

College and Career Advising for Special Population Students

Syllabus

Course Overview

This module, developed for practicing professional school counselors, pre-service school counselors, and college access professionals, includes six sessions that address the skills and knowledge required to help special population students prepare for college and careers.

Participants will be engaged in building knowledge and skills in several areas, including understanding and identifying special populations, building support systems, academic planning and record keeping, postsecondary exploration, the college application process and financial aid, and transitions to college.

Participants will engage in constructive discussions in a learning community with their colleagues during each session, and complete practical, hands-on activities throughout the course.

What are Special Population Students?

Special population students, as defined by Perkins IV are:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children
- Individuals preparing for nontraditional training and employment
- Single parents, including single pregnant women
- Individuals with other barriers to educational achievement, including individuals with limited English proficiency

This course will specifically address the needs of the following special populations:

- Homeless students
- Students in foster care and wards of the court
- Students with disabilities
- LGBTQ students
- Migrant or undocumented students
- Refugee students
- Court-involved youth

This course assumes knowledge of the content covered in the Go Alliance Academy modules I-III (*Building a College-Going Culture for All Students; College, Career, and Academic Planning; and Financial Aid and College Applications*). Participants should have taken modules I-III prior to taking to this module, or have demonstrated knowledge of the material covered in modules I-III.

Note: The term "college" is used throughout this course to refer to any postsecondary education or training in accordance with the [NCAN](#) definition: "College" refers to a Pell-eligible educational institution beyond the high school level, including those that offer apprenticeship programs, certificates, and associate and/or bachelor degree programs.

Goals

During this module, participants will:

- Understand the definition and needs of special population students
- Learn how to identify and develop a referral process for the specific special population students in your school or organization
- Understand your role in advocating for special population students
- Connect to community resources to support your special population students
- Build awareness of the ways to create a safe and supportive environment for special population students
- Prepare to educate your professional colleagues on the identification and needs of special population students
- Develop strategies to help special population students overcome challenges that may impede their academic progress.
- Build awareness of state or local policies and procedures regarding credit recovery, alternative graduation options, and appeals processes for graduation
- Brainstorm ways to help special population students develop self-advocacy skills and resilience
- Develop awareness of the specific needs of special population students in the postsecondary environment
- Practice identifying postsecondary institutions that offer the types of support needed for special students to be successful on campus and learn how to assist special population students in selecting postsecondary options that will provide them with the best fit and support
- Develop awareness of accommodations and fee waiver process for admissions testing for special population students
- Learn strategies to help students best communicate their special circumstances on applications and in college essays
- Develop an awareness of considerations for completing the FAFSA for special population students and learn how to research financial supports specific to special population students
- Develop tools and resources to help students advocate for themselves on campus
- Learn strategies to avoid summer melt and ensure students show up on campus in the fall
- Develop an understanding of how to help special populations address barriers to transitioning to college

Grading Policy & Requirements

Participants are required to complete all assigned products in this module and to participate in the several discussions.

Discussions and assignments will be graded by your facilitator, using the following rubrics:

- [Discussion Rubric](#)
- [Assignment Rubric](#)

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is a serious offense. You are not allowed to copy and paste or submit materials created or published by others as if you created the materials. All materials submitted and posted must be your own.

Technical Support

Technical support for accessing and using the Moodle Platform is provided by SREB Go Alliance via your Course Facilitator. If you experience any technical problems and need assistance at any time during this course, please contact your facilitator. If he/she is not able to answer your question immediately, he/she will contact SREB for advanced assistance, and SREB will work with you and your facilitator to resolve the issue.

Netiquette

Netiquette refers to etiquette that is used when communicating on the Internet. When you are communicating via email, discussion forums or synchronously (real-time), please use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar consistent with the academic environment and scholarship.

Module Structure

This module consists of six, one-week sessions, plus an orientation. Each session will provide participants with readings and resources to increase their background knowledge, activities that help to apply knowledge, and online discussions to encourage interaction and reflection among course participants. The time for completing each session is estimated to be four to six hours.

The outline for the module is as follows:

Session	Details
Orientation	<p>SREB's Go Alliance Academy is a special training program for elementary, middle, and high school counselors; college access professionals; teachers who serve as advisors; and school administrators. It provides special knowledge and skills that can assist you in getting more students on a path to education after high school—whether industry certification, technical college, or a two-or four-year institution.</p> <p>In this orientation session, you will be introduced to the online environment of this module and get acquainted with your colleagues enrolled in the module. To learn more about the other courses offered by the Go Alliance Academy, visit:http://www.sreb.org/go-alliance-academy</p>
1: Understanding and Identifying Special Populations	<p>In this session, you will watch a series of videos from special population students discussing their experiences. You will explore strategies for how school counselors and college access professionals can actively identify special population students, as well as work with other professionals in your school and community to develop a referral process for special population students. Finally, you will explore your role as an advocate for special population students.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the definition and needs of special population students• Learn how to identify the specific special population students in your school or organization• Develop a referral process for special population students• Understand your role in advocating for special population students

<p>2: Building Support Systems for Special Populations</p>	<p>In this session, you will learn about how to create a safe and supportive environment for special population students. You will explore strategies for connecting with community resources and educating your professional colleagues on the needs of special population students.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect to community resources to support your special population students • Build awareness of the ways to create a safe and supportive environment for special population students • Prepare to educate your professional colleagues on the identification and needs of special population students
<p>3: Academic Progress and Planning</p>	<p>In this session, you will review methods for supporting special population students in maintaining academic progress and planning for graduation. You will explore ways to develop self-advocacy and resilience in your special population students. You will investigate alternative graduation requirements and diploma options for your local area, and develop strategies to help special population students overcome challenges that may impede their academic progress.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm ways to help special population students develop self-advocacy skills and resilience • Develop strategies to help special population students overcome challenges that may impede their academic progress. • Build awareness of state or local policies and procedures regarding credit recovery, alternative graduation options, and appeals processes for graduation
<p>4: Postsecondary Exploration</p>	<p>In this session, you will learn how to support special population students in finding a postsecondary institution that is a good fit and match for them. You will consider what kinds of supports are available on postsecondary campuses and how to assist your special population students in selecting a safe and supportive environment for postsecondary study.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop awareness of the specific needs of special population students in the postsecondary environment • Practice identifying postsecondary institutions that offer the types of support needed for special students to be successful on campus • Learn how to assist special population students in selecting postsecondary options that will provide the best fit and support

<p>5: College Admission Process & Financial Aid</p>	<p>This session explores the nuances of the college admission and financial aid processes for special population students. Throughout this session you will develop an awareness of how to support your students in receiving accommodations and fee waivers, learn strategies to support your students in completing their college applications, spend time understanding the special considerations for different special populations when completing the FAFSA, and research grant and scholarship resources targeted for special population students.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an awareness of accommodations and the fee waiver process for admissions testing for special population students • Learn strategies to help students best communicate their special circumstances on applications and in college essays • Develop an awareness of considerations for completing the FAFSA for special population students and learn how to research financial aid, grants, and scholarship supports specific to special population students
<p>6: Transition to College</p>	<p>This session focuses on how to support special population students during their transition to education after high school. You will work with colleagues to develop tools and resources for advocacy on campus, learn strategies to avoid summer melt, and practice strategies for helping special population students anticipate and address barriers to postsecondary transition.</p> <p>Learning Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop tools and resources to help students advocate for themselves on campus • Learn strategies to avoid summer melt and ensure students show up on campus in the fall • Develop an understanding of how to help special populations address barriers to transitioning to education after high school

About This Module

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This course was developed in collaboration with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

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