

Overview of the Courses in the “Graduate Academic Certificate for Gifted Education Specialists” at the University of Denver

Nature and Needs of Gifted Learners CUI 4400

This course is designed to provide participants with an understanding of 1) conceptual foundations and definitions of giftedness, 2) how intelligence, creativity, and non-intellective factors are related to giftedness, 3) the nature, development, types, and needs of gifted individuals, 4) principles and issues in the identification of gifted individuals, and 5) the major issues and tensions in the education of gifted and talented individuals. Lectures, discussions, and other class activities and assigned readings and projects will include topics such as the history and nature of the giftedness construct; theories of intelligence and creativity and their relationship to conceptions of giftedness; types of giftedness; the diversity of gifted individuals and their personal and educational needs; the role of identification in the education and development of gifted children and youth; and the purposes of and perspectives in gifted education.

Psychological Aspects of Gifted Learners CUI 4401

The psychological development of gifted children is examined through a study of current theories, models, research, and case histories. Understanding of psychological development creates a foundation for applications and practices that nurture the psycho-social-emotional development of gifted individuals. Specific topics include the psychological nature and needs of the gifted; perfectionism, stress, and underachievement; special issues for gifted boys and gifted girls; highly gifted; and pertinent theories of psychological development. Emphasis is placed on synthesis of theories and application to specific situations.

Curriculum for Gifted Learners CUI 4402

This course is designed to provide participants with an understanding of the conceptual foundations in the design and development of curriculum for gifted and talented students. Includes theories, models and processes for curriculum modification and curriculum design; strategies for adapting educational content, process, product, and learning environment based on the educational characteristics and needs of gifted learners; and curriculum design and development approaches that are effective in the intellectual and personal growth of gifted and talented learners. Content in this course will be aligned with appropriate instructional strategies and techniques recommended for use with gifted and talented learners. Lectures, discussions, class activities, assigned reading and projects will include topics such as a general overview of curricular principles and perspectives; critical analysis of general curriculum; issues of diversity in curriculum development and modification including cultural congruence; recommended models of curriculum development for gifted and talented learners; and national trends in gifted education.

Instructional Strategies for Gifted Learners CUI 4403

This course will provide a basic understanding of how to adapt curriculum for gifted learners through various instructional strategies. Strategies to be studied include: acceleration, enrichment, differentiation, compacting, grouping, independent study, and advanced thinking skills. By selecting instructional strategies based on assessed learner needs, educators can reach many types of gifted learners in their classrooms including gifted students of poverty, gifted students of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Creativity CUI 4408

The essence of innovation is creativity, in thought, process and outcome. Classic and current theories provide a foundation for analysis of the concept of creativity. This course is designed to provide participants with an understanding of 1) the conceptual foundations and definitions of creativity, 2) how intelligence, creativity, and non-intellective factors are related to the constructs of giftedness, 3) documented brain research underlying exceptional cognition and/or creativity, 4) principles and issues in the identification and appropriate programming for creative individuals, and 5) the multiple perspectives and manifestations of creativity. Salon discussion groups, lectures, class activities and assigned readings and projects will focus on the history and nature of the construct of creativity; theories of creativity; the role of innovation and transformation; assessment and measurement tools; environmental support of the creative process and creativity; and teaching and learning applications.

Identification (Current Issues in Gifted Education) CUI 4407

This course focuses on the screening and selecting of gifted and talented students. It is designed for practicing professionals - teachers, counselors, psychologists, and administrators – who must make decisions about the identification and serving of gifted and talented students. Course uses multiple assessments both quantitative and qualitative to identify gifted students within an increasingly diverse population (including culturally and ethnically-diverse, high-potential, linguistically-different students with unique affective needs as well as high-potential economically-disadvantaged students). Students will use data to diagnose educational needs, prescribe appropriate educational strategies and to incorporate appropriate identification strategies for identifying gifted and talented students. Legal responsibilities and parent communication as well as staff development will be emphasized. Students will be required to develop an identification model based on relevant theory and current practices to be used in their particular setting.

Twice Exceptional Students CUI 4404

The purpose of this course is to acquaint the student with the various areas of exceptionalities typically encountered with gifted students and to provide classroom related techniques to assist the teacher in identifying and working with twice-exceptional children in an effective manner. Environmental, behavioral, motivational, emotional and educational needs will be addressed. Legal responsibilities, parent communication and staff development will be emphasized.

Program Leadership (Special Topics in Gifted Education) CUI 4410

This course emphasizes the concepts and practices involved in development and management of school- and district-based programs for the special education of gifted and talented children and youth. The course will lead to in-depth understanding of program components and systems, program planning and evaluation, program leadership, advocacy in gifted education, and communications. In addition, emphasis will be placed on planning and development of staff development in relation to gifted education. This course will include extensive in-class discussion and field applications.

This is an advanced graduate course in the sequence of courses offered by the University of Denver in preparation for the Gifted Education Specialist Endorsement offered by the Colorado Department of Education. Prerequisites for this course include Nature and Needs of Gifted Learners, Psychological Aspects of Gifted Learners, and Identification of Gifted Students. Strong knowledge of strategies in curriculum and instruction used with gifted students is also helpful. Students will be expected, in class discussion, activities, and written work, to demonstrate and utilize knowledge and skills they have developed in prerequisite professional education and current or previous experience in the education of gifted individuals.

Practicum CUI 4405

Students wishing to earn credit for the Practicum in Gifted Education must complete an experience in three of the five practicum areas. Students must submit a Practicum Proposal outlining the intended practicum experiences in the specified area (teaching, assessment, administration, research, and/or policy). This Proposal must be approved by the practicum faculty supervisor when the practicum experiences are begun and signed off when completed.