Certification Program for Teaching Gifted and Outstanding Students

Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education

**Rationale**

The Certification Program for Teaching Gifted and Outstanding Students aims to train people to promote and lead a culture where academic excellence is a central value, while simultaneously supporting the values of personal and moral excellence, transcendence and leadership, together with commitment and sensitivity to society. Educating the gifted necessitates developing a learning environment that is emotionally supportive, flexible and dynamic; an environment where it is possible to conduct challenging discourse and generate new knowledge.

These principles translate into polices and work programs, whose realization directs educational activities and facilitates a broad platform of academic initiatives for gifted and outstanding students that calls for a different type of teacher-student communication, whereby teachers and students collaborate in the process of generating new knowledge and new contexts for existing knowledge, promoting both academic excellence and emotional support for gifted students and their families.

This unique program at the Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education offers participants a golden opportunity to specialize in the field of gifted education. The program is designed to increase awareness of the special needs of gifted students among teachers and educators, and to develop a dynamic program model for working with these students. Program studies will provide participants with the knowledge, tools and skills for working in this field, such that program graduates will be able to nurture and guide gifted and outstanding students in centers for gifted education, in schools, at home and in society at large.

The Certification Program for Teaching Gifted and Outstanding Students is aligned with the Ministry of Education’s policy that only teachers with specialized training will work with gifted and outstanding students in the future. This program provides the infrastructure for cultivating the field of gifted education as its own subspecialty, both in Israel and in the world. The program fuses theory with practical application – giving teachers hands-on experience with the teaching methods exclusive to gifted education. It will include topics such as: the definition of gifted students, outstanding and capable students, and students with creative potential; the characteristics of the gifted child; the environment of the gifted student; diagnosing creative potential of gifted students; methods of teaching gifted students; different approaches to nurturing gifted and outstanding students; special populations among gifted students, among other things. The program will both empower participants and model the learning environment that will be created in their classrooms. Throughout the year, and at the end of the program, participants will complete projects and assignments that apply the material covered.

Cultivating awareness and deepening theoretical knowledge, strengthening the commitment and professional know-how of educators in the field of nurturing gifted and outstanding students. Program studies will empower participants and model for them how their classrooms and learning environments should function. Throughout the year, and upon completion of their studies, participants will complete projects that apply the material covered in the program.

It is anticipated that graduates will work with gifted and outstanding students who excel in the areas of philosophy, science, technology, art, literature, law, and business among other things. Beyond this though, we have additional expectations of our graduates: We expect them to be determined and diligent, creative and original, curious, and intellectually brazen. We expect them to have intellectual and artistic integrity, as well as the ability and drive to continually learn and develop. We expect them to think clearly in situations of uncertainty, think out of the box, use information efficiently, see things from a broader perspective and be aware of moral implications.

**Program Goals**

This program seeks to deepen professional expertise and develop the subspecialty of gifted education for gifted and outstanding students by:

* Promoting a deep understanding of the unique characteristics and needs of gifted and outstanding students
* Developing a holistic approach to educating this student population, by understanding their unique cognitive, emotional and social needs and providing for them
* Promoting familiarity and hands-on experience with the pedagogic tools geared towards this student population
* Gaining familiarity and experience with the diagnostic tools that are used to identify gifted and outstanding students
* Endowing participants with the ability to lead a program or independent project for gifted and outstanding students
* Familiarizing participants with the symposiums and researchers that study gifted education, as well as gifted students, in the world, and providing them with an inside look at the approach towards gifted education that is prevalent in the world

**Target Audience**

* Homeroom teachers, specialty teachers, and program coordinators who seek to promote education for gifted students
* Teachers, school guidance counselors and school principals in schools and educational frameworks that cater to gifted students
* Someone who plans to teach gifted students in the future

**Admission Requirements**

* Candidates must have a bachelor’s degree and a teacher’s certificate (professionals who currently teach at formal and informal centers for gifted education, who have a bachelor’s degree, but do not have a teacher’s certificate, are also eligible for this program)
* Candidates must come for a personal interview (please bring your CV, and a letter of recommendation with you to the interview)
* Candidates must intend to teach gifted students (in as far as they currently work with this population, or plan to begin teaching gifted students in the coming year)

**Certification**

* Students who successfully complete the course of study will receive a certificate that attests that they have completed the program for gifted education at the Al-Qasami Academic College of Education.

**Course of Study**

This two-year program is spread over three semesters and includes a total of 360 hours of supplementary training, or 120 hours per semester, with grades being assigned for coursework. Progression from one program semester to the next is contingent upon approval from the program coordinators. Participants who complete the two-year course of study with a grade average of 80 will receive certification.

**Study Tours**

The program will include three study tours to centers for gifted education in Israel, as well as one study tour abroad to visit a center for gifted education in a different country.

**Curriculum**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number** | **Modules** | **Semester** | **Number of Hours** |
| 1 | Introduction to gifted students, academic excellence and creativity | A | 30 |
| 2 | Diagnosing gifted students, outstanding students and students with creative potential | A | 45 |
| 3 | Planning and evaluation of programs for gifted education | A | 45 |
| **Total number of hours in Semester A** | | | **120** |
| 4 | Seminar – New issues in educating gifted and outstanding students | B | 30 |
| 5 | Twice Exceptional  Gifted students and special talents: Gifted students and learning disabilities | B | 20 |
| 6 | Productive Thinking  Twenty-first century skills, pedagogic skills for teaching gifted and outstanding students | B | 50 |
| 7 | Teaching gifted and outstanding students in the virtual world | B | 20 |
| **Total number of hours in Semester B** | | | **120** |
| 8 | Practicum in centers for gifted education, classes for gifted students and schools for gifted education | C | 70 |
| 9 | Creativity, leadership and entrepreneurship | C | 30 |
| 10 | Emotional development of gifted students, guiding and parenting students with gifted intelligence | C | 20 |
| **Total number of hours in Semester C** | | | **120** |
| **Total number of program hours** | | | **360** |

**Detailed Curriculum Description**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number** | **Module Topic** | **Module Subtopics** | **Number of Hours** |
| 1 | Introduction to gifted students, academic excellence and creativity | * Definitions:   Gifted intelligence, outstanding student, creative student, innovative student, and so on.   * Historical development of gifted intelligence and the nature of giftedness * People’s perceptions of gifted and outstanding students, including within the Israel-Arab sector * Gifted education and education of outstanding students around the world and specifically in Israel * The challenges in diagnosing gifted and outstanding students * Renzulli model for identifying gifted students * Giftedness and motivation – Growth mindset pattern | 30 |
| 2 | Diagnosing gifted students, outstanding students and students with creative potential | * Historical development of diagnosing and detecting gifted and outstanding students * Different models for diagnosing and detecting gifted and outstanding students * Diagnosing the creative potential of gifted and outstanding students (EPoC) | 45 |
| 3 | Planning and evaluation of programs for gifted education | * Exploring programs for gifted and outstanding students at different grade levels * Overview of the components of programs for gifted and outstanding students and their unique characteristics. * Planning a program for gifted and outstanding students * Evaluating a program for gifted and outstanding students | 45 |
| 4 | Seminar – New issues in educating gifted and outstanding students | The seminar will focus on new aspects of the following topics:   * New models for educating gifted and outstanding students * Identifying and diagnosing gifted and outstanding students * Characteristics of gifted and outstanding students * Methods for teaching and methods of pedagogy that are geared to gifted and outstanding students * Gifted and outstanding students in the virtual world * Emotional aspects of gifted and outstanding students * Developing unique programs for gifted and outstanding students. | 30 |
| 5 | Twice Exceptional  Gifted students and special talents: Gifted students and learning disabilities | * Identifying students with gifted intelligence and learning disabilities * Strategies for helping gifted students with learning disabilities or multiple learning issues | 20 |
| 6 | Productive Thinking  Twenty-first century skills, pedagogic and didactic skills for teaching gifted and outstanding students | * Development of creative thinking among gifted and outstanding students * Integrating productive thinking skills into activities and lessons for gifted and outstanding students * Teaching methods that develop productive and innovative thinking, creative thinking and critical thinking | 50 |
| 7 | Teaching gifted and outstanding students in the virtual world | * Renzulli’s online learning system for gifted and outstanding students * Development of a virtual learning environment for gifted and outstanding students | 20 |
| 8 | Practicum in centers for gifted education, classes for gifted students and schools for gifted education | * Observing activities for gifted and outstanding students that are conducted in centers for gifted education * Teaching classes and conducting activities in school-based classes for gifted students * Study tours in Israel * Study tours abroad | 70 |
| 9 | Creativity, leadership and entrepreneurship | * Defining creativity, leadership and entrepreneurship * Gifted intelligence and leadership * Gifted intelligence and creativity * Gifted intelligence and entrepreneurship | 30 |
| 10 | Emotional development of gifted students, guiding and parenting students with gifted intelligence | * Emotional aspects of gifted intelligence * Gifted intelligence and emotional intelligence * Gifted intelligence and motivation | 20 |

**Composition of Final Grade:**

**30%** of the final grade will be based on assessments by the different course instructors, based on a variety of assignments.

**20%** of the final grade will be based on a student portfolio that documents hands-on classroom experience and study tours.

**50%** of the final grade will be based on a final project

**Passing grade**: 80

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