



LILIE, LLC Course Information

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**More detailed course curriculum, including graduate level, alignment with standards, culturally responsive practices, assessments and resources, can be provided upon request*

Title of Course: The Intentional Classroom: Rigor, Relevance, and Equity in Action

Course Description: *The Intentional Classroom: Rigor, Relevance, and Equity in Action* supports educators in designing purposeful, inclusive learning experiences that promote high expectations, meaningful engagement, and equitable access for all students. Grounded in evidence-based instructional practices and an equity-centered framework, this course explores how intentional instructional design helps educators create classrooms where rigor is accessible, relevance is meaningful, and every learner feels seen, valued, and supported

Participants will examine the core components of intentional teaching, including building brave learning communities, unpacking standards, designing clear learning goals and success criteria, activating prior knowledge, fostering motivation and relevance, implementing responsive instructional moves, and using assessment to guide next steps. These practices help educators create meaningful learning experiences that support student ownership, engagement, and academic growth.

Through readings, videos, reflection, and applied activities, educators will learn how to design equitable learning experiences that remove barriers, affirm student identities, and promote deep engagement for diverse learners.

The course also provides opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and peer feedback to strengthen instructional decision-making, cultivate brave learning spaces, and support teaching practices that advance rigor, relevance, equity, and student success.

Instructor Consultation and Interaction

The course is an asynchronous online course that is available for instructor and student participation 24/7. The four-week duration of the class is broken down into four weekly sections each comprised of lecture in the form of instructor created articles and content, web links to academic and professionally reviewed articles in the discipline of general education, and instructor created discussion questions which are, in and of themselves, formative assessments to determine the extent to which the enrollees have comprehended and mastered the skills and information and begun to apply it to their personal teaching practices. The answers to these questions are the basis for the class interaction, as enrollees are required to respond to each other within the classroom.

Proof of Course Completion

LILIE, LLC is committed to assuring that enrollees fully participate in and receive the educational benefits provided by the course. Enrollees must demonstrate participation by making detailed postings designed to foster dialogue among colleagues and instructor that reflect the content, skills/ strategies learned and assessments covered in course. These enrollee postings must be made six times each week, in separate sessions, and including a minimum of 4 academic posts and at least 2 peer-peer comments of others' postings and possible shared assignments. Enrollees are required to submit a detailed reflective feedback in combination with the archived work. Attempts to falsify record or discussion board entries will result in denial of credit and a report to the enrollee's employer.



Scope & Sequence/Weekly Topics and Objectives

Session I

Objectives	• Explain how belonging, equity, and brave learning spaces support student engagement, academic risk-taking, and learner confidence. • Use the Brave Space Toolkit, including community agreements, Reflect → Connect → Extend, equity-centered talk moves, and peer feedback guidelines, to engage in respectful and courageous dialogue around equity, identity, bias, and instructional practice. • Analyze how understanding students' identities, lived experiences, strengths, and cultural assets supports teacher clarity and more equitable instructional decision-making. • Examine how counternarratives and multiple perspectives from historically marginalized or underrepresented communities can challenge bias, disrupt deficit thinking, and strengthen belonging, empathy, and representation in learning environments. • Explain how teacher clarity—including clear learning goals, success criteria, feedback, and transparent expectations—helps remove hidden barriers and increase access to rigorous learning. • Apply strategies for unpacking standards, clarifying learning intentions, and identifying language demands to make grade-level learning more accessible for diverse learners. • Analyze how explicit success criteria can help address opportunity gaps and success gaps by making expectations clear, visible, and achievable for all students. • Evaluate how clear goals, high expectations, self-assessment, and actionable feedback support equitable rigor, student ownership, and academic agency. • Design or reflect on instructional practices that foster brave learning communities where all students feel seen, valued, challenged, supported, and empowered to succeed.
Topics	• Introduce and Build Background Knowledge - The Foundation of Belonging, Equity, and Brave Learning • Unpacking Standards with Intention • Paving the Way for Equity Through Success Criteria • Connecting Clarity, Rigor, and Student Ownership
Application to Instruction & Student Learning	Module 1 lays the foundation for understanding how belonging, equity, teacher clarity, and rigorous instructional design work together to shape meaningful student learning. Participants begin by examining how understanding students' identities, lived experiences, strengths, and perspectives helps educators design more inclusive and responsive instruction. Through exploration of equity, counternarratives, and brave learning spaces, educators deepen their awareness of how representation, belonging, and culturally responsive practices influence student engagement and access. As the module progresses, participants apply these understandings to instructional design by unpacking standards, clarifying learning goals, developing explicit success criteria, and strengthening feedback and self-assessment practices. They examine how unclear expectations, hidden barriers, and inconsistent supports can contribute to opportunity and success gaps, particularly for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and historically marginalized students. Through research-based practices, classroom examples, and reflective application, educators learn to design instruction that balances rigor and support, ensuring all students have equitable access to challenging learning, meaningful feedback, and clear pathways to success. •

Session II

Objectives	• Explain how assessing prior knowledge serves as an equity practice by helping educators identify students' strengths, misconceptions, cultural assets, and learning needs before introducing new content. • Analyze how assumptions, bias, and "single stories" can influence instructional decisions, student expectations, and access to learning, particularly for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and students from historically marginalized or underrepresented communities. • Apply culturally responsive and equitable strategies to activate background knowledge, honor student voice, and build instruction that connects to students' identities, lived experiences, and prior learning. • Explain how relevance, rigor, and teacher clarity work together to create meaningful, challenging, and inclusive learning experiences. • Evaluate instructional practices that increase relevance by connecting content to students' cultural identities, interests, community experiences, and future goals. • Analyze how the five instructional moves that support relevance strengthen student engagement, belonging, brave participation, and intellectual ownership of learning. • Identify how motivation and culturally responsive teaching influence student engagement, persistence, curiosity, and willingness to participate in rigorous learning. • Design instructional activities, lesson hooks, bell ringers, or motivational strategies that foster inclusive, engaging, and student-centered learning environments. • Apply principles of teacher clarity, relevance, and motivation to design or refine lessons that promote equitable access, engagement, and academic success for diverse learners. • Reflect on professional growth by synthesizing learning from Modules 1 and 2 to strengthen instructional practices that support equity, belonging, student agency, and meaningful learning.
Topics	• Assessing Prior Knowledge for Equity • Setting the Stage for Relevance — Making Learning Meaningful, Rigorous, and Inclusive • Motivational Strategies for Inclusive Learning • Midterm — Clarity in Action
Application to Instruction & Student Learning	By the end of Module 2, participants will be able to understand how assessing prior knowledge serves as an equity practice by identifying students' strengths, cultural assets, lived experiences, and misconceptions; analyze how assumptions and "single stories" can influence expectations and access to learning; explain how relevance strengthens engagement by connecting curriculum to students' identities, cultures, lived experiences, and future goals; apply culturally responsive and inclusive motivational strategies that foster curiosity, belonging, brave participation, and equitable engagement; design lesson components that integrate relevance, motivation, and teacher clarity to support diverse learners; evaluate instructional decisions through an equity lens by considering how prior knowledge, relevance, and motivation influence access and inclusion; and synthesize learning from Modules 1 and 2 to create lesson plans, reflections, or visual artifacts that demonstrate equitable, identity-affirming, and student-centered instructional practices.

Session III

Objectives	• Analyze how explicit instruction, teacher clarity, and the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework support equitable access to rigorous learning for diverse learners. • Examine how bias, deficit thinking, representation, and culturally responsive teaching influence instructional decisions, student engagement, and access to learning. • Apply high-impact instructional moves—including scaffolding, academic discourse, differentiation, and practice/application—to design rigorous, inclusive, and identity-affirming learning experiences. • Design equitable formative assessment opportunities that generate meaningful evidence of learning and inform responsive instructional decisions. • Create brave learning environments that promote belonging, student voice, critical thinking, and meaningful participation for all learners.
Topics	• Building Inclusive Classrooms Through Intentional and Meaningful Instruction • Examining Instruction Through an Equity Lens • Instructional Moves for Support, Rigor, and Equity • Equity in Assessments — Evidence of Learning
Application to Instruction & Student Learning	In Module 3, participants apply their understanding of explicit instruction, culturally responsive teaching, instructional moves, and equitable assessment to strengthen lesson design and student learning. Through the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework, educators explore how clear learning goals, intentional modeling, and scaffolded support help remove barriers and make rigorous content accessible for multilingual learners,

	students with disabilities, gifted or twice-exceptional learners, and students from historically marginalized communities. Participants also examine instruction through an equity lens, reflecting on how bias, representation, and culturally responsive practices influence access, engagement, and belonging. Through high-impact instructional moves and equitable assessment practices, educators learn to design purposeful learning experiences that promote clarity, student agency, critical thinking, and meaningful participation for all learners.
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Session IV

Objectives	• Synthesize key ideas from Modules 1–3 to explain how teacher clarity supports equity, engagement, and purposeful instruction. • Design a final product (reflection, turnkey presentation, or lesson plan) that demonstrates intentional integration of learning intentions, success criteria, scaffolding, relevance, motivation, and assessment. • Create student- and family-friendly communication tools that help learners clearly articulate their goals, progress, and next steps. • Apply culturally responsive and inclusive strategies to strengthen family and community partnerships that support student learning. • Analyze how the physical and organizational learning environment reflects teacher clarity, rigor, and shared values, and propose adjustments that promote access and belonging for all students. • Explain how the four dimensions of teaching with clarity (standards, organization, explanation/guided practice, assessment/feedback) work together to make learning visible and attainable. • Evaluate their own instructional and leadership practices to identify concrete next steps for enhancing clarity, communication, feedback, and student engagement. • Commit to 2–3 specific actions that extend teacher clarity beyond the classroom to families, colleagues, and the wider school community. •
Topics	• Intentional Teaching in Practice – From Classroom to Community – Final Application Project • Connecting Family Engagement to Teacher Clarity • Exploring Organization with Clarity and Rigor • Four Dimensions of Teaching with Clarity and Course Reflection
Application to Instruction & Student Learning	In Module 4, participants apply the full range of teacher clarity practices—learning intentions, success criteria, scaffolding, relevance, and equitable assessment—to create purposeful, inclusive learning experiences. Through the final project, educators synthesize course concepts to design lessons, turnkey presentations, or reflective products that demonstrate how clarity strengthens instruction, removes barriers, and supports the diverse needs of multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and students from historically underserved backgrounds. This work enables teachers to refine their instructional decision-making and implement structures that make learning goals visible, attainable, and meaningful for all students. Participants also extend clarity beyond classroom instruction by applying it to family engagement and the learning environment. In Module 4B and 4C, educators examine student-led communication strategies and organizational practices that promote transparency, belonging, and shared responsibility for learning. Module 4D’s exploration of the four dimensions of clarity supports teachers in identifying practical next steps to enhance communication, feedback, and engagement. Together, these applications deepen student ownership, strengthen home–school partnerships, and ensure learning environments affirm students’ identities while supporting their academic success.