

# Differentiating Instruction for Student Success

GRADES K–12

GRADUATE CREDIT: 3 SEMESTER HOURS

The practice of differentiating instruction allows educators to meet diverse needs without having to individualize instruction for every student. In this course, educators explore the most current knowledge and practical skills and tools for maximizing learning for every student. They examine student differences and learn what, when, and how to differentiate instruction. They also learn how to use assessment to continually inform instructional planning. Additionally, educators work with their own curriculum and standards and use differentiation strategies to design lessons that they can use immediately with their students.

*This course is designed for K–12 classroom teachers, lead teachers, content-area teachers, curriculum coordinators/developers, special educators, instructional coaches, and department chairs.*

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## COURSE TOPICS

- Looking at students, self, and the learning environment
- Understanding what differentiated instruction is and what it is not
- Establishing a “growth” mindset
- Starting with high-quality curriculum
- Using assessment to inform instruction
- Exploring instructional elements for differentiation
- Differentiating for student readiness
- Differentiating for student interest
- Differentiating for learning profile
- Differentiating for multiple-learner variances
- Planning, organizing, and managing the differentiated classroom

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## COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, educators will:

- Develop an accurate definition of and strong rationale for differentiated instruction.
- Analyze and summarize student differences based on readiness, interest, and learning profile.
- Evaluate the words and actions of other teachers and themselves to identify evidence of the “growth” or “fluid” (versus “fixed”) mindset needed to successfully differentiate instruction.
- Evaluate and plan changes to their learning environment to better support differentiated instruction and promote positive student affect.
- Analyze and critique their own teaching practice and the practices of other teachers in relation to the “non-negotiables” of differentiated instruction.
- Plan ongoing assessments to inform instruction based on student readiness, interest, and learning profile.
- Design lessons that apply strategies (e.g., tiered lessons) for differentiating content, process, or product based on student readiness, interest, and/or learning profile.
- Develop classroom organization and management routines and procedures to address student readiness, interest, and learner profile.
- Create an affirmation/mission/philosophy statement (or more creative form of expression or product) that synthesizes the learning, attitudes, and beliefs they have developed as a result the course

## DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

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### METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

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This course provides numerous opportunities to apply research-based concepts and theory to practical teaching situations. Assessment is conducted in the following ways:

- **Activities** are short assessments that help educators explore concepts and make connections between the content and their teaching practice. Some activities are ungraded but serve to prepare educators for other graded assignments. Any ungraded activities are clearly marked as such.
- **Study Team Discussions (print & DVD) or Dialogue Summaries (online)** allow educators to share ideas about the course content with other teachers, then ask them to analyze and summarize the discussion, and then describe how their understanding of the topic has been enhanced or expanded.
- **Applications** assist educators in applying the theories, concepts, and strategies to their teaching practice.
- **Quizzes** provide educators with instant feedback (online only) on their understanding of the course material. There are three quizzes, each reviewing several sections of content.
- The **Final Reflection** requires educators to synthesize the content and reflect on their key learnings throughout the course.

### COURSE MATERIALS AND FORMAT

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Course texts, websites, and journal articles help facilitate learning and transfer theory into practice. Video programs feature interviews with nationally recognized education experts. Classroom scenes provide a view into the classrooms of master teachers who demonstrate the strategies taught in the course. This course is offered in two distance-learning formats: print & DVD and online. Educators select one format when they enroll.

#### PRINT & DVD FORMAT

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Educators in the print & DVD version of the course receive printed materials to facilitate their learning. This version of the course requires educators to form a study team. The educator must have at least one study partner or peer coach, preferably another educator, to complete activities, engage in discussion, and seek feedback. It is not necessary that the study partner be enrolled in the course. Educators enrolled in the print & DVD version should have Internet access in order to connect with the many websites that are offered as learning resources. Assignments are submitted via email. The print & DVD course includes:

- The print study guide:
  - *Differentiating Instruction for Student Success*
- The DVD:
  - Laureate Education, Inc. (Executive Producer). (2009). *Differentiating instruction for student success*. Baltimore: Executive Producer.
- The course textbook(s):
  - Tomlinson, C.A. (2003). *Fulfilling the promise of the differentiated classroom: Strategies and tools for responsive teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
  - Tomlinson, C.A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- The other required readings

#### ONLINE FORMAT

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Educators in the online version of the course access the course content via an online classroom. Educators are required to participate in virtual discussions with fellow educators via a discussion board. The course textbook is shipped to educators, but the video programs and other resources are available within the online classroom. Assignments are submitted through the online classroom. The online course includes:

- Access to the online classroom for:
  - *Differentiating Instruction for Student Success*
- Access to the video programs in the online classroom as well as a backup DVD:
  - Laureate Education, Inc. (Executive Producer). (2009). *Differentiating instruction for student success*. Baltimore: Executive Producer.
- The course textbook(s):
  - Tomlinson, C.A. (2003). *Fulfilling the promise of the differentiated classroom: Strategies and tools for responsive teaching*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
  - Tomlinson, C.A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Access to the other required readings

## DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

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### SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE COURSE FORMAT:

- Operating system for PC: Windows® XP, Windows Vista®, or Windows® 7
- Operating system for Mac®: OS X or higher
- Processor: 1 GHz, 32/64 bit or higher
- Memory: Minimum 512 MB of RAM; 1 GB recommended
- Browser: Microsoft Internet Explorer® 6.0 or higher; Firefox® 3.6 (also for Mac®: Apple® Safari® 4 or higher)
- Internet connection: Broadband (DSL, cable modem, or similar) required
- Software: Microsoft Word®, Adobe® Flash® Player 7 or higher (free), Adobe® Acrobat® Reader® version 8 or higher (free)
- Monitor resolution: 1280 x 800 pixels or higher

**Note:** If you are using a Macintosh®, please be sure to download Mozilla® Firefox® 3.6. It's free, and the download should take only a few minutes at [www.mozilla.org](http://www.mozilla.org).

#### *Trademark Information*

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- Mozilla and Firefox are registered trademarks of the Mozilla Foundation.
- Adobe, Flash, and Acrobat Reader are registered trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries.

## EDUCATION EXPERTS

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### **Carol Ann Tomlinson, Ed.D.**

Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson is the William Clay Parrish Jr. Professor and Chair of Educational Leadership, Foundations, and Policy at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education and co-director of the university's Institutes on Academic Diversity. Her special interests have included curriculum and instruction for struggling learners and advanced learners, effective instruction in heterogeneous settings, and encouraging creative and critical thinking in the classroom. Dr. Tomlinson is a prominent expert on the concept of differentiation and provides professional development throughout the United States and abroad. She is the author of more than 100 articles, books, book chapters, and other professional development materials, including the textbook *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms*.

### **Cindy Strickland, Ph.D.**

Dr. Cindy Strickland has been a teacher for 25 years and has worked with students of all ages, from kindergarten to the master's level. A member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Differentiated Instruction Cadre, Dr. Strickland works closely with Carol Ann Tomlinson and has co-authored several books and articles with her. Dr. Strickland provides workshops across the globe on topics relating to differentiation, the Parallel Curriculum Model, and gifted education.



### ABOUT CANTER

Canter, a subsidiary of Laureate Education, Inc., is committed to serving the educational community with high-quality, graduate-level courses that blend research-based theory with practical strategies. Canter began with one groundbreaking guide on managing behavior in the classroom and, more than 35 years later, has helped more than 300,000 educators address the most critical issues in education while advancing their careers.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Canter graduate-level courses, visit [www.Canter.net](http://www.Canter.net) or call 1-800-669-9011.

### ABOUT OUR PARTNERSHIP

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Canter offers its courses in partnership with Walden University, allowing you to benefit from Canter's quality curriculum in a self-paced format, while earning graduate credit from a leading accredited university.\* The course curriculum is developed and designed by Canter in collaboration with national education experts, while graduate credit is granted through Walden University, which assesses student work. Credit may be applicable for certification renewal and/or salary advancement.<sup>†</sup> Course credit may be transferable with prior approval from the university providing your advanced degree or planned program.

### Walden University

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University is a **National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)**–accredited college dedicated to enhancing educator effectiveness. As a recognized standard of excellence in professional education for the preparation of teachers, administrators, and other pre-K–12 school professionals, NCATE accreditation ensures the college has met rigorous national standards set by the profession and members of the public.

The college, named for the former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, was identified by *U.S. News & World Report* as having the largest online graduate program in education by enrollment (May 2010). Walden students were awarded the fourth most TEACH Grants to students nationwide in 2010–2011, according to the U.S. Department of Education. The choice of more than 53,000 students and alumni, including more than 80 state teachers of the year, the college is also a proud partner of the National Education Association (NEA) Academy and a year-round sponsor of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Walden University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association, [www.ncahlc.org](http://www.ncahlc.org). Canter and Walden University are both subsidiaries of Laureate Education, Inc.

\*Prospective Washington state students are advised to contact the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at 1-360-725-6275 or [prof.educ@k12.wa.us](mailto:prof.educ@k12.wa.us) to determine whether Walden's programs in the field of education are approved for teacher certification or endorsements in Washington state. Additionally, teachers are advised to contact their individual school district as to whether this program may qualify for salary advancement.

<sup>†</sup>It is each student's responsibility to check with his or her state/district and evaluate and understand any requirements related to the use of individual courses for any purpose.