

Faculty Work Comprehensive List

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## Celebrating Diversity in Christian Schools with Differentiation

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## Celebrating Diversity in Christian Schools with Differentiation

### Abstract

Does it matter if some of your students are lost and have no idea how to connect with you and with learning? Does it matter if some of your students are consistently ahead and are spending considerable time waiting for the rest of us to catch up?

### Keywords

differentiation, Christian education, academic achievement, students

### Disciplines

Christianity | Education

### Comments

Presented as part of a professional development conference for teachers and administrators from Christian schools in Belize in January 2017. The conference was approved by the Belizean Ministry of Education and met the national requirements for professional development. The conference was designed by Dordt College Education Department faculty.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN  
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS WITH  
DIFFERENTIATION

## IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- Does it matter that YOU the teacher has a clear learning destination for your students?
- Does it matter whether or not that destination is likely to help students build stronger, more productive and responsive lives in God's kingdom?
- Does it matter if some of your students are lost and have no idea how to connect with you and with learning?
- Does it matter if some of your students are consistently ahead and are spending considerable time waiting for the rest of us to catch up?

DID YOU ANSWER “YES” TO THESE  
QUESTIONS??

# *Differentiation*

*ONE size does not fit all*

IMAGE-BEARING

What does this  
mean??

What does it require  
of us as educators?



# DIFFERENTIATION

- Let's look at the case studies to determine the characteristics and the definition of differentiation

Definition:

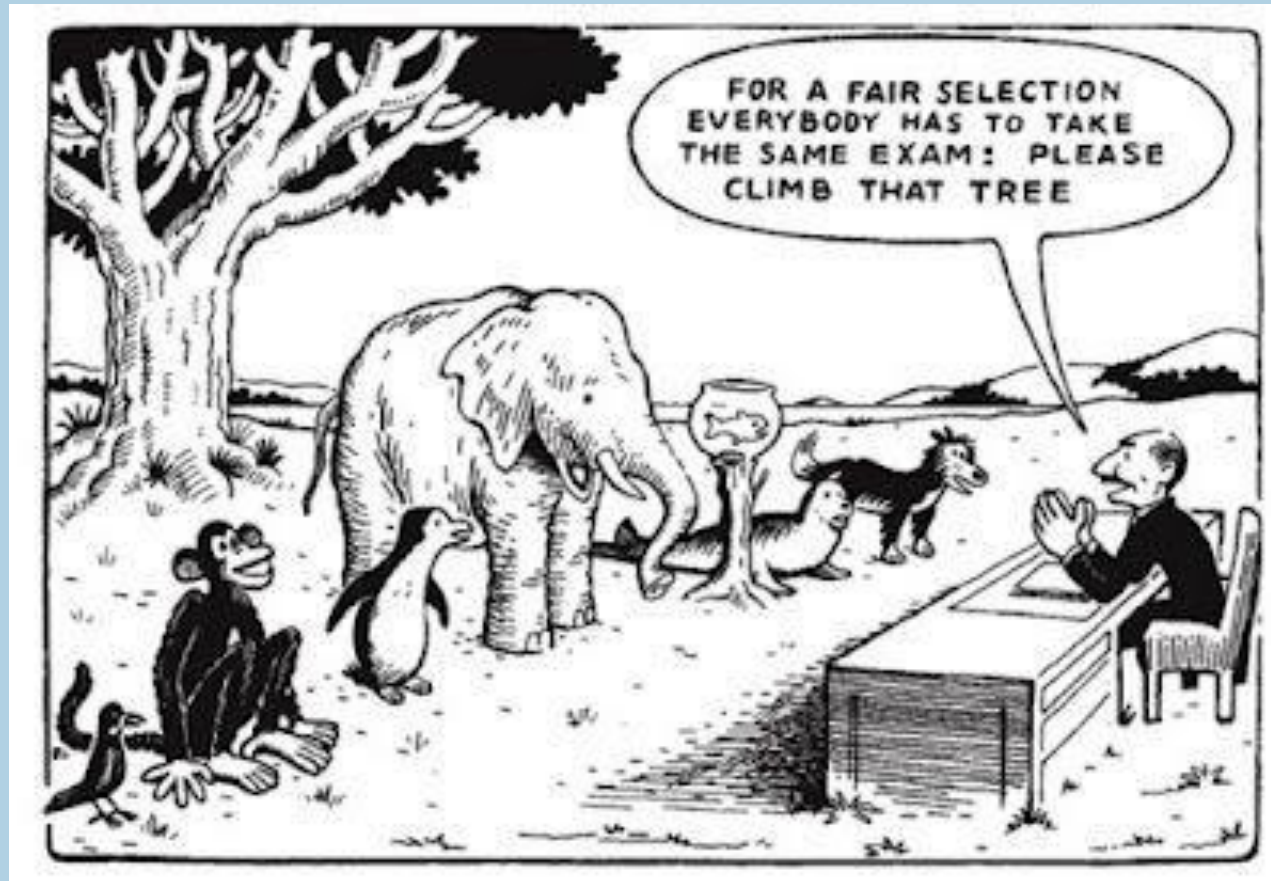
A systematic approach to planning curriculum and instruction for academically diverse learners

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Based on learners' needs (readiness, learning profile, interests)
- Takes various forms: content, process, product
- Requires continuous and ongoing assessment
- Requires flexibility
- Requires high-quality curriculum



## STEP I: KNOW YOUR LEARNERS



## THE CANOE DILEMMA

- Nineteen people need to cross the river. It is too rapid to swim and there is only one canoe. Only three people can fit into the canoe at one time. One of the three must be an adult. Only one person is an adult. How many trips across the river will be needed to get all the children to the other side of the river?



HOW???

# YOUR LEARNERS

Student	Academic Characteristics	Behavioral Characteristics	Motivational Characteristics	Your teaching actions
Most advanced				
Most struggling				
Most challenging				

## STEP 2: KNOW YOUR CONTENT

- Importance of learning objectives
  - KNOW
  - UNDERSTAND
  - DO

**DIFFERENTIATED  
INSTRUCTION: TIERING**

# WHAT IS IT?

- using varied levels of tasks to ensure that students explore ideas and use skills at a level that builds on what they already know and encourages growth
- All explore the same essential ideas but work at different levels of thought

# TIERING 101: THE BASICS

1. Identify the key concepts and understanding you want all your students to learn.



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- 2. Using pre-assessments, formative and ongoing assessments determine the readiness level of your students so that you can design tasks that will help them learn the key concepts and still challenge them

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- 3.Design different tasks that all meet the same objective and assign students to those tasks

# BIOLOGY LAB EXAMPLE

# MEASUREMENT EXAMPLE

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS OF  
EFFECTIVE DIFFERENTIATION DO  
YOU SEE IN THIS TIERED LESSON?

WHAT ARE IMPORTANT  
CHARACTERISTICS THAT  
EXCELLENT TIERED ACTIVITIES  
MUST CONTAIN?

**DIFFERENT WORK – NOT SIMPLY MORE OR  
LESS WORK**

**EQUALLY ACTIVE**



**EQUALLY INTERESTING AND  
ENGAGING**

## YOUR TURN

1. Choose a concept/skill that is important for ALL your learners to understand
2. Think about your students (including those described in your earlier chart)
3. Describe an activity that is interesting, meaningful and meets the learning objectives.
  - a. Which students will this activity best serve?
4. Design the different tiers.