ELPS 411: Special Education and the Catholic School

Leading Inclusive Catholic Schools Certificate Cohort

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Course Description:

This course is designed for Catholic school principals and other teacher/leaders whose goal is to develop inclusive practices within the Catholic school setting. Social Action through Education represents the foundation upon which this course has been developed. In support of this fundamental tenet of leadership development, this course will examine the moral and practical foundations of developing special education programs with the Catholic schools setting. This course will also explore the connection between Church documents and serving students with disabilities in faith-based settings.

Issues to be addressed include:

- Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)
- Section 504
- American with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Church Documents related to disability
- Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Timely and Meaningful Consultations (TMC) and Proportionate Share Plans
- Child find: identification, evaluation, and eligibility
- Individualized education plans (IEP) and individual service plans (ISP)

Course Objectives:

As a result of this course, the candidate will:

- Interpret and apply state and federal requirements regarding special education for children ages 3-21 years as well as infants and toddlers.
- Advocate appropriately with public schools officials to access available services.
- Build an evidence-based case for special education in a Catholic school using Church documents
- Create a ministerial approach to the provision of special education in Catholic schools
- Conduct an comprehensive accessibility assessment to identify areas of need within the parish/school
- Create an action plan to take first steps in creating an inclusive approach to service delivery in the Catholic school.

Required Texts:


**Other Sources (found on Sakai):**


**Academic Honesty**
Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. The School of Education’s Policy on Academic Integrity can be found at: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml). For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: [http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml)

**Accessibility**
Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: [http://www.luc.edu/sswd/](http://www.luc.edu/sswd/)

**EthicsLine Reporting Hotline**
Loyola University Chicago has implemented EthicsLine Reporting Hotline, through a third party internet & telephone hotline provider, to provide you with an automated and anonymous way to report activities that may involve misconduct or violations of Loyola University policy. You may file an anonymous report here on-line or by dialing 855-603-6988. (within the United States, Guam, and Puerto Rico)

The University is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct as an integral part of its mission of expanding knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith. To achieve this goal, the University relies on each community member's ethical behavior, honesty, integrity and good judgment. Each community member should demonstrate respect for the rights of others.

[www.luc.edu/ethicsline](http://www.luc.edu/ethicsline)

**Harassment:**
It is unacceptable and a violation of university policy to harass, discriminate against or abuse any person because of his or her race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. Such behavior threatens to destroy the environment of tolerance and mutual respect that must prevail for this university to fulfill its educational and health care mission. For this reason, every incident of harassment, discrimination or abuse undermines the aspirations and attacks the ideals of our community. The university qualifies these incidents as incidents of bias.

In order to uphold our mission of being Chicago's Jesuit Catholic University-- a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith, any incident(s) of bias must be reported and appropriately addressed. Therefore, the Bias Response (BR) Team was created to assist members of the Loyola University Chicago community in bringing incidents of bias to the attention of the university. If you believe you are subject to such bias, you should notify the Bias Response Team at this link: [http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/](http://webapps.luc.edu/biasreporting/)

**Technology:**
The information pertinent to human resources in schools changes constantly. Therefore, throughout the course, students will develop and practice skills in locating and using on-line resources critical to our topics. Technology tools pertinent to recruitment, certification, hiring, staff development, professional appraisal, and health care costs will be examines and utilized in classroom activities and assignments.

**Diversity:**
In concert with the conceptual framework for the School of Education, faculty and students will be expected to show respect and sensitivity to individual, cultural, social, and economic diversity. In
this spirit, as we look at questions of organizational theory, instructional leadership and student achievement, it will be our challenge to create will and capacity within our schools so that all educational stakeholders can fulfill the promise of education.

**Electronic Communication Policies and Guidelines**

The School of Education faculty, students and staff respect each other’s rights, privacy and access to electronic resources, services, and communications while in the pursuit of academic and professional growth, networking and research. All members of the university community are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, communication, and responsibility while accessing and utilizing technology, information resources, and computing facilities. A link to the Loyola University Chicago and School of Education official policies and guidelines can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/education/pdfs/SOE_Cyberbullying_Policy.pdf
www.luc.edu/its/itspoliciesguidelines/index.shtml

**Course Standards**

**Loyola University Chicago School of Education Conceptual Framework Standards (CFS):**

- CFS2: Candidates apply culturally responsive practices that engage diverse communities.
- CFS3: Candidates demonstrate knowledge of ethics and social justice.
- CFS4: Candidates engage with local and/or global communities in ethical and socially just practices.

**Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (2015)**

Standard 3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

- **Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.**

  *Effective leaders:*
  a) Ensure that each student is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of each student’s culture and context.
  b) Recognize, respect, and employ each student’s strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning.
  c) Ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success.
  d) Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.
  e) Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.
  f) Promote the preparation of students to live productively in and contribute to the diverse cultural contexts of a global society.
  g) Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in their interactions, decision making, and practice.
  h) Address matters of equity and cultural responsiveness in all aspects of leadership.

Standard 5. Community of Care and Support for Student

- **Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.**

  *Effective leaders:*
  a) Build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy school environment that meets that the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student.
b) Create and sustain a school environment in which each student is known, accepted and valued, trusted and respected, cared for, and encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the school community.

c) Provide coherent systems of academic and social supports, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations to meet the range of learning needs of each student.

d) Promote adult-student, student-peer, and school-community relationships that value and support academic learning and positive social and emotional development.

e) Cultivate and reinforce student engagement in school and positive student conduct.

f) Infuse the school’s learning environment with the cultures and languages of the school’s community.

**IDEA Objectives for ELPS 411**

Course evaluation can be found at [http://luc.edu/idea/](http://luc.edu/idea/)

- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
- Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and arguments, and points of view à points of view

**Evaluation:**

**Attendance, Participation, Professional Dispositions**

Because this class is online, on-going participation in both synchronous and asynchronous elements of this class are critical for student success. Participation will evaluated through participation in online discussions and timely completion of class assignments.

**Twitter (50 points)**

If you do not have a twitter account, go to twitter.com to create a free twitter account. Follow (at least) the following people:

- @mjboyle3
- @inclusionchick
- @Inclusive_Class
- @engelworks
- @VictoriaGraf1
- @GCCE_LUC
- @mliaCCE
- @behandiologic
- @autismspeaks
- @edutopia

Follow these people (and others that you may find!). Read their tweets and comment. When you comment, use the #ELPS411. Throughout the course of the term, you will be responsible to use the #ELPS411 to post 20 comments/tweets. If you don’t mark it #ELPS411 we won’t be able to find it and give credit.

Twitter can be a powerful professional development tool and there is a great deal of material out there. There is also a good community passionate about inclusion in Catholic schools in the Twittersphere.

**Parish Accessibility Survey (100 points)**

Complete the survey on Sakai to answer the following questions:

1. What is your parish current ability to meet the needs of parishioners with disabilities?
2. How does your parish track who needs accommodations and access?
3. What are the areas of need in ministering to all with disabilities?

Create a written report to answer these questions and identify areas of need and suggestions to address them.

**School Intake Process (100 points)**

This assignment will focus on developing an intake process for admission decisions for student with special needs. This should include a flow chart that identifies key personnel in the process (front office staff, administrative staff, teachers/support teachers). Additionally, a consent for the release of confidential information should be developed (if not already created). An intake script (with FAQs) should also be included. This will give guidance to your front office staff to adequately and respectfully triage inquiries in order to ensure that parents/guardians have the correct information. This will also include a set of parent questions for the intake survey.

**Continuum of Service Assessment: Classroom and School Level (100 points)**

Using the Continuum of Service Assessment checklist available on Sakai, complete an assessment of your building related to staff perceptions. Write a 2-3 page paper identifying strengths and naming opportunities for growth for both your staff and leadership. For the identified areas of growth, develop an action plan to address those areas.

**Building Faculty Awareness Strategy (200 points)**

Working with a partner, create a presentation (ppt, keynote, prezi etc) to help build your faculty build awareness about this project and the need to consider inclusive approaches to education within the Catholic setting. Your presentation should include references to church documents and other relevant documents.

**Policy statement for Addressing the Needs of Students with Disabilities (50 points)**

Create a policy statement for your school’s parent handbook for your school’s position on addressing the needs of students with disabilities in your school. This policy should suggest how parents should approach your school to indicate a desire to seek programming and should suggest the first steps that a parent should take.

**Field Experience Observations (150 points)**

Using the template found on Sakai, complete observations in the following areas:

- **Clinical** (Observe a therapy in a clinical setting. Observe a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist etc) 2 hours
- **Recreational/Community** (Observe a community-based activity for people with disabilities. This can be in sports, art, drama or anything that you can find. This will help to inform you about how disability interacts with the non-school world.) 2 hours
- **Family** (Attend a family support group or family education event for students with disability- try to get insight into how disability interacts with family) 2 hour
Blog Posts: “I Used to Think…/Now I think…” (100 points)

Throughout the course, you will be requested to post a blog post using the prompt, “I used to Think, Now I think…” . Using this prompt as a chance for reflection, be mindful of the kinds of changes that you are seeing in yourself. What changes to you see? What thoughts were validated? What are the new insights that you are developing? What does all of this mean for your school? This is a chance for the instructor to challenge you and to stretch you. You will be graded on your participation in this process.

Voice Thread Posts (100 points)

There will be several Voice Thread posts that will be required through the term. They are embedded in each of the modules. Using the tool, you will record a response to the prompt. Then go back and listen to what your classmates are saying and then you can post responses. Here are the prompts:

1. “What are my goals?”

   Think about the framework of this program. What are your goals for your school? What are your personal goals? What is it that you hoping to get out of this program?

2. Thinking about the Wheelchair Experience-What did I discover about disabilities? What did I discover about myself?

   Find or rent a wheelchair. Your task is to spend several hours in the wheelchair and experience your environment. Become aware of the obstacles that you encounter. How do people respond to you? Go out in the community- How do people respond to you? What are your feelings and emotions? What does tell you about “accessability”?

3. “What was the surprise observation from Beautiful Constraints?”

   Think about “Beautiful Constraints”, what are the surprises that you encounter? What are the questions that you have? Are there any “a-ha’s” that you experience?

Fellowship Discussion Posts (100 points)

Throughout the term, you will be asked to post your thoughts, reactions, and reflections to a series of prompts that are embedded in the modules. You will be asked to respond to your classmates. Again- this is an electronic version of class discussion. It is important to contribute and be a member of this learning environment. You will be graded on your participation.

A Note about Participation:

Because this class is online, on-going participation in both synchronous and asynchronous elements of this class are critical for student success. There will be expectations to participate and respond via the following vehicles throughout modules:

- Discussion forum
• Voice Thread
• Note Bene
• Zoom Calls

Participation will be assessed through your timely and thoughtful posts/commentary and responses. Your “presence” (by participating in these various forums) is expected and encourage throughout the entire semester. Failure to actively have continuous participation will negatively impact the participation grade.
IDEA Course Evaluation Link for Students
Each course you take in the School of Education is evaluated through the IDEA Campus Labs system. We ask that when you receive an email alerting you that the evaluation is available that you promptly complete it. To learn more about IDEA or to access the website directly to complete your course evaluation go to: http://luc.edu/idea/ and click on STUDENT IDEA LOGIN on the left hand side of the page.

Dispositions
All students are assessed on one or more dispositional areas of growth across our programs: Professionalism, Inquiry, and Social Justice. The instructor in your course will identify the dispositions assessed in this course and you can find the rubrics related to these dispositions in LiveText. For those students in non-degree programs, the rubric for dispositions may be available through Sakai, TaskStream or another platform. Disposition data is reviewed by program faculty on a regular basis. This allows faculty to work with students to develop throughout their program and address any issues as they arise.

LiveText
All students, except those who are non-degree, must have access to LiveText to complete the benchmark assessments aligned to the Conceptual Framework Standards and all other accreditation, school-wide and/or program-wide related assessments. You can access more information on LiveText here: LiveText.

Syllabus Addendum Link

www.luc.edu/education/syllabus-addendum/

This link directs students to statements on essential policies regarding academic honesty, accessibility, ethics line reporting and electronic communication policies and guidelines. We ask that you read each policy carefully.

This link will also bring you to the full text of our conceptual framework that guides the work of the School of Education – Social Action through Education.