

Innovative Program Proposal – the Guided Independent Study (GIS)
College of Education
Talent Development Program

October 11, 2018

To: Donna Breault
From: Jennifer Groman
RE: The Guided Independent Study Program for Gifted Intervention Specialists Proposal

This Proposal includes:

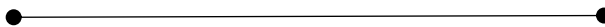
I. A Rationale that includes current problems that need to be solved with our existing Talent Development Endorsement Program. I believe that the Guided Independent Study (GIS) Proposal responds to these specific issues.

II. Talent Development Program. Here I outline the three distinct options we could offer if we add the GIS Program.

III. Outline (and a few brainstormed details) of the Online Guided Independent Study Program.

IV. What I need to put this together

V. What AU needs to consider to have this work



I. Rationale: Problems needed to solve within the TD Endorsement Program

- 1) Most educators seem to want online coursework
- 2) AU tends to get inquiries about the program early in the semester – too late to enroll for that semester’s courses, and too early to begin the next semester
- 3) AU tends to get inquiries about the program from singleton students who might be too far to attend on-campus courses, and are not part of a district willing to put together a cohort
- 4) Cohorts in districts are not making numbers as they were in previous years
- 5) Prospective students who inquire about the program seem to only want to know:
 - a) How long will the program take?
 - and
 - b) How much will it cost?

Curriculum does not seem to be an initial concern of theirs, only cost and time commitment. If we could offer both up front, we would be able to recruit these students immediately. This program would allow us to do so.

II. Talent Development Program. I propose that we offer three distinct options for students:

- 1) **Traditional hybrid coursework** at the Ashland Main site, the Columbus site, and the Cleveland campus. Course rotations are already established for these sites and would continue.
- 2) **Site-based cohorts** for districts interested in offering these, they can continue to work with our recruiters, set up information meetings, and determine the when, where, how often, and who will participate, and we can move forward with them.

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3) Online Guided Independent Study (GIS) for Gifted Intervention Specialist (GIS for GIS!). This would be the first of its kind for an endorsement program in Ohio and, from what I can tell, the first of its kind for an education/teacher training program in the US. I have not been able to find any such program in an online search.

III. The Online Guided Independent Study (GIS) Program will be as follows:

- Students inquiring about our gifted endorsement program are offered the option of:
 - Joining a campus-based course
 - Joining or forming a cohort in their district or joining a nearby cohort
 - Doing Founders School PD for 650 and entering the Guided Independent Study program at 651 after that, moving through the sequence at their own pace OR
 - Entering the Guided Independent Study program at 650 and moving through the sequence at their own pace
 - Students who need only a couple of courses or PD credit could take any one of the courses offered individually at any time, alone or with a couple of coworkers.

- A handbook will be provided outlining the “GIS for GIS” program with
 - Program expectations (at least 6 weeks per course, no longer than 1 year [not sure about this number per course), book requirements, etc,
 - Technology requirements and needs (Blackboard, Word documents, ability to make and submit videos via Kaltura, etc.)
 - Planning guide to schedule their personal sequence and set goals
 - Who to contact if they have problems with curriculum, technology, enrollment and billing, etc.
 - A calendar of required semesterly Saturday meeting dates (GIS Intensives) for the next 5 years (Fall, Spring, and Summer meetings).
 - An outline of a typical GIS Saturday Intensive and expectations for their preparation and interactions during the day.
 - Other information as needed

- A compact is signed by the student with a few requirements:
 - The student should have ongoing collaboration with their Gifted Coordinator, GIS, or a veteran teacher in their building, district, or elsewhere. This would make up for the lack of course interaction and be more relevant to their specific district, building, and classroom needs.
 - We might be able to recruit a few former grad students who might be willing to do this online for us, if a student does not have anyone to interact with. A good alumni connection.
 - The student will attend the once-a-semester Saturday Intensive at Main Campus, 9am – 5pm.
 - I think that we should include lunch boxes or lunch at Convo on that day as part of their paid tuition. This would make them feel like Eagles.
 - One Skype, FaceTime or telephone meeting with the Program Director or Instructor is required in the first week they start the program AND the first week

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of each semester (even if the student is in the middle of a course). This allows the Program Director to connect to students, gauge their interaction with the material, answer questions, assess needs, and simply get to know students in the program.

- A compact of promise for work to the best of their ability, etc.
 - I'm not sure what else will be in this compact, but perhaps goal-setting could be part of this, their own personal goals, as well as the program goals be part of it.
- Students enter 650 or 651 as determined by previous coursework (Founders School online PD counts for 650 and those students could simply move straight into 651).

I actually would like to include a very short APA module to be required prior to 650/651.

- Each course has three parts as follows:
 - Part One is a Breadth Analysis of the content. Part One of each course would be reading, watching videos, responding to the text in meaningful ways (two-column note taking, reflection journals, focus question responses, collaborative discussions with teachers at their site, surveys and data gathering from their site).
 - Goal Setting. Students would then be expected to set goals for themselves within the course – once they have the foundational course information, they can know more of what they need to learn for their own classroom, building, and district. These would center on their district Vision/Mission and the Ohio Department of Education Gifted Competencies.
 - Part Two is a Depth Analysis of the content. For example:
 - 650 might have an in-depth study of models of giftedness aligned with their personal philosophy
 - 651 would be a survey of various strategies for differentiation applied to their teaching situation
 - 652 might have an analysis of their Gifted District and/or Building Report Card data or Gifted Program Analysis and reflections on their findings
 - 653 would involve gathering a student or adult group to practice and reflect on a Small Group Dialogue of their choice
 - 654 would involve a two-pronged depth analysis
 - Personal Creativity: carrying out and reflection on a personal creativity field trip, attending a live performance, viewing a video of the life of a creative person, reading and applying a scholarly biography of a creative person
 - Classroom Creativity: Integrating ideas from the course into short application projects with students
 - Part Three of each course would be a Complexity Analysis and Personal Integration of the content. It would be their own personal research or integration project of some kind. For example:

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- 650 would be a case study of a creative individual
 - 651 would be a curriculum study, adaptation, or unit plan
 - 652 would be a program study or PD plan
 - 653 would be a research paper or practical application project
 - 654 would be a combination of a personal creativity project and a plan of integration of the creativity aspects of the course
- **The required Guided Independent Study GIS Saturday Intensive.**
 - Each semester would have ONE required GIS Intensive Saturday at AU's Main campus, 9am – 5pm. Every student would have to come - regardless of where they are in the program. Students would compile and share what they have been working on, bring questions for discussion, problems they have come across in anything from interpreting the law, to meeting the needs of certain populations, questions for the group.
 - There would be wildly varying levels of content, but I think this could work with the assistance of an adjunct or two.
 - **Keynote 9:30 – 11:00.** Perhaps this could become a semesterly Professional Development session in the morning for *any* interested individual. Getting a good keynote speaker for the morning and giving an open invitation for anyone in the area to attend for PD hours might be very cool for AU. This would bring outside interested teachers to AU to possibly do the GIS program themselves.
 - **11-12:30 for lunch at Convo** for GIS students, other interested individual could pay their own way.
 - **Afternoon session 12:30 – 5:00** could have two components:
 - **GIS students** only would meet with me and an adjunct to present and discuss their current work assignments, team-building, creative activities, panel discussions with concerns and questions, listen and learn from other graduate students. We could have the keynote participate here.
 - **Non GIS students** could attend various workshops throughout Schar offered by AU instructors, we could have panel discussions, strategy workshops, connect undergraduate teachers with veteran in-service teachers, with good discussion, Q & A with the keynote expert, creative activities, experience with the COE lab. This brings in teachers to interact with us and gain professional development hours. The recruitment possibilities are endless here.
 - **The Resource Notebook and EDIS 796 Internship.** One component I have added that would become an integral part of this program is the Resource Notebook, compiled throughout their GIS program.
 - This notebook would act as their Capstone and would give them a study guide for the OAE exam.

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- During 796 the students would set up an appointment with me (I would drive to them and visit them in their building) and we would review their notebook, review 796 requirements and set up a time for me to observe them.
- This is one more chance for me/an adjunct to have individual interaction with the GIS student.
- **In-course comments and interactions.** Every submitted assignment would receive rich, individual, and personal feedback from the instructor, with questions and ideas for further integration of the content. This needs to become a two-way conversation rather than just inserted comments in the margins of their work. Use of the comment, video, and journal functions of Blackboard will be invaluable in this.

IV. What do I need to put this together?

- Training on all features of Blackboard, including Kaltura (I struggle uploading Kaltura videos of longer than 10 minutes. I may not be doing it correctly). Much of this I can do online with the LearnAU online training and the periodic tech trainings they offer.
- A meeting with adjuncts to talk about updates to 652, 653, 654, and 796 and to determine their interest in teaching in the GIS or assisting with the Saturday Intensives.
- I have 4 credit hours (I believe) release time for recruitment and program development. I could use this time to develop at least a handbook, 650 and 651 this semester. This would be time-intensive to create, but I have a shell of an online program I can use to begin this work.
- I would love to visit at least one university where a Guided Independent Study program is offered to talk to their developers. None of these institutions has Gifted Education coursework, so I would imagine they would not see it as a conflict of interest for them.
 - University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IO
 - Thomas Edison State University, Trenton, NJ
 - Regis College, Denver, CO
 - SUNY Empire State, Saratoga Springs, NY

V. What do we (AU) need to consider to make this work?

- A flexible online format that is not semester based, but always open, always ready to take in students.
- A flexible course load format for the Program Director. This would definitely fall outside the normal operating load requirements.
- A cost effectiveness study of how much this program might cost students in tuition and fees (paid to AU), and textbooks (they purchase separately).
- A financial allowance or budget for paying a keynote speaker for a Saturday Intensive each semester.
- A financial allowance or budget (from their tuition or fees, perhaps) for lunch (at Convo or box lunch) during the Saturday Intensive each semester.
- A financial allowance or budget for advertisement of the GIS program throughout the state (OAGC Review advertisement, even the National Association for Gifted Children publications – this could draw nationally)

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- A financial allowance or budget for advertisement of the Saturday Intensive morning keynote PD for local districts.