

Some Underlying Assumptions of Differentiated Instruction

- 1. Differentiation is planning to accommodate multiple and varied learning needs (social as well as cognitive) within regular units of instruction, rather than primarily attempting to accommodate those needs apart from the regular curriculum or attempting to accommodate them after student frustration or failure.**
- 2. Effective differentiation requires creation and maintenance of a classroom community where students feel safe and valued as they are; at the same time each student is supported in maximizing his or her potential.**
- 3. In an effectively differentiated classroom, the teacher interacts with each student with positive regard and positive expectations.**
- 4. Teachers successfully with differentiation see the whole learner and emphasize the student's strengths rather than accentuating labels, deficits, or differences.**
- 5. Teachers effective with differentiation do not call attention to the differentiation, but rather help students appreciate varied ways in which all of them can find personal success with important goals.**
- 6. Differentiation requires use of multiple and alternative forms or assessment of all stages of student learning in order to uncover and address a full range of learning needs and strengths.**

- 7. Differentiation calls on teachers to develop knowledge about human learning so that they can know their students well enough to identify and address varied readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.**
- 8. A central goal of differentiation is successful student achievement of meaningful and powerful ideas, information, and skills-not reduction in standards, watered-down curriculum, or busy work.**
- 9. Differentiation calls on teachers to use multiple methods to engage students in active learning. Although whole-class instruction is a component of differentiation, differentiation does not take place during whole-class instruction.**
- 10. Effective differentiation calls on a teacher to develop complex management skills that allow (1) multiple tasks to proceed smoothly in the classroom, (2) students to take increasing responsibility for their learning, and (3) the teacher to monitor student activity and coach for student growth and quality work.**
- 11. A teacher skilled in differentiation does not expect students to assume the major responsibility for differentiating their own work or making tasks a good fit for other students.**
- 12. To differentiate successfully, teachers must accept responsibility for successful teaching and learning of each student in the class while working collaboratively with specialists to ensure success of individuals and the class as a whole.**

**-----Based on the work of Stephanie Corrigan, Utah Valley State
College-----**