Shoolman Graduate School of Jewish Education
CG-EDUC-546A: Creating an Inclusive School-Wide Environment
1 graduate credit
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Contact Information:
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Course Description:
The purpose of this course is to focus on what Jewish schools and teachers can do to create inclusive, tolerant environments for all children. Topics that will be explored include character education, PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) and an examination of existing programs that promote school-wide social emotional learning. Students will demonstrate an understanding of strategies for increasing positive behaviors and promoting social integration of children with special needs in general education settings.

Learning Objectives:
1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of strategies for increasing positive behaviors and promoting social integration of children with special needs in general education settings.
2. Students will become familiar with whole school methods for creating inclusive environments.

Required Texts:
Required readings will be available electronically.

Assessment:
Students will be assigned readings on a weekly basis and should expect to participate in either discussion board questions that will foster dialogue amongst the class participants or in individual assignments designed to allow for opportunities to apply new concepts and skills.

Assignments:
1. Students will participate in and comment on classmates' postings on discussion boards. (40 points)
2. Each student will critique a classroom management system (10 points)
3. Each student will create a teaching plan for changing a problem behavior into positive behavior (5 points)
4. Each student will merge SEL competencies with PBIS goals (5 points)
5. Each student will develop a teacher resource kit of materials that promote an inclusive environment (40 points.)
Course Accommodations for Disabilities:
Hebrew College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in programs. Accordingly, if a student has a documented disability, and as a result, needs a reasonable accommodation to attend, participate or complete course requirements, then he or she should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. For further information, see the Student Handbook at http://hebrewcollege.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook.pdf.

If you require course accommodations because of a documented disability or an emergency medical condition, please email your instructor as soon as possible. We are happy to work with you on any issues you have to ensure that you can participate fully in the class and complete the course requirements. Please do not wait until the assignments are due for a retroactive accommodation, but discuss the situation with your instructor before you experience difficulty.

Course Structure:

Week 1  What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
In addition to schools being aware of student differences and working towards making learning accessible to all learners, schools need to address social needs. Making sure that all students feel safe and can grow socially is an equally important component of creating an inclusive environment.

Key Questions:
1. What are the benefits of social emotional learning?
2. What skills do students need in order be socially competent?

Readings:
- http://www.edutopia.org/keys-social-emotional-learning-video

Assignments:
Discussion Board
Introduce final project- Developing a Teacher Resource Kit

Week 2  Character Education
Character education refers to teaching students about the traits they need to get along in society. In terms of a school setting, it is those core values that we need to teach our students to embrace in order to create a positive learning environment.

Key Questions:
1. What are those key core traits that are important for schools to teach?
2. How do you teach character?

Reading:
- Borba, Michele. "5 Steps to Teaching Any Character Trait." Education World

Assignments:
Discussion Board
Week 3  Classroom Management Systems
Teachers often use behavior management systems to create a climate within their own classroom. This week we're going to think about those systems from the point of view of the child who learns differently, finds socialization challenging or has behavior issues.

Key Questions:
1. What are the components of a successful behavior management system?
2. Which systems help to create an inclusive environment without creating more barriers?

Readings:

Assignment: Critique a classroom behavior management plan

Week 4  PBIS
PBIS stands for “Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.” PBIS is a structure for making sure that all students can be successful at school—academically, socially, emotionally and behaviorally. PBIS looks at all aspects of a school life, establishes clear behavioral expectations and actively teaches those expectations to all of its students.

Key Questions:
1. What are the characteristics of a school wide PBIS plan?
2. How does PBIS connect with a core values approach to education?
3. How does PBIS work together with a teacher's classroom behavior system?

Readings:
- PBIS for Beginners (www.pbis.org)
- PBIS and the Law (www.pbis.org)
- PBIS Example 1 and 2
- Rethinking PBIS- a principal's reflection
- Explore the rest of www.pbis.org to learn more about the approach (optional)

Assignments:
Plan for changing a behavior
Discussion Board

Weeks 5  Merging PBIS and SEL Competencies
SEL and PBIS both believe that students learn best in safe and well-managed learning environments.

Key Questions:
1. How do the principles of SEL and PBIS work together to improve behavior?
2. How do SEL and PBIS help create positive environments for all children?

Assignments:
Match SEL competencies with PBIS goals
Discussion Board
Share Teacher Resource Kit