

“In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or des-escalated, and if a child is humanized or dehumanized”

Hiam Ginot

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAM

TA 1234

THE ROLE OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL IN THE CLASSROOM

FALL 2006: September 6 to December 8, 2005

CLASS: Thursday and Thursday
10:00 to 11:20 a.m.

LOCATION: B304

CREDITS: 45 hours 3credits

INSTRUCTOR: Dolly McArthur, MEd.

OFFICE: H210

CONTACT: Phone: 539-2787
Email: mcarthur@gprc.ab.ca

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays and Wednesdays
3:00 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 settings 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 required readings 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 a 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

10%

Due: October 5, 2006

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.

Case Study

25%

Due: November 7, 2006

The purpose of this project is to synthesize and apply the knowledge you have acquired about roles and responsibilities, ethical practice and problem solving.

You will work in a small group (chosen by the instructor) and solve the very realistic dilemma that many teacher assistants may experience. Some class time will be provided to start work on this project. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

Lesson Plan Application Project

25%

Due: November 30, 2006

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

Student will work in pairs. You will be responsible for adapting a lesson plan and developing a learning plan for one student. A student profile and a lesson plan will be provided for two students. **You will choose only one student.**

Your plan will include the following: the needs and interests of the student, a description of the environment, how the lesson will be adapted or modified, teaching strategies utilized, motivational strategies used, how you would assess the student's learning, and how you will communicate the outcomes of the lesson to the teacher. Some class time will be provided to start work on this project. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

Tests

Test # 1	20%	November 2, 2006 (covers information learned to date)
Test # 2	20%	December 7, 2006 (covers information learned after Test #1)

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.

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Point
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Poor Minimal Pass	D+	1.3
	D	1.0
Failure	F	0.0

RIGHT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROFESSIONALISM

Student Conduct

Students are advised to familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities as outlined on pages 43 to 47 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.

Late Arrival

Late arrivals are disruptive to the class. If you must arrive late, take the first seat available closest to the door. Get information about material missed from your classmates after 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. The following website is also useful for assisting you in proper APA format <http://webapps.calvin.edu/knightcite/>

Due Dates

Due dates are specified in the course schedule. All assignments must be submitted no later than 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. Penalties include weekends and holidays. Use the assignment drop box outside of H206 if it is after hours.

I have attached a “**No Questions Asked**” **Coupon**, remember you only have one coupon so use it wisely.

Blackboard

Blackboard is a Learning Management System that will be used to improve communication with and between students. I will post course resources such as the course outline, notes, handouts, etc. Blackboard is a password-protected environment that you can access 24/7 from any computer as long as you have internet access.

Learning Support Center

The Center provides a wide variety of services and programs to assist students in achieving academic success. The center is located in room F215 and the contact number is 539-2957.

FALL 2006 – CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

DATE	TOPIC	READING	TEST/ ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
Thursday Sept. 7	Introductions; review course outline; expectations;		
Tuesday Sept. 12	Roles and Responsibilities -Who are teacher assistants? -What duties can be assigned?	ATA Book	
Thursday Sept. 14	No Class Dept. of Human Services Retreat at Wapiti Nordic Ski Lodge		
Tuesday Sept. 19	Roles and Responsibilities - What are the rights of the teacher assistant?	RR - Carroll	
Thursday Sept. 21	Characteristics of the Teacher Assistant - personal strengths and attributes - values clarification	Handouts will be provided	
Tuesday Sept. 26	Characteristics of the Teacher Assistant - learning styles - multiple intelligences		
Thursday Sept. 28	Inclusion - What is inclusion and why does it matter? - Why is labelling controversial?	Hammeken – Ch. 1 pp. 18- 24	
Tuesday Oct. 3	Inclusion - Who are students with diverse abilities		
Thursday Oct. 5	How do you assist students with diverse learning needs? - What are Individual Program Plans?	RR – Doyal Ch. 4	Reflection Journal
Tuesday Oct. 10	How do you assist students with diverse learning needs? - Assisting students who vary from their peers in their interactions, gaining access to the environment or learning styles and rates	RR – Interventions and Adaptations	

DATE	TOPIC	READING	TEST/ ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
Thursday Oct. 12	Ethical Practice - Professional behaviour - Confidentiality	Gursky pp. 28-32	
Tuesday Oct. 17	Ethical Practice - Reporting child abuse - Legal issues	RR – Hammeken Ch. 4	
Thursday Oct. 19	Collaboration and Teamwork - The Multi-disciplinary team - The school team - Making relationships work	Hammeken pp. 27-32	
Tuesday Oct. 24	Collaboration and Teamwork - Teamwork, trust and traps	RR – Gursky – Ch. 8	
Thursday Oct. 26	In Class – Case Study Assignment		
Tuesday Oct. 31	In Class – Case Study Assignment		
Thursday Nov. 2	Test # 1		Test # 1
Tuesday Nov. 7	Classroom Environment - Establishing a positive environment	Hammeken pp. 53-57; 77-78; 121-122	Case Study Due
Thursday Nov. 9	Classroom Environment - Organizing skills	RR – Programs and Strategies	
Tuesday Nov. 14	Classroom Instruction - Multi-level instruction - Cooperative learning - Mastery learning		Hammeken Ch. 6
Thursday Nov. 16	Classroom Instruction - Individual instruction - Motivating students to learn	Hammeken Ch. 6	

Tuesday Nov. 21	Assisting across the curriculum and modifications - Modification categories - Text modifications	Hammeken Ch. 7	
Thursday Nov. 23	Assisting across the curriculum and modifications - Written language modification - Subject modification	Gursky Ch. 4	
Thursday Nov. 28	In-class Lesson Plan Application Project		
Thursday Nov. 30	Behaviour Management - Behaviour and attention difficulties - Expectations - Monitoring - Reinforcement	Hammeken pp. 08 – 112 RR – Sprick ch. 3, pp. 55-78	Lesson Plan Project
Tuesday Dec. 5	Behaviour Management - Responding to irresponsible behaviour - Decision making - Dealing effectively with non-compliance	RR – Sprick pp. 79-97	
Thursday Dec. 7	Test # 2		Test # 2

TA 1234
“NO QUESTIONS ASKED” COUPON

This coupon entitles _____ to submit an assignment up to 14 days late with no questions asked and no penalty assessed during this period. This coupon is not transferable to other students **and will not be replaced if lost**. This coupon applies to TA1234 assignments only. To **be valid, you must staple this coupon to your assignment**. Students who return the coupon unused on or before the last day of class will receive a 2% bonus for the course.