

## **Course Title: Aiding Students with Learning Disabilities**

**Instructors:** Donna Walker Tileston, Marilee Sprenger

**Length:** 15 hours

**Dates:** Rolling admissions

**Prerequisites:** Bachelor Degree

**Number of credits:** 1

### **Course Description:**

This course, founded on a systems approach, offers teachers access and understanding of key components of the Multi-Memory system, Self-System, Metacognitive system, and Cognitive system to develop declarative and procedural knowledge. Innovative instructional strategies include advanced use of graphic organizers and methods for exploring/attacking problems that students can integrate into their daily classroom and homework experience. The concept of “automaticity” is explored or tapping into *prior knowledge* which uses the classroom as a well rather than a dry purveyor of facts and figures.

The course, presented by leaders in the field of brain-based education, addresses individuals with diverse learning needs. The special needs of students with reading disorders, emotional and behavioral disorders, attention disorders, and autism are addressed.

The particular emphasis of this course is to develop an understanding of the impact of neurobiological differences that present themselves in a regular classroom. The course is based on an assumption that students can gain knowledge and the skills necessary to perform in today’s world through access to a learning menu of teaching strategies and systems to promote learning in all areas of instruction. Finally, this course is a distillation of “best practices” currently available for a truly inclusive, brain-based learning environment.

### **Objectives:**

1. Knowledge –at the end of this course, the student will be able to understand
  - a. how the cognitive system of the brain affects student learning,
  - b. learning disabilities are varied; there is no accepted definition,
  - c. the difference between declarative and procedural knowledge, and
  - d. how behavioral problems affect learning.
2. Skills –after this course, a student will be able to develop
  - a. strategies to deal with students with emotional disorders and autism,
  - b. effective strategies for helping students construct their knowledge,
  - c. a priori knowledge and strategies for creating patterns in the brain, and
  - d. ideas that can help students complete tasks at high complexity levels.
3. Dispositions – after this course, a student will appreciate

- a. the effect of the emotions on the brain,
- b. what it means for students to achieve automaticity, and
- c. windows of opportunity and when they open and close.

### Topic Sessions (8):

• Brain Structure and Development	Marilee Sprenger
• Brain-Compatible Teaching Principles	Marilee Sprenger
• Wiring the Brain for Literacy	Marilee Sprenger
• Special Education and the Brain: Part 1	Donna Walker Tileston
• Special Education and the Brain: Part 2	Donna Walker Tileston
• Emotional and Behavior Disorders	Donna Walker Tileston
• Autism	Donna Walker Tileston
• Learning Disabilities and Literacy	Carol Mowen

### Instructor Overview:

**Marilee Sprenger** is a creative and compassionate educator who interprets and applies current brain research for classroom teacher at the elementary, middle school, high school, and university levels. As an independent consultant, her passion is brain-based teaching and best practices using brain research and differentiation. She also consults in the areas of learning styles, using music in the classroom, teaming, multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence, and memory. She is affiliated with the American Academy of Neurology and is constantly updated on current research.

**Donna Walker Tileston** is the author of eighteen books published by Corwin Press. Her series of ten books, *What Every Teacher Should Know*, won the distinguished National Publishers Award in 2005. That series, as well as her book, *Ten Best Teaching Practices*, have been on Corwin’s best-seller list since they were introduced. As a teacher and administrator, Donna first used her research on the brain and learning to restructure a “failing school” and to help lead it to win statewide acclaim for high test scores and a low drop-out rate. That experience led to her first book and much of her work on helping struggling students. Donna is an international speaker who has delivered more than 600 workshops on a variety of topics including differentiation, diversity, technology, and brain research. She resides in Dallas, Texas where she writes full time and works with schools throughout the world to help all kids to be successful.

## Methods of Instruction:

## Percentage of Course Credit

Methods of instruction will include

- Individual sections (8) (15 hours)
- Pre assessments (8) 5%
- Graded post assessments (8) 20%
- Video lectures (8) 35%
- Polling questions Included in videos
- Study guides (8) (60 to 100 pages)
- Handouts
- Projects 40%

## Texts (included in program)

- Study guide provided in the program (200 pages)

## Assignments

- Pre assignments (40)
- Post assignments (64)

## Grading:

Grading requirements include a Lesson Plan and a Guided Reflection Activity.

## Due dates of major assignments, projects, and examinations:

Online, self-running programs can be started and completed at participants' own leisure within two months from the day they begin the course.

**FINAL EXAM PROJECT:** Develop a detailed Lesson Plan and Reflection Guide that assumes you have students with specific learning disabilities. \* Include the following:

1. Select a standard of learning objective from a specific content area.
2. Develop one or more activities that you will use to differentiate curriculum for specific learning disabilities.
3. Create one or more cooperative learning activities that can be used to address the standard or learning objective.
4. Incorporate activities that allow for students to perform tasks successfully in a mixed-ability classroom

5. Describe one or more assessment measures that you will use to check for understanding. Create a rubric to provide a common framework of stated lesson objectives and student understanding.

Incorporate anecdotal evidence and data to indicate that your lesson plan was successful or may need revision for future lessons. Discuss your experience in implementation of this lesson plan and the possible *pros and cons* of adapting the lesson for future classroom use.

*A KDS Lesson Plan and Reflection Guide are attached and should be followed to provide a comprehensive assessment of course objectives. \*However, if you are unable to implement your Lesson Plan and Guided Reflection in an actual classroom, please project what anticipated outcomes would be.*