

## *Course Syllabus*

**COURSE NUMBER: SOCS 5970 COURSE TITLE: The Gifted Learner**

**TERM: Fall 2005 SITE: Webster Hall 324 INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**1. Course Description:** This course is designed to present students with an overview of research and current issues in the field of gifted education. Students will explore the latest in intellectual, social and emotional development of gifted students. Programs, teaching methods, best practices, and curriculum for the gifted will be presented. *The Gifted Learner* is an introductory course to the field of gifted education and is a recognized gifted certification course.

### **2. Learning Outcomes:**

**Course Outcomes MoSTEP/ Prof Standards Addressed**

1. Evaluate contrasting definitions of “gifted” and determine appropriate definition, along with associated characteristics and vocabulary. MS 1, 2, 32. Recognize the special needs of gifted student in the educational areas of curriculum and instruction, and affective domains. MS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 3. Identify key issues effecting gifted education. MS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 74. Become aware of the unique needs of special populations: culturally diverse, gifted females, gifted males, underachievers, highly gifted, and twice exceptional. MS 2, 3, 5, 65. Become knowledgeable of the leaders in the field of gifted education, and a historical perspective of the field. MS 1, 10

(Standards at end of document)

Schedule of required readings, class preparations and assignments, lectures, discussions, student presentations, out-of-class assignments and exams.

Week 1:	Class introductions and overview of course and requirements. Understanding the definition of and terms related to giftedness What does it mean to be gifted? Barriers to appropriate education Reading for tonight's class: Growing Up Gifted, Chapter One
Week 2:	Characteristics of gifted learners, related needs, concomitant problems Defining giftedness: Identification, gifted programming options Highly and exceptionally gifted individuals Aspects of Creativity, Leadership Assignment: Identify and analyze three area gifted programs Reading for tonight's class: Growing Up Gifted, Chapters 2 and 3 Supporting research articles provided by instructor: Silverman, Tolan
Week 3:	Social-emotional development of gifted students Perfectionism, motivation Friendships, Peer relationships Reading for tonight's class: Growing Up Gifted, Chapters 4 and 5 Supporting research articles provided by instructor: DeLisle, Webb
Week 4:	Support systems for the gifted Gender Issues, Counseling the Gifted Parenting the gifted child, Competition Reading: Growing Up Gifted, Chapters 6 and 7 Supporting research articles provided by instructor: Reis, Silverman
Week 5:	Optimizing learning for gifted students Underachievers, Gifted Learners with Disabilities

Reading: Growing Up Gifted, Chapters 8 and 9  
Supporting research articles provided by instructor, Rimm, DeLisle

Week 6: Differentiation strategies for gifted learners, compacting, acceleration  
Content, Curriculum, and Instruction  
Assessment, Alternative performance based and authentic, rubrics  
Reading: Growing Up Gifted, Chapters 10  
Supporting research articles provided by instructor: Tomlinson, Renzulli

Week 7: Issues and Concerns in the Education of Gifted Learners  
Current legislation concerns  
Advocacy for gifted education  
Reading: Growing Up Gifted, Chapter 11  
Supporting research articles provided by instructor

Week 8: Project presentations  
Evaluation and Reflection

### 3. RESOURCES:

Required Text(s): Growing Up Gifted by Barbara Clark

Supplemental Readings: Articles from contemporary gifted education journals, Internet resources, handouts provided by instructor each week to support course focus

### 4. EVALUATION: (basis of evaluation with explanation regarding the nature of the assignment and the percentage of the grade assigned to each item below)

Assessments	Links to Course Outcomes	Percentage of Grade	Term Paper
In-depth research paper on self-selected component of giftedness	Outcomes 1 - 530%	Class presentations sharing curriculum project and term paper	Outcomes 1 - 510%
Curriculum project – modifications to curriculum unit incorporating gifted strategies	Outcomes 2, 3, 4, 530%	Students will visit one week-day or Saturday program for gifted students, record observations, and personal recommendations for curricular modification to meet needs of gifted students.	Outcomes 1 - 420%
Class Participation and Regular Attendance	Outcomes 1 - 510%		

6. GRADING SCALE: Rubrics will be shared with participants at the first class. 90% = A 80% = B 70% = C

**Note: ALL PAPERS/PROJECTS MAY BE RETURNED VIA A SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE. PAPERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR PICK-UP IN THE SOE OFFICE.**

### 5. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

**Students at Webster University are expected to practice academic honesty.**

#### **Avoiding Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is intentionally claiming that another person's work is his/her own or implying that another person's work is his/her own (through inadequate or inaccurate citations of reference material.)

Students:

- Should not copy whole portions of text from another source as a major component of papers or projects.
- Should identify the title, author, page number/webpage address, and publication date of works when directly quoting small portions of texts, articles, interviews, or websites.

- Should appropriately identify the source of information when paraphrasing (restating) ideas from texts, interviews, articles, or websites.
- Should follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association Style Guide when referencing all research sources.

For further information about the consequences of academic dishonesty please consult the Webster University Student Handbook.

#### 6. ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMODATIONS POLICY:

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations contact the Director of the Academic Resource Center, Dr. Pat McLeese, at (314) 968-7495.

**WEBSTER UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**Vision:** “. . . We all must work to make this world worthy of its children.” (Casals, 1970)

**Mission:** The School of Education at Webster University provides its students with the knowledge, experiences, and practical tools that help them guide both themselves and others toward lifelong learning. The School of Education is a community of educator-scholars who apply critical reflections and creative energies to enhance learning in schools and other educational settings. The faculty strives to support this community by modeling effective teaching practices based on sound theory and research. Personalized approaches create a challenging, yet supportive environment that permits the risk-taking necessary for learning and growth. The School of Education encourages its faculty and students to work actively toward this end, keeping in mind that action must be rooted in visionary, yet realistic, thinking. This thought and action process underscores the development of an inner-directed self-understanding, an outer-directed global perspective, and an appreciation of human diversity that arises from both.

**Theme:** Developing a world of learners through knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning.

The universal mandala (a circle with intersecting vertical and horizontal lines) graphically represents the conceptual framework of the School of Education. The outer circle provides the framework for a “world of learners” in cultural settings. The two axes represent the theme components of knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning. These lines are broken to emphasize the fluid relationship of the goals and integrated concepts. Each quadrant represents one of the school's four goals for its candidates: to develop knowledgeable learners, informed instructors, reflective collaborators, and responsive educators.

## **Goals**

1. Education candidates will demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the learner, and knowledge of pedagogy based on inquiry and scholarship.

### The knowledgeable learner:

- 1.1 knows content that supports conceptual understanding;
- 1.2 applies tools of inquiry to construct meaningful learning experiences;
- 1.3 identifies developmental factors in student learning; and
- 1.4 understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.

2. Education candidates will incorporate multiple assessment and instructional strategies to support effective educational practices based on research and theory.

### The informed instructor:

- 2.1 designs curriculum based on students' prior knowledge, learning styles, strengths, and needs;
- 2.2 understands and uses a range of instructional strategies;
- 2.3 uses a variety of communication modes, media, and technology to support student learning; and
- 2.4 employs a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor learning and modify instruction.

3. Education candidates will reflect on the roles educators take as leaders of change through collaboration with colleagues, students, and families in schools and communities.

### The reflective collaborator:

- 3.1 values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional;
- 3.2 promotes communication and collaboration with colleagues, families, and community leaders;
- 3.3 seeks relationships with families and students to support student learning; and
- 3.4 initiates change that benefits students and their families.

4. Education candidates will demonstrate respect for diversity through responsive teaching and learning that values individual differences.

### The responsive educator:

- 4.1 understands and responds appropriately to issues of diversity
- 4.2 acknowledges social and cultural contexts to create effective teaching and learning environments;
- 4.3 adapts instruction to the learner's knowledge, ability, and background experience; and
- 4.4 identifies resources for specialized services when needed.

## **Dispositions:**

NCATE defines dispositions as “the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. “ (Professional Standards, p. 53) There is significant value in focusing attention on qualities that make an effective teacher.

1. Understands and Respects Self
  - 1.1 Understands and respects that s (he) may be different from others
  - 1.2 Embraces an openness to change (adaptability, flexibility)
  - 1.3 Exhibits curiosity
  - 1.4 Engages in reflection
  
2. Understands and Respects Others
  - 2.1 Understands, respects, and responds appropriately to diversity in a variety of settings
  - 2.2 Exhibits empathy
  - 2.3 Commits to fairness and honesty
  - 2.4 Listens respectfully to other points of view
  
3. Understands and Respects Professional Communities
  - 3.1 Commits to professional behavior in university and school cultures
  - 3.2 Practices informed decision-making in university and school cultures
  - 3.3 Communicates and collaborates in university and school cultures
  - 3.4 Accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/ high expectations)
  - 3.5 Affects change with courage and confidence

### **MoSTEP Standards**

1. The pre-service teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) within the context of a global society and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.2. The pre-service teacher understands how students learn and develop and provides learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.3. The pre-service teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners4. The pre-service teacher recognizes the importance of long-range planning and curriculum development and develops, implements, and evaluates curriculum based upon student, district, and states performance standards.5. The pre-service teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.6. The pre-service teacher uses an understanding of individuals and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation7. The pre-service teacher models effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.8. The pre-service teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner9. The pre-service teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually assesses the effects of choices and actions on others. This reflective practitioner actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally and utilizes the assessment and professional growth to generate more learning for more students.10. The pre-service teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and educational partners in the larger community to support student learning and well being.