



**College of Education and Human Development  
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Summer 2016

EDSE 590: Special Education Research; 3-Credits

Section B03, CRN: 43227

Section 692, CRN: 43253

<b>Instructor:</b> Mrs. Shalu Rana	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 06/06/16 - 07/30/16
<b>Phone:</b> Phone appointments may be scheduled via e-mail	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Asynchronous
<b>E-Mail:</b> srana8@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> Asynchronous
<b>Office Hours:</b> By appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Internet

***Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.*

**Course Description**

Describes fundamental concepts and practices in educational research in special education. Covers specific applications of educational research methods to problems in special education. Emphasizes review and critique of special education research, and applied classroom research for teachers.

Schedule Type: LEC

Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3

Hours of Lab or Studio per week: 0

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisite(s):** None

**Advising Contact Information**

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

## **Nature of Course Delivery**

Learning activities include the following:

1. Recorded lecture and online discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities

This course is delivered in an online format, in an asynchronous format. Please plan to access the Blackboard website several times per week. Access Blackboard 9.1 at <https://mymason.gmu.edu>. Your login and password is the same as your George Mason e-mail login. Once you enter, select the EDSE 590-B03 Summer 2016 course.

All new materials, readings, and assignments within weekly learning modules will be posted on Mondays and Thursdays and students will be expected to complete and **submit** due assignments **by midnight on Wednesdays (for Monday's module) and midnight on Sundays (for Thursday's module)** before the deadline. The instruction will be provided via regular and/or narrated PowerPoint presentations. Presentations, case studies, videos, and additional appropriate readings will be provided under **Learning Modules** tab. Assignments and activities will be completed using asynchronous tools such as **Discussion Boards, Wikis**, and/or submitted under the **Assignments** link. Multiple **Collaboration Tools** will be offered for students to explore different research methods through the **Group Project** of designing a research study.

In order to facilitate interaction, the instructor will be available for office hours via **Blackboard Collaborate** (within Blackboard 9.1) or in person by appointment. Students will be asked to use **Discussion Board** to interact and reflect on the readings and course content. In addition, **Frequently Asked Questions Blog** will be available to interact with each other and post questions, comments, resources related to the course assignment.

## **DELIVERY METHOD:**

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before "@masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;

- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of the course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for Pcs and Macs respectively, available for free downloading by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player>
  - Apple QuickTime Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)
- A headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

- **Course Week:** Refer to the asynchronous bullet below if your course is asynchronous or the synchronous bullet if your course is synchronous.
  - **Asynchronous:** Because online courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will **start** on **Monday**, and **finish** on **Sunday**.
  - **Synchronous:** Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meeting take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **Log-in Frequency:** Refer to the asynchronous bullet below if your course is asynchronous or the synchronous bullet if your course is synchronous.
  - **Asynchronous:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be 2 times per week.
  - **Synchronous:** Students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings. In addition, students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be 2 times per week.
- **Participation:** Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:** Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course. Contact ITU (<http://itservices.gmu.edu/help.cfm>) at (703) 993-8870 or [support@gmu.edu](mailto:support@gmu.edu).
- **Technical Issues:** Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

- **Workload:** Expect to log in to this course **at least three times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. Remember, this course is **not** self-paced. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

**Netiquette:** Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.

### **Learner Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and understand different methods of educational research suitable for different research purposes in special education.
2. Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of quantitative experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education.
3. Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of survey research in special education.
4. Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of single subject research in special education.
5. Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of qualitative research in special education.
6. Critically evaluate education research and describe implications for educational practice.

### **Required Textbooks**

McMillan, J. (2007). *Fundamentals of Educational Research* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: AB Longman.

### **Recommended Textbooks**

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

### **Additional Readings**

The textbook will be used as a framework for the course. Additional readings relevant to the course will be provided by the instructor on Blackboard.

## **Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Masters in Special Education Program. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 5: Instructional planning and strategies; Standard 6: Professional learning and ethical practice.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students:**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- d. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- e. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services and inform their instructor, in writing, as soon as possible. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## Core Values Commitment

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>]

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>]

## Course Policies & Expectations

### *Attendance.*

While there are no synchronous sessions in this course, students are required to complete all weekly online assignments using the **Blackboard 9.1** course management system. Active attendance and participation in the course will be seen as timely completion of assigned semi-weekly work in the course learning modules.

### *Late Work.*

All assignments should be submitted via Blackboard by the due date. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit work on time, points will be deducted from your grade for late assignments. Assignments will not be accepted more than 3 days late unless prior arrangements with the instructor have been made. Allow additional time for as well as additional participation during activities that require constructive feedback.

## Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit the (*NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE*) to Tk20 through Blackboard (regardless of whether the student is taking the course as an elective, a onetime course or as part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Tk20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Tk20 (through Blackboard) will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Tk20 submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

## Grading Scale

Requirements	Points	Percent
Participation in class activities	90	60%
Research Application: Mini Project	20	15%
Final Research Project: Research Review Paper	40	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

Grade	Range
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	86-89%
B	80-85%
C	70-79%
F	69% or below

## Assignments

### Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required).

None

### Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required).

Final Research project: Research Review Paper

### Other Assignments.

Participation in class activities

Research Application: Mini Project

1. Students will complete class readings to include a supplemental set of articles that reflect current special education research trends and will explore different methodologies in published special education research.

**Participant** – 90 points:

**Class activities and discussion \*** - 90 points (5-10 points weekly): Students will participate in class activities and interactive quizzes in order to practice literature searches, reviews, and relevant research applications. In addition to weekly class activities, students will be prompted to work on their Research Review Wiki Page. The work is designed to help students prepare for their final Research Paper assignment one step at a time.

2. **Human Subjects CITI Training Module Completion** – Pass/Fail

GMU Mandatory Training for Persons Conducting Research Using Human Subjects is accessed at <http://www.citiprogram.org>. Seven learner modules in the Basic Course are required prior to conducting any research at Mason using human subjects. In addition, you are required to complete additional modules related to conducting research with school aged children and persons with disabilities. *This assignment will be evaluated as pass/fail.*

3. **Research Application: Mini-Project** – 20 points  
The research application mini-project is designed to provide experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating a research application project in special education. All activities for this assignment will be completed in research teams. *Specific directions and a rubric for this assignment will be provided by the instructor.*
  
4. **Final Research Project: Research Review Paper** – 40 points  
You will complete a traditional research review paper of a selected intervention area of your choice. **Your topic must be approved by the instructor.** You will need to collect a minimum of 8-10 original intervention research studies on a particular topic to include in your review paper. An electronic copy (posted to blackboard) should be submitted no later than 4:30 pm on the due date. **This assignment is the signature assignment of the course.**
  - a. As part of class activities, students will provide constructive feedback to at least, one classmate on their drafts of the literature review introduction, method, results, and discussion sections.

*Specific directions will be provided by the instructor and this assignment will be evaluated using the attached rubric.*

\*Detailed descriptions and step-by-step instructions for each class activity and course assignments will be provided by the instructor and posted in the corresponding Learning Modules.

## Schedule

### **Tentative Class Topics and Due Dates** (Subject to change for any unforeseen interruptions)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Learning Module</b>	<b>Textbook Readings*, Weekly Activities &amp; Assignments Due at the end of the Module</b>
Monday, June 6 - 8	1. Introduction to research methods in special education	Chapter 1 (pp.2-18) <b>*Introduction Forum</b> <b>*CITI Training</b>
Thursday, June 9 - 12	2. Literature searches & reviews	*Chapter 3 <b>*Literature Search Scavenger Hunt</b> <b>*Research Review Wiki: Research Topic</b>



<b>Date</b>	<b>Learning Module</b>	<b>Textbook Readings*, Weekly Activities &amp; Assignments Due at the <u>end</u> of the Module</b>
Monday, June 13	3. Empirical article anatomy. Research problem & questions	*Chapter 1 (pp. 17-26) *Chapter 2 <b>*Overview of Research in My Field</b> <b>*Research Review Wiki: Purpose Statement &amp; Research Questions</b>
Thursday, June 16	4. Experimental research designs: Group Research	*Chapter 4 and Chapter 9 (about Group Research only!) <b>*Research Review Wiki: Introduction Section Draft &amp; Peer Feedback</b>
Monday, June 20	5. Experimental research designs: Single-subject Research	*Chapter 9 (about Single Subject Research only!) <b>*Research Review Wiki: Method Section Draft &amp; Peer Feedback</b>
Thursday, June 23	6. Research components Part I: Participants & variables	*Chapter 2 (pp. 54-59) *Chapter 5 <b>*Research Review Wiki: Description of Each Individual Study Draft</b>
Monday, June 27	7. Research components Part II: Educational measurements & data collection	*Chapter 7 *Chapter 10 <b>*Research Review Wiki: Results and Discussion Section Draft &amp; Peer Feedback</b>
Thursday, June 30	8. Discussion and conclusions. APA 6th edition style	*Chapter 15 <b>*Mini-Research Method Outline</b>
<b>Monday, July 4: No Assigned Module</b>		
Thursday, July 7	9. Mini-Research Proposal work time	<b>*Mini-Research Method Due</b>
Monday, July 11	10. Qualitative research designs	*Chapter 11 & 12 <b>*Research Review Wiki: Final Research Review Draft &amp; Peer Feedback</b>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Learning Module</b>	<b>Textbook Readings*, Weekly Activities &amp; Assignments Due at the <u>end</u> of the Module</b>
Thursday, July 14	11. Non-experimental quantitative research designs: Survey research	*Chapter 8 * <b>Reference List in APA Format</b>
Monday, July 18	12. Work on Research Review Paper	* <b>Final Research Review Paper Due</b>
Thursday, July 21	13. Mixed methods research designs	*Chapter 13
Monday, July 25	14. Intelligent Research Consumer/Action research 15. Final Assignment	*Chapter 14 * <b>Reflection Due</b>

\* Additional readings will be provided by the instructor for some Learning Modules.

## Appendix

### Rubric for Participation in Class Activities

**Exemplary (5 points):** The student:

- Correctly completes and posts all activities on time;
- Actively participates and supports the members of the learning group and the members of the class. When appropriate provides constructive feedback to at least one of the classmates in a respectful manner.

**Adequate (1-3 points):** The student:

- Completes and posts the majority of the activities that are partially correct;
- Occasionally participates in discussions and provides feedback.

**Inadequate (0 points):** The student:

- Does not complete class activities;
- Does not actively participate in discussions and does not provide constructive feedback;
- The student may fail to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions.

### Final Research Project: Research Review Paper Scoring Rubric

Effective literature reviews contain the following:

- **An introduction** that establishes an important educational problem that needs to be addressed, a logical presentation of information that leads to the purpose statement of the paper (in this case a systematic literature review). Important concepts are defined in this section as well as any background information needed to support search procedures in the methodology.

- **A method section** that has clearly replicable procedures and demonstrates competency in the search techniques learned in class (search of educational data bases with key terms, ancestry and/or descendent searches, hand searches of relevant journals), and identifies clear and reasonable decision making criteria for individual studies included in the review (inclusion/exclusion criteria).

- **A results section** that provides an overview of the characteristics of the data set, is logically organized for the reader, demonstrates that search procedures described in the method section were consistently followed, and succinctly and sufficiently describes relevant information from each of the studies reviewed. A visual representation of the findings (i.e., a table) with accurate information helps the reader to understand more thoroughly the research reviewed.

- **A discussion section** that provides a thoughtful and analytical discussion of findings and is based firmly on studies reviewed (not solely the authors opinion), and references implications for practice where appropriate.

- **Overall** student understanding of the purpose of each of these sections of a research paper, a professional writing style (has been thoroughly edited), and citations that are in APA format (with careful attention to ‘glaring’ errors).

Exemplary paper (36-40 points): Meets all of the criteria above.

Adequate paper (32-35 points): Good overall paper, lacking in one or two of the criteria for an exemplary paper.

Marginal paper (28-31 points): Overall, acceptable but with one or more significant problems. Contains some useful information, but may have substantial problems with evaluation, writing style, or review of relevant literature.

Inadequate paper (1-27 points): Paper with substantial problems in important areas such as writing, evaluation of research, overall thoughtfulness. Contains little or no information of value to special education practice.

Unacceptable/no paper (0 points): No paper turned in or paper was not approved for this assignment.

Exemplary paper	Adequate paper	Marginal paper	Inadequate paper	No paper
40 - 36	35 – 32	31 - 28	<28	0