M5: Individualized Educational Program (IEP) Role Play

## Course

Special Education

## Location

Module 5

## Alignments

### Course Outcomes

CLO V: Describe the utility of important collaborative relationships: school, district, and family members.

### Module Outcomes

MLO 5.1: Identify research-based approaches for effective, pro-active, and positive communication with parents and other service delivery team members to allow for involvement in IEP planning and execution.

MLO 5.2: Explain the role for all members of the assessment/IEP team and the importance of each team member to provide an equitable education plan for students with special needs.

MLO 5.3: Incorporate effective collaboration practices into the legal, ethical, and procedural requirements of the IEP process.

### Specific InTASC Standards

| **InTASC** | **Type** | **Specific Standard** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1c | Performance | The teacher collaborates with families, communities, colleagues, and other professionals to promote learner growth and development. |
| 7e | Performance | The teacher plans collaboratively with professionals who have specialized expertise (e.g., special educators, related service providers, language learning specialists, librarians, media specialists) to design and jointly deliver as appropriate learning experiences to meet unique learning needs. |
| 7m | Knowledge | The teacher knows when and how to access resources and collaborate with others to support student learning (e.g., special educators, related service providers, language learner specialists, librarians, media specialists, community organizations). |
| 8m | Knowledge | The teacher understands how multiple forms of communication (oral, written, nonverbal, digital, visual) convey ideas, foster self expression, and build relationships. |
| 10d | Performance | The teacher works collaboratively with learners and their families to establish mutual expectations and ongoing communication to support learner development and achievement. |
| 10n | Knowledge | The teacher knows how to work with other adults and has developed skills in collaborative interaction appropriate for both face-to-face and virtual contexts. |
| 10q | Disposition | The teacher respects families’ beliefs, norms, and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with learners and families in setting and meeting challenging goals. |

## Assignment Instructions

### Purpose

Special education teachers must know how to effectively collaborate and communicate with parents, students, administrators, and others who work to support students with disabilities. As you will learn through this assignment, each stakeholder has a different perspective regarding the student, and these varying perspectives inform the motivations, preferences, and understandings of how to best serve the student. This assignment invites you to consider these perspectives through role-playing and reflection.

### Task

#### Step 1: Choose a Scenario and Role

For this assignment, you will work in a small group of 4-5 students. Choose one of the [scenarios](#_Scenarios), then choose one of the roles in the list below. You will be representing one of these role in an IEP meeting for the scenario you selected:

* Parent of the student with a disability
* Student with a disability
* Special education teacher
* Classroom teacher
* School district representative (LEA)

While you should play your role in a way that works for the scenario you chose, you may also need to imagine a back story in order to make the role play more realistic. Draw on what you have learned from this course, and also do some exploring online to become familiar with the experiences of actual people who have been in roles similar to the one you are playing. Preparation for an IEP meeting includes reflecting on the identities and needs of other IEP team members, so, *be sure to share your back story with other members of your group ahead of time*. It is not helpful to ambush your group with new dynamics during the recording!

#### Step 2: Develop your IEP agenda

As a group, create an IEP agenda appropriate to the scenario you chose. Use the [IEP Meeting Agenda](#_IEP_Meeting_Agenda) outline to prepare your agenda *as a team*; ensuring everyone is on board with the meeting agenda will make the role-play go more smoothly. *This is one the items you will submit for grading.*

* Use what you’ve learned about IEP development to create your agenda.
* The back stories for your roles might inform the agenda, but the agenda may also help you flesh out your back stories as well.
* Agree upon a date and time for your IEP meeting recording, and plan the meeting to last no longer than 30 minutes for the purpose of this assignment.

#### Step 3: Prepare

Before the IEP role-play, complete the [Preparation Worksheet](#_Preparation_Worksheet), as this will prepare you and your group for the rest of the exercise. *This is one the items you will submit for grading.*

#### Step 4: Record a Role Play

Using one of the video platforms listed above, record yourselves role playing the IEP meeting. Be sure that all group members have access to the recording link.

#### Step 5: Reflect

Use the [Reflection Worksheet](#_Reflection_Worksheet) to evaluate how the meeting went, what could be improved, and how this might inform your choices for professional development moving forward in your program. *This is one the items you will submit for grading.*

#### Technical Details

Submit a link to the video (not the video file!). You can choose any video platform available to you; some examples include;

* YouTube
* Flip (formerly known as Flipgrid)
* Vimeo
* TikTok
* Your institution’s video platform (common examples include Kaltura Mediaspace and Panopto)

Captioning is available through all the platforms mentioned above. Be sure to review the captions for accuracy; you will also want to make sure the person you are sharing the video with can access your video and enable the captions.

### Criteria

You will be evaluated, *not* on your actual role play performance, but rather on how well you prepared and how applicably you reflect on the experience. Each student should submit four items:

1. The IEP meeting agenda your group collaboratively developed
2. Your individual preparation worksheet
3. A link to your recording (which will be used as reference/context for the graded agenda and worksheets, not directly graded for performance)
4. Your individual reflection worksheet

## Rubric

Table 1: Assignment Rubric

| **Criterion** | **InTASC** | **A(4)** | **B(3)** | **C(2)** | **D(1)** | **F(0)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Identify what preparation to request from other team members prior to the meeting. | 7e, 7m | Identifies what preparation to request from other team members prior to the meeting; considers alternate resources or ways to prepare. | Identifies what preparation to request from other team members prior to the meeting. | Identifies some preparations to request from other team members prior to the meeting, or requests needed preparations from wrong team member. | Inaccurately identifies what preparation to request from other team members prior to the meeting. | Does not identify what preparation to request from other team members prior to the meeting. |
| Identify common challenges in the IEP process and describe approaches to mitigate them. | 10n, 10q | Identifies common challenges in the IEP process with concrete examples and describes approaches to mitigate them. | Identifies common challenges in the IEP process and describes approaches to mitigate them. | Identifies some common challenges in the IEP process and describes approaches to mitigate them, but not in a comprehensive way. | Inadequately identifies common challenges in the IEP process and describes approaches to mitigate them. | Does not identify common challenges in the IEP process and describe approaches to mitigate them. |
| Demonstrate effective conflict resolution and collaboration. | 1c, 10d | Demonstrates effective conflict resolution and collaboration through awareness of self and understanding of roles. | Demonstrates effective conflict resolution and collaboration. | Demonstrates a working understanding of conflict resolution and collaboration. | Inadequately demonstrates conflict resolution and collaboration. | Does not demonstrate effective conflict resolution and collaboration. |
| Evaluate representation of character in role play through reflection. | 8m | Evaluates representation of character in role play through reflection and uses several examples to support reflection. | Evaluates representation of character in role play through reflection. | Evaluates some of the representation of character in role play through reflection. | Inadequately evaluates representation of character in role play through reflection. | Does not Evaluate representation of character in role play through reflection. |

## Preparation Worksheet

Watch [Mock IEP Meeting: A Student with Special Needs](https://youtu.be/_7rB_9gl3kQ?si=cOuZKkMVGmYOiCGd) to see an example of a typical IEP meeting.

Your role on the IEP team:

Prepare for your IEP meeting by addressing the following questions.

1. Your role
   1. What responsibilities does your role have on the IEP team?
   2. What experience might your role have with IEP development?
   3. What might be your personal and professional priorities coming into the meeting?
2. Materials
   1. What materials should you bring into the meeting?
   2. What materials should you read or have access to before the meeting?
3. Relationships
   1. What do you know about the other team members?
   2. How might your relationships with the other team members inform your preparation for the meeting? (Example: You are the special education teacher. You don’t know the classroom teacher very well, but you know they and the student have had a challenging relationship, you might structure the agenda in a way that allows the classroom teacher to contribute, but frames questions to the teacher in ways that are less likely to cause conflict with the student or parent during the meeting.)
4. Practices
   1. What collaborative practices have you learned about that you will bring into this meeting?
   2. What are some interpersonal skills that might be hard for you, and how will you proactively strategize to address them in the meeting?
   3. What are some of your interpersonal communication strengths, and how can you employ them to ensure an effective collaboration?

## IEP Meeting Agenda

A typical Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting follows a structured agenda to ensure effective collaboration among team members. Here are the key elements commonly included in an IEP meeting:

1. Introductions

* Team members introduce themselves.
* Establish a positive and respectful atmosphere.

1. Purpose of the Meeting

* Clarify the purpose of the IEP meeting.
* Discuss the student’s progress, goals, and services.

1. Establish Time Parameters

* Set expectations for the meeting duration.
* Allocate time for each agenda item.

1. Review Procedural Safeguards

* Discuss the legal rights and protections related to special education.
* Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities.

1. Review Excusal Form

* If any team member is absent, review the excusal form.
* Confirm that essential team members are present.

1. Present Levels of Performance and Eligibility

* Discuss the student’s current academic, social, and functional abilities.
* Consider assessment results and observations.

1. Transition Planning (for Students 16 Years and Older)- if applicable

* Address transition goals related to post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.
* Involve the student in planning for their future.

1. Review Goals and Measurement of Goals:

* Evaluate progress toward existing goals.
* Determine if adjustments or new goals are needed.

1. Parent Concerns

* Allow parents/guardians to express their concerns, questions, and aspirations.
* Address any issues related to the student’s education.

1. Signatures

* Obtain signatures for consent to finalize the IEP document.
* Acknowledge participation in the meeting.

Remember that the IEP meeting is a collaborative process involving various team members, including special education teachers, general education teachers, administrators, related service providers, and sometimes advocates or attorneys.

## Reflection Worksheet

Watch the recording of your IEP role-play meeting.

Your role on the IEP team:

Reflect on your experience using the prompts below to guide your response.

1. Preparation

* Describe how you prepared for the role-play. Did you research your assigned role? What resources did you use?
* Highlight any strengths or positive aspects of your preparation. What strategies worked well?

2. Role-Play Experience

* Briefly summarize the role-play scenario. What specific challenges or dilemmas did you encounter during the meeting?
* Identify areas where you faced difficulties or uncertainties. Were there moments when you felt unprepared or struggled to respond effectively?

3. Reflection

* Consider any positive moments during the role-play. Did you effectively communicate your perspective? Were you empathetic toward other team members?
* Reflect on how your actions aligned with the goals of the IEP process. How did you advocate for the student’s needs?

4. Insights and Learning

* What insights did you gain from this experience? How has it deepened your understanding of IEP collaboration?
* How will you apply what you’ve learned to future IEP meetings or your teaching practice?

## Scenarios

### Scenario 1

Meet John, a 10-year-old student from Kansas. John has been diagnosed with a specific learning disability in reading comprehension. The team, consisting of John’s teacher, parent(s), John himself, and the school administrator, needs to set goals that will help improve John’s reading comprehension skills while also ensuring that John can keep up with other subjects. Here is what we know.

John (Student): “When I read, I understand the words, but sometimes I get confused about what the story is saying. It’s like I can see the trees, but not the forest.”

John’s Parent(s): “At home, we’ve noticed that John often re-reads the same passages, trying to understand them. He also has difficulty summarizing stories after he’s read them.”

Teacher: “In class, John is enthusiastic and participates actively in discussions. However, when it comes to reading comprehension tasks, he struggles. He can read the text aloud fluently, but when asked questions about the content, he often gives vague or off-topic answers. He also has difficulty making predictions or inferences based on the text. Despite these challenges, John has a positive attitude and is persistent in his efforts to improve.”

Administrator: “As an administrator, I see John’s struggle with reading comprehension as a challenge that we need to address collectively. We have resources available, such as reading specialists and special education teachers, who can provide additional support. We also need to ensure that John’s learning environment is supportive and inclusive. It’s important that we communicate effectively with John and his parents, keeping them informed about his progress and the strategies we’re using to help him improve. Remember, our goal is not just to help John catch up, but to equip him with the skills he needs to thrive.”

### Scenario 2

Meet Mohammad, a 14-year-old student from Oregon. Mohammad has been diagnosed with an intellectual disability. The team, consisting of Mohammad’s teacher, parent(s), Mohammad himself, and the school administrator, needs to set goals that will help improve Mohammad’s overall learning skills while also ensuring that Mohammad can keep up with other subjects. Here is what we know.

Mohammad (Student): “When I learn, I understand the concepts, but sometimes I get confused about how they connect. It’s like I can see the pieces, but not the whole picture.”

Mohammad’s Parent(s): “At home, we’ve noticed that Mohammad often revisits the same topics, trying to understand them. He also has difficulty summarizing what he has learned.”

Teacher: “In class, Mohammad is enthusiastic and participates actively in discussions. However, when it comes to tasks that require connecting different concepts, he struggles. He can understand individual concepts, but when asked questions about how they relate, he often gives vague or off-topic answers. He also has difficulty making predictions or inferences based on the information. Despite these challenges, Mohammad has a positive attitude and is persistent in his efforts to improve.”

Administrator: “As an administrator, I see Mohammad’s struggle with learning as a challenge that we need to address collectively. We have resources available, such as special education teachers and learning specialists, who can provide additional support. We also need to ensure that Mohammad’s learning environment is supportive and inclusive. It’s important that we communicate effectively with Mohammad and his parents, keeping them informed about his progress and the strategies we’re using to help him improve. Remember, our goal is not just to help Mohammad catch up, but to equip him with the skills he needs to thrive.”

### Scenario 3

Meet Cynthia, a 7-year-old student from California. Cynthia has been diagnosed with an emotional disturbance. The team, consisting of Cynthia’s teacher, parent(s), Cynthia herself, and the school administrator, needs to set goals that will help improve Cynthia’s emotional well-being while also ensuring that Cynthia can keep up with other subjects. Here is what we know.

Cynthia (Student): “Sometimes, I feel really sad or really angry and I don’t know why. It’s hard for me to focus on my work when I feel like this.”

Cynthia’s Parent(s): “At home, we’ve noticed that Cynthia has intense emotional reactions to situations. She also has difficulty calming down after these episodes.”

Teacher: “In class, Cynthia is creative and has a vivid imagination. However, she struggles with sudden emotional outbursts that seem to be triggered by minor incidents. These emotional outbursts can disrupt her focus and learning. Despite these challenges, Cynthia is a resilient child who tries to manage her emotions.”

Administrator: “As an administrator, I see Cynthia’s emotional disturbance as a challenge that we need to address collectively. We have resources available, such as school psychologists and special education teachers, who can provide additional support. We also need to ensure that Cynthia’s learning environment is supportive and inclusive. It’s important that we communicate effectively with Cynthia and her parents, keeping them informed about her progress and the strategies we’re using to help her improve. Remember, our goal is not just to help Cynthia catch up, but to equip her with the skills she needs to thrive.”