

University of Massachusetts Boston
Graduate College of Education
Department: Institute for Community Inclusion

Professional Development course name: Secondary Transition Topics
Course Number - TBD
Semester and Year: Spring 2012

Syllabus

Instructors:

Section A

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Course description: This professional development course is one of four courses offered to Massachusetts teachers and counselors who are interested in increasing their competencies in transition related practices. The courses are funded through a federally funded state improvement grant referred to as Massachusetts Focus Academy. Participants of these courses are developing the knowledge and skills needed to successfully support transition age students with disabilities.

The Transition Topics course covers a wide range of topics that influence secondary transition for students with disabilities. This course will provide an overview of transition-related laws and will include strategies to promote self-determination, interagency collaboration, and family involvement in the transition planning process. Additional topics include guardianship, social security and disability benefits, healthcare issues that impact transition, community living options, social networks, transportation, technology and accommodations, transition assessments and assisting in the realization of person centered planning.

This course follows the professional standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (<http://www.ncate.org/index.htm>), the University of Massachusetts/Boston Graduate College of Education Program Conceptual Framework of Thoughtful and Responsive Educators (<http://www.gcoe.umb.edu/>), the recommended standards and

indicators of the National Alliance on Secondary Education and Transition (<http://www.nasetalliance.org/>) the transition competencies outlined by the Council for Exceptional Children (http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/info_briefs/dcdt/trans_educators.htm) and the culturally responsive practices outline by The Education Alliance at Brown University (<http://www.alliance.brown.edu/tcl/tl-strategies/crt-principles.shtml>).

Course Objectives:

Participants will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and integration of the framework, standards and indicators of the National Alliance of Secondary Education and Alliance (NASET), in secondary curriculum (see above).
2. Utilize material and instructional strategies that build on students' strengths and prior knowledge.
3. Demonstrate, in verbal presentations and written documents, that they accommodated, and responded to differences in students' communication, thinking, and cultural values.
4. Demonstrate, through written products, concrete ways in which they will facilitate change in the post-school academic, social, and employment outcomes for students with disabilities
5. Discuss the challenges of formal assessments including gender, class and ability biases.
6. Understand adult service agencies' role in transition and how these agencies use assessment for placement and services decisions.
7. Evaluate cultural-ethnic and socioeconomic factors that contribute to family involvement in transition planning and development of career/ postsecondary educational goals of the secondary learner with disabilities.
8. Demonstrate familiarity with issues that influence (positively and negatively) transition success for students with disabilities.
9. Demonstrate competence in integrating transition related information (topics/lessons) into general curriculum.
10. Develop a transition packet to prepare students and their parents for the knowledge and advocacy they will need to pursue student's transition and postschool goals.

Selected online readings for class (comprehensive list in course schedule located in this syllabus)

Transition Specialist Competencies

http://www.educ.kent.edu/cite/ttw/trans_competencies.pdf

Morningstar, M.E. & Kleinhammer-Tramill, J. (2005). Professional Development for Transition Personnel: Current Issues and Strategies for Success. Information brief, 4(4). National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. Retrieved on Jan. 14, 2007 at <http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=2440>

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition
<http://www.ncset.org/>

Brown University/LAB:
<http://www.alliance.brown.edu/tdl/tl-strategies/crt-principles.shtml>

Recommendations for use of online technology:

Access to a high-speed Internet connection (DSL) is desirable to take full advantage of the online course management system (e.g., MassONE) used to enhance instruction and learning in this course. While dial-up service is sufficient for many online tasks, DSL will increase speed and reduce frustration when trying to download documents and engaging in threaded discussions (for example).

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Massachusetts Online Network for Educators, Moodle

This class uses an online course management system which participants will be required to access. All course lessons, assignments, online references and the course syllabus will be posted on this website. In addition, electronic versions of the course readings, video clips and other assigned readings will be posted to this site. Please check the website weekly, at a minimum, to check for announcements and group discussion assignments.

Class website: The website for this class is located at <http://massone.mass.edu/>The course syllabus, lessons, assignments, and online references will be posted on this site, as will electronic versions of assigned and suggested readings (and video clips, etc.). Participants are expected to check the website several times a week for readings, announcements and group discussion assignments.

Online communication: In addition to the course website, the class will use a course management system through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Participants will receive written instruction and a PowerPoint presentation on accessing the online class, as well as a course password,

Required assignments (Due dates indicated in assignment packet)

Class participation This class is designed to be highly interactive. The weekly format for the class will include an introduction on a topic, an in-class or videotaped interview with a guest speaker who has expertise or specific insight on a topic, selected readings, a follow-up threaded discussion and a written reflection on the topic. Participation in threaded discussions and online communications is expected of every participant. A percentage of the grade for this class comes from participants' active involvement in class activities and clear evidence that the participant is making connections to their own classrooms or in their own schools.

Online discussion and written reflections: All participants will be expected to participate in online discussions to discuss weekly readings, and to submit reflections. Please refer to course calendar for specific due dates of reflections and discussion

Culminating project Participants will choose from a list of projects that will serve as the culminating project for the course. Project options include but are not limited to:

- (a) Develop 10 lesson plans that integrate best practices in transition that are highlighted in this course. Project will require you to partner with a colleague from your school to develop lessons that can be taught across middle, high school or transition curriculum
- (b) Update the person centered plan you developed with a student from the last course by including strategy/best practices from this course. Instructors will provide additional instruction to those participants who did not take the first class and therefore have not completed a person centered plan (see item (c) below).
- (c) For those who didn't take last class, review PCP tutorials and complete enhanced PCP with practices highlighted in this course
- (d) Develop a list of competencies that teachers need to support transition age students using knowledge from the two courses thus far. Criteria will be outlined by instructors.
- (e) Develop a comprehensive transition packet that can be used by students and families.

Written instructions and grading rubrics for these projects will be fully described in the assignment packet for this class.

Methods of evaluation

A number of methods (below) will be used to evaluate progress toward the expectations listed below. Information on the assignments can be found in the Assignments Packet along with a grading rubric for each assignment.

Participants are evaluated on the following assignments, weighted as follows:

Domain/Assignment	Relevant objectives	Percent of grade
Class participation including attendance	All	20%
Online discussion	All	20%
Written reflections	All	20%
Culminating project	All	40%

Accommodations:

This course is designed with principles of universal design. This means that the course is designed to reflect learning theory and learning styles research, strategies for assuring high levels of student motivation and interest in learning, instructional approaches that accommodate participants with diverse learning styles, and strategies for getting participants to produce authentic pieces of work that demonstrate their knowledge of course content.

Some participants may need specific accommodations, however. Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act offers guidelines and recommendations for modifications and adaptations for participants with documented disabilities. Participants should contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible to discuss specific challenges and accommodations that would best support his/her learning process in this course.

Conduct:

Participants are required to adhere to respectful and appropriate language in all communications. In addition, it is expected that information about districts, families, students and educators are kept confidential. This course is an opportunity for all of us to support each other and to honestly and productively work to improve school and postschool outcomes for students with disabilities.

Written material expectations

All written work should be prepared on a word processor. Written work should be checked for spelling and grammar accuracy. If a paper contains more than five errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation, the grade for that paper will drop five points.

Guest speakers

Guest speakers with particular expertise or insight in specific transition issues will be included via video clips in almost every class. Their views and opinions are not necessarily those of the MA Department of Education or of the Institute for Community Inclusion. They have been invited to add another lens to issues that influence disability.

Content subject to change: This syllabus will be a guide to our coursework. It is subject to change. An updated syllabus will be provided the first week of the course.

Course Calendar: Spring 2012 –Start date to be determined. There will be no new course material and no assignments during weeks of winter and spring break weeks

Week	Topic	Guest transition speaker	Readings, assignment
Week of TBD	Transition overview	ICI staff	Overview of course and expectations, transition, student interview, parent interview. Reading: Professional Development for Transition Personnel: Current Issues and Strategies for Success
Objectives/competencies addressed:			

Course obj#1: Knowledge of transition standards; CEC standard #1: National transition initiatives; NASET: Overview			
Week of TBD	Transition laws; accountability (indicators)	Mass Advocates for Children, Disability Law Center or MA DOE	Overview of transition laws with advocates Readings (1) Washman (2006), Ch1. Transition. Will be distributed. (2) Indicator 13
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 1: Knowledge of transition standards; CEC standard #1: National transition initiatives; NASET: Overview			
Week of TBD	Interagency collaboration	Members of a local interagency team	Reading: (1) Challenges in Coordinating and Managing Services and Supports in Secondary and Postsecondary Options (2) Interagency Collaboration and Transition
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 6: Understand adult service agencies' roles in transition; CEC standard #1: roles of federal, state and local legislation and implications for providing transition services; NASET: Connecting activities, 5.1-5.3			
Week of TBD	State agencies	Panel presentation; Representatives from state agencies	TBD
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 6: Understand adult service agencies' roles in transition; CEC standard #1: roles of federal, state and local legislation and implications for providing transition services, #7 Skills and knowledge for communication & collaborative partnerships & #8 Professionalism and ethical practices; NASET: Connecting activities, 5.1-5.3			
Week of TBD	Transition Assessments	Teachers from field speak about their experiences with transition assessment	Assigned reading from Sax & Thoma to be distributed
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 5 Understand challenges of formal assessments; CEC: Knowledge and skills about formal and informal career and vocational assessment approaches; NASET: Career Preparatory Experiences 2.1-2.4			

Week of TBD	Self determination and guardianship	Theresa Varnet of Spain, Spain & Varnet	Reading: Self determination and young adults: Seeking a state of mind
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 2 Building on student's strengths and prior knowledge, #3 Concrete ways to facilitate change in postschool outcomes; CEC #6: Managing student behavior and social interaction skills: student involvement in transition process; NASET: Youth development and Leadership 3.1-3.4			
Week of TBD	Benefits planning	Rick Kugler, ICI	Reading: Going to work: A guide to social security benefits and employment for young people with disabilities
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 8 Familiarity with issues that influence transition success; NASET 5.2 Connect youth to appropriate resources			
Week of TBD	Health care issues in transition planning	MA Consortium for Children w/Spc Nds, Opening Doors Staff	Reading (1) Adolescent Health Transition Project (2) When youth with special health care needs transition to adulthood
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 4 Concrete way to facilitate change in transition; CEC #5: Planning and managing transition and # 3 Assessment, diagnosis and evaluation; NASET: Connecting activities 5.1			
Week of TBD	Community Living options and Social Networks	Personal story from young adult living in own apt Cheska Komissar; Susan Tufts, Outdoor Explorations	Reading: Home of your own Reading: Outdoor Explorations ; other readings
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 4 Facilitating change toward postschool outcomes; #10 Transition information for students and families; CEC#7: Communication and collaborative partnerships; 3.3 Supporting self management; NASET: Connecting activities 5.1 & 5.3 Course obj # 2 & 3: Building on students' strengths and accommodating and responding			

to differences; #10 Transition information to students and families, CEC: Social interaction skills; NASET: Youth development and leadership 3.1 & 3.3			
Week of TBD	Transportation	Guest speaker from on or more of these offices: MRC MBTA DMV- Mass ID Easter Seals	Reading: United We Ride (4 fact sheets)
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 4 Concrete ways to facilitate transition; CEC: Planning and managing teaching and learning environment; NASET: Connecting activities			
Week of TBD	Technology/Accommodations	Guest Speaker	Easter Seals of Massachusetts; Assistive Technology Massmatch
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 5 Challenges of formal assessment; familiarity with technology; #7 Collaborative partnerships; Assessment and evaluation; NASET Connecting activities			
Week of TBD	Family involvement in transition planning	Teachers from field speak about their experiences with transition assessment	Reading: Family involvement in transition
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 7 Cultural-ethnic and socioeconomic factors that contribute to family involvement in transition & #10 Preparing transition information for students and parents; CEC #7: Skills and knowledge for communication & collaborative partnerships with families; NASET, Family involvement 4.1-4.4			
Week of TBD	PCP: The Next Steps; Wrap up	ICI staff	
Objectives/competencies addressed: Course obj # 9 &10 Demonstrate competence in integrating transition related information into general curriculum and prepare transition packets for students and parents; CEC: Professionalism and ethical practices; NASET: All			

Bibliography

Books

Harry, B., Kalyunpur, M. & Day, M. (1999). *Building cultural reciprocity with families: Case studies in special education*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing Company.

Hughes, C. & Carter, E. (2000). *The transition handbook: Strategies high school teachers use that work!* Baltimore: Brookes Publishing Company.

Kalyanpur, M. & Harry, B. (1999). *Culture in Special Education: Building reciprocal family – professional relationships*. Chapter 3

Lynch, E.W. & Hanson, M.J. (1997). *Developing cross-cultural competence: A guide for working with children and their families*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing Company.

Sax, C.L. & Thoma, C.A. (2002). *Transition assessment: Wise practices for quality lives*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing Company.

Wehman, P. (2007). *Life beyond the classroom: Transition strategies for young people with disabilities*. Brookes Publishing Company.

Additional resources

State agencies

Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation
[http:// www.dmr.state.ma.us](http://www.dmr.state.ma.us)

Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
<http://www.dmh.state.ma.us>

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
<http://www.state.ma.us/mrc/>

Independent Living Centers
 ILCs
<http://www.state.ma.us/mrc/il/aboutil.htm>

Department of Public Health
www.state.ma.us/dph/

MA Commission for the Blind
www.state.ma.us/mcb/

MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
www.state.ma.us/mcdhh/

MA Department of Education, Special Education
www.doe.mass.edu/sped/

MA Office on Disability

www.state.ma.us/mod

Housing sites

Center on Human Policy, Syracuse University

<http://soeweb.syr.edu/thechp/nrc.html>

Independent Living Research Utilization

<http://www.ilru.org/jump1.htm>

Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire

http://iod.unh.edu/projects/community_living.html#CHANCE

Additional resources

The Institute for Community Inclusion

<http://www.communityinclusion.org/>

Federation for Children with Special Needs

www.fcsn.org

Driver's Education/ support

Adaptive Driving Program

250 Milton Street #LL002

Dedham, MA 02026-2904

Contact: Mark or Tricia Whitehouse

781-329-6656