PRDV 72619
Knowledge of Services: Developing Collaborative Relationships and Integrating Services

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Description: Addresses strategies and processes for developing effective collaborative relationships among special and general educators, families, and outside agencies. Emphasis will be placed on developing knowledge of services through other agencies, communication skills, establishing role responsibilities, and reaching consensus. Participants will explore effective communication strategies that lead to building and maintaining positive relationships with families, the school community, outside agencies, and students. Participants will develop a clear working knowledge of private schools and state agencies that support and provide services to school districts, children, and families. Also addressed will be the necessary services by various providers to support the transition process of students with disabilities to adult life.

Our course discussions are on www.framingham.blackboard.com
Additional coursework is emailed directly to me at dmerriam@framingham.edu

Please contact me by email if you have any questions at all along the way.

The course is 5 units of discussion based on readings, DESE website resources, and additional resources - links provided within the course site.

Each Unit offers a website exploration and reading/watching a video. A discussion questions are posted in the threaded discussion area. Each participant responds to the question and additionally to two peers.

Grading: 100 points
80pts. Reading, attendance/online participation (see rubric) 5 units
20 pts. Development of a resource binder or PowerPoint with information regarding outside agencies and supports. This resource will be shared with the class demonstrating understanding of information gained from participation in the class and outside reading.

Unit 1 Effective communication and collaboration skills – how can we keep it positive and build bridges with schools, families, and outside agencies?

Unit 2 Role responsibilities and consensus (among and between schools, families, and agencies) – what is consensus and how do we determine who does what, when, and how?

Unit 3 What resources may exist in terms private schools and state agencies that support and provide services to school districts, children, and families?

Unit 4 When students become adults, what do we need to do to support the transition? What is the “who, what, where, when” of transition planning?

Unit 5 Putting It All Together: What Do We Know? What Do We Still Need to Know? How will the knowledge of other agencies effect our students' achievement?
Course Readings and Resources


The Transition Planning Process:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/cspd/transition.pps
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html

Massachusetts State Agencies:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/state_agcy.html

The following list of resources and descriptions are taken directly from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website.

Massachusetts Organizations/Resources

Arc Massachusetts http://www.arcmass.org/
Arc Massachusetts is a statewide volunteer educational and advocacy organization dedicated to helping individuals with specific developmental disabilities.

Family TIES http://www.massfamilyties.org/
Family TIES of Massachusetts is a statewide information and parent-to-parent support project for families of children with special needs and chronic illness.

The Federation is a center for parents and parent organizations to work together on behalf of children with special needs and their families.
Massachusetts Association of Special Education Parent Advisory Councils (MASSPAC)  
http://www.masspac.org/  
The mission of MassPac is to work towards the understanding of, respect for, support and appropriate education for all children with special needs in our respective communities.

Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change (MFOFC) http://www.mfofc.org/  
The mission of MFOFC is to provide sustained advocacy and leadership training in pursuit of high quality, individualized community support and service options, including family support, for people with disabilities and their families.

Massachusetts Public, Charter, Private, Collaborative, and Approved Private Special Education Schools  
http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/  
Directory and Profiles

The Parent Professional Advocacy League (PAL) http://ppal.net/  
PAL is the statewide chapter of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. PAL provides support, education, and advocacy around issues related to children's mental health.

National Organizations/Resources

Considering Your Child's Need for Assistive Technology  
http://www.ldonline.org/article/6246/  
LD Online describes IDEA's requirement to consider the need for assistive technology in all IEPs and offers common uses of assistive technology for students with learning disabilities.

LD Online offer several tools to assist with the evaluation process: a form listing areas to be considered, a list of critical questions for consideration, plus a quick guide to No Tech/Low Tech/High Tech materials, equipment and technology tools.

New England INDEX http://www.disabilityinfo.org/  
New England INDEX, a project of the UMass Medical School located at the Shriver Center, provides information about programs and agencies, physicians, dentists, and consultants that serve people with disabilities. INDEX also coordinates the Mass Network of Information Providers (MNIP), a multi-agency collaboration that provides telephone information and referral at over 50 sites across the state (800-642-0249).

Special Education Areas of Study http://curry.virginia.edu/academics/areas-of-study/special-education  
Special Education Areas of Study from the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia  

Discussion Rubric

Students are expected to post a response for each threaded question and respond to at least 2 other students’ posts for each unit.

Threaded Discussion activity will be awarded 0-16 points/unit for the following:

Quantity of Postings How many times did you post? Was it the minimum or did you post more often. Did you take over the forum by excessive posting?

Quality of Postings Were the posts relevant to the question and thoughtful or were they simply “Yes, I agree”?
**Quality of Interactive Discussion and Community Building** Did you weave other postings into your own posting?

**Understanding of the Reading** Did you weave your understanding of the literature into your posting?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsatisfactory 0</th>
<th>Satisfactory 8</th>
<th>Exemplary 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Postings</strong></td>
<td>Postings are not relevant to the question posted.</td>
<td>Postings reflect the reading but no information given to source of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantity of Postings</strong></td>
<td>Responds to the question posted and one of the following: Neglects to respond to any student postings or Dominates the thread with excessive postings</td>
<td>Responds to the question posted and responds to a couple of student postings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding of Readings</strong></td>
<td>Responds to the question posted but does not mention material from the readings.</td>
<td>Responds to the question posted and makes reference to the readings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interweaving other postings into discussion</strong></td>
<td>Responds to question posted and to student posting but does not weave information into posting.</td>
<td>Responds to question posted and to student posting and weaves information into own posting.</td>
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**COMPUTER SKILLS**

Participants are expected to have basic computer skills, know how to search the web, understand how to send an email and attach a file, and have basic file management skills. A fairly new computer connected to the internet works best with Blackboard and familiarity with the learning management tool is also advised. Mozilla Firefox is the preferred browser to use with Blackboard.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All students enrolled in courses at Framingham State University must abide by the University Policy Regarding Academic Honesty, as published in the Framingham State University catalog and the RAM Student handbook. All forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, are serious offenses and are subject to scrutiny under due process. By logging into Blackboard, you agree to the university Acceptable Use Policy which also covers academic honesty. To become more familiar with this policy click here.

**TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

You are encouraged to reference the link to Atomic Learning on Blackboard if you have a need to brush up on your technology skills or learn how to use a specific computer application. Atomic Learning self-
paced tutorials are free to anyone enrolled in a course at the university. In addition, if you are new to Blackboard or online courses, review the Blackboard On Demand Learning Center for Students, which provides short (2-4 minute) show me videos about how to submit an assignment, participate in discussion forums, and much more. Blackboard technical support is also available 24-7 by calling 1-866-361-8970.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Framingham State University offers equal opportunities to all qualified students, including those with disabilities and impairments. The University is committed to making reasonable accommodations as are necessary to ensure that its programs and activities do not discriminate, or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of disability. Academic Support serves students with learning and psychiatric disabilities as well as students with visual, mobility and hearing impairments. For further information about this, please visit the website at: http://www.framingham.edu/center-for-academic-support-and-advising/disability-services/index.html or contact Ms. LaDonna Bridges, Director of Academic Support/Disability Services, in the Center for Academic Support and Advising (CASA) at 508-626-4906 or lbridges@framingham.edu.

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QUESTIONS
If you have general questions or need assistance, please post your comments to the Ask Deb discussion board of the course. Most likely, someone in the class has the same question. If the question is specific to your work, please email dmerriam@framingham.edu or phone 508 359-2710. Questions will be answered within 24 to 48 hours.