

*“You are not given a wish, without also the power to make it come true.”
Jonathan Livingstone Seagul*

**PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
TEACHER ASSISTANT PROGRAM
TA 1234**

THE ROLE OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL IN THE CLASSROOM

FALL 2003: September 3 to December 9, 2003

CLASS: Monday and Wednesday 10:00 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.

LOCATION: B201

CREDITS: 45 hours 3credits

INSTRUCTOR: Dolly McArthur, M. Ed.

OFFICE: H204

CONTACT: Phone: 539-2787
Email: mcarthur@gprc.ab.ca

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday: 2:30 to 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Thursday 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course develops knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the paraprofessional to perform their roles and responsibilities as a member of an instructional team. Students are equipped to function effectively and professionally in a wide variety of educational setting from kindergarten through senior high school.

CLASS FORMAT

Students will be engaged in active learning, and classes will include a mixture of lecture, discussion, small group work, case studies, in-class assignments and audio-visual materials.

According to Edgar Dale from the University of Texas, we tend to remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we hear and see, 70% of what we say and 90% of what we both say and do. Therefore, **student participation is a vital part of this course.**

REQUIRED TEXT

Gursky, B. (2003). The Art of Assisting in the Classroom: A practical guide filled with tips and tools for School Assistants. AB. SchoolBell.

Sprick, R., Garrison M., Howard, L. (2002). ParaPro: Supporting the Instructional Process. CL. Sopris.

Additional reading will be placed on reserve. (see attached)

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

To demonstrate an understanding that is enduring, learners will uncover the answers to the following essential questions:

1. What personal strengths and attributes do you have, that are relevant to the characteristics of a paraprofessional in various classroom settings?
2. How do you implement goal setting and self-evaluation as a means of establishing a professional development plan?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of the teacher, teacher assistant, special needs instructor and other members of the multi-disciplinary team?
4. What is inclusion and why is it beneficial for all children?
5. How do you motivate and engage students in the learning process?
6. How do you develop the art of questioning?
7. Can the learning environment be organized for effective learning?
8. Can you respond to (correct) irresponsible student behaviour in way that will help students learn to behave more responsibly?

9. Who are our students with diverse learning needs?
10. What is the role of the Paraprofessional with respect to working with diverse learners?
11. What ethical practices are expected to be followed by the staff, students, parents, administration and the community?
12. Why is collaboration important and how do you establish collaborative working relationships with student, parents, teachers and others?
13. Why is reflection an important key to your success as a teacher assistant?

COURSE EVALUATION

Reflective Journal

20%

Due: TBA

Becoming a reflective teacher assistant fosters personal and professional growth. Your journal should address specific questions and may also include ideas, questions and reflections as the result of your learning. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

Assignments

50%

Due: TBA

All of the following assignments will take place in class. They make take the form of questions and answer, paragraph or short essay, creative expression, role-play, presentations or other forms of presenting information. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

Role of Teachers and Teacher Assistants	10%
Motivation-Behavioral Management	10%
Ethical Implications	10%
Collaboration and Communication	10%
Inclusive Classroom – Assisting Children Who have special needs?	10%

Final Project

30%

Due: December 5, 2003

The Final Project is intended to allow individuals or groups of students to review and highlight the important characteristics of the role of the Teacher Assistant in a variety of

settings. Part A will be a take home and will be a 300-400 word paper. The content of the paper will be your personal philosophy of Teacher Assistants in Education. Part B will consist of an applied question and answer exam on the last day of class. Specific instructions and requirements will be handed out in class.

GRADING

Final grades will be assigned using a LETTER GRADING system with a FOUR-POINT SCALE of numerical equivalents for calculating grade point averages.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalence	Descriptor
A+	4.0	Excellent
A	4.0	
A-	3.7	First Class Standing
B+	3.3	
B	3.0	Good
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	Satisfactory
C	2.0	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	Poor
D	1.0	Minimal Pass
F	0.0	Failure

RIGHT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROFESSIONALISM

Student Conduct

Students are advised to familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities as outlined on pages 38 to 42 of the college calendar.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes and will be responsible for content covered, assigned readings, and for any announcements that will be made in class. If a student is unable to attend a particular class, it will be her/his responsibility to find out what was missed. For optimal learning and readiness for class participation, students should read the assigned chapters and articles before coming to class on the dates indicated on the class schedule.

Assignments

All take home assignments must be typed and follow APA guidelines. Computers are available in the library, as well, the computer labs. See <http://www.gprc.ab.ca/departments/cts/labs.html> for more information.

Late Policy

Assignments must be received by 4:00 p.m. **ON** or **BEFORE** the day which they are due. **Late** assignments will be **penalized** at the rate of **5% per day**. That is, if an assignment receives a grade of 80% and is one day late, the grade recorded will be 75%; two days late 70% etc.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: This is tentative and subject to change.

DATE	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
W. Sept. 10	Introductions; review course outline; expectations		
F. Sept. 12	The educational system	Ch. 1 – Gursky	
M. Sept. 15	The basics	Ch. 1 - Sprick	
W. Sept. 17	Educational theorists	Ch. 2 - Gursky	
M. Sept. 22	Roles and responsibilities of the paraprofessional	Ch. 3 – Gursky RR - Carroll	
W. Sept. 24	Characteristics of the Teacher Assistant		
M. Sept. 29	The multi-disciplinary team The IPP	Ch. 2 - Sprick	
W. Oct. 1	Assignment #1 – The role of the Teacher Assistant		Assignment #1
M. Oct. 6	Students with exceptionalities: What is inclusion? Who are students with diverse abilities? Do labels matter? Learning styles	Handouts	
W. Oct. 8	Encouraging positive behaviour	Ch. 3 – Sprick Pg. 55-78	
W. Oct. 15	Purpose of behaviour Modifying our own behaviour		
F. Oct. 17	Responding to irresponsible behaviour	Ch. 3 – Sprick Pg. 79-83	
W. Oct. 22	Assignment #2 – Managing Student Behaviour		Assignment #2
M. Oct. 27	Ethical practice Maintaining confidentiality		
W. Oct. 29	Assignment #3 – Ethical Implications		Assignment #3
M. Nov. 3	In the classroom	Ch. 4 – Gursky RR – Program and Strategies	
W. Nov. 5	The cooperative classroom Working in small groups	Ch. 5 – Gursky Ch. 5 - Sprick	
W. Nov. 12	Supervising independent work Work with individuals	Ch. 6 – Sprick Ch. 7 - Sprick	
M. Nov. 17	Assisting across the curriculum Penmanship; Story Telling	Ch. 6 - Gursky	

DATE	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE
W. Nov. 19	Assisting across the curriculum Constructing effective displays Learning Centers	Guest Speaker	
M. Nov. 24	Tools for Collaboration (workshop on 25 th .????) or Teamwork Assignment # 4 - Collaboration and Communication	Ch. 8 - Gursky	Assignment # 4
W. Nov. 26	Inclusive Classroom and Role of Teacher Assistant	RR. Giangreco- The Tip of the Iceberg ... RR – Interventions ...	
M. Dec. 1	Working as a Special Needs Assistant Individual Program Plans	Ch. 7 – Gursky RR – Giangreco – Helping or Hovering? . . .	
W. Dec. 3	Assignment #5 – Inclusive Classrooms and the Role of the TA Thriving Attitudes for Successful Assisting		Assignment # 5
F. Dec. 5	Final Project		Final Project