

## Seattle Pacific University

Course Number: EDCT 5699  
Winter Dates: January 24, 2022 – April 3, 2022  
Summer Dates: June 13, 2022 – August 21, 2022  
Course Title: Building Executive Function Skills in the Classroom: Time Management, Planning and Organization (2 credits)  
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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce participants to the research on Executive Functioning that is applicable to the K-12 classroom environment. Participants will analyze their students' Executive Function (EF) skills, learn strategies to help with EF skills and implement activities to improve student academic success. Topics include:

- Current perspectives on brain development and EF skills as they relate to classroom behaviors
- Visual instruction models to teach key concepts that are the foundation for developing and improving EF skills
- Hands-on activities and downloadable forms to use with your students
- A simple binder system for your students' paper management and organization
- Practical information about the brain and how we learn
- Information on how to improve your own time-management, planning, and organization skills

### 10-week Online Course

This course has pre-recorded video lectures, readings and weekly written assignments, as well as a final project. Participants are also required to contribute to discussion threads every week. There are two optional live question and answer periods, via videoconference. The dates and times are detailed in the online classroom. These Q & A periods will be recorded and will be available to you in the online classroom after they occur.

### Required Reading

Textbooks:

- Kaufman, Christopher (2010) *Executive Function in the Classroom: Practical Strategies for Improving Performance and Enhancing Skills for All Students*. Brookes Publishing
- Sousa, David (2017) *How the Brain Learns* (5th ed.), Corwin Press

#### Additional Reading Provided by Instructors:

- Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2011). Building the Brain's "Air Traffic Control" System: How Early Experiences Shape the Development of Executive Function: Working Paper No. 11. PDF from [www.developingchild.harvard.edu](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu)
- Sklar, M. (2010). Unit 3: The Second Truth of Time - in the *Seeing My Time Instructor's Manual*, Aguanga Press, PDF
- Sklar, M. (2010). Unit 4: Meeting Due Dates - in the *Seeing My Time Instructor's Manual*, Aguanga Press, PDF
- Sklar, M. (2014). Time Scientist. PDF
- Sklar, M. (2014). *50 Tips to Help Students Succeed*, pages 206-216, Aguanga Press, PDF

#### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA**

(for graduate credit students)

Assignments will be assessed according to the following criteria. Participants will:

- Answer all questions in the assignments thoroughly, using excellent spelling, grammar and punctuation. When there are two reflections within one week, please create a separate file for each.
- Apply course concepts in the classroom when appropriate.
- Collaborate with fellow learners by adding to online discussion threads.
- Turn in assignments on a weekly basis.
- Submit a final lesson plan that incorporates ideas from the course, is practical for your students, and is of high quality such that you would be proud to share it with your colleagues or administration.

**All assignments are detailed at the end of each week's topics in the online classroom. There is also mention of each assignment in the "overview" section at the beginning of each week in the online classroom.**

**Post Comments on Discussion Threads in Online Classroom** (5 points each discussion topic – ongoing throughout the course)

To foster a learning community and to facilitate deeper understanding and sharing of ideas, after each lesson, post a comment in the discussion section of the online classroom. Also, please comment on at least one other student's post (make as many comments as you are inspired to make!)

**Final project: Lesson Plan on Executive Functioning** (approximately 3 pages)

At the end of the term, submit a lesson plan that you would implement with your own students. Please choose any topic from the course that inspires you. Include goals and objectives. Imagine your plan will be shared with colleagues and become a resource for other teachers. If applicable, integrate your lesson on Executive Functioning with other subjects. If you are not currently working in a classroom, make a plan for use in your

future teaching position. Upon completion, the lesson plan will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- There is a description of the setting in which your plan will be taught.
- The lesson promotes development of executive functioning skills that support student intellectual growth and academic performance.
- The plan is clearly written and easily followed. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are appropriate, citations are provided for all non-original work.
- Tap into your creativity, include playful/interesting activities. If appropriate to your goals and objectives, include outside resources from books or websites that you find helpful.
- The final project must be posted on time, by 5pm Pacific Time on the ending date of the course.
- Please refer to the Lesson Plan Information document for guidance in more detail.

### **Reflections on Reading**

Each week, there are questions to answer in a reflection pertaining to the reading. The reflections must be clearly written, with excellent grammar and spelling. They will vary in length from a couple of paragraphs to a page or more, depending on how much you have to say!

We encourage you to “be kind to your future self” and turn in work the week that it is assigned. We advise you to keep up with work consistently and avoid waiting to the last minute, just as you would advise your students. We like to be in communication with you. If you are having difficulty keeping up with the assignments, please contact us.

### **Assignments by week:**

Each week’s Overview in the online classroom contains all of the expectations and assignments for the week, as well as a suggested schedule for completing all work.

#### **Week 1: Introduction to Executive Function and Building Metacognition**

- Watch Week 1 videos: Topic A and Topic B
- Reading:
  - Kaufman (2010) Executive Function in the Classroom: Practical Strategies for Improving Performance and Enhancing Skills for All Students, Chapter 1 pgs. 1-15.
  - Sklar (2014), 50 Tips to Help Students Succeed, pgs. 206-216
- Post and respond to the following discussions:
  - Introduction to Executive Function Skills of the Brain
  - Building Student Metacognition
- Reflection on Kaufman Chapter 1 (10 points)  
Please refer to “Week 1 Assignments” in the online classroom for questions on the Kaufman reading.

## Week 2: Developmental Perspectives on Executive Function

- Watch Week 2 videos: Topic A and Topic B
  - Reading:
    - Kaufman, Chapter 2
    - Sousa, D. (2017) *How the Brain Learns*, Chapter 1, pgs 15-42
  - Post and respond to the following discussions:
    - Brain Basics
    - Developmental Perspectives on Executive Function Skills
  - Reflection on Kaufman, Chapter 2 (10 points)
  - Reflection on Sousa, Chapter 1 (10 points)
- Please refer to “Week 2 Assignments” in the online classroom for writing prompts.

## Week 3: Background on the Brain

- Watch Week 3 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
  - Reading:
    - Kaufman, Chapter 3
    - Sousa, Chapter 2, pgs 43-83
  - Post and respond to the following discussions:
    - ‘Sound or Picture Brain?’
    - Memory and Learning
  - Reflection on Sousa, Chapter 2 (10 points)
- On pages 71 & 72 in *How the Brain Learns*, there are questions about developing a nurturing classroom environment. Instead of answering the more general form of the questions, please answer the questions (included below) as they relate specifically to your own experience (current or past).
- What kinds of emotions have you seen in your classroom that could interfere with cognitive processing?
  - What strategies have you used in your classroom to limit the negative effects of these emotions?
  - In your classroom, how do you foster positive emotions that support learning?
- Please refer to “Week 3 Assignments” in the online classroom for writing prompts.

## Week 4: Connections between Learning, Behavior, Emotions, and Self-advocacy

- Watch Week 4 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
  - Reading: Sousa, Chapter 3, pgs 96-119,
  - Post and respond to the following discussions:
    - Learning and Behavior
    - Self-Advocacy Skills
  - Practitioner’s Corner from Sousa, Chapter 3 (10 points)
- Please refer to “Week 4 Assignments” in the online classroom for writing prompts.

### Week 5: Evaluating Your Student's Executive Skills

- Watch Week 5 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
- Reading: Kaufman, Chapter 4
- Post and respond to the following discussions:
  - Honoring Differences
  - "Which Train?"
  - Growth Mindset
- Reflection on Kaufman, Chapter 4 (10 points)

Please refer to "Week 5 Assignments" in the online classroom for writing prompts.

### Week 6: Supporting the Executive Skill of Time Management with External Tools

- Watch Week 6 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
  - Reading:
    - Kaufman, Chapter 5
    - Sklar (2014) 50 Tips to Help Students Succeed, Chapters 2 and 3 (PDF)
  - Post and respond to the following discussions:
    - Time Tools
    - Self Control
    - Multitasking Activity
  - Reflection on Kaufman Chapter 5 & Sklar Chapters 2 & 3 (10 points)
- Please refer to "Week 6 Assignments" in the online classroom to download PDF for reading and see writing prompt.

### Week 7: Developing Time Awareness

- Watch Week 7 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
  - Reading: Sklar 2010, Seeing My Time – Instructor's Manual, Unit 3: The Second Truth of Time (PDF)
  - Post and respond to the following discussions:
    - Seeing the Week
    - Processing Speed
    - Dopamine Reward System
  - Classroom activity based on Unit 3 of the Seeing My Time Instructor's Manual (10 points)
- Please refer to "Week 7 Assignments" in the online classroom to download PDF for reading and see writing prompt.

### Week 8: Developing Future Thinking – Getting Projects Done on Time

- Watch Week 8 videos: Topic A, Topic B
- Reading: Sklar 2010, Seeing My Time – Instructor's Manual, Unit 4: Meeting Due Dates

(PDF)

- Post and respond to the following discussions:
  - Drawing an Assignment: Supporting Working Memory
  - Meeting Project Deadlines: A Visual Instruction Model
- Implementation of strategy based on Unit 4 of the Seeing My Time Instructor's Manual (10 points)  
Please refer to "Week 8 Assignments" in the online classroom to download PDF for reading and see writing prompt.

#### Week 9: Organization and Paper Management

- Watch Week 9 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
- Reading: Kaufman, Chapter 9
- Post and respond to the following discussions:
  - Organization and Paper Management
  - Sleep and the Brain
  - Motivation and Future Thinking
- Reflection on Kaufman, Chapter 9 (10 points)  
Please refer to "Week 9 Assignments" in the online classroom for writing prompts.
- Focus on completing your final project

#### Week 10: Sustaining Learning and the Reality of Change

- Watch Week 10 videos: Topic A, Topic B, Topic C
- Reading: Kaufman, any or all of Chapters 6, 7 and 8, depending on your content area.  
This is background information to help with your lesson plan.
- Post and respond to the following discussions:
  - The Science of Learning
  - Behavioral Change
  - Final Thoughts
- Finalize and submit your lesson plan project.

#### **Course Objectives and Outcomes associated with Standards for Professional Learning Criteria**

1. Objective: Discuss and synthesize information on brain development and executive functioning skills as they relate to classroom behaviors.  
Evidence: Personal and student assessment of executive function skills in the classroom, Personal reflections and online discussions  
(SPL criterion: Learning Communities – to extend educators' knowledge of content, content-specific pedagogy, how students learn, and management of classroom environments)
2. Objective: Describe the abstract nature of time and its connection to executive functioning challenges. Demonstrate how to make time concrete and visible.

Evidence: Create student resources, incorporate strategies for classroom and home use.  
(SPL criterion: Learning Designs – to apply learning theories, research, and models of human learning)

3. Objective: Analyze the behaviors related to executive function skills that are necessary to support learning and participation in class.

Evidence: Complete a student assessment, choose support strategy and evaluation application.

(SPL criterion: Data- to analyze student, educator, and system data)

4. Objective: Make a lesson plan designed to develop executive functioning skills appropriate for your subject matter and age group.

Evidence: Complete a plan to teach in a classroom. Include goals and objectives with activities.

(SPL criterion: implementation – to apply change research)