



**The Learning Tree Professional Development Network, LLC**  
Course Syllabus

**Course Title:** Understanding Special Education

**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.*

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to provide educators with an overview of the major special education disability categories and best teaching practices to support each disability type within the inclusive classroom. Definitions for each category as well as determination criteria will be reviewed. Participants will learn a structured approach to assess and understand the assessment of students' needs, provide appropriate modifications and accommodations, and obtain the suitable support services that match the disability. Participants will study the IEP process, review the parts of an IEP, and learn strategies for implementing IEP accommodations. Additionally, the course will explore child find laws, diagnostic criteria, behavioral characteristics, best educational approaches and more!

**LEARNING GOALS:**

- Participants will recall, synthesize, and interpret, in applicable situations, the major special education disability categories.
- Participants will be able to select and implement strategies and accommodations with appropriate special education disabilities.
- Participants will be able to apply best instructional teaching practices for appropriate special education disabilities.
- Participants will synthesize, design, and implement a structured approach to support students' needs.
- Participants will be able to select, navigate, and obtain the suitable support services in applicable situations.

- Participants will critique, interpret, and apply current research in special education disability categories and supports.

### **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:**

Flynn, S. (2015). 6 Inclusion strategies for students with autism spectrum disorders. Retrieved April 9, 2015, from <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/every-learner/6692>

Helping Children with Communication Disorders in the Schools. (2010, August 9). Retrieved April 9, 2015, from <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/helping-children-communication-disorders-schools>

Henley, M., & Long, N. (2003). Helping Students with Emotional Problems Succeed. Classroom Leadership, 7(3).

Willis, J. (2007). Success for all Students in Inclusion Classes. In Brain-friendly strategies for the inclusion classroom insights from a neurologist and classroom teacher (ch. 1). Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

### **EVALUATION METHODS:**

1. **One Page Response Journals:** Some weeks participants may be given a required article to read. Participants should write a one page response to each article on particular weeks when journals are assigned. 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? Each response should be one page and double spaced in length and treating weekly topics on student disability categories.
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.
3. **Final Assignment:** For the final assignment, participants will research a disability category as well as best instructional strategies and accommodations complementing the disability. Participants should choose one of the major disability categories. The assignment is to write a paper determining which accommodations would be most appropriate for the chosen disability, explaining why the chosen accommodations would best fit a student with the chosen disability, and explaining how the accommodations can be best implemented within the classroom. Students should choose five accommodations to focus on. Participants' papers should include the integration of course topics and materials. The final assignment should be no more than five (5) typed pages that are double-spaced and include 12-point Times New Roman font. The final assignment is due at the end of Week Six.

The Final Assignment must include the following:

- Overview of the chosen disability category **(20 points)**
- Description of five (5) accommodations that would support the disability **(20 points)**
- Explanation of why the five (5) accommodations would best fit a student with the chosen disability **(20 points)**
- Explanation of how the accommodations can be best implemented within the classroom/school setting **(20 points)**
- Integration of course topics and materials **(20 points)**

### **TESTING AND GRADING:**

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

### **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 in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:
  - Child Find
  - Eligibility Determination
  - Developmentally Delayed
  - Intellectual Impairment
  - Neurological

#### **Other Assignments**

Online discussion

#### **Week Two**

- Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:
  - Autism

#### **Required Readings For Assignment**

Article on Autism.

#### **Other Assignments**

One page written response.

#### **Week Three**

- Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:
  - Other Health Impairments

- o Physical Disabilities
- o Sensory: Vision and Hearing

**Other Assignments**

Online discussion

**Week Four**

- Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:
  - o Communication

**Required Readings For Assignment**

Article on Communication.

**Other Assignments**

One page written response.

**Week Five**

- Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:
  - o Specific Learning Disabilities

**Required Readings For Assignment**

Article on Specific Learning Disabilities.

**Other Assignments**

One page written response.

**Week Six**

- Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:
  - o Emotional Disability

**Required Readings For Assignment**

Article on Emotional Disabilities.

**Other Assignments**

One page written response.

Final Assignment

*\* Syllabus is subject to change.*

**TOPICAL OUTLINE**

Instructional Activity	Description of Activity	Time Spent
<p><b><u>Week One</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review Syllabus</li> <li>● Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Child Find</li> <li>o Eligibility Determination</li> <li>o Developmentally Delayed</li> <li>o Intellectual Impairment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Neurological</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Assignments</b> Online discussion</p>		
<p><b><u>Week Two</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Autism</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Required Readings For Assignment</b> Article on Autism.</p> <p><b>Other Assignments</b> One page written response.</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p><b><u>Week Three</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Other Health Impairments</li> <li>○ Physical Disabilities</li> <li>○ Sensory: Vision and Hearing</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Other Assignments</b> Online discussion</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p><b><u>Week Four</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Required Readings For Assignment</b> Article on Communication.</p> <p><b>Other Assignments</b> One page written response.</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p><b><u>Week Five</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specific Learning Disabilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Required Readings For Assignment</b> Article on Specific Learning Disabilities.</p> <p><b>Other Assignments</b> One page written response.</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>
<p><b><u>Week Six</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Topics Covered in Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Emotional Disability</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Required Readings For Assignment</b> Article on Emotional Disabilities.</p>	<p>Posted Lecture Notes, Articles, PowerPoint, and Websites, Discussion Board, Written Response</p>	<p>22.5</p>

<b>Other Assignments</b> One page written response. Final Assignment		
		Total 135 hours