

*“You are not given a wish, without also the power to make it come true.”  
Jonathan Livingstone Seagul*

**PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAM  
TA 1234**

**THE ROLE OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL IN THE CLASSROOM**

**FALL 2004:** September 7 to December 14, 2004

**CLASS:** Tuesday 6:00 p.m. – 8:50 p.m.

**LOCATION:** B303

**CREDITS:** 45 hours 3credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dolly McArthur, M. Ed.

**OFFICE:** H204

**CONTACT:** Phone: 539-2787  
Email: [mcarthur@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:mcarthur@gprc.ab.ca)

**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesday 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
Thursday 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course develops knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the paraprofessional to perform their roles and responsibilities as a member of an instructional team. Students are equipped to function effectively and professionally in a wide variety of educational setting from kindergarten through senior high school.

## **CLASS FORMAT**

According to Edgar Dale from the University of Texas, we tend to remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we hear and see, 70% of what we say and 90% of what we both say and do. Therefore, **student participation is a vital part of this course.**

Students will be engaged in active learning, and classes will include a mixture of lecture, discussion, small group work, case studies, in-class assignments and audio-visual materials.

## **REQUIRED TEXT**

Alberta Teachers' Association. Teachers and Teachers' Assistants: Roles and Responsibilities. Edmonton, AB.

Hammeken, Peggy. Inclusion An Essential Guide for the Paraprofessional. Minnetonka, MN.

*Note: Additional reading will be placed on reserve at the GPRC Library.*

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

To demonstrate an understanding that is enduring, learners will uncover the answers to the following essential questions:

1. What personal strengths and attributes do you have, that are relevant to the characteristics of a paraprofessional in various classroom settings?
2. How do you implement goal setting and self-evaluation as a means of establishing a professional development plan?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of the teacher, teacher assistant, special needs instructor and other members of the multi-disciplinary team?
4. What is inclusion and why is it beneficial for all children?
5. How do you motivate and engage students in the learning process?
6. How do you develop the art of questioning?
7. Can the learning environment be organized for effective learning?
8. Can you respond to (correct) irresponsible student behaviour in way that will help students learn to behave more responsibly?

9. Who are our students with diverse learning needs?
10. What is the role of the Paraprofessional with respect to working with diverse learners?
11. What ethical practices are expected to be followed by the staff, students, parents, administration and the community?
12. Why is collaboration important and how do you establish collaborative working relationships with student, parents, teachers and others?
13. Why is reflection an important key to your success as a teacher assistant?

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

### **Reflective Journal**

**20%**

**Due: # 1 October 12  
# 2 November 16**

Becoming a reflective teacher assistant fosters personal and professional growth. Your journals should address specific questions and may also include ideas, questions and reflections as the result of your learning. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

### **Lesson Plan Application Project**

**30%**

**Due: November 23**

The purpose of this group project is to provide you with the opportunity to develop a practical use of the topics we discuss in class.

Student will work in small groups. You will be responsible for adapting a lesson plan and developing a learning plan for a particular student. A student profile and a lesson plan will be provided.

Your plan will include the following: the needs and interest of the student, a description of the environment, how the lesson will be adapted or modified, teaching strategies utilized, motivational strategies used, assessment of student's learning as well as the overall lesson, and how you will communicate the outcomes of the lesson to the teacher. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

### **Tests**

Test # 1 (covers information learned to date)	25%	October 19
--	-----	------------

Test # 2 (covers information learned after Test # 1)	25%	December 14
---	-----	-------------

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

Final grades will be based on absolute measures and will be assigned using a LETTER GRADING system with a Four-Point Scale of numerical equivalents for calculating grade point averages.

<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Point</b>	<b>Raw Score</b>
Excellent	A+	4.0	96-100
	A	4.0	92-95
	A-	3.7	87-91
Good	B+	3.3	83-86
	B	3.0	78-82
	B-	2.7	73-77
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	69-72
	C	2.0	64-68
	C-	1.7	60-63
Poor	D+	1.3	55-59
Minimal Pass	D	1.0	50-54
Failure	F	0.0	Less than 50

## **RIGHT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROFESSIONALISM**

### **Student Conduct**

Students are advised to familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities as outlined on pages 39 to 43 of the college calendar.

**Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all classes and will be responsible for content covered, assigned readings, and for any announcements made in class. If a student is unable to attend a particular class, it will be her/his responsibility to find out what was missed. For optimal learning and readiness for class participation, students should read the assigned chapters and articles before coming to class.

**Assignments**

All assignments must be typed and follow APA guidelines. Computers are available in the library, as well, the computer labs. See <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/departments/cts/labs.html> for more information.

**Late Policy**

Assignments must be received by 4:00 p.m. **ON** or **BEFORE** the day which they are due. **Late** assignments will be **penalized** at the rate of **5% per day**. That is, if an assignment receives a grade of 80% and is one day late, the grade recorded will be 75%; two days late 70% etc.

**TA1234 – 2004 CLASS SCHEDULE**

*Note: This is tentative and subject to change.*

DATE	TOPIC	READING	TESTS/ ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
Sept. 7	Introductions; review course outline; expectations Roles & Responsibilities		
Sept. 14	Roles and Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who are teacher assistants?</li> <li>- What duties can be assigned?</li> <li>- Rights and responsibilities</li> </ul>	ATA Booklet RR – Carroll	
Sept. 21	Characteristics of the Teacher Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- personal strengths and attributes</li> <li>- values clarification</li> <li>- learning styles</li> </ul>	Handouts will be provided	
Sept. 28	Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is inclusion and why does it matter?</li> <li>- Who are students with diverse abilities?</li> <li>- Do labels matter?</li> </ul>	Hammeken - Ch. 1, pp. 19-25	
Oct. 5	How do you assist students with diverse learning needs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual Program Plans</li> <li>- Assisting students who vary from their peers in their interactions, gaining access to the environment or learning styles and rates</li> </ul>	RR. – Doyal Ch. 4 RR – Giangreco RR – Interventions and Adaptations	
Oct. 12	Ethical Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional behaviour</li> <li>- Confidentiality</li> <li>- Reporting child abuse</li> <li>- Legal issues</li> </ul>	RR – Gursky pp. 34-35 Hammeken – pp. 34-35	<b>Reflection Paper # 1</b>
Oct. 19	Classroom Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing a positive environment</li> <li>- Organizing skills</li> </ul>	Hammeken - pp. 47-52, 98 RR – Programs and Strategies . . .	

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>READING</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE</b>
Oct. 26	Classroom Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multi-level instruction</li> <li>- Cooperative learning</li> <li>- Mastery learning</li> <li>- Individual instructions</li> <li>- Motivating students to learn</li> </ul>	Hammeken -pp. 52-58, 101-106	
Nov. 2	Assisting across the curriculum and modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Modification categories</li> </ul>	Hammeken - Ch. 5, 63-73 RR – Gursky Ch. 4	
Nov. 9	Assisting across the curriculum and modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Text modifications</li> <li>- Written language modification</li> <li>- Subject modifications</li> </ul>	Hammeken- pp. 76-101	
Nov. 16	Collaboration and Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Multi-disciplinary team</li> <li>- The school team</li> <li>- Making relationships work</li> </ul>	Hammeken pp. 27-32 RR. Sprick – Ch. 2 ATA pp. 12-13	<b>Reflection Paper # 2</b>
Nov. 23	Collaboration and Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teamwork, trust and traps</li> </ul>	RR. Gursky – Ch. 8	<b>Lesson Plan Application Project</b>
Nov. 30	Behaviour Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Behaviour and attention difficulties</li> <li>- Expectations</li> <li>- Monitoring</li> <li>- Reinforcement</li> </ul>	Hammeken pp. 108-112 RR.- Sprick ch. 3 – pp. 55-78	
Dec. 7	Behaviour Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responding to irresponsible behaviour</li> <li>- Decision – making</li> <li>- Dealing effectively with non-compliance</li> </ul>	RR - Sprick- pp. 79-97	
Dec 14	Test # 2		<b>Test # 2</b>