

**Before 651: Consider up to five of the above outcomes that you feel are most critical to you to learn in this course as they pertain to your gifted students and your teaching. List their numbers and comment on them here.** 15 responses

9: I struggle with finding and utilizing appropriate assessments for gifted students. I feel badly providing an end point to their learning; it's not a benchmark that they're striving for like it is with grade-level learning. 11: This is my first time back in an official course/program since 2007. For my license renewals, I have focused on PD and PD-level graduate coursework. While I have no doubt that I will incorporate what I learn from this course into my teaching philosophy, I am less certain that I am fully prepared for the rigor of the content. 12: I have so far relied completely on our Gifted Intervention Specialist to check WEPs for clear goals, make sure that students are advancing in their goals, and help with reflection of their goals after completion. I look forward to understanding how to work more independently. 13: I am completely unfamiliar with Ashland's Accent on Writing. I have not used APA since my master's degree completion in 2007. This will be part of my research this week.

#6: I can provide an extension or replacement of the general education curricula, modify the learning process through strategies such as curriculum compacting, and select alternative assignments and projects based on individual and student needs; critique my and others' curricular plans. Becoming more proficient at this would have the greatest impact on my classroom and help better meet my students needs.

4,5,6: Choosing differentiated methods to better service my gifted students will be a game-changer for me. We have little guidance in working with our gifted students and quite frequently an afterthought which is part of the reason I have signed up for the gifted endorsement. 9: Measuring and monitoring student growth is also extremely important to me. So often in our district, we use only one monitoring tool to determine if our gifted students are making progress. It is necessary to be able to offer our students and parents more.

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#5: I am interested in learning how to create a variety of differentiated curricula for gifted students because during my first year of teaching this past year, I did not have the time to create as much

variety and differentiation within my units to reach all learners. #7: I really believe in creating a safe and responsive learning environment for all students and this outcome spoke to me since it allows me to respond to characteristic of gifted students specifically. #8: In addition to differentiating content for gifted learners, I would love to have strategies and lessons to incorporate which involve growing self-regulation, self-efficacy, divergent and creative thinking, organization, etc. #9: I feel it is critical to learn the outcome of assessing gifted students with different measures of achievement and growth so that I can continue developing the best lessons and materials for these learners. #11: This outcome aligns with my reasons for going into this program in general - having an interested in gifted student populations and best supporting them and how I as an educator can play a role in being a facilitator of really powerful learning and life experiences for my students.

#5 - Selecting, adapting, creating a variety of differentiated curricula, etc. It can hard to determine if something is quality material to be sure it offers enough challenge/rigor for student growth. #6 - I can provide an extension or replacement of the gen. ed. curricula. etc. I would like to learn more and become better at curriculum impacting. #9 - I can effectively incorporate a variety of sources to measure and monitor gifted students, etc. MAP testing is a indicator of giftedness and shows growth, however I would like to have more resources for gifted students to better monitor growth.

4. I know and can apply processes for differentiating instruction based on student readiness, knowledge and skill level, including using accelerated content, complexity, depth, challenge, creativity, and abstractions. \*I feel that this outcome is most critical to my learning in this course. This outcome also pertains to my gifted students and my teaching. Being able to apply the processes for differentiated instruction is key in all students learning, especially gifted students. It is important for me as a teacher to make sure that I am differentiating my instruction for all students and that my instruction is based on student readiness, prior knowledge, and skill level.

5. I can select, adapt, or create a variety of differentiated curricula that incorporate advanced, conceptually challenging, in-depth, distinctive, and complex content; critique my and others' differentiation plans. \*I feel that this outcome is also very critical to my learning in this course. It is crucial to understand how to create and select differentiated instruction, so that the needs of all of my students, including gifted students, can be met. It is important to understand which lessons will challenge my students appropriately.

6. I can provide an extension or replacement of the general education curricula, modify the learning process through strategies such as curriculum compacting, and select alternative assignments and projects based on individual and student needs; critique my and others' curricular plans. \*I feel that this outcome really pertains to my gifted students and my teaching. As a general education teacher, it is incredibly important that I provide extensions or replacements of the general education curriculum for my gifted students or any other student that needs it.

8. I can effectively identify the need for and incorporate strategies to support gifted students' critical and creative thinking, motivation, self-regulation, and autonomy. \*I feel that identifying the need for and incorporating strategies to support gifted students' critical and creative thinking, motivation, self-regulation, and autonomy is essential in helping gifted students to reach their potential. I really hope to grow in my knowledge of incorporating different strategies to support gifted students.

9. I can effectively incorporate a

variety of sources to measure and monitor gifted students' growth; effectively incorporate processes for selecting, using, and interpreting technically sound formal and informal assessments for the purpose of academic decision making. \*I feel that this outcome will be very helpful when it comes to progress monitoring my gifted students. I will be able to use data to better inform my instruction!

1. Ohio law & operating standards - I want to have a deeper understanding of these standards. 6. Curriculum compacting & alternative assignments - I think I have grown some in this area this past year due to 650 but still have much to improve, especially in the area of curriculum compacting. 8. Incorporating strategies for self-regulation - I need to work more on having my gifted students set goals and track their growth. I do some of this but I know I can do more/better.

9. Variety of sources to measure/monitor gifted students growth - beyond i-Ready data, I want to use other sources and honestly don't know what is available in this area. I'm looking forward to gaining lots of knowledge in this area during this course. 12. Use standards & competencies in the field to provide accountability to my teaching & district - I want to hold myself more accountable to growing my gifted students. I want the district to be more accountable in following WEP/WAP plans and to offer more support for this population of students. I want to be an advocate for gifted students.

Through this course, I am most looking forward to exploring the idea of differentiation more and seeing how my current interpretation of differentiation measures up to the readings and research we look at in 651. #4 and #5: I know I already use differentiation in my own classroom, however, I struggle with what this would look like specifically for gifted students. I am looking forward to learning about more specific strategies or lesson ideas that cover these areas for gifted students. I would also like to explore how to differentiate on a more individual basis. I currently tend to differentiate for entire classes as I teach one gifted class (no extra support) and two inclusion classes (with an intervention specialist). I recognize there is a range of abilities within these groupings and would like to prepare better lessons to meet those individual needs. #6: While I have created independent projects or choice boards for gifted students, I have never gone as in-depth as curriculum compacting or replacing the general education curriculum. I would like to learn more about what this looks like and how to do it appropriately in the classroom. I would also like to learn how to direct or help others in doing the same.

5. I feel that I am not comfortable yet with creating curricula. I am excited to learn more in-depth how to do this with the gifted and talented. 6. I would like to learn more about curriculum compacting and would like to be able to assist my peers with their curricular plans. 13. I feel comfortable with writing at a graduate level. I need to work on my presenting skills when it comes to presenting to my peers.

8. One of the goals in my class is to allow students to push themselves farther and give them the freedom to explore their interests, expand creative thinking and problem solving. 7. Gifted students have a variety of needs, and not all gifted students are the "model student" and may be

overlooked or not challenged enough. 5. I want to expand and support all learners, the focus is usually on a struggling student, but the gifted students also need support for their learning. 3--Teachers need help individualizing WEPS, which is something I'd like to be able to initiate for my building. 5-I would like to be able to incorporate more differentiation and help others do the same.

The five outcomes I feel are most critical to learn in this course are numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7. I think the first 3 learning outcomes are essential in order for me to be able to properly serve my students. Without understanding how students are identified and what the requirements are for gifted service, I cannot be an advocate for what they need. Similarly, I need to know the major research and advocacy groups. The third learning outcome is one I'm greatly looking forward to as I really don't know anything about WEP's. I am handed a stack from my gifted coordinator each year without any context in how to interpret them. Understanding these documents will help me serve my current and future students. #4 was about differentiating instruction for higher learners. In my district a lot of the focus is on differentiating for students with disabilities and I would like to see a shift to include all of our students. I believe learning more ways to differentiate for my gifted students is something that is critical for all classroom teachers, not just those with a specified gifted program. The seventh learning outcome was one I hadn't given much thought to before. I think it is important to know which populations are historically underrepresented and how to better identify and serve those students.

4. Knowing and Interpreting processes for differentiating instruction; 5. Select, adapt, or create a variety of differentiated curricula; and 8. Effectively identify the need for and incorporate strategies to support gifted students' critical and creative thinking, motivation, self-regulation, and autonomy. These three outcomes seem critical because mastering them would help to resolve the tension I feel nearly every day as I am teaching! My experience has been primarily in situations in which struggling students are receiving extra support while gifted students quickly understand and successfully complete learning outcomes. And then they wait while others catch up. I have a desire to provide enrichment but have lacked the knowledge, and confidence, to create experiences for these students that would support their motivation, self-regulation, and creativity. Over the past three years I have been a long-term substitute running my own classroom in three different grade levels. Having to learn and adapt to new materials each year has not left much space for addressing the needs of the gifted children in my classroom, and my lack of knowledge has added to the burden. I am looking forward to again having my own classroom and teaching the same subject(s) for consecutive years. As I develop my units and lesson plans, I intend to use the knowledge gained in this course to incorporate ideas and plans for differentiation from the start.

8: Many of middle school students lack autonomy. They need constant reassurance. I want to help my students become more independent and take charge of their learning journey. 10: I teach STEM so I utilize technology almost everyday. Learning how to incorporate more technology specifically for gifted students is very applicable to my current teaching position.

**After 651: Where did you feel you made the most growth in this class? What areas do you still feel you need or want to improve?** 15 responses

I feel I improved the most in the area of developing curriculum for gifted and talented students. I feel more confident to make decisions regarding curriculum and differentiated instruction to meet the higher level needs of our gifted and talented population. I would like to improve more on critiquing and analyzing WEPs as well as reaching students with diverse backgrounds.

I feel I have made the most growth with assessment of gifted students. I \*love\* the DAP tool that was included in the Kettler text, and I can see how it would be a powerful rubric to incorporate across fourth and fifth grades at our school. If a unit has a good assessment, the rest falls into place. I feel like this course really helped me improve curriculum design and differentiation for all students, but especially gifted, in my class. I greatly appreciate the authentic approach to this course's instruction--it's not just theory; I am applying the information. I am \*awful\* at basic recall of names/dates/programs. I know it's counter-intuitive to say I would like more "Remember" time, and I know I can make time for that myself, but that is what I lack.

I feel that I made the most growth in this class in learning and applying strategies of differentiation for gifted students who deserve challenge and extension. I learned that this does not require a unique lesson and activity for each individual student. I can use tools which allow for differentiation and appropriate levels of challenge for different groups of students. I feel that I still need to improve in developing strategies for assessing students' prior knowledge and end-of-unit knowledge in various ways to allow different demonstrations of mastery.

#5 & 6 somewhat go together. I feel much more confident and prepared in modifying curricula, and do not feel as though I have to search for things that have already been differentiated. Differentiating for gifted students does not seem nearly as daunting as it previously did. The strategies we learned and used will be greatly helpful.

I feel that I made the most growth in this class in the area of knowing and applying processes for differentiating instruction based on student readiness, knowledge and skill level, including using accelerated content, complexity, depth, challenge, creativity, and abstractions. I feel that this class gave me many tools to help when increasing the depth and complexity in lessons for my gifted students. This class also helped me to grow in selecting, adapting, and creating a variety of differentiated curriculum that incorporates advanced, conceptually challenging, in-depth, distinctive, and complex content. I also grew in critiquing my and others' differentiation plans. I feel that I still need to improve in knowing and interpreting the general categories, definitions, and requirements for Ohio gifted education and service. I also feel that I need more practice in interpreting the service portion of the WEP and supporting the writing of WEP goals.

Learning new strategies to service gifted students in the areas of depth and complexity. I've gained confidence to take existing curriculum and make it more robust, focusing on the needs of all children but especially those who are identified gifted.

I am much more confident in my ability to differentiate thoughtfully, effectively, and efficiently. I really feel like I made the most improvement with differentiation as well as incorporating appropriate strategies for gifted students. I have always felt like I could define differentiation, but putting it into practice was another story. Through the readings for this course I found areas where I am already differentiating well and areas that could use improvement. For example, I already used a decent amount of flexible grouping but I could spend more time creating units or assignments that are more open-ended and theme/topic-based. I am looking forward to using the strategies from this course in my classroom. It is one thing to read the research and write a unit plan and another to implement that plan with a group of students. Having a little more practical application under my belt will be my goal moving forward.

Just learning a lot of information rapidly as I had limited knowledge prior to the two courses I'm taking.

I felt that I made a lot of growth in understanding how to differentiate for gifted students. I learned a lot about how to challenge gifted students and I think this will help me as a teacher. I have ideas on how to make a curriculum plan that includes differentiation for gifted students. I feel that I still need to improve on understanding the history of gifted education and using it to help with my understanding of teaching gifted and talented students.

I feel that I made the most growth in acquiring different techniques for differentiating content and instruction to meet the needs of higher ability students. I am still looking to improve on how to maximize challenging gifted students in a classroom where there is a wide range of abilities, as well as gifted students identified in the different subject areas. A gifted student in math has different abilities than a gifted student in reading.

I feel much more confident about differentiation. I am still a bit unsure of how to use Kaplan's framework of depth and complexity but look forward to learning more through additional classes and trial and error in the classroom!

I feel I made the most growth in learning outcome 4. After reading the selections from Kettler and Cash, I feel I have a large bank of activities and frameworks I can employ in my classroom to better differentiate for my gifted learners. I feel I still need to improve in better understanding WEP's and underrepresented populations of the gifted and talented. I don't think there was much emphasis on this course, so I hope to learn more about these goals in the upcoming courses.

I am very excited to have a whole new perspective on differentiation (although I cannot say I had spent too much time working on it in the past). I fell into the category of thinking that providing for the diverse needs of my classroom would mean much more work for me, but after this course I believe I have a whole new arsenal of ideas and techniques to make my classroom more engaging and to reach my gifted students and challenge them. I want to improve on this -- having ideas isn't the same as implementing them and figuring out what actually works and doesn't work

with my own personality and my classroom. I want to improve my overall teaching, particularly my discussion times where we are thinking and creating and learning together.

I think I made the most growth in understanding the research for why the instructional strategies or tools that are promoted work best for gifted students. Before 651, I did not know the wide range of differentiation strategies for gifted students and how it will support them specifically. So I know things I can do, I just need to find a way to implement them. I still would like to improve on how I adapt my lessons to meet the needs of gifted students. I don't like to admit that this did not happen much last year. It was my first year of teaching and I did not know much about gifted students. I was trying to keep my head above water my first year teaching. Now, I feel like have more knowledge to adapt lessons effectively, but more improvement can still be made.

**After 651 Reflection: Please comment on the course itself, the texts, the instructor, the format, pace, level of challenge, anything you wish to share so that I can improve the course:15 responses**

There were at times when the information presented on Blackboard was a bit confusing for 651. It was not as user-friendly as 650.

I thoroughly enjoyed learning from Janet James. She has an unbelievable amount of experience and knowledge, and she shares it so well. I look forward to taking more courses from her in future years. The format of the course flowed naturally. I appreciated that it went from history, to pedagogy, to real-life examples, to application. When it came time for me to write my [40-page] curriculum unit, I already had all the rough plans in place. If I would have started the course with the understanding that there would be this large of an assignment at the end, I do not know if I would have signed up. Yet, thanks to the format and flow of the course, it was simply a matter of plugging in the information rather than inventing everything at the last minute. I am immensely thankful that the pace of the course near the beginning was manageable while I was still teaching. I missed 2 of the last 5 days of school for a funeral for my grandmother. When that hit, along with the normal end-of-year chaos (plus 2 days of subs and recovery), and then family visiting for two weeks, I sank. I'm eternally grateful for the 24 hr extension that helped me get back afloat. My sinking had much more to do with my personal/professional life than it did with the course pace, but it helped me face some realities with time commitment. The level of challenge was perfect for my taste in the summer. I grew professionally, and I know I'll be a better teacher now. I found myself referencing all the texts for nearly every one of my lesson plans. I thought Cash was amazing at the beginning of the course, but I preferred the detailed explanations of Kettler & Rimm in the end. I think their varied focus lent itself well to offering a full picture of gifted education. I am eternally grateful for this course. I took it in order to fulfill my 6 hours of graduate credit for renewal thinking that I may slowly work toward a license as a gifted interventionist. I have found a passion within myself that makes me want to continue the route of a gifted endorsement. I look forward to taking another class next summer!

## EDIS 651 Summer A, 2022 Pre/Post Comments

I think that the course was organized well and the weekly assignment workload was not too intimidating or overwhelming. The texts had a lot of actionable strategies for differentiation which could be implemented easily and applied to many subject areas, which I appreciated reading about! I wish that there had been checkpoints for the curriculum unit to get feedback and receive input and suggestions for feedback from peers beyond the Kaplan frame. Maybe we could have put our topics and unit goals on the padlet and had peers provide one or two suggestions for lessons. I do also wish that the focus questions were weighted more into the final grade since these were time-consuming and required a lot of reflection and reading.

I was anxious to take this course and learn more about gifted curriculum. I am happy with all aspects of it and feel I learned quite a bit.

I really enjoyed the course work in this class, professor, and felt that I learned a lot. The only piece of feedback that I would like to mention is having a more comprehensive explanation of the courses final project (curriculum unit) at the beginning of the course and including more directions in the syllabus about it. There was a rubric, but that was pretty much the only guidance in regardless to a project this large and lengthy. I feel that future students might benefit from more guidance and expectations for the final project.

Loved the textbooks ... I'm always looking for user-friendly professional resources. I plan to use these throughout my career when I need to reference gifted education. The professor was very quick to respond to emails with support and guidance. The syllabus contained a nice variety of assignments, my favorites are those when I get to interact with my peers to provide and receive feedback. The big curriculum project is very practical, however the points assigned for this on the rubric was rather intimidating at first.

Cash was the text I found most useful. Kettler did not give me much. I enjoyed the curriculum project as a practical application of the content.

I was really looking forward to this course because I am always interested in new strategies for the classroom and this course did not disappoint. The Cash text with its plethora of activities is definitely a text I will continue to use moving forward. As always, I appreciate Professor James' wealth of knowledge on gifted education.

I thought the course was great. It was very fast paced but I understand why. It was extremely interesting and I love how accessible you were if we had any questions! Thanks for that. I enjoyed the course very much

I felt this was a great course. I felt that I was challenged at a good level. I learned a lot from the readings and I felt that these texts have improved my understanding of teaching the gifted and talented. I also felt that it was a good pace and even though I felt overwhelmed at times, it was a challenge that made me a better student.



## EDIS 651 Summer A, 2022 Pre/Post Comments

I appreciated using Cash and the variety of resources presented in the book. The feedback on the assignments were great and quick so that it could be included in the next weeks assignment. I wish that maybe we had broken up the curriculum unit and had different parts connected back to it throughout the course. There was some connection, especially with the Kaplan frame and the three Cash assignments but it still seemed like a lot at the end all of a sudden.

I really enjoyed this course, the content, and the level of challenge. I also appreciate the instructor's flexibility.

I really enjoyed using Padlet as that was a new format for me. I think the locations of where to submit the annotated bibliography and collaborative glossary were unclear. Everything else was clearly posted to Padlet or a Dropbox according to the syllabus.

I felt challenged by the pace and each assignment, not so much because it was academically challenging but because there was not a lot of extra time to really wrestle with understanding points of view and whether or not they match my own beliefs and values. But I am happy with the direction of my unit plan, and can see the value in that work even if I continue to tweak it before the school year hits. I appreciated how the assignments helped to guide toward completion of the project. I would have liked some information on the annotated bibliography a little earlier - it felt like we had already made many of the decisions about the unit plan and then needed to come up with three more articles to tie in. (BUT perhaps I missed information in the early whirlwind of a new course, too.) I was not looking forward to the mandatory Zoom, but it turned out to be one of my favorite parts of the class. It is so helpful to hear how others are teaching and thinking. I appreciate the time you put into collecting materials and helping us to organize our thinking and our resources, and also your availability. Thanks!

I think the course work was spread out evenly. I appreciate the curriculum unit being due the second to last week of class so I can receive feedback from classmates. The amount of feedback from classmates and Dr. James was very beneficial. Some things did not line up with the syllabus and blackboard. For example, the grade components in the syllabus was not the same as the grade components on blackboard.