

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Challenging Gifted and All Students with the Cluster Grouping Model

Presenters: Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles

Hours: 45

Required Reading: Winebrenner, S., Brulles, D. (2008) *The Cluster Grouping Handbook: How to Challenge Gifted Students and Improve Achievement for All*. New York; Free Spirit Publishing
(Included in course fee, allow 2-4 weeks for delivery)

Course Overview

Gifted students and struggling learners have much in common. Both ends of the academic bell curve deserve to have their special learning needs met. Attending to the needs of gifted students through the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) techniques in the classroom—at all grade levels—can provide challenging curriculum options for advanced learners, lead to improved classroom behavior and, perhaps surprisingly, raise the performance of all students.

Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles introduce course participants to a variety of teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, alternative assignments including extension menus, and differentiated instructional options that help teachers meet the needs of their gifted students in the heterogeneous classroom. Participants also view classroom segments of teachers utilizing essential components of the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model. The presenters cover placement of all students, emotional issues, teacher support issues, relevant research, and how to communicate with all stakeholders.

Winebrenner and Dulles take viewers step-by-step through the process of beginning the SCGM using a two to three year plan for initial implementation. They also review aspects of flexible groupings, curriculum differentiation, and monitoring progress so that all students have the opportunity to experience continuous growth

Presenters' Bios

Dina Brulles earned a Ph.D. in education for the gifted and an M.A. in curriculum and instruction; teaches at the Graduate College of Education at Arizona State University; is the director of gifted education in the Paradise Valley Unified School District in Arizona; is president of the Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented (AAGT); and is a board director for Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG). She has created and supervised cluster grouping programs and, with the publication of *The Cluster Grouping Handbook: A Schoolwide Model Book with CD-Rom*, become a recognized expert in that practice. Brulles consults with school districts in their efforts to create education programs for the gifted that reflect the needs of the districts' specific population. Before she became an administrator, Brulles was an elementary classroom teacher, a bilingual teacher, and an ESL teacher.



Author and consultant **Susan Winebrenner** is founder and president of Education Consulting Service, Inc., a speakers' bureau for educational topics. A B.S. in education and M.A. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Wisconsin inform her work as a columnist for the journal *Understanding Our Gifted* and as a national and international presenter in her field. Winebrenner has published three books—*Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*, *Teaching Kids with Learning Difficulties in the Regular Classroom*, and *Super Sentences*—and a stand-alone compact disc, *Differentiating Content for Gifted Learners in Grades 6-12*. She has served on the faculty of New Leaders for New Schools, a national organization dedicated to training and supporting a new generation of outstanding school principals for urban schools.

Objectives

After completing this course, educators will know:

- The components, benefits, and achievement implications of the SCGM
- The emotional and behavioral impact of giftedness and advanced learning needs of gifted students in the regular classroom
- A variety of SCGM teaching methods and techniques
- Ways to use formative assessment, flexible groupings, and differentiated instruction for gifted learners
- Effective classroom management techniques to facilitate differentiation
- Areas of giftedness identification, the responsibilities of gifted cluster teachers, and the staffing needs to support cluster classrooms
- Different questioning strategies that encourage creative and high-level thinking
- How and why the schoolwide cluster grouping model, flexible groupings, curriculum differentiation, and ongoing assessment benefit all students
- How to collect data for, organize, implement, and support the SCGM
- Ways to manage, record, and document independent work
- The research and analysis of achievement for SCGM by grade, gender, ethnicity, and ELL status and its impact on non-gifted students and school scores
- Special populations in gifted education including ELL and twice-exceptional students and strategies to increase productivity

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Implement the following strategies and techniques: name card method, Most Difficult First, compacting, walkabouts, alternative assignments, pre-test, accelerated pacing, extension menus, study guides, activities logs, rubrics, a variety of questioning techniques, discussion buddies
- Provide flexible grouping, tiered lessons, and extension activities for differentiated instruction
- Help students self-regulate using rubrics and collaborative logs
- Address emotional and behavioral issues of gifted students to motivate and inspire
- Place and compose classrooms to accommodate gifted students
- Develop and support gifted cluster teachers
- Communicate effectively with parents of gifted students
- Evaluate the cluster grouping model and create a network of support



- Explain the research results to educators, administrators and parents, and champion adoption of SCGM for non-gifted populations
- Recognize gifted behaviors to look for in special populations and how to accommodate special populations in gifted education
- Use the SCGM groupings to support the learning of all students
- Introduce the SCGM over a two to three year implementation process

Unit 1: Description of SCGM to Educators

Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles explain the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) and the history of teaching gifted students dating from Sputnik in the late 1950's. They also discuss the impact of No Child Left Behind on teaching gifted students. Included in this unit are specifics regarding identifying students who should be placed in the gifted clusters, placing all other students, and addressing parent concerns.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The evolution of the SCGM
- The benefits and achievement implications of the SCGM
- The areas of identification of gifted students
- The responsibilities of gifted cluster teachers and the staffing needs to support cluster classrooms

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Identify gifted students, including twice-exceptional and non-productive students
- Compose classrooms to accommodate gifted students
- Develop and support gifted cluster teachers

Unit 2: Description of SCGM to Parents

Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles explain the School Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM) to parents. The discussion and Q and A that follow cover the components, goals, and philosophy of the method. The unit ends with a parent panel discussing their gifted children, the impact gifted programs have had on their children, and how parents try to partner with schools to meet the needs of their gifted learners.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- How to explain the school cluster grouping model to parents



- The goals and philosophies of the SCGM
- Parents' role in making the schoolwide cluster grouping model successful
- Parents' frequently asked questions

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Talk to parents about the SCGM model
- Address parental concerns
- Answer frequently asked questions about the SCGM model

Unit 3: Teaching Strategies for Students in the Primary Grades

Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles address strategies for recognizing and understanding the advanced learning and emotional needs of gifted students in the primary grades and ways the primary curriculum can be differentiated to meet their needs. Presenters discuss a variety of ways to accommodate gifted ELL and CDL students. Included are successful classroom management strategies for primary grades.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Advanced learning needs of gifted primary students
- How differentiation strategies for gifted learners benefit all learners
- How to differentiate instruction for gifted ELL and CDL students
- Successful classroom management strategies for primary grades
- The importance of addressing perfectionism

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Develop and use a variety of differentiation methods and techniques
- Use logs to record student mastery and extension choices
- Differentiate instruction for gifted ELL and CDL students
- Understand gifted behaviors as they impact classroom management
- Plan for differentiated instruction prior to beginning a unit or topic

Unit 4: Demonstrations in Primary Classrooms

In this unit, participants make virtual visits to kindergarten, first, and second grade classrooms in which



the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model has been implemented. They observe teachers using differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, Most Difficult First, and Walkabout to meet the needs of all learners.

Unit Objectives

After completing this session, educators will know:

- Various cluster grouping model teaching skills
- Effective classroom management techniques

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Use flexible grouping techniques
- Differentiate instruction using extension activities
- Develop student-made learning centers
- Use Most Difficult First and student checkers
- Use walkabouts for review and cumulative activities

Unit 5: Teaching Strategies for Students in the Intermediate Grades

Dina Brulles and Susan Winebrenner explain the data needed prior to school starting so that gifted and potentially gifted students can be monitored and identified. This data comes from district approved testing and outside testing chosen by parents. This unit also includes step-by-step instructions on how to use Most Difficult First, pretests, accelerated pacing, and other strategies. The presenters explain in depth models and templates for rules, study guides, activity logs, learning contracts, and extension menus, along with classroom management strategies to facilitate differentiation efforts.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The advanced learning needs of gifted students
- Effective extension strategies
- Successful classroom management strategies
- The importance of sharing techniques and peer coaching between colleagues

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Develop and use a variety of differentiation methods/techniques including: Most Difficult First, pretest, accelerated pacing, extension menus, contracts, study guides, and activity logs



- Grade extension work based on contracted grading standards
- Use understanding of gifted behaviors for classroom management
- Plan for differentiated instruction prior to beginning a unit or topic

Unit 6: Demonstrations in Intermediate Classrooms

Participants virtually visit Alex, Elizabeth and Erica's third and fourth classrooms where they watch these teachers apply a variety of SCGM (Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model) teaching techniques. This unit illustrates various methods and applications of the SCGM including: grading rubrics, flexible grouping, name card/name stick method, tiered lesson, extension menu, and differentiated instruction.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Uses of gifted group clusters in the classroom
- A variety of SCGM teaching methods and techniques
- Ways to use rubrics and collaborative logs

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Apply techniques and strategies of the SCGM in the classroom
- Help students self-regulate using rubrics and collaborative logs
- Motivate and inspire students

Unit 7: Demonstrations in Middle School Classrooms

In this unit, participants are welcomed to middle school. They view segments with gifted clusters as gifted teachers apply effective classroom management techniques. Participants also observe tiered lessons, flexible grouping, differentiated learning, walkabout, the name card method, and an explanation of compacting.

Unit Objectives

After completing this session, educators will know:

- Uses of flexible grouping and differentiated learning
- How to use formative assessment for flexible grouping
- Classroom management with the name card method



Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Provide tiered lessons for differentiated instruction
- Use walkabouts and compacting alternative assignments

Unit 8: Using Effective Questioning Strategies

Denis Shuman leads workshop participants to explore a variety of questioning strategies that facilitate higher-level thinking and set high expectations for thoughtful responses from all students. The unit also demonstrates how to utilize behaviors that allow students to take more responsibility for their own learning. Susan Winebrenner closes the unit with further discussion of the name card method and what to do with students when your school uses a pull-out method to meet the needs of gifted students.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Different kinds of questions and their uses
- Methods of successful classroom management that engage all students
- The benefits of discussion buddies and of the name card method on student and teacher behaviors

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Use different kinds of questions, graphic organizers, and physical activities to stimulate creative thinking and student engagement
- Pair students appropriately for discussion
- Use the name card method in one or more areas of the curriculum
- Plan appropriate review/reinforcement activities for students not in a gifted pull-out group

Unit 9: Additional Demonstrations of Teaching Strategies

Course presenters Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles introduce additional video segment demonstrations of differentiation strategies for gifted cluster teachers at a wide range of grade levels from first grade to high school. The unit reviews applications of Most Difficult First, the responsibility of the checker, and testing for eligibility to participate in differentiated lessons. Other segments demonstrate how to use contracts and extension menus. The unit ends with Susan Winebrenner demonstrating the name card method.



Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Why differentiation is important
- How to use Most Difficult First
- Extension menus and the student contracts
- Name card method

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Use differentiated strategies including: Most Difficult First, contracts, and extension menus
- Use the name card method

Unit 10: Creating and Using Effective Extension Menus

Susan Winebrenner introduces strategies for creating and using effective extension activities with students who have mastered the standards and need opportunities to extend their learning. Included are many formats, references, charts, and resources that will help teachers develop their own extension menus or adapt the ones in *The Cluster Grouping Handbook*. The presenter also reviews compacting through Most Difficult First, study guides, evaluation contracts, rules for working independently, and the need for homework differentiation. Participants will understand that clear extension menus and explicit guidelines will simplify classroom management.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- How to develop extension activities
- The uses of extension activities to differentiate instruction and homework
- How to identify students who will benefit from extension activities
- Ways to manage, record, and document independent work

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Create extension and or adapt sample menus
- Differentiate instruction and homework using study guides and extensions
- Document independent work on extension activities
- Use logs to record, organize, manage, and document independent work



Unit 11: Evaluating Progress in the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model

Just as you would use pre- and post-test assessments to find out what students know and what they have learned, Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles explain the data that need to be collected prior to implementing the SCGM. This data will help schools monitor progress and growth of all students prior to and in the cluster grouping model. The presenters detail the need and various options for feedback for administrators, teachers, students and parents, as well as teacher training and support, necessary for the success of the SCGM.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What kinds of data are needed to collect before implementing the SCGM
- Ways to use the data to evaluate the model
- Why a support network is important

Student Learning Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Collect data prior to and through the SCGM implementation
- Evaluate the cluster grouping model
- Create a network of support

Unit 12: Special Populations

This unit focuses on the unique challenges of special populations in gifted education. These populations include: ELL, culturally and linguistically diverse students (CLD), twice-exceptional gifted learners (such as those with ADD and ADHD), and non-motivated (non-productive) learners. By way of lively personal anecdotes, the presenters discuss specific students and strategies for these special populations.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Different special populations in gifted education
- Different types of populations
- Strategies to increase productivity of nonproductive learners

Student Learning Outcomes



After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Distinguish between different types of special populations
- Understand the gifted behaviors to look for in special populations
- Accommodate special populations in gifted education

Unit 13: Training for Gifted Specialists and Mentors

In this unit, presenters Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles discuss the advanced learning needs of gifted students with gifted specialists and mentors. The discussion includes how to group students for the SCGM, how to explain the model to principals, and how to address parental concerns. The unit reviews effective extensions and classroom management strategies that facilitate teachers' differentiation efforts.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- How to identify the advanced learning needs of gifted students
- How to locate, develop, and utilize effective extension strategies with gifted students
- Successful classroom management strategies to facilitate their differentiation efforts

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Identify the learning needs of gifted students
- Locate, develop, and create extension strategies
- Employ classroom management techniques for differentiated instruction

Unit 14: Gifted Cluster Teacher Meeting

Participants view segments of different teacher meetings that support individual teachers' efforts. Meetings focus on resources to share, techniques that work, and effective classroom management, including behavior issues.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Appropriate components of cluster teacher meetings
- Uses for cluster teacher meetings
- The strengths of the SCGM



Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Develop agenda components of cluster teacher meeting
- Use cluster teacher meetings to share resources, lesson plans, and techniques; and to discuss students, parents, and challenges of the cluster grouping model

Unit 15: Research Supporting the SCGM

After completing this unit, participants will understand the research surrounding the SCGM and the remarkable and surprising results of implementing this model.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- How the research surrounding the SCGM was conducted
- The analysis of achievement for SCGM overall, as well as by grade, gender, ethnicity and ELL status
- The research-based findings on the impact of SCGM for non-gifted students and school scores

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Use the research data to support adoption of the SCGM
- Explain the research results to educators, administrators, and parents
- Champion adoption of SCGM for non-gifted populations

Unit 16: Wrapping Up the SCGM

In this final unit, Susan Winebrenner and Dina Brulles take viewers step-by-step through the process of implementing the SCGM. These steps include analyzing current needs, gathering input from teachers, identifying potential gifted cluster teachers, and providing gifted cluster training for teachers. The presenters map out a two to three year plan for initial implementation. They also review aspects of flexible groupings, curriculum differentiation, and monitoring progress so that all students have the opportunity to experience continuous growth.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:



- How to assess needs in the current system
- How to begin implementation of the SCGM
- How flexible groupings, curriculum differentiation, and ongoing assessment benefit all students

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Assess current needs
- Introduce the SCGM over a two to three year implementation process
- Discuss the benefits and advantages with principals, teachers, and parents

Methods of Instruction

- Videos with PowerPoint presentations (teacher workshops and additional resources)
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the videos where educators are asked to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and their intentions for their practice)
- Quizzes (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding of the video presentations)

Plagiarism Policy

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own and includes failing to cite sources for others' ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult plagiarism.org.

Passing Requirements:

In order to complete the requirements of the course, the participant must complete all course work. We do not award partial credit.

- Quizzes 40% of total grade
- Reflection Questions 60% of total grade



KDS Self-Assessment Rubric:

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Quizzes	100% Correct	80% Correct	60% Correct	0-40% Correct

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Reflection Questions	Participant provides rich detail from the content of the course in his or her responses Participant makes his or her responses to the questions personally meaningful	Participant includes appropriate content from the course in his or her responses Participant makes thoughtful comments in direct response to the questions	Participant includes some content from the course, usually appropriate, in his or her responses Participant answers the questions directly, not always fully	Participant includes no content from the course in his or her responses Participant does not address the questions posed