



ArmchairEd Course Syllabus  
Susan Kane-Ronning, Ph.D., Director  
Post Office Box 29137  
Bellingham, WA 98228-1137

- **The course syllabus is provided for your preview. Please be sure to register PRIOR to completing any coursework. Registering for a course after coursework has been started violates accreditation standards and puts the University at risk; therefore, SPU reserves the right to not award credit if students are found to be in violation of this policy.**

**Overview:**

ArmchairEd.com currently provides continuing education to educators, using Educational Leadership magazine and premiere published books on cutting-edge educational themes and topics. The program has been operating since Fall, 2000, and has provided continuing education to hundreds of educators.

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

As a result of these courses, the student will be able to:

1. Stay current on educational themes and topics pertinent to teaching and education
2. Identify current research in education
3. Apply this knowledge to the student's current educational position

The following published books are currently being used as texts for the ArmchairEd course:

Tokuhamma-Espinosa, T. (2018). *Neuromyths: Debunking false ideas about the brain*. W.W. Norton & Company.

Jung, L. A., Frey, N., Fisher, D., & Kroener, J. (2019). *Your students my students our students: Rethinking Equitable and inclusive classrooms*. ASCD.

**Using Neuroscience to Create Equitable and Inclusive Classrooms**

This course untangles scientific fact from pedagogical fiction, debunking dozens of widely held beliefs about the brain that have made their way into the education literature. In ten central themes on topics ranging from brain structure to classroom environments, the course traces the origins of common neuromyths—from categorizing individuals as "right-brained" or "left-brained" to prevailing beliefs about multitasking or the effects of video games—and corrects the record with the most current state of knowledge. Combining neuroscience research, educators learn to create equitable and inclusive classrooms through the following:

- Establish a school culture that champions equity and inclusion.
- Rethink the long-standing structure of least restrictive environment and the resulting service delivery.



- Leverage the strengths of all educators to provide appropriate support and challenge.
- Collaborate on the delivery of instruction and intervention.
- Honor the aspirations of each student and plan accordingly.

*Using Neuroscience* is ideal for not just "special educators" or "general educators" but for *all* educators—challenging teachers to be curious about the brain and become learning scientists, while supplying the tools needed to evaluate research and put it to use in the classroom.

#### **Credit Options:**

The course will be offered for five credits, based on the length and substance of the books. The five-credit course will include 50 multiple-choice questions and five required essays.

#### **Grading Rubric:**

Pass/Fail: Coursework must be passed with 70% criterion.

Letter Grade: 90%: A grade  
80% B grade  
70% C grade

Multiple Choice Test: 30% of overall grade

Essays: 70% of overall grade

#### **Two essays required for Neuromyths:**

Option 1: From a chapter that best suits the needs and developmental status of your learners, choose at least 3 different neuromyths that are included in that chapter. In your essay, discuss why you chose these neuromyths and why you believe that they are often misunderstood when teaching that population. Include how you would address these myths in lesson plans and discuss the desired outcome of overcoming these myths with students. Do you believe that they increased comprehension of the material? Will you continue to consider these misconceptions in future lessons? Why or why not?

Option 2: From the book *Neuromyths*, choose an end of chapter "Practical Application" that you believe will enhance student learning in the context of your class. Detail a lesson you would plan to integrate this method. Include concrete details from the corresponding chapter indicating why you have chosen to teach the concepts in this way and how this will positively benefit student understanding.

Option 3: In chapter three, a neuromyth that is addressed is the very popular "Theory of Multiple Intelligences". Based on the evidence provided by the text, cite reasons why this theory may not be able to summarize success among all students in your classroom. Knowing that this theory may not account for difference in learning styles or abilities, create a lesson plan for your classroom that emphasizes different tactics for teaching students who may learn in different ways. How will the strategies you employ facilitate a high level of comprehension for all students? What different styles of learning will you be aiming to accommodate? How do you think your approach is similar to the "Theory of Multiple Intelligences" and how does it differ?

Option 4: From chapter five, pick three of the chapter topics, and discuss how you, as a teacher, may have had misconceptions regarding learning environments. Summarize how your classroom and lessons have been structured in ways that align with these misconceptions. Create an action plan for addressing each of these three topics in your classroom. How will you restructure lessons as a result? Will this impact your use of technology in the classroom? How will this impact your implementation of practice and rehearsal in lessons?



Option 5: From a chapter of your choosing, discuss the “Why is this good news for teaching?” component of the chapter. How have the neuromyths outlined in that chapter impacted teaching and learning negatively? What can we now do to improve teaching and learning? How will this research benefit your class in a positive way? What are the major takeaways from the chapter that would be helpful for other teachers in your subject area to know?

### **Two Essays Required for *Your Students, My Students, Our Students***

Option 1: Using evidence from the text, discuss the IEP needs of a student. How should the IEP of that student be formatted to meet that student’s goals? Do you believe that the student should have an equal part at the IEP meeting to discuss accommodations and goal achievement? Using evidence from the text, evaluate and recommend what the Least Restrictive Environment might look like for this student, and how it would benefit their learning and achievement. What evidence of this student’s capabilities have you documented that substantiate this plan?

Option 2: From the text, “Your Students, My Students, Our Students”, use the three ‘RTI Tiers of Intervention’ to describe three different students in your class based on ability level. Expand by creating a plan for how you would plan to implement intervention for each of these students. Do you already use the tiers of RTI in your classroom? What benefits do you believe each student would gain from further intervention or individualized aid?

Option 3: Using “Your Students, My Students, Our Students”, from a chapter of your choosing, address the common misconceptions that are associated with equitable teaching in the classroom. Include concrete examples from the text, as well as ways that this could be transformed in your school. Include an action plan for how you will implement strategies within the school to create a more equitable environment for all students.

Option 4: Is formative assessment already implementing in your lesson planning? If so, describe how it influences your daily instruction, and student comprehension. If not, include some form of formative assessment (example: exit tickets) in lesson plans for a month. In your essay, speak to the experience and efficacy of monitoring student progress every day. What strategies were used? How did students respond? What did you learn about your student’s comprehension? Will you continue daily progress-monitoring at least with some students? Did you find you were re-teaching concepts more or less than before?

Option 5: In chapter three, “Leverage the Strengths of All Educators”, the author emphasizes the importance of common planning time between general and special educators. Create a plan that would help foster positive collaboration through common planning time with a general or special educator that you work with. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve by increasing shared planning time? Do you already implement shared planning time? How do you think your combined teaching would change as a result of increased collaboration? How do you think that the students would benefit? Use evidence from chapter three to substantiate your reasoning.



**Five total essays required. Two essays from “Neuromyths”, two essays from “Your Students, My Students, Our Students”, and one combined essay:**

**Essay scoring rubric:**

Two essays required for **Neuromyths**,

Two essays required for **Your Students, My Students, Our Students**,

Each essay 10% of overall grade

Single Spaced, 10 to 12 size font

Use of introduction and summary statement (even when a unit is developed)

Demonstration of grammar, spelling and writing skill

Demonstration of applied knowledge

**One essay required for Neuromyths and Your Students, My Students, Our Students**

**Combined Essay:** Using evidence from both texts, discuss myths that exist around equitable teaching and inclusion of all learners in the classroom. Discuss how you would modify classroom practices or lesson plans to accommodate learners with different learning styles or IEP's in lessons. Develop a lesson plan to provide evidence of inclusion-based practices. From 'Neuromyths' discuss the misconceptions that would lead educators to structure a lesson like yours in ways that are not conducive to learning. From 'Your Students, My Students, Our Students' discuss how these strategies will aid students that have IEP's or other accommodations to remain in the Least Restrictive Environment.

**Combined Essay Scoring Rubric:**

35% of overall grade

Single spaced, 10 to 12 size font

Use of introduction and summary statement (even when a unit is developed)

Demonstration of grammar, spelling and writing skill

Demonstration of applied knowledge

Demonstration of grammar, spelling and writing skill

- **You must download the coursework before starting this course.**
- **Submit all coursework at the same time.**
- **All essays must be fully completed and the rubric followed to receive a grade. Essays not completed to required length will not be processed and revisions will be required.**