Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development

Director

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Website: https://belinblank.education.uiowa.edu

The Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development is dedicated to serving the needs of advanced learners at local, national, and international levels. It offers programs for preservice and in-service educators, including the State of Iowa Talented and Gifted Endorsement. Our online and on-campus courses about the nature and needs of advanced learners and ways to facilitate talent development support the professional development of educators worldwide.

The center is home to the Assessment and Counseling Clinic and the Acceleration Institute.

Precollege Program Offerings

The Belin-Blank Center offers a wide variety of programs for precollege students.

High School Research Symposium

The High School Research Symposium (grades 9–12) engages students in original research and experimentation in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math). Students submit research papers in early January and present the results of their research to a panel of judges and an audience of their peers at the February symposium.

Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

The Belin-Blank Center is proud to serve as the Iowa and Midwest region at-large affiliate for the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards (grades 7–12), which recognizes achievement in the literary and visual arts. The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards program is the nation’s longest-running, largest, and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens. Over the past 90 years, the awards have recognized and encouraged artists and writers such as Sylvia Plath, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, Robert Redford, Tom Otterness, and Zac Posen, among countless others.

Weekend Enrichment Program

The Weekend Enrichment program (grades 3–8) consists of half-day enrichment opportunities for elementary and junior high students that take place on the University of Iowa campus. Classes in STEM, the arts, and the humanities cultivate students' interest and enliven their curiosity.

Summer Programs

The Belin-Blank Center also offers the following summer programs, many of which are residential programs held on the University of Iowa campus. Students in each program participate in cultural and recreational activities and have access to the university's libraries, computer facilities, and study areas. For residential programs, housing and meals are provided at the university's residence halls. Junior Scholars Academy students do not stay on campus.

Blank Summer Institute

The Blank Summer Institute for the Arts and Sciences (BSI) is a program that provides an intensive, advanced educational experience designed to enhance talented students' intellectual and social growth. The BSI plan of study complements the regular school curriculum. Students are nominated for program participation.

To be eligible for BSI, students must be Iowa residents, must be completing grade 7 or 8, and must be nominated by their schools. Students selected for BSI receive a scholarship to cover part of the institute's cost.

Junior Scholars Academy

The Junior Scholars Academy (JSA) is a summer program designed specifically for bright elementary and middle school students. In this weeklong, commuter program, students spend their days thoroughly exploring a topic while having fun with other kids who share their enthusiasm for learning.

Summer Writing Online

The Summer Writing Online offers a three-week online program for students completing grade 9, 10, or 11. Students learn from world-class faculty and graduates of the famed Iowa Writers' Workshop. The program is 100% synchronous, featuring 3.5 hours of interactive class time each day for students to create community with other talented, young writers as they read, write, laugh, and learn together.

Twice-Exceptional Summer Academy

The Twice-Exceptional Summer Academy is a two-day semi-residential experience that focuses on a variety of topics to help prepare students for success in college. There are activities for students and for parents and guardians. In addition to sessions, the camp includes team building and social activities. A parent or guardian must attend the entire camp.

University-Based Programs

Academy for Twice-Exceptionality

A college journey at the University of Iowa embraces meaningful academic experiences and the development of important skills, including independence, social-emotional maturity, effective communication, and career readiness. The Academy for Twice-Exceptionality partners with neurodiverse college students to foster and support these experiences and skills and enhance community engagement as an Iowa Hawkeye. The academy strives to ensure that neurodiverse students have a positive and fulfilling college experience, nurturing students' talents while also creating a sense of community and helping students connect with resources from the Belin-Blank Center, the University of Iowa, and the broader community.

Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy

The Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy gives high-achieving early high school graduates the opportunity to enroll at the University of Iowa. The Bucksbaum Academy provides top students with a high-level curriculum while supporting them through the transition from high school to the University of Iowa. The academy focuses on building a community of advanced learners who are striving to become future leaders. We provide support through weekly seminars, merit

scholarships, individual weekly meetings, and a variety of social events. The program is open to students worldwide.

Courses

Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education Courses

BBC:1000 Bucksbaum Academy Second-Year Seminar 1 s.h.
Unites self-efficacy skills attained in first-year seminar experience with exploration of how to foster more fulfilling and productive lives; understanding and development of high potential; for Bucksbaum Academy second-year students and early-entrance program supported by the Belin-Blank Center.

BBC:1001 Summer Art Residency 2 s.h.
Partnership between Belin-Blank Center and the UI School of Art, Art History, and Design; designed for talented high school artists from across the country; taught by faculty, staff, and graduate students from the School of Art, Art History, and Design and special visiting artists.

BBC:1002 Summer Writing Residency 2 s.h.
Partnership between Belin-Blank Center and the UI undergraduate creative writing program; designed for talented high school writers from across the country; taught by faculty, staff, and graduate students from the English department, Iowa Writers' Workshop, and special visiting authors.

BBC:1004 Secondary Student Training Program 3 s.h.
Experience conducting research under the guidance of a faculty mentor; presentation of research findings at concluding seminar.

BBC:1025 Succeeding in College and Beyond 1,3 s.h.
Foster belonging, develop connections. Includes campus transition/navigation, key university resources, essential skills for collegiate success, goal setting, self-advocacy, campus opportunities and barriers, community student health and wellbeing, leadership skills. Requirements: admission to Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy. Same as PSQF:1025.

BBC:1030 Belin-Blank Center Seminar 1 s.h.
Presentations and discussions by university resource experts and Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education staff. Requirements: Bucksbaum Early Entrance Academy student. Same as CSED:1030.

BBC:4023 Twice-Exceptionality Support Seminar 1 s.h.
Areas and issues that typically impact students diagnosed as twice-exceptional in college (specifically autism spectrum disorder); focus on navigating campus and services, communication skills (social and academic based), stress management, executive functioning skills, career and job seeking skills. Same as EDTL:4023.

BBC:4025 Differentiated Instruction for Advanced Learners 1 s.h.
Introduces the concept of a differentiated classroom for K-8 advanced learners for preservice and practicing educators. Specific content relates to understanding the foundation of differentiation, preparing for facilitating a differentiated classroom, establishing routines and classroom management, and sharing instructional strategies to engage advanced learners. Same as EDTL:4025.

BBC:4026 Language Arts for Advanced Learners 1 s.h.
Explores the purposes and methods of language arts instruction with focus on the developmental, social, and emotional needs of high-ability readers featuring the key components and elements necessary for an advanced language arts program in grades K-8; includes criteria for developmentally appropriate literature and grammar with an overview of the role of writing and composition. Prerequisites: EDTL:3095 or EDTL:3160 and EDTL:3164. Same as EDTL:4026.

BBC:4031 Belin-Blank Talent Development Fellowship 1-2 s.h.
Content is approached as a survey of concepts, ideas, and issues pertinent to the development of talent (and its potential) in K-12 students. Key course content includes acceleration, appropriate curriculum and instruction, assessment and identification, collaborating with staff and families, differentiation, diverse student populations, social and emotional needs, and research. Same as EDTL:4031.

BBC:4033 Talent Development in the Arts and Athletics: Models and Methods 1 s.h.
Examines multiple general and domain-specific talent development models relevant to arts and athletics. Students will consider the roles of nature and nurture, the role of the teacher/coach, and the use of creativity while weighing the impact these have on the development of talent. Students will analyze how these talent development processes have played out in the lives of individuals eminent in the arts and athletics. Same as EDTL:4033.

BBC:4035 Talent Development in the Arts and Athletics: Psychosocial Trials and Benefits 1 s.h.
Students will understand and integrate the multiple psychosocial issues (both trials and benefits) experienced during varying stages of the talent development process, including practice, perfectionism, anxiety, failure, shame, motivation, leadership, asynchrony, competition, multipotentiality, performance, grit, and intensities. Students will analyze how these psychosocial issues impacted the talent development process in the lives of individuals eminent in the arts and athletics. Same as EDTL:4035.

BBC:4066 Curriculum and Programming for Advanced Learners 3 s.h.
Designed to assist preservice educators, inservice educators, and anyone interested in curriculum and program development, design, and delivery of qualitatively differentiated experiences in the context of responding to the needs of advanced learners. Primary focus is on research-based curriculum models and programming for advanced learners from experts in the field. Same as EDTL:4066.

BBC:4067 Conceptions of Talent Development 3 s.h.
Students review conceptions of talent development and explore possibilities for appropriate programming in specific fields across various stages in life; traditional opportunities in gifted education programs; stages of development in early childhood; development of knowledge and skills in addition to and beyond organized educational programs. Same as EDTL:4067.

BBC:4070 Best Practices in Advanced Learning and Talent Development 3 s.h.
Research-based practices for serving academically advanced learners; topics include universal screening, grouping, academic acceleration, advocacy, and professional development. Same as EDTL:4070.

BBC:4074 Differentiation at the Secondary Level 1 s.h.
Importance of differentiation for gifted learners in middle school and high school; differentiation through advanced placement programs as well as broader perspectives on differentiation; essentials for differentiation understood and applied to a lesson that will be implemented with students. Same as EDTL:4074.

BBC:4085 Current Readings and Research in Gifted Education 1 s.h.
Research in the field of gifted education and talent development; applications of research to ensure best practices in providing services and programs for high-ability learners. Same as EDTL:4085.

BBC:4111 Evaluation of Advanced Programs 1 s.h.
Foundation of knowledge to develop a high-quality, research-based program for advanced learners. Primary focus on applying practical strategies and tools to conduct an effective and comprehensive evaluation of a program for advanced learners. Same as EPLS:4111.

BBC:4118 Meeting the Emotional Needs of Talented Students 1 s.h.
Unique emotional needs of talented students, including twice exceptionality. Theories of and trends in emotional development; identification of needs and myths about skills/challenges; research-based strategies to best meet needs; emotional impact of acceleration; and counseling. Same as PSQF:4118.

BBC:4119 Meeting the Social Needs of Talented Students 1 s.h.
Unique social needs of talented students, including twice exceptionality. Theories of and general trends in social development; identification of needs and myths about skills/challenges; family and peer relationships; research-based strategies to best meet needs; social impact of acceleration; and counseling. Same as PSQF:4119.

BBC:4120 Psychology of Giftedness 3 s.h.
Theories of learning, child development, motivation; issues unique to gifted education. Same as CSED:4120, PSQF:4120.

BBC:4121 Identification of Students for Advanced Programming 3 s.h.
Best practices in assessing and identifying students for advanced programs, including standardized tests and other measurement instruments used to identify academic talent for grades K-12 and current issues in the use of various instruments and tests (e.g., ability, aptitude, achievement, rating scales). Same as CSED:4121, PSQF:4121.

BBC:4123 Academic Acceleration 1 s.h.
Examine academic acceleration, one of the best research-based interventions for advanced learners. Topics include different types of acceleration (e.g., subject, whole-grade, curriculum compacting), research evidence supporting acceleration, acceleration policies, processes and skills for implementing acceleration, and applying resources and practical ideas to develop appropriate accelerative opportunities for students. Requirements: computer with internet access, sound card, Adobe Reader, and Adobe Flash Player. Same as PSQF:4123.

BBC:4137 Introduction to Educating Advanced Learners 3 s.h.
Survey of critical topics and issues related to advanced learners and meeting their needs through a research-based, best practice lens. Topics include key terms and definitions, standards, characteristics of advanced learners, social and emotional needs, assessment, acceleration, enrichment, diversity of learners, and accessible programming. Highlights the expertise of leaders in the field to provide current thinking and evidence-based practices on important topics related to advanced learners and meeting their needs. Same as CSED:4137, EDTL:4137.

BBC:4153 Collaboration Between Advanced Academics and General Education 1 s.h.
Examining the need for differentiated learning experiences throughout the school day for advanced learning and the combined effort among varied staff to accomplish this. Specific content related to how classroom teachers and gifted/talented resource teachers can collaborate to provide appropriate instructional services, collaborative models, the planning process, and recommendations for both direct and indirect services. Requirements: internet access. Same as EDTL:4153.

BBC:4188 Practicum in Teaching and Curriculum for Advanced Academics 1-6 s.h.
Combination of readings, discussions, field experiences, and reflections; development of a guided, interest-based culminating product for the TAG endorsement. Same as CSED:4188, EDTL:4188.

BBC:4189 Practicum in Talent Development and Advanced Academics 1 s.h.
Combines readings, discussions, field experiences, and reflections. Finish developing a guided, interest-based culminating product for the TAG Endorsement. Same as EDTL:4189.

BBC:5065 Talent Development Capstone Exploration 2 s.h.
Develop and complete a capstone exploration project relevant to a school or other context that focuses on an important topic or issue in talent development. Requirements: completion of all coursework for the graduate Certificate in Talent Development. Same as EDTL:5065.

BBC:5080 Workshop: Teacher Training for Advanced Placement Courses 1-2 s.h.
Focus on a particular academic content area. Same as EDTL:5080.

BBC:5194 Continuing Education Individual Study arr.
Supervised individual study. Same as PSQF:5194.

BBC:5226 Assessment of Students for Advanced Programming 3 s.h.
Best practices in assessing and identifying students for advanced programs, including interpreting standardized tests and other measurement instruments used to identify academic talent for grades K-12 and current issues in the use of various instruments and tests (e.g., ability, aptitude, achievement, rating scales). Same as CSED:5226, PSQF:5226.