



## Supporting Students: The Importance of Inclusive Curriculum

**Number of Credits:** 3

**Course Instructors:** Miriam Woods and Jordan Mix

**Course Description:** With increased visibility surrounding LGBTQ topics, issues, and people, comes more and more students who are openly identifying as part of the LGBTQ community, and more questions for educators about how to best support them.

This course is designed for educators who are seeking a more in-depth look at what it means to be LGBTQ, how the experiences of LGBTQ students are different from their heterosexual and cisgender peers, and how to successfully implement inclusive curriculum to help them better reach and support all students.

Participants in this course can expect a thorough run-through of common LGBTQ terminology, especially as it relates to gender identity and transgender students, a breakdown of federal and state laws protecting LGBTQ students, examples of LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum across various levels and subjects, and resources designed to answer some of their biggest and most common questions such as “why do I suddenly have so many LGBTQ students,” “how do I respond to students and parents who are uncomfortable with LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum,” and “how do I ensure I’m providing an effective learning environment for all of my students?”.

Participants will demonstrate their learning with discussions throughout the course, as well as through a final Implementation Plan, that tasks them with designing a project they can implement in their classroom or school community that strives to improve the learning experience of LGBTQ students.

**Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Have a working knowledge of LGBTQ terminology
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the most prominent barriers facing LGBTQ students in schools
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which LGBTQ-Inclusive curriculum benefits all students
- Design LGBT-Inclusive lesson plans for various subjects and grade levels
- Be able to respond to student and parent questions about what LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum is and does

**Resources:** No texts are required to purchase in order to complete this course

- The mission of Iowa Safe Schools is to provide safe, supportive and nurturing learning environments for all students. Staff of the Iowa Safe Schools are experts in the fields of bullying prevention and intervention, developing positive school climate, and advocating for underrepresented populations. GSAs are shown to be a best practice for increasing awareness of

discriminatory school policies, reducing bullying, reducing deaths by suicide, and ensuring students feel safe and supported in their schools and communities.

- Shane. Kryss. *The Educator's Guide to LGBT+ Inclusion: A Practical Resource for K-12 Teachers, Administrators, and School Support Staff*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2020.  
This approachable and easy to follow book guides teachers, educators, administrators, and school staff toward appropriate and proven ways to create safer learning environments, update school policies, enhance curricula, and better support LGBT+ youth as they learn.
- Smith, Dominique. Nancy Frey, Ian Pumpian, and Douglas Fisher. *Building Equity: Policies and Practices to Empower All Learners*. Stylus, 2020.

In *Building Equity*, Dominique Smith, Nancy Frey, Ian Pumpian, and Douglas Fisher introduce the School Equity Taxonomy, a new model to clarify the structural and interpersonal components of an equitable and excellent schooling experience, and the School Equity Audit, a survey-based tool to help school and teacher leaders uncover equity-related issues and organize their efforts to better address: physical integration, social-emotional engagement, opportunity to learn, instructional excellence, and engaged and inspired learners. Built on the authors' own experiences and those of hundreds of educators throughout the United States, this book is filled with examples of policy initiatives and practices that support crucial standards of equity and high-quality, inclusive learning experiences.

**Course Requirements:** To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

#### **Other Course Information:**

##### **Getting Started**

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with login instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

##### **Participation**

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 3 Weekly Units, however, and all assignments will be due by midnight on the final day of the course.
- All responses will be posted online. Large documents, files, photographs or PowerPoint presentations may be attached as part of your response by using the "Submit A File" option.

- You may work collaboratively and submit *similar* responses on all assignments except for quizzes which must be done individually. You may **not** submit the same exact post (copy/paste) from a colleague or classmate.

**INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:**

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
- 10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

**Check the Iowa Teaching Standards that are addressed in this course:**

X	1. Enhance Student Achievement		5. Monitoring Student Learning
X	2. Content Knowledge	X	6. Classroom Management
X	3. Planning and Preparation	X	7. Professional Growth
X	4. Instructional Strategies	X	8. Professional Responsibilities

**Assignment Checklist**

Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
<b>Getting to Know the Class; Additional Readings:</b> Take the time to get to know the class layout, read over the Help section, and review any other materials present in the class to get started. Take your time!		3 hrs
<b><u>Week 1 – Objectives of Inclusive Curriculum</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Introductions</b> – Participants will introduce themselves to the class and discuss what they hope to get out of it.	1 hrs	1 hrs
<b>Discussion: What is Inclusive Curriculum?</b> – Participants will read about the objectives of LGBTQ-Inclusive curriculum, begin their journey of understanding why it’s so important to the academic success of LGBTQ Youth, and look at/discuss examples of what it looks like at different grade levels.	2 hrs	2.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: Why does Inclusive Curriculum Make Us Nervous?</b> – Participants will explore barriers of implementing LGBTQ-Inclusive curriculum, why taking the step to implement	2 hrs	2.5 hrs

inclusive curriculum makes us nervous, and how to respond to concerns surrounding its implementation.		
<b><u>Week 2 – LGBTQ 101</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: LGBTQ Terminology Refresher</b> – Participants will revisit basic terms and definitions associated with the LGBTQ Community. They will also visit a terminology data base where they will research terms they are unfamiliar with, and then share their findings with other participants.	1.5hrs	2.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: Needs of LGBTQ Students</b> – In this discussion, participants will explore survey results that discuss the experiences of LGBTQ students in schools. They will then revisit theories such as Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs to illustrate the basic needs of students that Inclusive Curriculum strives to meet. They will discuss their findings in several posts.	1.5hrs	2.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: How Inclusive Curriculum works to meet the Needs of ALL students</b> – In this lesson, participants will cross-compare data from schools that do have LGBTQ-Inclusive curriculum with those that do not. They will also read about the psychological effects of having inclusive learning environments benefits academic performance for all students. They will share their findings in discussion posts.	1.5 hrs	2.5 hrs
<b><u>Week 3 – LGBTQ 201: Unpacking Gender</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Trans vs. Cis</b> – Most participants will already be familiar with the word “Transgender” but many will be less familiar with its opposite: “Cisgender”. This lesson breaks down the definitions of these words, and explains how a person can have a gender that is different than their biological sex. Participants will answer questions in discussion posts and engage in a written dialogue with their classmates.	1 hrs	3 hrs
<b>Discussion: Identity vs. Expression</b> – Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the terms/concepts gender identity and gender expression. Participants will be challenged to reflect on their own gender identities and expressions, rather than continuing to examine them as they relate to other people. Participants will use a webinar from their instructor along with supplementary materials to answer a series of discussion questions.	1 hrs	3 hrs
<b>Discussion: Trans History</b> – In this lesson, participants will explore a brief history of transgender identities from throughout the world. They’ll choose one example to write about in a report/discussion post.	1.5 hrs	2.5hrs
<b><u>Week 4 – The Importance of Inclusive Language</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Names and Pronouns</b> -- In this lesson we’ll cover why using a student’s chosen name and pronouns is instrumental in creating a safe learning environment. Participants will gain strategies to practice using unfamiliar names and pronouns, as well as engage in an instructor-led activity demonstrating how/why incorrect pronoun usage can be harmful. Participants will reflect on their experiences in a discussion post.	2 hrs	2.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: Practicing Inclusive Language Everyday</b> – In this lesson, Participants will analyze ways to incorporate inclusive language and content into their classroom dialogues each day. Participants will engage in a practice exercise and reflect on their experiences in a discussion post.	1 hrs	2.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: Non-verbal Communication</b> – In this lesson participants will unpack all the ways that they send messages about LGBTQ people through non-verbal communication. We’ll	1 hrs	2.5 hrs

spend time exploring ways to send messages of affirmation to LGBTQ students using your classroom space, as well as work to prepare responses to questions about LGBTQ people/topics we might not feel comfortable answering.		
<b><u>Week 5 – Social Emotional Learning</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: SEL Elementary</b> - In this lesson, participants will explore what LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum looks like with an SEL approach at the elementary level. Participants will read a series of children’s books as well as put together a sample lesson plan using SEL standards.	2 hrs	3 hrs
<b>Discussion: SEL Middle School</b> - In this lesson, participants will explore what LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum looks like with an SEL approach at the middle school level. Participants will read a series of example lesson plans before creating one of their own.	2 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: SEL High School</b> - In this lesson, participants will explore what LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum looks like with an SEL approach at the high school level. Participants will read a series of example inclusive-SEL curriculum before creating a sample of their own.	2 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b><u>Week 6 – Utilizing Core Competencies</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Mathematics</b> – People often think that inclusive curriculum is reserved for social studies and language arts classes, however this lesson will show participants all the ways in which even courses like mathematics can implement LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum. Participants will explore examples of inclusive lessons and then create one of their own, before reflecting on the exercise in a discussion post.	1 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: Science &amp; Sexual Health</b> – This lesson will demonstrate to participants that biological sex is not as binary as people typically think. Through this learning experience, participants will learn how to make curriculum in science classes (like biology and zoology) more inclusive. Additionally, this lesson will help participants cultivate resources for any sexual health lessons they may be teaching. All lessons will be age-appropriate, and reflect the age-group that the participant works with.	2 hrs	4 hrs
<b>Discussion: English and Language Arts</b> – Making sure students can see themselves and their families reflected in curriculum in their classes is so important to overall student success. This lesson will lean into conversations about education as both a window and a mirror (allowing students to see themselves and others) in course materials. Participants will read excerpts from different books featuring LGBTQ characters, and then design their own reading-group activities (at the grade level they feel is most appropriate for them).	2 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b>Discussion: Social Studies</b> - This lesson will <i>also</i> lean into conversations about education as both a window and a mirror (allowing students to see themselves and others) in course materials. Participants will familiarize themselves with LGBTQ leaders and changemakers throughout history. We’ll explore resources meant for different grade levels. Participants will explore how they can implement LGBTQ-inclusive history lessons in their classrooms through a series of discussion questions.	2 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b><u>Week 7: Sports and Athletics</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Physical Education</b> – Physical Education can often be a space filled with a lot of anxiety for LGBTQ students. This lesson will provide K-12 educators and athletic leaders with information about transgender identity and the participation of transgender students	1.5 hrs	3 hrs

in physical education and athletics by exploring inclusive policies for including transgender students in athletics and physical education.		
<b>Discussion: Trans Athletes in Sport</b> – This lesson will explore different policies for transgender athletes, as well as discuss some of the physiological changes in transgender individuals receiving gender affirming hormone therapy. Participants will also explore Iowa’s current laws regarding transgender athletes and share their findings in a discussion post.	2 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b>Quiz: Laws Protecting LGBTQ Students in Schools and in Sports</b> – In this lesson participants will explore various federal and state laws protecting LGBTQ students in schools and in athletics. They will also engage with resources explain how and why these laws came to be, and their impacts. Participants will be given a quiz to ensure their understanding.	1 hrs	3.5 hrs
<b><u>Week 8 – Approaches to Inclusive Curriculum</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Four Approaches to Multicultural Education Reform</b> – In this lesson, participants will learn about the four main approaches to education reform: contributions, ethnic additive, transformative, and social action. Participants will then use this information to discuss the pros and cons of each.	2.5 hrs	4 hrs
<b>Discussion: Responding to Student Concerns</b> – This lesson will help to prepare educators to best respond to student concerns of all sorts. The resources utilized in this lesson will encourage educators to practice active listening, empathizing, and problem-solving with students. Participants will share their responses in a discussion post.	1.5 hrs	3 hrs
<b>Discussion: Facilitating Difficult Conversations</b> – In this lesson participants will go over best-practices for facilitating potentially difficult or controversial group conversations. Participants will demonstrate their findings in a discussion post.	1 hrs	2.5 hrs
<b><u>Week 9 – Looking Inward and Looking Forward</u></b>		
<b>Discussion: Starting with Ourselves</b> – Participants will research and explain what the phrase “you are not a neutral participant in your own space” means to them and for them in their work. Participants will create a series of guided reflective questions to hold them accountable for being intentional with the space that they create/facilitate.	1.5 hrs	3 hrs
<b>Discussion: Looking Ahead</b> – Participants will research what leaders in education are saying about the future of inclusive education, and summarize goals, barriers, and potential changes to the field of inclusion in the next several years. In a discussion post, participants will summarize their findings as well as share with their classmates what they’ve learned over the last nine weeks.	1 hrs	2.5 hrs
<b>Final Assignment:</b> Participants will synthesize their learning from this course in a final assignment. This assignment can be either in an essay format (no fewer than 1,000 words) or a creative project of similar size. All participants must use this assignment to demonstrate what they will implement in their own work wit youth to make it more LGBTQ-inclusive.	3 hrs	8 hrs
<b><u>Total</u></b>	45 Hours	90 Hours

**Coursework:** Participants can earn up to 210 points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
26 Discussion Posts (5 Points Each)	130
1 Quiz (5 points)	5
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>

**Grading Scale – Graduate Credit**

100-90% (210-189 points)	A
89-80% (188 – 168 points)	B
79-70% (167 - 147 points)	C
69-60% (146 - 126 points)	D
59%-Below (<126 points)	F

**Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit**

100-80% (210 - 168 points)	P
79%-Below (<168 points)	NP

**Student Requirements** Students are required to:

- Participate in **ALL** discussion forums and quizzes
- Complete a final implementation plan

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

**Statement of Plagiarism:** Academic dishonesty results in failure of this course. Give credit where credit is due. Use the APA Publication Manual to cite references when needed. Not crediting ideas or words of others is unacceptable scholarship as is submitting work that was done for a previous course or that is not your own origin in design or completion. Submit original assignments. Do not submit work for this course that you have done for other courses.

## Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities

**26 Discussions (50 points possible)** Discussion Forums are asynchronous ways to engage in class discussions. They require you to submit an answer to a question and respond to the posts of other classmates. Because they are an integral part of sharing strategies, analyzing research, and sharing ideas, discussion forums in this course comprise a significant percentage of your final grade. It's highly recommended that you read and respond to more than the required two peer postings because greater participation will facilitate a greater depth of understanding. Additionally, it's important to make posts in a timely manner to benefit from peer responses.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Makes connections to the other content and real-life that are supported by reference(s) and example(s)	1
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	1
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	1
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	1
Participation (Responses to at least 2 peer posts)	Responds to other posts (when available)	1
Total Points Possible		5

## Final Assignment (75 points possible)

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a two-page final assignment. The paper is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. The rubric below will be used to grade the final assignment, but additional details will be provided within the course.

Grading Rubric for Implementation Plan		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	15
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	15
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	9
	Discusses Overall Implications	6
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	6
Mechanics	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	6
Implementation	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	6
	States resources to be used	6
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	6
Total Points Possible		75