



Professional Development Institute

Flex Course Syllabus

Responding to Students' Mental Health Challenges with SEL (6-12)

PDI Course Number: 144T02

UCSD Course Number: EDUC42428

If you would like information about receiving post-baccalaureate (graduate) credit for completing this course, [please click here](#).

Course Timeline

Participants have one year to complete the course. Participants must spend a minimum of three weeks in this course.

Course Description

Do you wish you had social-emotional teaching strategies to respond to the current mental health crisis among teens? Many of our students face numerous challenges that can contribute to poor mental health outcomes, including disabilities; adverse childhood experiences; social, racial, and ethnic justice; and risky behaviors. This online course is specifically designed for teachers in grades 6-12 who are looking to dig deeper into how these challenges impact mental health and how effective social-emotional strategies such as empathy, coping, problem solving, decision making, emotional resilience, and effective communication can make a difference. Teachers are provided with thorough background information on a variety of mental health challenges that are germane to grades 6-12. The foundations of equity and equality in education are discussed, as well as strategies for helping students who have suffered from trauma. Specific culturally-responsive social-emotional strategies are also shared so that teachers can be more effective when working with students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Finally, teachers will learn how to explicitly teach self-advocacy — a skill that all students can benefit from, regardless of the challenges they face. By the end of this course, teachers will be well prepared to teach critical SEL skills that directly relate to mental health.

Educational Outcomes

1. Teachers will learn how to detect mental health challenges among their students, including the risk factors, causes, and protective factors.
2. Teachers will understand the guiding principles of social-emotional learning and how they relate to mental health and students with special needs.
3. Teachers will understand the consequences of social, emotional, and behavioral challenges and how to improve the mental health outcomes of special education students.
4. Teachers will be able to identify various emotional and behavioral disorders and will learn how to support students' emotional resiliency and positive behaviors.
5. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students with learning disabilities.
6. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students with autism.
7. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students with intellectual disabilities.
8. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students with sensory impairments.
9. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students with health impairments.
10. Teachers will understand how adverse childhood experiences can impact students' mental health.
11. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students who have experienced abuse and neglect.
12. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students who have been exposed to violence.
13. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of students who have experienced poverty and homelessness.
14. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of LGBTQIA+ students.
15. Teachers will learn culturally responsive social-emotional strategies to support the mental health of racial and ethnic minority students.
16. Teachers will be able to differentiate between equity and equality and will understand the importance of each in education.
17. Teachers will learn the short-term and long-term impacts of bullying on the mental health of everyone involved.
18. Teachers will learn social-emotional strategies to prevent bullying.
19. Teachers will understand the link between substance abuse and mental health and will learn social-emotional strategies to prevent substance abuse.
20. Teachers will be able to explicitly teach self-advocacy to students with mental health challenges.

Instructional Media

- Online Discussions
- Online Engagement
- Online Collaboration
- Instructor Feedback
- Instructor Interaction
- Online Resources and Websites
- Supplemental Instructional Materials
- Printable Classroom Resources

Evaluation

- Test #1 (5% of final grade)
- Test #2 (5% of final grade)
- Test #3 (5% of final grade)
- Test #4 (5% of final grade)
- Test #5 (5% of final grade)
- Autobiography and Goals for the Course (10% of final grade)
- Article/Video Reflection (15% of final grade)
- Course Collaboration/Share Ideas with the Class (10% of final grade)
- Design Lesson Plans (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

Topical Outline

Unit One

- The Rise of Adolescent Mental Health Issues
- What is SEL?
- Mental Health and Special Education
- **Assignment #1**
Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level and what you specifically hope to learn about applying social and emotional learning in your classroom. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.
- **Test #1**

Unit Two

- Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders
- Students with Learning Disabilities
- Students with Autism

- **Assignment #2**
As an educator, it is important to be aware of the research, studies, and professional work done in the field. In the course, you will find an article and video that are relevant to the specific course content. Read the article and then write an essay with your thoughts.
- **Test #2**

Unit Three

- Students with Intellectual Disabilities
- Students with Sensory Impairments
- Students with Health Impairments
- **Assignment #3**
Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to effectively implementing social and emotional skills using literature and will make a difference to other teachers in their own classrooms. Your assignment should be a minimum of three paragraphs and detailed enough for another teacher to easily follow. This is a great opportunity to share and collaborate with other teachers at your grade level around the country. Take time to review and respond to other postings that are relevant to your classroom population in order to gain effective ideas to use immediately in your classroom.
- **Test #3**

Unit Four

- Mental Health and Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Students of Abuse and Neglect
- Students Exposed to Violence
- Students of Poverty and Homelessness
- **Test #4**

Unit Five

- Addressing the Mental Health of LGBTQIA+ Students
- Students from Diverse Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds
- **Test #5**

Unit Six

- Bullying
- Substance Abuse
- Encouraging Students to be Self-Advocates
- **Assignment #4**
You have been provided with many examples of social-emotional strategies that address the mental health challenges our students face. Considering all the information you have

learned from this course, design two social-emotional lesson plans that are geared toward helping students from any two of the populations addressed within the course. The lesson plans should include a purpose, a materials list, and a minimum of six detailed steps to execute the procedure. In addition to incorporating social-emotional strategies, your lessons should be detailed enough so that another teacher can immediately use them in his/her classroom. Be sure to label the lesson plans with the grade level(s), content area, and diverse populations to which they best apply.

- **Assignment #5**

The culminating practicum is a three-step process. (1) In the first assignment, you were asked what goals you had and what you hoped to learn from the course. Think back to your original goals for this course. Write a minimum two-paragraph reflection specifically describing how what you learned can be used to help you reach those goal(s). (2) Next, write a minimum three-paragraph plan that specifically describes the ways in which you intend to implement a particular strategy you learned in this course into your own teaching situation. (3) Last, write a minimum two-paragraph reflection describing a student you have or have had in the past. Then, discuss how the strategies you learned in this course will specifically benefit that student as you put your plan into action.

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