### INSTRUCTOR:
Kanisha J. Porter, PhD  
Phone: 281-928-0212  
Email address: porterkj@stthom.edu  
Office Hours: By appointment

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| Social Justice Tenets | Selected social justice teachings of the Catholic Church are used to inform the School of Education and Human Services programs. As educators, the tenets of social justice should play a pivotal role in decision-making strategies in Catholic, private, and public schools of all levels.  
**Subsidiarity:** Educational institutions should be organized and governed as much as possible by the community being served; education should only be controlled at higher levels of society when it cannot be done effectively locally.  
**Dignity and rights of children:** Children possess full human dignity and are bearers of rights which should be recognized and upheld in the educational process.  
**People have a right to an education:** All people have a responsibility, for the good of society, to contribute to and foster education. |
Course Description

The course is designed to enhance students’ understanding of differentiating instruction, the rationale for its use, and how to differentiate instruction. Students’ understanding of the ‘how to’ of differentiation is multifaceted. This includes an understanding of what is most important for students to learn, the critical importance of assessment for differentiating instruction and various assessment strategies that can be used in support of differentiating instruction, differentiation instructional strategies, and classroom management strategies that support differentiating instruction. The course will provide students with an opportunity to analyze, apply, and evaluate various approaches and methods for differentiating classroom instruction to help better meet the needs of all learners, including special needs learners and English Language Learners. Finally, a major focus of the course will be on students investigating and developing differentiated strategies and lessons.

National/State/Professional Association Standards Guiding Course

**TExES PEDAGOGY AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (EC-12)**

**COMPETENCIES:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

**Domain I**
- Design instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment.

**Domain II**
- Create a classroom environment of respect and rapport that fosters a positive climate for learning, equity, and excellence by
  - Using knowledge of the unique characteristics and needs of students at different developmental levels to establish a positive, productive classroom environment (e.g., encourages cooperation and sharing among younger students; provides middle-level students with opportunities to collaborate with peers, encourages older students’ respect for the community and the people in it).
  - Establishing a classroom that emphasizes collaboration and supportive interactions, respect for diversity and individual differences, and active engagement in learning by all students.
  - Using a variety of means to convey high expectations for all students
  - Knowing characteristics of physical spaces that are safe and productive for learning, recognizing the benefits and limitations of various arrangements of furniture in the classroom and applying strategies for organizing the physical
environment to ensure physical accessibility and to facilitate learning in various instructional contexts.

- Creating a safe and nurturing inclusive classroom environment that addresses student’s emotional needs and respects students’ rights and dignity.
- Organizing and managing group activities that promote students’ ability to work together cooperatively and productively, assume responsible roles and develop collaborative skills and individual accountability.

**Domain III**

- Promote student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high-quality feedback by
  - Employing various instructional techniques and varying teacher and student roles in the instructional process and providing instruction that promotes intellectual involvement and active student engagement and learning
  - Applying various strategies to promote student engagement and learning (e.g., by structuring lessons effectively, using flexible instructional groupings, pacing lesson flexibly in response to student needs, including wait time).
  - Applying criteria for evaluating the appropriateness of instructional activities, materials, resources, and technologies for students with varied characteristics and needs.
  - Engaging in continuous monitoring of instructional effectiveness.
  - Creating assessments that are congruent with instructional goals and objectives and communicating assessment criteria and standards to students based on high expectations for learning.
  - Responding flexibly to various situations (e.g., lack of student engagement in an activity, the occurrence of an unanticipated learning opportunity, etc.) and adjusts instructional approaches based on ongoing assessment of student performance.
  - Engaging in reflection and self-assessment to identify strengths, challenges, and potential problems, to improve teaching performance, and to achieve professional goals.

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**Course Objectives/Learner Outcomes**

**Upon completion of this course, the student will:**

1. Explain differentiating instruction
2. Discuss the rationale for differentiating instruction and its relationship to the curricular framework
3. Describe the role that assessment plays in differentiating instruction and describe assessment strategies
4. List ten differentiating strategies
5. List five classroom management strategies that support differentiating
6. Analyze the instructional factors that can be used to help differentiate instruction
7. Develop plans for differentiating instruction that respond to individual learner needs including:
   (a) Assessment of learning preferences of students
   (b) Assessment of the academic needs of students
   (c) Assessment of the interests and social needs of students
   (d) Assessment of the grade level TEKS
   (e) Plan teaching/learning activities which consider multiple intelligences
   (f) Plan a classroom which incorporates the key principles of differentiated instruction
   (g) Plan a room arrangement for differentiating instruction
   (h) Plan differentiated lessons

8. Differentiate instruction by:
   (a) Using a variety instructional approaches to accommodate various learning and instructional needs
   (b) Setting up various groupings for instruction and study
   (c) Arranging individualized contracts with students
   (d) Adjusting teaching methods and materials to meet individual needs of learners

**METHODOLOGY/TECHNOLOGY**
This is an on-line course. Blackboard (BB) will be used as the course delivery and management tool. Students will be expected to utilize BB on a regular basis. Components of BB that will be used on a regular basis include the Announcements, Syllabus, Discussion Board, and Course Documents (for specific assignments and course materials). You are expected to be active learners and submit your assignments on time via. You are expected to download course documents and keep up with the assigned readings.

**Major Assignments**

You will find specific weekly assignments in the Course Documents section of BB. All assignments must be completed and submitted on the due date. A description of each type of assignment follows.

**Discussion Board Assignments**: Students are expected to ‘log-on’ on a regular basis (at least three times a week) and to be active and thoughtful discussion board participants. Weeks run from Tuesday to Tuesday—starting May 31st.

Assigned readings and postings are to be completed within the specified time period so that discussions related to the assignments may occur. If for some reason you will be unable to log-on at least three times in any week, please notify your instructor, as soon as possible. Appropriate contributions should always be professional and courteous (e.g., no personal attacks).
Before doing the Discussion Board Postings for each learning module:

- Read assigned chapters and other readings (if applicable).

**For your discussion board first postings, your thread must be at least 245 words in length and reference at least two course resources—readings by page number and Power Points by slide number.** You must also respond (by clicking on reply) to at least two peers. Your responses to peers must be substantial. If you miss two Discussions in a row the course instructor will assume you have dropped the course, unless you have notified her in advance.

Your discussion board participation represents 30% of your course grade. A grading rubric for discussion board assignments is in the Syllabus section of Blackboard.

**Other Assignments listed under the “Assignments” tab for each learning module.** For these assignments, simply answer the questions and submit. These assignments represent 15% of your course grade (specific points are noted in BB).

**Plan a DI Lesson.** For this assignment, you will plan a lesson (i.e., not just use a strategy) in your classroom using a differentiated instructional approach. If you are not currently teaching, this assignment involves your planning a differentiated lesson in a content area that reflects your level of ‘readiness with the curriculum’. Whether your DI lesson is a real lesson or one based on your understanding of curriculum, your lesson can reflect any of the possible ways to differentiate in Tomlinson’s content-process-product by readiness-interest-learning profile matrix.

For your lesson plan, use your school or school district’s format. The lesson plan should include the following information (each numbered item on the following list should have a corresponding number on the lesson plan you use to verify where it has been addressed):

1. In view of Tomlinson’s matrix, how you will be differentiating your lesson.
2. The grade level and content area of your lesson and any important background information about your students.
3. Your specific instructional objective(s) and your TEKS objective(s), if applicable.
4. What will be acceptable evidence that your students mastered the lesson’s objective(s)—that is, how you will assess your students’ learning/mastery of the content and the grading rubric/criteria you will use to do this.
5. Any special preparations or materials you have to make/gather ahead of time for your lesson
6. Any pre-assessment you will do before your lesson. This pre-assessment can address student readiness, interests, or learning profiles.
7. A step-by-step description of your instructional activities—including your opening activity, what you will differentiate, how you will differentiate, what the students will do, and how what students will do will vary.

Grading for this assignment will be based on the extent to which your lesson plan addresses all
seven items above, the clarity and specificity of your lesson plan, and the extent to which the lesson plan builds on student variance in a creative and manageable/feasible way. This assignment represents 15% of your course grade.

**Participating in Field Experience:** For this assignment, you will spend at least an hour observing/assisting in a classroom where differentiating instruction is being implemented. You should complete a brief, one-page summary of each lesson you observe or assist with as part of this assignment. In your summary you should indicate what aspects of classroom practices were differentiated, what impressed you about the differentiation of instruction occurring in the lesson, and what ideas you would have for improving the differentiation of instruction in the lesson you observed/assisted.

To determine if a class qualifies as a ‘differentiating classroom’, both the classroom teacher and a campus administrator should attest to such practices occurring in the class. Care should also be taken to observe/assist in a particular classroom when differentiation is occurring within a particular lesson/instructional activity or set of activities.

Please complete a form for your fieldwork experience. A fieldwork documentation form is included in the Orientation Module for this course. This one form may list multiple lessons which you observed/assisted within this one classroom.

This assignment represents 10% of your course grade.

**FINAL EXAM** (30% of course grade):

The final exam is an on-line exam, and will serve as a cognitive organizer for your course experience. It will require critical and higher order thinking skills. The exam will draw on what you have learned from your course related readings, your completion of the assignments, and your active and thoughtful participation in discussion boards and the other assignments. The exam will consist of short essay questions and address course essential understandings. You will complete your final exam and submit it on the last day of class (August 2nd).

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**Grading Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>Numeric Range Set by Instructor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>95-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>88-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>84-87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>80-83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>78-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>74-77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>70-73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>68-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>65-67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Below 65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading:

1. Discussion Boards (30pts)
2. DI Lesson Plan (15pts)
3. Field Experience (10pts)
4. Assignments (15pts)
5. Final Exam (30pts)

TOTAL=100pts

Student Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that will impact your work in this class, please contact your instructor to discuss your needs. Additionally, you will need to register with the University of St. Thomas Counseling and Disability Services Office in Crooker Center. This office can be reached at (713) 525-2169 or 6953.

Professional Standards of Behavior for Students and Faculty

| Academic Integrity | Taking credit for any thought, idea, or work that is not your own is plagiarism. Any instance of academic dishonesty will be documented and reported to the Dean of the School of Education and Human Services. Students will be informed of this action and must submit a written response to the charge. The instructor has the right to fail the student for the specific project or the entire course. When writing any paper, reference your information, websites, books, etc. that is not your own. Be sure you cite properly and accordingly. Please refer to the APA manual or its website to cite accordingly. |
| Other Issues | In all written work, grammar, sentence structure, organization, and spelling will be of such quality as to be an outstanding model for other educators. All work should be original and prepared solely for the designated assignment. It is the instructor’s policy that late assignments will not be accepted. Exceptions to this policy are only allowed due to individual extenuating circumstances. It will be at the discretion of the instructor to accept or not to accept late assignments and to make appropriate point deductions for lateness. |
All email correspondence will be through the my.stthom email system. Please check your email through your my.stthom account daily for correspondence and announcements OR have your StThom e-mail account forwarded to an e-mail account that you check regularly.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Information on Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Module</td>
<td>June 2nd</td>
<td>Read the course syllabus and grading rubrics and let the course instructor know if you have any questions about them. Post, in Orientation Learning Module Discussion Board Forum on BB, biography information about yourself. Please include information about the extent of your experience with on-line courses, your current teaching position (if applicable), your general location, your strengths as a student/professional, and your professional interests related to your career and this course. By everyone introducing themselves and reading each other’s biography information, you will get to know your classmates. Explore the contents of the course on Blackboard. More specifically, check out the various sections of BB and their contents. If you have questions, please contact your course instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Module (LM) #1- The Differentiating Instruction (DI) Framework: What It Is and Its Beliefs and Rationale; Assignment in LM 1; DB#1</td>
<td>June 7th</td>
<td>Read your Tomlinson &amp; Imbeau (T&amp; I) textbook chapters on Understanding Differentiation in Order to Lead and Teaching What You Believe Go to LM#1 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#2- The DI Teacher and Learning Environment; Assignment in LM 2; DB #2</td>
<td>June 7th</td>
<td>Read your Tomlinson (T) textbook chapters on The Role of the Teacher in a Differentiated Classroom, The Learning Environment in a Differentiated Classroom, and A Look Inside Some Differentiated Classrooms Education. Also, read your T&amp;I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module Number</td>
<td>Module Title</td>
<td>Reading Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>LM#3</td>
<td>Planning lessons Differentiated by Readiness; Assignment in LM 3; DB#3</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Learning Environment. Go to LM#2 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#4</td>
<td>Planning Lessons Differentiated by Interests; Assignment in LM 4; DB#4</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Planning Lessons Differentiated by Readiness. Go to LM#4 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#5</td>
<td>Planning Lessons Differentiated by Learning Profile; Assignment in LM 5; DB#5</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Planning Lessons Differentiated by Learning Profile. Go to LM#5 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#6</td>
<td>Differentiating Content; Assignment in LM 6; DB #6</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Differentiating Content. Go to LM#6 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LM#7</td>
<td>Differentiating Process; Assignment in LM 7; DB #7</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Differentiating Process. Go to LM#7 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LM#8</td>
<td>Differentiating Products; Assignment in LM 8; DB #8</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Differentiating Products. Go to LM#8 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#9</td>
<td>Classroom Management Strategies for a DI Classroom; Assignment in LM 9; DB#9</td>
<td>Read your T&amp;I textbook chapter on Classroom Routines and Routines in a Differentiated Classroom. Also read in your T&amp;I textbook the chapter on Strategies for Managing a Differentiated Classroom. Go to LM#9 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#10</td>
<td>Grading and Related Issues in a DI Classroom; Assignment in LM 10; DB #10</td>
<td>Read your textbook chapter on Grading in a Differentiated Classroom. Also read in your T&amp;I textbook the chapter on Yes But… Common Sticking Points regarding Grading to the Concluding Thoughts section of the chapter. Go to LM#10 section of Course Documents in BB for your specific assignments for this module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete final exam located in BB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM#11</td>
<td>Alternative Approaches to DI: Retrofitting and Majority Rules</td>
<td>This is FYI, not a grade. Go to LM#11 section of Course Documents in BB and review the PP.</td>
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Please note that this syllabus was developed building on the prior work of Dr. Soffer.