UNDERSTANDING DYSLEXIA: A GRADUATE LEVEL COURSE OF INSTRUCTION
DEVELOPED TO PREPARE FACULTY MEMBERS TO WORK WITH ADULT LEARNERS
WITH DYSLEXIA OR LEARNING DISABILITIES ENROLLED IN POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Approved by Tom Lo Guidice
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Kim Carpenter

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Abstract

UNDERSTANDING DYSLEXIA: A GRADUATE LEVEL COURSE OF INSTRUCTION DEVELOPED TO PREPARE FACULTY MEMBERS TO WORK WITH ADULT LEARNERS WITH DYSLEXIA OR LEARNING DISABILITIES ENROLLED IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Kim Carpenter

Under the Supervision of Tom Lo Guidice, Ph D

The number of students with dyslexia or learning disabilities (LD) enrolling into postsecondary educational institutions increases each year. Some colleges reported as much as 10% of the student population, and 80% of the student’s with disabilities population reported having dyslexia or LD. 86% of colleges and universities have disability services programs to support all students with disabilities. Additionally, organizations, inclusionary practices, legislation, and public awareness programs have been developed to support individuals with dyslexia or LD. Yet, the success rate of students with dyslexia or LD is dismal. Less than one fourth of the students with dyslexia or LD enrolled in postsecondary institutions complete their programs or graduate. Researchers suggest a critical need for training in dyslexia or LD, not only for faculty members, but also for the individuals with dyslexia or LD.
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Chapter One: Introduction

According to the U.S. Department of Health, up to 15% of the entire population suffers with some form of dyslexia. Currently, 15 to 20 percent of the population has dyslexia or a learning disability involving reading, writing, spelling, and or math (SHHS, 2010; NICHCY, 2011). With more than thirty years of evolving federal and state regulations protecting their rights, students with dyslexia or learning disabilities (LD) have become the largest and fastest growing subgroup of students with disabilities (Orr & Hammig, 2009), making up approximately 80% of the population of students with disabilities among children in grades Kindergarten through twelve, 61% of the population of students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions, and more than 10% of the total population attending postsecondary institutions. The percentage is much higher when including students attending postsecondary institutions who do not disclose their disability (Colker, 2011; Gradel & Edson, 2009; Raue & Lewis, 2011). Responses to this legislation and to the increasing numbers of students with disabilities, 86% of colleges and universities have disability support services to support all students with disabilities (Raue & Lewis, 2011). However, while these programs attempt to meet the needs of the students with dyslexia or LD they often fall short. About one fourth of the students with dyslexia or LD complete their programs or graduate (Gregg, 2009; Orr, 2009; Hadley, 2011).

Researchers give several reasons for the lack of success among the population of students with dyslexia or LD, including a lack of academic preparation and transition support between high school and college (Orr & Hammig, 2009). However, literature suggests two factors with a greater impact on success. The first factor is a lack of appropriate support from college or university faculty, primarily due to stereotyping and a lack of training, knowledge, and
understanding of the disability (Orr, 2010). The second factor is a lack of self-determination on the part of students with dyslexia or LD that stems from a lack of knowledge and understanding of the disability (Getzel & Thoma, 2008).

While a comprehensive program is needed that would address both the faculty and student understanding of the disability, this project will consist of a course intended to address issues surrounding faculty support. The overall intent of the course is to create a better understanding of the disability among faculty members, provide faculty members with the tools to create more inclusive classroom environments that can meet the needs of adults with dyslexia or learning disabilities, identified or unidentified, and to dispel stereotypes regarding this population of students. The goals for the course are: one, to develop faculty knowledge and understanding of the social, emotional, and educational impact on adults with dyslexia or learning disabilities; two, increase faculty willingness to work with students with dyslexia or learning disabilities, thus improving faculty students relationship; three, to dispel stereotypes associated with dyslexia and learning disabilities and create positive attitudes among faculty members so students with the disabilities are more likely to self-identify because they view faculty members as understanding and approachable.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem to be addressed stated as a series of questions are “To what extent do disability service programs offered in colleges and universities meet the needs of students with dyslexia or learning disabilities? What additions or modifications made to disability services programs would increase program completion or graduation rates among the population of adults with dyslexia or a learning disability in colleges and universities? Additionally, to what extent
would faculty development in understanding dyslexia and learning disabilities increase educators' willingness and ability to effectively meet the needs of adults with dyslexia and learning disabilities in postsecondary educational institutions? “.

Definition of Terms

Dyslexia: The term dyslexia has been defined in many different ways by many different authorities since the term was first coined by Rudolf Berlin in 1887. Over the years, different labels have been used to identify and describe individuals who struggle academically due to poor reading, spelling, writing, and/or math ability despite appropriate educational opportunities and average to above average intelligence. Federal regulations, organizations, scholars and educational programs have led to relabeling and redefining the problem for many years. For the purpose of this paper, and to avoid addressing the myriad of labels and definitions as well as the associated controversy over which set of criteria defines which label, the term “dyslexia” will be used along with the term “learning disability” to refer to the same population which is the population of individuals who meet any of the criteria for any of the disabilities listed below.

The definition Adopted by The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Board of Directors on November 12, 2002 and also used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD):

Dyslexia is characterized by difficulties with accurate and / or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the
provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. Individuals with dyslexia process information in a different area of the brain than do non-dyslexics. Many people who are dyslexic are of average to above average intelligence.

Shaywitz (2005) provides a more general definition of dyslexia:

“Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Other forms of dyslexia include dyscalculia (difficulty with math) and dysgraphia (difficulty writing) “(pp 3-12).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has labeled the same problem as a Specific Learning Disability and defines it as follows:

(10) Specific learning disability —(i) General. Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read,
write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

(ii) Disorders not included. Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disability, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. [34 CFR §300.8(c 10)]

The federal definition of a specific learning disability is as follows:

The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Disorders not included. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (Federal law 34 C.F.R. §§300.7 and 300.541)

Accommodations: Changes made to instruction and/or assessment that do not change the expectations for performance or change the construct that is being measured. Accommodations
provide access to buildings, curriculum, and assessments (Gregg, 2012).

Universal Design (UD): A movement, in the early 1990's, in architectural design and construction. It was intended to make public buildings, bathrooms, sidewalks, curbs, park benches, drawer pulls, door handles, light switches, signs, text labels, icons, picnic tables and other public use areas more accessible for a diverse population of individuals with disabilities, primarily individuals with physical disabilities. The concept was rooted in economics, as it was more economical to design and build products to accommodate individuals with disabilities than to retrofit them later. These new designs not only increased accessibility for individuals with wheelchairs, but extended access to a wide range of individuals without disabilities. For example, curb cuts accommodated shopping carts, strollers, skateboards, rollerblades and bicycles (Howard, 2004; CAST, 2010).

Universal Design for Instruction (UDI): UDI, also referred to as Universal Design for Learning (UDIL, stems from the UD movement but relates to learning and instructions with the intent of making instruction accessible for a diverse population of learners. It is based on UD principles, but applied to the area of teaching and instruction. It is a framework of instruction that anticipates and addresses the needs of a variety of learners, including those with dyslexia or LD. The goal is to make instruction accessible to all students, thus, allowing equal access and opportunities to learn.
Delimitations of Research

The references used for the review of literature were collected over a period of 40 days using the resources of the Karrmann Library at the University of Wisconsin – Platteville. Search engines provided by EBSCOHOST were used along with journal online publishing sites such as SAGE Publishing, and The Journal of Learning Disabilities. The key search terms were “dyslexia”, “learning disabilities”, “support programs”, and “teacher attitudes”.

Method of Approach

A brief review of the literature on college and university support programs for adults with dyslexia or a learning disability, student success rates and causes for student failure was conducted. The findings were summarized and synthesized. A course to provide educators with an understanding of learning disabilities and equip them with the tools necessary to create inclusive classroom environments that can effectively meet the diverse needs of this disabled population was developed.
Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

Faculty Support

Relationships between students and faculty play a significant role in the success of all students, but for students with disabilities, these relationships are critical (Orr & Goodman, 2010; Orr & Hammig, 2009; Kirwan & Leather, 2011; May & Stone, 2010). To students with dyslexia or LD, a positive relationship with faculty means they receive respect, understanding and support from the faculty member (Murray, Wren, & Keys, 2003). Furthermore, it means that faculty members are approachable, supportive and willing to provide appropriate accommodations (Getzel & Thoma 2008; Murray, Wren, & Keys, 2003). Researchers suggest that the lack of appropriate accommodations and modifications is a significant barrier to the success of students with dyslexia or LD (Orr 2008). Therefore, faculty knowledge, sensitivity and understanding of the disability and the unique challenges it presents for students with dyslexia and LD is critical to the success of these students (Orr, 2008; Orr & Goodman, 2010).

In-depth training in dyslexia and LD can improve faculty support in several ways. First, training can give willing faculty members the tools necessary to provide the needed support. Studies of faculty attitudes toward students with dyslexia or LD, indicated that many faculty members had positive attitudes and expressed a willingness to help students with dyslexia and LD, but a significant number of them reported that they did not feel confident in their abilities to provide support and needed more information on the disability, the referral process and support procedures (Allsopp, Minskoff, & Bolt, 2005; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Murray, Flannery, & Wren, 2008; May & Stone, 2010; Orr & Goodman, 2010; Orr & Hammig, 2009). Most college and university faculty members are not expected to have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of students with dyslexia or LD. Most faculty members have
degrees or expertise in areas other than education (e.g., engineering, mechanics, and graphic design) and do not have the background or training to meet the needs of students with dyslexia or LD (Orr & Goodman, 2010). Yet, it is the faculty members who have the most control over curriculum and student success (Orr, 2008).

To help faculty improve their ability to work with the adults with disabilities, 86% of colleges and universities in the United States have disability support services. These support services provide faculty with consultation and a list of recommended accommodations for students with dyslexia or LD. Unfortunately, there are many problems with this approach. First, many faculty members reported that they were not comfortable providing or did not know how to implement accommodations (Getzel & Thoma 2008; Murray, Wren, & Keys, 2003). Secondly, providing a list of accommodations does not abate stereotypes and misconceptions about the disability or help faculty members build a relationship with the student. Finally, students desiring accommodations must self-advocate by asking for them personally, which means they must disclose their disability, and many students are reluctant to do so (Orr & Hammig, 2009).

Students with dyslexia or LD would not have to disclose their disability if their needs could be met within the construct of the instruction, the expectations of outcomes, and the physical environment for which the learning takes place. With this goal in mind, some universities encourage the application of Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) to the development of courses of instruction. UDI anticipates and addresses the needs of a variety of learners, including those with dyslexia or LD. The goal is to make instruction accessible to all students, thus, allowing equal access and opportunities to learn, and eliminating the need to disclose a disability. Faculty members are encouraged to apply the principles in their
classrooms. However, while many colleges and universities have adopted the principles of UDI, the practice falls short of helping adults with dyslexia or LD if not accompanied with in-depth faculty training in the disability (Orr, 2008; Orr & Hammig, 2009).

Secondly, training can improve faculty relationships and support by enabling faculty members to self-evaluate their attitudes, the quality and effectiveness of accommodations and support they currently offer students with dyslexia or LD. Researchers looking at student perspectives on accommodations indicated that while faculty members consider themselves to have positive interactions with students with dyslexia or LD, the students did not feel the same way. As many as 86% of the students with dyslexia or LD reported encountering barriers in their education related to faculty attitudes and/or interactions (Cawthon, & Cole, 2010). The students reported lacking a sense of belonging because they felt that faculty members viewed them as incompetent or as unsuited to be enrolled in their class. The students also reported that they felt faculty members provided accommodations because they were legally obligated to do so, not because they saw the value in them. Furthermore, the students reported that faculty did not know how to provide accommodations or provided accommodations that were inadequate (Cawthon & Cole, 2010; Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Orr & Hammig, 2009). One student gave the example of being provided with a note taker whose handwriting was so poor; it was illegible (Cawthon, & Cole, 2010).

Thirdly, proper training can improve faculty student relationships by creating a better understanding of dyslexia and LD and dispelling some of the misconceptions and stereotypes that are held by some faculty members (May & Stone, 2010; McCleary-Jones, 2008; Orr, 2008; Wadlington, 2005). A general lack of knowledge and understanding can impact faculty attitudes toward working with the disabled students and their willingness to offer support (Connor, 2012;
Gwernan-Jones & Burden, 2010; Hadley, 2011; Orr, 2008; Orr & Hammig, 2009). Just a small sampling of the misconceptions or stereotypes associated with dyslexia or LD that impact faculty attitude include low potential for learning, low intelligence, they attempt to work the system, lazy, accommodations give them an unfair advantage over other students without disabilities, cannot succeed or hopeless. These negative views can impact attitude and willingness to provide support. These misconceptions of students with dyslexia or LD persist despite years of inclusion, research to the contrary and actual successes of other individuals with dyslexia or LD (May & Stone, 2010). Faculty members, who perceive these misconceptions as true, may be reluctant to support students with dyslexia or LD, especially if they view the student as lazy or working the system. Furthermore, Faculty attitude can attribute to whether or not a student views them as approachable which, in turn, may impact students’ decision to disclose information regarding their disabilities or to request accommodations (Orr & Goodman, 2010). Studies have shown that stereotypes come from a lack of knowledge or understanding of dyslexia or LD and are perpetuated by the fact that the disability is not one that you can see (May & Stone, 2010). Therefore, training can go far to dispel misconceptions and/or stereotypes, thus improve faculty attitudes and their relationships with the students with dyslexia or LD

**Self-determination**

Because faculty support is critical to the success of students with dyslexia and LD in achieving their higher education goals, it becomes paramount to provide in-depth training for faculty members in postsecondary educational institutions. However, it is equally important to educate the students living with the disability, not only to dispel misconceptions and stereotypes regarding intelligence and ability, but also to build confidence and self-determination. Researchers suggest that self-determination on the part of students with dyslexia and LD is
equally as critical to their success as faculty support because self-determination is necessary to overcome the many obstacles they must endure to complete their programs and graduate (Getzel & Thoma, 2008). Students with dyslexia or LD have many unique challenges related to their disability, which cannot be overcome unless they are made aware that it is possible to overcome the disability (Hadley, 2011; Orr & Goodman, 2010). In a study by Orr & Goodman, of past and present experiences of postsecondary students with LD, findings revealed lasting emotional scarring related to learning differently (Orr & Goodman, 2010). In their study, Orr and Goodman found the most powerful theme that emerged during the data analysis pertained to a “lasting emotional impact of a learning disability on participants’ emotions, identities, and self-concepts” (p 217). Additionally, 93% of the participants reported feeling stupid, embarrassed, or ashamed of their disability. Students also reported feeling defeated, something is wrong with them, scared, overwhelmed, a bad person and/or inadequate. All participants in the study said that their feelings of inadequacy, embarrassment, and frustration persisted into the postsecondary setting.

Students with dyslexia or LD are anxious to put negative past experiences from high school and earlier behind them and start new chapters in their lives (Getzel & McManus, 2005; Getzel & Thoma, 2008). Frequently, this means convincing themselves that they can make positive changes, that they do not have a disability and that they can be successful without using disability services and/or accommodations. Qualitative studies have indicated that students’ fear of prejudicial reactions from faculty influence their decisions regarding self-disclosure or self-advocacy (Denhart, 2008; May & Stone, 2010). They want to be treated with the same respect from faculty that their nondisabled peers experience and avoid being labeled. As a result, more than half of the students with dyslexia or LD decide not to disclose their disability (Wagner,
Unfortunately, in most cases, students with dyslexia or LD cannot be successful without support, often in the form of accommodations, but most students feel that faculty will view them differently once they disclose their disability. They feel that faculty will view them as stupid, lazy, working the system, not worthy of the education or questioning their belonging in the class. They often do not feel that faculty members understand. These feelings are compounded by the fact the students often feel the same way about themselves. To obtain support, these students must risk their sense of worth and/or pride and disclose their disability.

To change this destructive pattern, it is critical that students with dyslexia or LD become knowledgeable about their disability and how it impacts their learning. A good understanding of the disability can help them become confident and self-determined. It is important for these students to know that they are not dumb but intelligent and, in many cases, gifted. They must learn what the disability is and the misconceptions and stereotypes imposed on them by others who do not understand dyslexia or LD. They must learn that their reading, writing, spelling and math deficits can be remediated and they need to know how to seek the help they need to remediate those deficits. Furthermore, with knowledge, perseverance, self-determination and remediation, adults with dyslexia or LD have the potential to become more successful than their nondisabled peers (Getzel & Thoma, 2008; Orr & Goodman, 1010).

**Course Design**

The course is developed using the conceptual framework of Vygotsky’s socio cultural theory of learning. Considering Vygotsky’s principle of the zone of proximal development, the lessons are designed to extend faculty member’s current knowledge level, building on what they
already know while encouraging them to extend beyond his or her current level. Vygotsky’s theory promotes learning in the context of social interaction where the students take on the active role in learning and the teacher acts as facilitator (Jaramillo, 1996; Kapusnick & Hauslein, 2001).

In this course, faculty members will take an active role in their learning by collaborating with each other in the learning process. For example, faculty members will identify specific learning goals within their area of instruction for which students with dyslexia or LD have typically been unsuccessful in achieving. Faculty members will work together to develop new ways to present the instruction, assess student learning and accommodate needs without compromising their expectations for learning and achievement of their students.

The course was developed with four specific goals in mind. The first goal is to instill knowledge. Since stereotypes and misunderstandings stem from a lack of knowledge, this is a critical first step. To achieve this goal the course delves into history, definitions, laws, assessment, brain studies, characteristics and manifestations of the disability.

The second goal is to create a deeper understanding of dyslexia and LD: To imbue empathy and sensitivity. To achieve this, two modules are devoted to the coverage of the social, emotional, and educational impact of the disability. The modules include presentations by individuals with dyslexia and LD who will share their lived experiences. Faculty will be given an opportunity to interact with the presenters and ask pertinent questions. Additionally, the faculty will participate in a simulation experience designed to replicate some of the characteristics, challenges and frustration experienced by individuals with dyslexia and LD when interacting with language.
Providing faculty with the tools needed to apply their new knowledge and understanding is the third goal of this course. The tools needed include not only a repertoire of accommodations, but also a working knowledge of UDI principles and application. Faculty members will be taught the principles of Universal Design for Instruction UDI and how courses developed using UDI principles can benefit a diverse population of learners. The goal is not only to teach faculty members how to use UDI in their classrooms, but also to infuse a completely different way of looking at their students. If faculty members instinctively viewed their students as a diverse population of individuals worthy of an education, their curriculum, instruction and expectations would reflect that view.

The subject of UDI cannot be covered without a clear understanding what accommodations are and their place in secondary education. Most colleges and universities provide faculty members with a list of suggested accommodations to use with their students who have dyslexia or a LD and many are familiar with and attempt to use them. The course covers how to choose the correct accommodations for specific needs as well how to implement them appropriately. Faculty members will learn how to evaluate learning goals and assign specific accommodations that will not impede the measurement or achievement of that goal. Additionally, the course delves into the controversy surrounding the use of accommodations versus remediation and when accommodations enable dependence.

The fourth and final goal of the course is to provide opportunities for faculty members to apply and implement their newly acquired knowledge, understanding, and tools to the courses they are currently teaching. Faculty will be given an opportunity to redesign their courses and rewrite their lessons to include the principles of UDI with a diverse population of students’ needs in mind. They will also be given an opportunity to reflect on their goals and expectations for
students; work accommodations into their programs; and reduce the need for adults to self-disclose their disability. And finally, they will be given an opportunity to reflect on their interactions with their students and identify ways that could improve their report with students, instill trust, and encourage self-disclosure.
Chapter Three: Conclusions and Recommendations

The number of students with dyslexia or LD enrolling in postsecondary educational institutions increases each year. Reports indicate that students with dyslexia or LD make up the largest subgroup of students with disabilities in colleges and universities, as much as 10% of the student population. Disability support services are found in most colleges and universities, and offer support to all students with disabilities. Yet, a large percentage of students with dyslexia or LD are not successful. Fewer, than one fourth successfully complete their programs and/or graduate. Researchers suggest several factors contributing to this lack of success. However, the two primary barriers to success for students with dyslexia or LD are a lack of support and understanding from faculty members, and a lack of self-awareness and self-determination skills on the part of the students with the disability. In any case, a deeper understanding and knowledge of the disability is needed if students with dyslexia or LD are to be successful in their postsecondary education endeavors.

In depth training may go far to improve faculty member’s ability to offer support, but more than ability, training can go far to improve faculty attitudes toward the disability and improve relationships and interactions with the students. If students sense a positive attitude and a willingness to help from faculty members, they are more likely to self-disclose their disability, which is a requirement if they desire accommodations.

While this course addresses the critical need for teacher training, it is only one piece of the solution. It is important to note that the answer does not lie in teacher training alone, but also in student education. Many of the components included in the teacher training course must also be included in a course developed specifically to help individuals who are dyslexic or LD obtain
a deeper understanding and knowledge of the disability. Adults with learning disabilities who enroll in colleges and universities are often unprepared to meet the demands of their programs. Unaware of their true potential, they lack confidence and determination. A deeper understanding of the disability can boost their confidence and self-esteem because it will dispel any misconceptions they hold regarding the disability, such as low intelligence and unworthiness. To increase the graduation success rate of adults with dyslexia or LD in postsecondary institutions, a comprehensive program should include more than faculty training. Is should also address self-awareness on the part of the students with the disability, and include peer support, remediation of achievement deficits, and counseling. A comprehensive program could greatly increase the success rate of students with dyslexia or LD.
References


Murray, C., Christopher, Flannery, Brigid, K., & Wren, C. (2008). University staff members' attitudes and knowledge about learning disabilities and disability support services. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, vol. 21*(2)


Appendix A

Course Syllabus

TITLE: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Adult Learners with Dyslexia and/or Learning Disabilities

Number: TBD
Semester: TBD
Credits/Contact Hours: 3-Graduate Credits / 45 Contact Hours

Days and dates: TBD
Times: TBD
Location: TBD

Instructor(s):
Office Address:

Office Phone:
E-mail Address:
Office Hours:

Course description
A comprehensive course designed to create an understanding of dyslexia and learning disabilities in higher education. Course topics include the social, emotional and educational impact on students, impact on faculty members in postsecondary institutions, common perceptions and misconceptions, legislation, problems with student self-disclosure, self-advocacy and self-determination. The course will not only provide faculty members with tools needed to make appropriate accommodations when needed, but also to create inclusive educational programs, lessons and/or environments using the principals of Universal Design which can decrease the need for self-disclosure and/or special accommodations.

The course is designed for all faculty and staff members in secondary educational settings, but particularly faculty members whose backgrounds are in fields other than special education (i.e., Business, engineering, mechanics, math, music, art, counseling, etc.)

Course objectives
The student will:
1. Define dyslexia and LD.
2. Identify the characteristics and the social, emotional, and educational impact of the disability.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of common perceptions, misconceptions and stereotypes, the problems with self-disclosure and self-advocacy.
4. Define and describe legislation and inclusionary issues associated with disability rights and legislation.
5. Identify characteristics of an inclusive classroom and indicators of an inclusive mindset or attitude.
6. Plan appropriate accommodations for specific needs.
7. Apply the basic principles of Universal Design for Instruction and inclusionary practices to modify a current lesson plan, program, curriculum, or physical environment. Explain how each component meets the needs of specific characteristics associated with Dyslexia, HDD, ADHD or LD.
**Teaching Method/Class format:**
Each participant will meet in whole group or small groups a total of 45 hours over a period of one semester. Class is designed to meet on weekends to accommodate working adults enrolled in the course. Some class time will be provided for group and/or individual project completion, but students will need to spend some time outside of class completing their assignment. Students will play a role by choosing the topic and activity for their final project. All exams or quizzes are open notes and/or text. The course will use the basic principles of UDI in instructional delivery, assessment, assignment requirements, and structure of the course design.

**Textbooks:**

**Other Materials, Handouts, or Websites:**


**Course requirements**

**Assignments**

1. **Analysis of Reading Materials and Group Presentations:**
   Students will be given a study guide for the assigned text. The class will be divided into groups. Each group will provide an analysis of an assigned section of the reading material or a concept to present to the class. The group will apply the principles of UDI in the development of their presentation to the class.

2. **Journal**
   Students will keep a short journal for the purpose of notating thoughts and reflections regarding their own experiences teaching adults with dyslexia or LD, both identified or unidentified. The purpose is to create self-awareness of personal attitudes, perceptions, etc. toward disabilities, and to promote the application of new learning and awareness.

3. **Quizzes:**
   Students will be given 1 quiz each weekend (4 quizzes total) on the content of the course. All quizzes will be short and open-book and/or open notes. Since the purpose of the quizzes is to focus student attention on specific facts or concepts, quizzes can be retaken up to 3 times for improved score.

4. **Final Project.** Given instructor approval, a set of criteria, a set of guidelines and a list of suggestions, students will choose the topic and format of their final project. Through the project, the student will analyze and synthesize what they have learned about the characteristics, perceptions, misperceptions, stereotypes, accommodations and legislation and apply the
principles of UDI to their current classroom and population of adult learners. The intent is to promote the development of inclusive classroom environments, positive attitudes, positive faculty-student relationships and self-disclosure on the part of the student. Projects will be presented on the last weekend of the course.

**Attendance and class participation**

Students are required to attend all classes and to participate in class discussions, small group activities, practicum, and scheduled tutor meetings. In the case of severe illness or family emergency, students will need to set up a time for individual instruction. In the case of conflicts or non-severe illness, students will need to set up a time for individual instruction.

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are required to attend all classes and to participate in class discussions, and small group activities. In the case of severe illness or family emergency, Students will need to contact the instructor for make-up.

**Student progress - Evaluation and Grading Procedures:**

A. Grades will be based upon quality of work with components weighted as follows:

1. Group Presentation 20%
2. Class Participation 15%
3. Journal Reflections 15%
4. Quizzes 20%
5. Project 30%

Grades are differentiated on the basis of quality. Quantity alone is not a significant factor for grade differentiation.

B. Grading System:

1. A Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 95%
2. A- Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 90%
3. B+ Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 87%
4. B Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 84%
5. B- Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 80%
6. C+ Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 77%
7. C Completion of all assignments with a minimum average of 74%

**Late Work and Make-up:**

Students are to be prepared for each class session however, extenuating circumstances do occur. In an effort to be fair, workable, and equitable, the following policies have been designed to deal with those situations.

1. Demonstrations missed will be made up during the next class session.
2. If there are any doubts about missing assignments, materials, etc., the student should see the instructor.

**Academic Honesty and Integrity Statement:**

Students are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity as students by doing their own work to the best of their ability.

**Final Examination Policy:**

The Project will be used as the Final Examination grade.
## Course outline

### Weekend 1

**Friday (date TBD) 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

**Saturday (date TBD) 9:00 am to 3:30 pm**

### Objectives

Faculty members will:

1. Reflect on prior knowledge of dyslexia, learning disabilities, and attention deficit disorder by completing a short test and by compiling a list of facts.
2. Raise self-awareness of their attitudes, beliefs and current teaching practices by completing a journal entry at key points throughout the day and at the end of each day.
3. Define dyslexia and LD.
4. Identify the characteristics and the social, emotional, and educational impact of the disability.

### Summary:

The first goal for this course is to instill knowledge. Since stereotypes and misunderstandings stem from a lack of knowledge, this is a critical first step. To achieve this goal the course delves into history, definitions, laws, assessment, brain studies, characteristics and manifestations of the disability. More importantly, students are asked to begin a journal that will be kept throughout the course. The purpose of the journal is threefold. First, journaling will be used to tap into prior knowledge. Students will list everything they know about dyslexia, learning disabilities, attention deficit and other key topics. Secondly, the students will journal to become more self-aware of good or bad habits, thoughts and attitudes regarding the topic of adults with disabilities and postsecondary education. The idea is that to change yourself and get rid of bad habits, first you have to track yourself. Humans are such forgetful and unconscious creatures; we don't always realize who we are or how we're behaving. So we need to keep track of ourselves. Some faculty members will realize that they are already practicing effective teaching methods for students with disabilities. Likewise, some faculty members may come to realize that their teaching methods are not as effective. This heightened awareness may instill a desire to change.

### Module 1

**Introduction:**

- Participant Introductions
- Course Syllabus
- Course Goals
- Texts and materials
- Assignments
- Assessment

### Module 2

**Dyslexia**

- Definitions and Labeling
- Brain Studies
- Intelligence
- Giftedness
- Identification
- Dyslexia vs. LD
### Module 3
**Other Learning Disabilities**
- Reading Disability
- Reading Disorder
- Specific Learning Disability
- Other

### Module 4
**Characteristics and the Impact on Learning**
- Reading
- Math
- Writing
- Time and Space
- Memory

### Module 5
**Attention Deficit**
- ADD
- ADHD
- Impact on Learning
- Treatment

### Weekend 2
**Friday (date TBD) 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**
**Saturday (date TBD) 9:00 am to 3:30 pm**

#### Objectives
Faculty members will:
1. Site common stereotypes misperceptions surrounding dyslexia and LD and discuss the origins and implications.
2. Identify the academic challenges that are associated with each characteristic of dyslexia.
3. Identify specific areas in the courses they are currently teaching that could present a challenge to adults with dyslexia or LD.

#### Summary:
The second goal of this course is to create a deeper understanding of dyslexia and LD: To imbue empathy and sensitivity. To achieve this, two weekends and five modules are devoted to the coverage of the social, emotional, and educational impact of the disability. The topic begins with a review of characteristic and moves right into a simulation workshop. Faculty will participate in several activities intended to provide some of the characteristics and frustrations experienced by individuals with dyslexia or LD. Next, Faculty members will listen to personal accounts of struggles, gifts and challenges experienced by individuals with the disability. The modules include presentations by individuals with dyslexia and LD who will share their lived experiences. Faculty will be given an opportunity to interact with the presenters and ask pertinent questions. Additionally, the faculty will participate in a simulation experience designed to replicate some of the characteristics, challenges and frustration experienced by individuals with dyslexia and LD when interacting with language. Again, faculty will record their reflections within their journal entries. They will be given opportunities to share their reflections on a volunteer basis.
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<th>Module 7</th>
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<th>Module 9</th>
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Weekend 3
Friday (date TBD) 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Saturday (date TBD) 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

Objectives
Faculty members will:

1. Define and describe legislation and inclusionary issues associated with disability rights and legislation.
2. Site the principles of UDI.
3. Given a list of characteristics and its impact on learning, will choose from a list or develop three possible accommodations for each sited problem.
4. After reflecting on their current teaching practices and beliefs, will identify possible changes or modifications to meet the needs of individuals with dyslexia or LD, as well as other students who make up a diverse population.

Summary:
Providing faculty with the tools needed to apply their new knowledge and understanding is the third goal of this course. The tools needed include not only a repertoire of accommodations, but also a working knowledge of UDI principles and application. Faculty members will be taught the principles of Universal Design for Instruction UDI and how courses developed using UDI principles can benefit a diverse population of learners. The goal is not only to teach faculty members how to use UDI in their classrooms, but also to infuse a completely different way of looking at their students. If faculty members instinctively viewed their students as a diverse population of individuals worthy of an education, their curriculum, instruction and expectations would reflect that view.

Additionally, the subject of UDI cannot be covered without a clear understanding what accommodations are and their place in secondary education. Faculty will learn how to choose the correct accommodations to meet specific needs as well how to implement them appropriately. Faculty members will learn how to evaluate learning goals and assign specific accommodations that will not impede the measurement or achievement of that goal. The modules delve into the controversy surrounding the use of accommodations versus remediation and when accommodations enable dependence.

Module 10
Treatment and Solutions:
- Remediation vs. Accommodation
- Public Schools Perspective
- Direct Instruction
- Controversy and Politics

Module 11
Federal and State Legislation
- PL 94-142
- ADA
- IDEA
- 504

Module 12
Disability Support Services
- Goal/Mission
- Expectations
- Accommodations
- Consultation
- Population Served
Weekend 4
Friday (date TBD) 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Saturday (date TBD) 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

Objectives
Faculty members will:

1. Describe the controversy over accommodations.
2. After reflecting on their current teaching practices and beliefs, identify changes or modifications to meet the needs of individuals with dyslexia or LD, as well as other students who make up a diverse population.
3. Identify characteristics of an inclusive classroom and indictors of an inclusive mindset or attitude.
4. Given a list of characteristics and its impact on learning, students will choose from a list or develop three possible accommodations for each sited problem.
5. Plan and implement changes to their current curriculum, instruction, expectations and assessment that are consistent with the principles of UDI as applied to meeting the needs of students with dyslexia and LD.
6. Apply the basic principles of Universal Design for Instruction and inclusionary practices to modify a current lesson plan, program, curriculum, or physical environment. Explain how each component meets the needs of specific characteristics associated with Dyslexia, HDD, ADHD or LD.

Summary:
The fourth and final goal of the course is to provide opportunities for faculty members to apply and implement their newly acquired knowledge, understanding, and tools to the courses they are currently teaching. Faculty will be given an opportunity to redesign their courses and rewrite their lessons to include the principles of UDI with a diverse population of students' needs in mind. They will also be given an opportunity to reflect on their goals and expectations for students; work accommodations into their programs; and reduce the need for adults to self-disclose their disability. And finally, they will be given an opportunity to reflect on their interactions with their students and identify ways that could improve their report with students, instill trust, and encourage self-disclosure. Faculty members will work in groups and help each other make additions and modifications to their instruction to meet the needs of their disabled students.

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<th>Module 14</th>
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<td>UDI – Mindset and Attitude</td>
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### Weekend 5

**Friday** (date TBD) 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm  
**Saturday** (date TBD) 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

**Module 15**  
**Project Presentations:**  
Faculty members will be given an opportunity to share reflections recorded in their journal and share changes and growth in their perceptions regarding dyslexia or LD. They will also use this weekend to present their projects to the class.

UW-Platteville grading system as follows:

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**NOTE:** Students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills are encouraged and have the responsibility to contact the Office of Continuing Education toll free 888-281-9472 regarding reasonable accommodation needs. Students requiring reasonable accommodation needs must be registered as a student with a disability. Please contact Roxanne Vedvig at the Continuing Education Office.