



## LILIE, LLC Course Information

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### Title of Course (*45 hours*): Teaching Gifted Students

#### Course Description:

Educators will study the current status of gifted education and identify the special needs of gifted students in our classrooms. Teachers will investigate the unique obstacles gifted students face in the classroom today and identify and select strategies that can be used to help these children realize their full potential.

#### Overall Course Objective and Expectation(s):

It is the objective of this course to explore the reasons for which many gifted students are not sufficiently challenged on a daily basis. The first half of the course will be dedicated to distinguishing the gifted student from others in our classrooms in order to begin to understand his/her particular academic, social and emotional needs. It is our objective in the second half of the course to analyze different approaches to working with this population, identifying those which appear to be most useful, and designing materials and lesson plans that will foster the development of our best and brightest students.

#### Course Instructional Materials:

All courses maintain a fully developed and dynamic webpage that houses all resources, reference material and various other required informational texts, videos and alike that is both active and relevant to course objectives and content. Course web pages are routinely updated to reflect most current research and available readings therefore instructional materials used to teach course objectives are subject to change.

#### Instructor Consultation and Interaction:

Real time consultation and instruction is provided through the LILIE, LLC discussion boards for each course/classroom on a daily basis.

#### Suggested Readings (*subject to change*):

- Cross, T.L. (2005). *The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids*. Waco, Texas. Prufrock Press.
- Davidson, B., & Davidson, J. (2004). *Genius Denied: How to Stop Wasting Our Brightest Young Minds*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Delisle, J., & Galbraith, J. (2002). *When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers*. Minneapolis, MN. Free Spirit Publishing.
- Dillon, S. (2009, October 29). Federal researchers find lower standards in schools. *The New York Times*. p. A22.
- Hu, W. (2009, October 19). School for the gifted, and only the gifted. *The New York Times*. p. A22.
- Winebrenner, S. (2001). *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*. Minneapolis, MN. Free Spirit Publishing.

### Proof of Course Completion:

LILIE, LLC is committed to assuring that enrollees fully participate in and receive the educational benefits contemplated by the course. Enrollees must demonstrate participation by making detailed postings designed to foster dialogue among colleagues and instructors. These enrollee postings must be made four times each week in separate sessions. Enrollees will be required to submit a detailed log documenting at least 45 hours of course work, including discussion board posts, and will be required to apply information and strategies acquired from the course content to weekly classroom instruction. Attempts to falsify logs or discussion board entries will result in denial of credit and a report to the enrollee's employer.



## Scope & Sequence/Weekly Topics and Objectives

### *Week 1*

**Topic(s):** Understanding Gifted Education

**Objectives:**

- Create a working definition for the terms “gifted student” and “gifted education.”
- Assess the current status of gifted education in our current school systems.
- Compare different models of gifted education amongst our schools.

**Impact on Classroom Instruction:**

Teachers will bring to their classrooms a framework and general understanding of the current status of gifted education. Teachers will first define in their own words the terms “gifted education” and “gifted student.”

**Learner Outcomes:**

As a result of our week this week teachers will have an understanding of the challenges that face both gifted students and the educators that serve them. They will examine their own practices and establish a base of knowledge of the central issues that concern gifted education. They will analyze case studies from selected reading assignments, explore alternatives to the current programs offered by our schools compare programs and analyze the notion of lower standards and their effect on gifted education. From this established base of knowledge they will begin to understand the ways in which they can alter their approaches to accommodate and better serve gifted students.

**Assessment of Understanding and Learning/ Weekly Assignments (*including but not limited to posting requirements set forth by LILIE, LLC*):**

The following written assignments will be assigned over the course of the five days of Week #1:

**Week #1 Day #1** What is your definition of a gifted student? Please use examples to illustrate your definition.

**Week #1 Day #2 *Question (A)*:** Please read *Genius Denied*. Chapter One, (7 – 21). After reading Rachel’s tale, please reflect and share a similar experience or encounter with a gifted student. Share you struggles, successes and ideas for better handling this type of student in the future.

***Question (B)*:** The students illustrated in today’s reading all have needs that extend beyond what a typical educational setting can provide for them. As was the case with Rachel, do you think an I.E.P. may be necessary to provide for these students’ exceptional needs? If not an I.E.P, how do we assure that we do not ignore and waste the talents of these young students?

**Week #1 Day #3 *Question*:** Please read *Genius Denied*.Chapter Three, *The Lowest Common Denominator*, (51 – 59) & the article “Federal Researchers Find Lower Standards in Schools” from *The New York Times*. After both, do you feel that there is enough evidence to support the notion that the lowering of standards has had a detrimental affect on our gifted students? How does this manifest in specific ways in our schools and in our individual classrooms?

**Week #1 Day #4:** Read Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom. Chapter One, Characteristics of Gifted Students (9-26) and review the entire web page document. Take notes on both the possible joys and frustrations in working with gifted students. Take a moment and post a situation in which you witness the dichotomy of behavior that can present itself within this population and how your teaching style may or may not support the need of these students. Finally, please visit the segment of the website titled, “How To Spot A Gifted Student.” Does this change your definition of a gifted student that you posted on Day #1?

**Week #1 Day #5** Read *School for the Gifted, and Only the Gifted* (The New York Times , October 19, 2009) and compare the findings to your own ideas surrounding the idea of separate schools for the gifted



## *Week II*

**Topic(s):** Identifying and Supporting the Needs of Gifted Learners.

### **Objectives:**

- Identify gifted individuals in our classrooms.
- Categorize and examine the different needs of the Gifted Student (Academic, Emotional, Social).
- Identify personal challenges in meeting the needs of this population.

### **Impact on Classroom Instruction:**

Teachers will have a greater awareness and sensitivity to the unique needs of gifted students. This will have an effect on subsequent lesson planning and classroom management techniques.

### **Learner Outcomes:**

As a result of our work during this week, teachers will...

- gain a more profound understanding of the individual gifted student.
- begin to alter lesson plans with the goal of challenges and engaging gifted students.
- begin to place greater focus on his/her needs within the larger classroom setting.

### **Assessment of Understanding and Learning/ Weekly Assignments (including but not limited to posting requirements set forth by LILIE, LLC):**

The following written assignments will be assigned over the course of the five days of Week #2:

**Week #2 Day #1 Question #1** The first challenge in assessing the needs of our gifted students appears to be our ability to correctly identify who indeed should be classified as gifted. Read [When Gifted Kids Don't Have All The Answers](#). Identifying Gifted Kids. (46 – 53) and in your posting discuss the challenges of the process as identified in the article as well as your own experience. Please also research and report on the “identification plan” in your school.

**Week #2 Day #2 Question #2(A):** The premise of Chapter 3 [When Gifted Kids Don't Have All The Answers](#) Chapter 3 Emotional Dimension of Giftedness pp.62 – 71 is that while every gifted student is unique, there is a common set of “problems” encountered their school years. Have you encountered any of the “problems” discussed in this chapter and how have you dealt with them?

**Week #2 Day #2 (B):** Choose one of “The Eight Great Gripses” on p. 67 and discuss how this can manifest itself on a classroom or any school setting. If you were successful in dealing with the situation, please share your technique.

**Week #2 Day #3 Question#3:** The premise of this chapter [The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids. Competing With Myths About The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Students](#) (19 – 26) is that there are widely held practices in our schools that have negative effects on the “social and emotional development of gifted students.” Take a look at some of your past practices and discuss how you may change your approach in the future. Is there any room in our current systems to challenge any of the “myths” debunked by this author?

*Week #2 Day #4 Question #4:* If we agree to refer to our gifted students as part of a diverse population of learners, please discuss how you and/or your school utilize any of the approaches discussed in today's reading assignment PDF: The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids .*Working on Behalf of Gifted Student*. (67 – 71). If none of them currently apply to your school, please offer your opinion as to how we can foster tolerance and understanding between gifted children and the rest of the school population.

*Week #2 Day #5 Question #5:* Assessing the well-being of our students amidst the technological revolution of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a complicated task. Reading the following two assignments and answer the questions that follow:

The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids . *Putting the Well-Being of All Students (Including Gifted Students First* (pgs. 80-86).

&

The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids. *Gifted Students's Social and Emotional Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (97-101).

Do you feel it is necessary and/or possible to truly put the needs of every student (including gifted students) first in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century school systems? Do you agree that the well-being of our students is currently defined as “reaching minimum competency on a statewide achievement test?” Therefore, how is the well-being of gifted students being tended to when they soon realize that they are going to be taught “what they already know?” How does the current climate of our digital age affect these issues?



### *Week III*

**Topic(s):** Strategies and Methods To Reach The Gifted Learner

#### **Objectives:**

- examine successful approaches to gifted education approaches.
- debate the merits of various approaches to gifted education.
- investigate and analyze reported successful strategies and approaches that meet their unique needs of gifted students.

#### **Impact on Classroom Instruction:**

Teachers will be exposed to a host of approaches that can be used integrated into daily lesson plans and activities. Teachers will begin to feel and understand the practical applications of our study.

#### **Learner Outcomes:**

- Teachers will identify research and share finding related to techniques that effectively reach the gifted learner.
- Teachers will reflect on their own past practice and the practices currently employed by themselves and colleagues.
- Teachers will analyze current trends in gifted education.

**Assessment of Understanding and Learning/ Weekly Assignments (*including but not limited to posting requirements set forth by LILIE, LLC*):**

***Week #3 Day #1 Assignment IA:*** Read Case Study - Charter School of Wilmington Delaware *Genius Denied*. Chapter Six: School Solutions “I Do Not See Boredom Here” (127 – 136).

The Charter School is a glaring example of success in the realm of gifted education. It also revisits a sub-theme of week #1 in which we discussed the need for separate facilities to provide adequately for gifted students. Do you agree that when “concentrated in one school, the brightest students will push each other to higher achievement than if scattered”?

***Week #3 Day #1 Assignment IB:*** Page 130 describes the faculty of the Charter School of Wilmington. Do you think there is the same dedication to recruiting this caliber of faculty in our districts? Could a shift in the way in which we recruit teachers produce a better environment for our gifted students?

***Week #3 Day #1 Assignment IC:*** Page 133 outlines in a specific manner the characteristics of programs and/or schools that have had great success in serving the gifted population. Compare these to programs/approaches employed in your school by you and your colleagues. How many are evident in your schools? If they are not, to what may we attribute their absence?

**Week #3 Day #2 Assignment #2** Read *Genius Denied* Chapter Six: School Solutions “I Do Not See Boredom Here” (140 – 155) and the provided web link, post – in your opinion – the advantages and disadvantages of acceleration? In your opinion, is this a viable alternative?

**Report:** Research and report on your school district’s policy on acceleration as it related to gifted students.

**Week #3 Day #3 Assignment #3** Read *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*. Chapter Six, Planning Curriculum for All Students at the Same Time (129-144).

Analyze the techniques described in this chapter (Curriculum Differentiation Chart, Learning Centers, and The Socratic Seminar) and determine which, if any, you would you most likely use in your particular discipline/grade level and why? To what degree would you rely on Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives when designing your lessons?

**Week #3 Day #4 Assignment #4** Read *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*. Chapter 8 Grouping Gifted Students for Learning (171-181) and post responses to the following:

**Assignment #4A:** Explain the differences between traditional cooperative learning techniques and those described in this chapter that better serve gifted students. Do you agree with the premise that traditional cooperative learning groups serve the struggling learner well but do little to help the gifted student? Please provide examples.

**Assignment #4B:** Do you agree with the premise that gifted students are more successful when working in homogeneous groups? Is this possible in a heterogeneous class?

**Week #3 Day #5 Assignment #5** Web link provided

A complete review of the website that accompanies our text, *Genius Denied*, will offer you wonderful practical techniques and advice on how to best serve gifted students in your classroom. It should also serve as a first stop for our final assignment of this week. I suggest that after visiting the website, you navigate to Educators of Gifted Students → Recommended Readings for wonderful links to articles and research appropriate to our discussion.

Below is a list of instructional strategies that assist in the education of gifted students. While we have touched upon some of them over the past three weeks, please research each one of the following and provide the class with a brief synopsis and an example of a practical application in the classroom. Please post any websites used to both document your research and provide useful resources for the other students.

- Differentiation
- Acceleration (see week #3 assignment #2)
- Flexible/Individualized curriculum
- Compacting
- Learning Centers
- Distance Learning
- The Socratic Seminar
- Cooperative Learning
- Grouping / Cluster Grouping



Topic(s): Implementation

**Objectives:**

Teachers will create lessons and materials with new focus on the needs of the Gifted Student that can be used with his/her particular discipline and/or grade level.

**Impact on Classroom Instruction:**

This week will produce a lesson that both reflects an effort to better serve our gifted students and can be used immediately in the classroom by the teacher. After identifying and better understanding the gifted learner, it is essential that teachers begin to identify these students and develop techniques that we can apply to our daily lessons and activities to address their unique needs. After assessing the needs of the gifted learner, teachers will assess their current practices and modify lessons to meet the needs of these students.

**Learner Outcomes:**

Teachers will leave week four better able to predict the needs of gifted students and compose lesson plans that will have a direct and positive impact on their experience in our classrooms. Teachers will study and select from a variety of techniques to support the composition of their plans.

This week teachers will:

1. Identify a class (past or present) in which you have at least one gifted student.
2. Describe the ways in which this student is gifted. Use our work from the first three weeks to help you in this area.
3. Create a lesson that reaches all learners and that highlights an increased awareness and acknowledgment of the gifted learner in the classroom.

**Assessment of Understanding and Learning/ Weekly Assignments (*including but not limited to posting requirements set forth by LILIE, LLC*):**

During week four, teachers will be evaluated on the basis of a practical application of material and techniques studied during the first three weeks of this class. The application will be appropriate to the teacher's discipline and/or grade level and will reflect the proven need to better assess and meet the needs of our gifted students. Lesson plans will be accompanied by personal reflections that explain the lesson and verify the increased awareness of the gifted student in the classroom.

**Week #4 Assignment:** Choose create a new lesson plan or modify an existing plan that reflects key concepts or techniques learned in this course. Please use one of the techniques, approaches or philosophies as a guiding force when constructing the lesson. Your posting is due by the end of the second day of Week #4 and must summarize the lesson for the class and explain how the lesson is now geared toward a diverse population in which there are

gifted students in a regular classroom. Please also include how you will gear subsequent lessons to reflect the needs of gifted students.

The actual lesson plan shall be sent as an attachment. Documents can be scanned using adobe, or e-mailed to course participants using MS Word. Please make sure that the lesson is also completed within the first two days of Week 4. The remainder of class will be used for peer assessment, response, and lesson revisions.