learners to close the achievement gap.
6. Implement the best practical and applicable instructional strategies for closing the achievement gap.
7. Design and implement best instructional strategies for closing the achievement gap for identified learners.

TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Video clips, PowerPoints, readings, graphic organizers, teaching tools, sample lessons, classroom discussion, lecture, etc. will all be implemented to demonstrate concepts.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Cole, Robert W. Educating Everybody's Children: Diverse Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.

Simmons, D. "Is Social-Emotional Learning Really Going to Work for Students of Color?." Education Week Teacher (2017): Bethesda, MD: Editorial Projects in Education.

Willis, S., and L. Mann. "Differentiating Instruction Finding Manageable Ways to Meet Individual Needs." Curriculum Update (2000): Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

EVALUATION METHODS:

1. One Page Response Journals: Participants should write a one page response to the required reading article. Participants should respond to the article, not summarize it. How does it affect you as an educator? How can you implement this in your own educational setting? Would you want to implement it? Journals should be a minimum of one page in length (12 point Times New Roman, double spaced).
2. Online Discussions: Participants are asked to discuss assignments. These discussions can include **meaningful** questions, stories, examples, concerns, ideas, etc. To get full credit for these discussions, a participant must post a response, question, story, etc. at least once during the assigned week and include a minimum of 150 words.
3. Final Assignment: For the final assignment, you will write a 2-3 page report on a plan of action for a participant's school or a school of a participant's choice. The report should include student population data, factors for achievement gap as well as steps the school will take to close the achievement gap. Participant papers should include the integration of course topics and materials. The final assignment is due at the end of week 6 / the close of the course.

Final Assignment Rubric:	
<u>Student Population Data</u> included to provide background on school and to identify factors for achievement gap	__ / 30
<u>Plan of Action</u> includes steps school should take to close the achievement gap	__ / 30
<u>Course Integration</u> (integration of course topics and materials)	__ / 30
<u>Assignment Requirements:</u> 2-3 pages	__ / 10
Total: __ / 100	

TESTING AND GRADING:

- 40% Written assignments (one page response journals)
- 20% Online discussions
- 40% Final Assignment

ADA Policy

If you as a student qualify as a person with a disability as defined in Chapter 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), you are strongly encouraged to register through the accrediting affiliated college or university. As a student, it is your responsibility to present your accommodation letter to your instructor at the beginning of each semester.

Academic Integrity Statement

Students are required to abide by the *Academic Integrity Policy*.

Course Credit Guidelines

For a graduate three credit course, students are expected to receive a minimum of 135 hours of instruction and work outside of the class by the conclusion of the course.

6 Week online course - This course is a 3-credit course, which means that students are expected to do at least 22.5 hours of course-related work each week of the 6-week term. This includes work done completing assigned readings, studying for test and examinations, preparing written assignments, and other course-related tasks.

Class attendance is expected of all students up to and including the last day of scheduled classes in the semester. Students must plan accordingly.

TOPICAL TIMELINE

Week One

- Review Syllabus
- Topics Covered:
 - Identifying the achievement gap
 - Contributing factors to the achievement gap
 - Highly qualified teachers
 - Educator professional development
 - Rigorous curriculums

Assignment(s)

Online Discussion

Week Two

- Topics Covered:
 - Culturally competent classrooms
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Understanding by design
 - Response to intervention

Assignment(s)

Required Reading:

Cole, Robert W. *Educating Everybody's Children: Diverse Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.

One Page Response Journals - Written Response

Week Three

- Topics Covered:
 - Student supports
 - Enrichment
 - Diverse learners
 - Testing
 - Special education
 - Progress monitoring
 - Identification
 - Special education
 - 504s
 - Increased instructional time
 - Extended school day and year

Assignment(s)

Required Reading:

Willis, S., and L. Mann. "Differentiating Instruction Finding Manageable Ways to Meet Individual Needs." Curriculum Update (2000): Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

One Page Response Journals - Written Response

Week Four

- Topics Covered:
 - Social behavior supports
 - Behavioral and emotional management
 - Effective communication with families

Assignment(s)

Required Reading:

Simmons, D. "Is Social-Emotional Learning Really Going to Work for Students of Color?!" Education Week Teacher (2017): Bethesda, MD: Editorial Projects in Education.

One Page Response Journals - Written Response

Week Five

- Topics Covered:
 - School spirit and philosophy
 - Resources and funding
 - District support

Assignment(s)

Online Discussion

Week Six

- Topics Covered:
 - Strategies for closing the achievement gap
 - Wrap-up: so what does it all mean?

Assignment(s)

Final Assignment.

* *Syllabus is subject to change.*

TOPICAL OUTLINE

Instructional Activity	Description of Activity	Time Spent
<p><u>Week One</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review Syllabus ● Topics Covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying the achievement gap ○ Contributing factors to the achievement gap ○ Highly qualified teachers ○ Educator professional development ○ Rigorous curriculums <p>Assignment(s) Online Discussion</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p><u>Week Two</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics Covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Culturally competent classrooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Socioeconomic status ○ Understanding by design ○ Response to intervention <p>Assignment(s) Required Reading: Cole, Robert W. Educating Everybody's Children: Diverse Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2008.</p> <p>One Page Response Journals - Written Response</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p><u>Week Three</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics Covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enrichment ▪ Diverse learners ○ Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special education ▪ Progress monitoring ○ Identification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special education ▪ 504s ○ Increased instructional time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extended school day and year <p>Assignment(s) Required Reading:</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>

<p>Willis, S., and L. Mann. "Differentiating Instruction Finding Manageable Ways to Meet Individual Needs." Curriculum Update (2000): Alexandria, VA: ASCD.</p> <p>One Page Response Journals - Written Response</p>		
<p>Week Four</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics Covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social behavior supports ○ Behavioral and emotional management ○ Effective communication with families <p>Assignment(s) Required Reading: Simmons, D. "Is Social-Emotional Learning Really Going to Work for Students of Color?." Education Week Teacher (2017): Bethesda, MD: Editorial Projects in Education.</p> <p>One Page Response Journals - Written Response</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p>Week Five</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics Covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School spirit and philosophy ○ Resources and funding ○ District support <p>Assignment(s) Online Discussion</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p>Week Six</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topics Covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategies for closing the achievement gap ○ Wrap-up: so what does it all mean? <p>Assignment(s) Final Assignment.</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
		<p>Total 135 hours</p>