



Professional Development Institute

Flex Course Syllabus

Adopting High-Leverage Strategies to Engage Struggling Students (PreK-12)

PDI Course Number: 169T02

UCSD Course Number: EDUC42647

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 find yourself constantly searching for ways to reach your struggling students? Whether these barriers to learning are academic, behavioral, or socioemotional, all students need access to quality, evidence-based, inclusive practices that are designed to yield high results. This online course for teachers takes a deep dive into a variety of high-leverage, evidence-based practices to support a variety of diverse learners. The course explores common challenges, including the root causes of academic difficulties. Next, teachers are taken through a step-by-step explanation of the high-leverage practices (HLP) framework, thoroughly exploring how each evidence-based instructional technique (EBPs) significantly impacts student outcomes. Then, teachers take a deep dive into the four main domains of the HLP framework and learn best practices to address each important core pillar, including (1) collaboration; (2) data-driven planning; (3) instruction in behavior and academics; and (4) intensify and intervene as needed. Teachers will explore several high-leverage Tier 1 practices, such as cooperative learning and active learning strategies, as well as investigate several Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions within the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), which provide additional support for struggling students. Teachers will also learn about differentiated instruction, helping them design effective differentiated lessons across content, process, and product, all within a real-world context. By the end of this

continuing education course, teachers will feel more confident in their quest to harness the power of high-leverage, evidence-based best practices to anchor their own teaching practices as they strive to make learning more accessible, engaging, and effective for their students.

Educational Outcomes

1. Teachers will explore and understand the key characteristics of struggling learners, including how they relate to academic deficiencies, behavioral challenges, and lack of self-efficacy.
2. Teachers will learn how learning disabilities, socioeconomic factors, and differences in language skills all act as barriers to learning.
3. Teachers will take a deep dive into the role that engagement plays in a student's school success, including the reasons why engagement is so critical for struggling students.
4. Teachers will explore several evidence-based general teaching strategies that are specifically targeted to change a student's mindset from fixed to growth, foster independence, and give directions so that they are more easily understood.
5. Teachers will explore the framework that encompasses all twenty-two high-leverage best practices, across all four core domains — (1) collaboration; (2) data-driven-planning; (3) instruction in behavior and academics; and (4) intensify and intervene as needed, as well as take a deep dive into the associated six pillars and embedded practices.
6. Teachers will understand what evidence-based practices are.
7. Teachers will explore some common evidence-based practices, including explicit instruction, modeling, systemic phonics instruction, multi-sensory instruction, setting clear learning goals and charting progress, flexible grouping, providing frequent feedback and scaffolds, active learning and metacognition strategies, differentiated instruction, regular review of previous material, frequent checks for understanding, and regular assessment.
8. Teachers will understand how high-leverage practices form the basis for evidence-based practices and that when combined, they provide PreK-12 educators with a powerful toolbox of strategies to help their students succeed.
9. Teachers will learn how both high-leverage practices and evidence-based practices align with data-driven instruction so that the resulting data can be used to inform instruction.
10. Teachers will understand the important role they have in students' success, including how their own efficacy and reliance on active learning strategies impact student outcomes, as well as the importance of self-reflection.
11. Teachers will explore how professional learning communities (PLCs) can be harnessed to foster collective improvement within educational settings.
12. Teachers will explore the SMART goal-setting framework as an evidence-based strategy to facilitate a sustainable and supportive learning environment for themselves and their students so that they can continue to grow professionally.
13. Teachers will be introduced to several methods to obtain continuing professional development, such as webinars, workshops, and online courses so that they can continue to learn and adapt their instructional strategies based on students' needs.

14. Teachers will understand the importance of building a community of practice, including how collaboration with their colleagues can help build and support a culture of trust and shared responsibility.
15. Teachers will be introduced to the data-driven instruction (DDI) process as a framework to create successful learning plans for students.
16. Teachers will understand the importance of family engagement, and they will learn how to strengthen parent-school relationships so that they are more like partners instead of adversaries.
17. Teachers will learn how to establish clear and explicit learning goals and objectives by using student-friendly language, connecting them to students' prior knowledge, and providing clear success criteria.
18. Teachers will learn how to collect data and analyze trends using the DDI process so that teachers are better able to adjust their instruction and monitor students' progress using high-leverage, evidence-based best practices.
19. Teachers will learn how to use assessment results to inform their lessons and monitor student growth vis-à-vis differentiating by content, process, and product.
20. Teachers will learn how to use the backward design framework (UbD) to create detailed lessons that are aligned with their long-term goals.
21. Teachers will learn about the multi-tiered system of supports framework (MTSS), and they will explore a variety of universal screeners commonly used in schools for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional issues.
22. Teachers will learn how equity is at the core of Tier 1 instruction, and they will explore several high-leverage strategies to implement during Tier 1 instruction, including universal practices, cooperative learning, and active learning strategies.
23. Teachers will take an in-depth look at evidence-based practices and strategies for both Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, including such things as small group instruction, instructional differentiation, and targeted academic and behavioral supports, among others.
24. Teachers will explore differentiation in detail (by content, process, and product), and they will understand how it ties into the fourth core domain of the HLP framework.
25. Teachers will learn how to incorporate multiple intelligences and students' learning preferences into their differentiated classroom activities.
26. Teachers will explore several evidence-based high-leverage differentiation practices, including adjusting content complexity using tiered activities, providing meaningful choices using choice boards, and implementing scaffolding techniques like graphic organizers and sentence starters to promote equitable access to learning for all students.
27. Teachers will explore several applications of differentiated instruction by content, process, and product in the real world, including how the lessons can be adapted to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

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)
- Cumulative Assignment/Project: Design a Multi-Tiered Inclusive Lesson Plan Using HLPs and EBPs (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

Topical Outline

Unit One

- Introduction to Struggling Students
- Understanding the Role of Engagement
- General Teaching Strategies for Struggling Students
- **Assignment #1**
Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level, and what you specifically hope to learn about harnessing high-leverage evidence-based practices to help support struggling PreK-12 students. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.
- **Test #1**

Unit Two

- An Introduction to High-Leverage Practices
- An Introduction to Evidence-Based Practices
- HLPs and EBPs: A Powerful Combination
- **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 a video that are relevant

to the specific course content. Read the article or watch the video and then write an essay with your thoughts.

- **Test #2**

Unit Three

- The Role of the Teacher in Student Success
- Creating a Professional Growth Plan
- Building a Community of Practice
- **Assignment #3**

Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to harnessing high-leverage, evidence-based practices to help support struggling PreK-12 students. The tip, strategy, or idea that you share needs to 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 follow easily. 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

- Establishing Clear Learning Goals
- Data-Driven Instruction
- Using Assessment Results to Inform Lessons and Monitor Student Growth
- **Test #4**

Unit Five

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports Framework
- High-Leverage Tier 1 Supports
- Implementing Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions
- **Test #5**

Unit Six

- Principles of Differentiation
- Designing Effective Differentiated Lessons
- Differentiated Instruction in the Real World
- **Assignment #4**

Design a differentiated lesson plan (by content, process, or product) that incorporates at least three high-leverage practices (HLPs) and two evidence-based practices (EBPs). Your lesson should include strategies that address learners at Tier 1 (universal), Tier 2 (targeted), and Tier 3 (intensive) levels, using the MTSS framework. The lesson plan

should be rooted in one of the four main domains of the HLP framework: (1) collaboration; (2) data-driven planning; (3) instruction in behavior and academics; or (4) intensify and intervene as needed. To obtain full credit, please be sure to adhere to all the lesson requirements as laid forth in Assignment 4.

- **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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