

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY REHABILITATION

OCT. 02 2002

**TA1234: THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER ASSISTANT**

**Fall 2002:** September 4 to December 6, 2002

**Class Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 p.m.-2:00p.m.

**Credits:** 3 (45 hours)

**Location:** B201

**Instructor:** Aum Nicol  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursdays 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Students may request alternate times and days.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on developing knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for teacher assistants to perform their roles and responsibilities as a member of the instructional team. This course equips teacher assistants to function effectively and professionally in a wide variety of educational settings, from kindergarten through to senior high school.

### CLASS FORMAT

Learning outcomes will be achieved through mini-lectures, discussions, small group activities, in-class assignments and projects.

### REQUIRED TEXT

Doyle, Mary Beth. (2002) The Paraprofessional's Guide to the Inclusive Classroom – Working as a Team 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Baltimore, Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will explore and identify personal strengths and attributes that are relevant to the characteristics of a teacher assistant in various classroom settings.
2. Students will practice personal goal setting and self-evaluation as a means of establishing a professional development plan.
3. Students will describe the roles and responsibilities of the teacher, teacher assistant, special needs instructor and other members of the multi-disciplinary team.
4. Students will identify the characteristics of an inclusive classroom and the role of the teacher assistant in creating a positive learning environment adaptable for children with exceptionalities.
5. Students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and attitudes to establish collaborative working relationships with students, parents, teachers and others.
6. Students will identify ways to motivate and engage students in the learning process and demonstrate awareness of behavior management strategies.
7. Students will demonstrate proficiency in
  - a. Following and responding to specific/general directions
  - b. Asking questions for information or for eliciting responses from students.
  - c. Activating background knowledge or personal skills.
  - d. Managing/organizing the learning environment.
8. Students will explain ethical standards set for school personnel applicable to other staff, students, parents, administrators, and the community.

## SCHEDULE

This course has specific units designed to provide knowledge of the various skills required by the teacher assistant. The required text will be supplemented with handouts or books placed on reserve in the LRC. This schedule is a tentative outline, with new resources brought in changes may be made.

## **INTRODUCTIONS TO CLASS EXPECTATIONS AND OVERVIEW:**

- A. Characteristics of a Teacher Assistant  
(Text Reading: Chapter 1: pp. 1-3)
- B. Roles and Responsibilities of the Teacher Assistant ( Handouts)

## **UNIT I: STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES**

- A. What is Inclusion?
- B. Identifying Exceptionalities (Handouts/Notes)
- C. The Multi-Disciplinary Team
- D. The IEP (Text Reading: p. 36-41)
- E. Review of Terms

## **UNIT II: PROVIDING CURRICULAR AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT (Text Reading: Chapter 4-p.43-52, 53-59, Handouts)**

- A. Prompts
- B. Difference between learning support and general support
- C. Paraprofessional's Role

## **UNIT III: ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR**

- A. Four Tenants of Positive Behavioral Support (Text Reading p. 62-65)
- B. The Basics of Cooperative Learning (Handout)
- C. Five Purposes of Behaviors (Text Reading p. 65-67)
- D. Managing Challenging Behaviors (Text Reading p. 67, Handouts)
- E. Fred Jones Positive Discipline Strategies in a Nutshell

## **UNIT IV: ETHICS AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

- A. Maintaining Confidentiality (Text Reading p. 77-83)
- B. Ethical Practice (Handout)

**\*The following units will be supplemented by:**

Gursky, Beatrice. (2001) The Art of Assisting in the Classroom, Sherwood Park, Alberta: SchoolBell Productions Inc.

## **UNIT V: IN THE CLASSROOM**

- A. The Art of Penmanship
- B. Read Aloud and Storytelling
- C. Art of Creating Drill and Practice Worksheets
- D. Working as the Special Needs Assistant

## **UNIT VI: COMMUNICATION FOR TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION**

- A. The Role of the Teacher and the Teacher Assistant

## **UNIT XI: THE ART OF THRIVING AND SURVIVING**

- A. Tools for the Teacher Assistant

## EVALUATION

### 10% Participation

Students will contribute to group discussions and activities. Involvement is required in various simulated classroom activities geared to achieve the learning outcomes. Throughout the required text are activities that will require both group and individual participation.

### 20% Reflective Writing

This involves writing summaries of major learning outcomes discussed in class, the review of definitions related to students with exceptionalities and roles of the Teacher Assistant. Students will reflect on personal attributes, attitudes, or philosophies of becoming a teacher assistant throughout the course.

### Assignments

All assignments will take place in class. They may take the form of question and answer, paragraph or short essay, creative expression, role-play, group presentations or other forms of presenting information.

### 10% Role of Teachers and Teacher Assistants

### 10% Inclusive Classroom-Assisting Special Needs Children

### 10% Motivation-Behavioral Management

### 10% Ethical Implications

### 10% Collaboration and Communicating

### 30% Final Project

The Final Project is intended to allow individuals or groups of students to review and highlight the important characteristics of the role of the Teacher Assistant in a variety of settings. Students will be allowed to select a format, from several choices, to demonstrate their learning.

### Grades

9	90-100%	5	57-64%
8	80-89%	4	50-56%
7	72-79%	3	45-49%
6	65-71%	2	26-44%
		1	0-25%

In order to obtain credit for this course, students must achieve a minimum of 57% or a 5.

### Rights, Responsibilities and Professionalism of Students

Students are advised to familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities as outlined on pages 36 and 37 of the college calendar.