Course: Peer Assistance for Students with Disabilities I & II
PEIMS Code: N1290203, N1290204
Abbreviation: PASWD1, PASWD2
Grade Level(s): 10-12
Number of Credits: 0.5-2.0

Course description:

Peer Assistance for Students with Disabilities is designed to promote an inclusive educational environment for special education students. This course provides peer assistants the opportunity to develop leadership and communication skills. Peer assistants obtain initial training in confidentiality, cueing, prompting, and positive reinforcement upon enrollment in the course and mini sessions throughout the semester. Peer assistants assist the teacher in general education classroom and special education setting by modeling appropriate learning behaviors, assisting with hands on learning activities, and developing activities to facilitate inclusion in the classroom. The goal is to create a relationship among age appropriate peers of differing abilities, both socially and academically.

Essential knowledge and skills:

Peer Assistance for Students with Disabilities I (Semesters 1 and 2)
(a) General requirements: Students shall be awarded ½ credit for successful completion of the course per semester.
(b) Introduction: In this course the peer assistant will:
   (1) understand the impact of their relationship with self and others as well as the impact of a student’s disability and their relationship with age appropriate peers;
   (2) acquire a basic understanding of students with disabilities including implications to learning, communication, and independence;
   (3) gain a basic understanding of the importance of confidentiality for students with disabilities per federal law and complies with federal law; and
   (4) gain a fundamental understanding of Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences as it pertains to varied learning styles.
(c) Knowledge and Skills:
   (1) Peer Assistant Skills. The peer assistant understands the importance of relationships between themselves and the special education student. The student is expected to:
(A) participate in class as a leader and a peer;
(B) demonstrate flexibility in their ability to adapt to varied settings; and
(C) identify appropriate support for needed individuals and groups of individuals in a social environment.

(2) Management and Relationships. The peer assistant identifies and utilizes techniques for managing learning and behavioral outcomes. The student is expected to:
(A) provide positive reinforcement and supportive language;
(B) implement redirecting and focusing techniques;
(C) recognize repetitive and self-stimulating behaviors;
(D) study behavioral antecedents in specific situations or with individual students;
(E) recognize and describe communication options such as pointing, gesturing, picture exchange communication system, and electronic devices that students can use to express wants and needs;
(F) define cueing and prompting;
(G) identify and describe the different types of cueing such as verbal indirect cue, verbal direct cue, pointing and physical gesture; and
(H) identify and describe the different types of prompting such as verbal direction, gesture assist, visual graphic, student modeling, and physical assist.

(3) Confidentiality. The peer assistant will understand students’ rights of confidentiality per Federal Law (Public Law 94-142, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The student is expected to:
(A) define confidentiality and the relationship to federal law; and
(B) maintain confidentiality as it applies to special education students in varied settings and scenarios.

(4) Theories. The peer student relates Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences theory. The student is expected to:
(A) identify and describe Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences; and
(B) identify their own learning style utilizing survey of Howard Gardner’s Model.

(5) Therapy. The peer assistant understands the importance of related services provided to students in an educational setting. The student is expected to:
identify equipment used by therapist such as a Rifton chair, a gait trainer, standers, musical instruments, walkers, motor lab equipment, and augmented communication devices;

explain how equipment such as a Rifton chair, a gait trainer, standers, musical instruments, walkers, motor lab equipment, and augmented communication devices are used during therapy sessions;

learn about student disabilities and how they can impact a student’s ability to participate in the learning environment; and

research a variety of disabilities such as autism, intellectual disabilities, general learning disabilities, Down’s Syndrome, and identify how to support students with disabilities.

Peer Assistance for Students with Disabilities II (Semester 1 and 2)

(a) General requirements: Students shall be awarded ½ credit for successful completion of the course per semester.

(b) Introduction: In this course the peer assistant will:

   (1) understand the impact of their relationship with self and others and the impact of a student’s disability and their relationship in the community and society;

   (2) understand the meaning of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) including long and short term goals of students with disabilities;

   (3) acquire a basic knowledge of all special services programs provided in the district and become an integral part of instruction, communication, and relationship building in the classroom;

   (4) understand the students’ rights of confidentiality protected by federal law and complies with federal law; and

   (5) understand their own personal learning style, the learning style of students, and utilize the techniques and learning in the classroom.

(c) Knowledge and Skills

   (1) Peer Assistant Skills. The peer assistant understands the importance of relationships between themselves and the special education student. The student is expected to:

      (A) provide instructional support to student with disabilities independently;

      (B) analyze learning environment and provide appropriate interventions for students independently;

      (C) extend support through cues and prompting to individuals and groups of individuals in a social environment; and

      (D) assist the student in developing communication skills that transfer to their work related job and the community.
(2) Management and Relationships. The peer assistant identifies and utilizes techniques for managing learning and behavioral outcomes. The student is expected to:

(A) generate positive reinforcements to encourage supportive language;
(B) prioritize and implement cueing and prompting techniques independently in a general education setting;
(C) assess repetitive and self-stimulating behaviors and implement appropriate refocusing techniques to extinguish the behaviors;
(D) predict behavior antecedents in learning environment for individual students;
(E) support student communication skills by assisting students with utilizing the most appropriate method for communication for sharing wants and needs;
(F) delineate in order, from the least invasive to the most invasive cueing options to be utilized to assist students;
(G) delineate in order, from the least invasive to the most invasive prompting options to be utilized to assist students;
(H) demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of cueing and prompting by utilizing the least invasive method of support necessary when cueing and prompting students;
(I) provide support and encouragement to students as they attempt new activities or participate in a different way in activities;
(J) provide feedback to teachers about student’s level of involvement in activities; and
(K) provide suggestions to teacher about alternate ways for students to accomplish the task.

(3) Management and Confidentiality. The peer assistant understands the purpose of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) including long and short term goals, special education options, and students’ rights of confidentiality. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the relationship of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP);
(B) describe components of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP);
(C) identify varied special education programs designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities;
(D) define Least Restrictive Environment and explain specific reasons for placing students in the least restrictive environment for learning;
(E) support students in the least restrictive environment by serving as their assistant;
(F) define Progress Based Monitoring;
(G) identify methods of utilizing Progress Based Monitoring to monitor students with disabilities in accomplishing their short and long term goals; and
(H) maintain confidentiality as it applies to special education students in varied settings and scenarios.

(4) Theories. The peer assistant understands and applies Howard Gardner’s learning styles. The student is expected to:
(A) articulate and apply his/her own learning style to their assignments;
(B) identify learning styles of students with disabilities within the classroom setting; and
(C) utilize student’s learning styles in developing lessons to teach students with disabilities.

(5) Therapy. The peer assistant understands the importance of related services provided to students in an educational setting. The student is expected to:
(A) assess any signs of discomfort or frustration exhibited by students when using therapeutic equipment and determine the student’s needs and offer assistance by providing distractions, and encouragement to tolerate activity;
(B) support student’s participation in therapy by discerning appropriate wait-time and level of support needed during therapy;
(C) apply knowledge and skills gleaned from researching student disabilities to support students in their learning environment; and
(D) research related career fields such as Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Music Therapy, Adaptive Physical Education, Speech Therapy, and Assistive Technology. Compose a profile for your chosen career including required education, certifications, cost of education, and institutions offering the required education and training.
Description of specific student needs this course is designed to meet:

Peer Assistance for Students with Disabilities is designed to promote an inclusive educational environment for special education students.

Listed below are the descriptors for both the peer assistant and the student.

- Peer Assistant: Empathy and support of the student, Recognition of the unique needs of the students with disabilities, Development of leadership skills, Exploration of career opportunities in education, counseling and health care.

- Student with Disabilities: Development of socialization skills with age appropriate peers, Life skills for acceptance by society, improved academic performance.

Major resources and materials:

Resources:

Autism Society: Living with Autism. Educating Students on the Spectrum
http://support.autismsociety.org/site/DocServer/buildingourfuture

University of Utah: Positive Techniques for Positive Behaviors
http://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/home/resource_pdfs/tools_techniques_positive_behaviors.pdf

Functional Behavior Analysis (multiple sources)

H. Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory

Learning Style Inventory

STAAR Alternate Cueing & Prompting
Refresher Course/Hierarchy


Blooms’s Taxonomy

Family Educational Rights and Privacy ACT (FERPA)

Youtube: FERPA http://youtube.com/watch?v=5XpRGd8O44
Required activities and sample optional activities to be used:

LEVEL I
- Orientation (Required)
- Daily Journaling (Required)
- Social Activity Log (Required)
- Study of H. Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory (Required)
- Develop and Teach a Lesson
- Assist Classroom Teacher: Hands-on Learning and Modeling (Required)
- Model Appropriate Behaviors (Required)

LEVEL II
- Daily Journaling (Required)
- Social Activity log (Required)
- Application of H. Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory (Required)
- Independently Implement Hands-on Classroom Activity (Required)
- Redirect Inappropriate Behaviors with appropriate replacement skills with cueing and prompting. (Required)
- Research Project on Disabilities (Required once per grade period)

Methods for evaluating student outcomes:
- Weekly journal activity
- Develop and teach an instructional activity
- Social activity log (outside classroom setting)
- Research projects

Teacher qualifications:
Special Education Certification

Additional information: none