

Online Course – Introduction to Learning Disabilities in Adults

Syllabus

Welcome to the Online Professional Development Courses developed by the University of Tennessee Center for Literacy Studies and the Tennessee Division of Labor and Workforce Development.

This course, named “Introduction to Learning Disabilities in Adult Education” is based on the Center for Literacy Studies publication *Keys to Effective Teaching Practice* by Margaret Lindop, Editor, which is, in turn, based strongly on *Bridges to Practice* – a series of guidebooks produced by the National Institute for Literacy. Other resources integrated throughout the course are credited within each individual lesson and include:

- *Bridges to Practice: Florida’s Focus on Adults with Learning Disabilities*
<http://www.floridatechnet.org/bridges/>
- *LINCS special collection: Literacy and Learning Disabilities* <http://ldlink.coe.utk.edu/>
- *LD Online* <http://www.ldonline.org/>
- *Learning Disabilities Resources* – Dr. Richard Cooper <http://www.learningdifferences.com/>

50 to 80% of students in adult education classes have learning difficulties – many with diagnosed learning disabilities or Attention Disorders. This introductory course, designed for adult education instructors, will overview types of learning disabilities, various screening tools to assist in identification, and teaching tools to support identified learning needs.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- ~ Describe common learning disabilities and their long-term effects on adult learners
- ~ Use at least one tool for screening adult learners for learning disabilities
- ~ List online resources for materials/ideas/lessons that use the teaching/support strategies introduced in this course
- ~ Implement at least one of the teaching tools introduced in this course with their adult learners
- ~ List online resources for information on learning disabilities, the law, screenings, and testing accommodations.
- ~ Describe state policies and procedures for referrals and support of adult learners with learning disabilities

- ~ Outline major legal issues surrounding learning difficulties and learning disabilities in adult education

This course will be conducted over 6 weeks as follows:

- ~ Week 1: Course Introduction
- ~ Week 2: Learning Disabilities and Adult Learners
- ~ Week 3: Screenings, Referrals, and Accommodations
- ~ Week 4: Teaching Tools for Effective Support
- ~ Week 5: Putting New Learning into Practice
- ~ Week 6: Plans and Evaluation

During this course, participants will engage in the following activities:

- ~ Reviewing/reading short passages and web pages
- ~ Responding to readings in writing
- ~ Taking online surveys
- ~ Participating in online discussion via a discussion board
- ~ Self-evaluation & learner evaluation via written screenings and/or observation tools
- ~ Participation in online "chat" sessions
- ~ Modifying/developing plans for supporting adult learners with learning disabilities
- ~ Implementing new teaching techniques & strategies with adult learners
- ~ Evaluating implementation and revising instructional/support plans
- ~ Reflection on, and planning for improvement in, personal teaching practice