



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

Spring 2024
EDSE 590 611: Special Education Research
CRN: 23891, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Frederick Brigham	Meeting Dates: 1/8/24 – 3/18/24
Phone: 703 993 1667 (don't call here, I will send my home phone number in an email)	Meeting Day(s): N/A
E-Mail: fbrigham@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): N/A
Office Hours: by arrangement	Meeting Location: N/A; Online
Office Location: Finley Hall, second floor across from the elevator	Other Phone: I will send my home phone number to the class in an email.

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

Prerequisite(s):

None

Co-requisite(s):

None

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.

Advising Contact Information

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

Advising Tip

Are you ready to apply for graduation? Students completing their program can apply for graduation on Patriotweb. If you are graduating from a Masters and certificate, be sure to apply to graduate from each program. Visit <http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/graduation/> for more information.

Course Delivery Method

Learning activities include the following:

1. Independent Readings
2. Application activities
3. Individual project development with instructor
4. Video and other media supports
5. Online quizzes
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on Jan 5, 2024, 10:00 AM.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [Browser support \(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support\)](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
- Students must maintain 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 course requirements.
 - The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - [Adobe Acrobat Reader: https://get.adobe.com/reader/](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
 - [Windows Media Player: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player)

- [Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

Expectations

- **Course Week:**
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Monday and finish on Sunday. Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **Log-in Frequency:**
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least one time per week.
- **Participation:**
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing 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 who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:**
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:**
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- **Accommodations:**

Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Service.

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, teacher candidates/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.

Professional Standards

(Council for Exceptional Children [CEC] and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium [InTASC]). Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: CEC Standard 5: Instructional planning and strategies (InTASC 7,8) & CEC Standard 6: Professional learning and ethical practice (InTASC 9).

Required Texts

Hott, B., Brigham, F., & Peltier, C. (2021) *Research methods in special education*. Thorofare, NJ: Slack Books. ISBN 10: 1630917567

The link to the publisher for this text is:

<https://www.slackbooks.com/research-methods-in-special-education-evidence-based-instruction-in-special-education/>

You can get it from Amazon at:

https://www.amazon.com/Research-Methods-Special-Education-Hott/dp/1630917567/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=Research+Methods+in+Special+Education&qid=1629571091&sr=8-3

But, and this is the reward for reading all of this section, it appears that the library has an e-version of this book available for free! Here is what they told me:

Course: EDSE 590

Ebook title: Research methods in special education /

Link to access

ebook: <http://mutex.gmu.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=3045909>

The license for this ebook allows for **unlimited simultaneous users**, so all students in the class should be able to access it.

Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL.

For EDSE 590: No requirement to upload a Performance-based Assessment (PBA) to VIA/SLL.

Assignments and/or Examinations

Performance-based Assessment (VIA submission required)

N/A.

College Wide Common Assessment (VIA submission required)

N/A.

Other Assignments

See grading for listing of the course assignments.

Student Evaluations of Teaching:

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and Blackboard notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at <https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/>

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Please refer to the previously described expectations for the course.

Late Work

Online Submission of Student Work Required. All student work must be submitted through the Blackboard class website. Due dates are posted at the end of the syllabus and, also on the blackboard site. On time submissions are required to be in the class Blackboard Assignment folder by the beginning of the class session on the due date.

Only submissions through the Blackboard Assignment folder will be accepted. Assignments sent as email attachments will be deleted without opening them. Assignments that are not in the Blackboard assignments folder at the appropriate time are late.

Individual Effort

Each assignment in this course is expected to be completed by the individual student. Unless explicitly agreed to by the instructor, there is *no* group work in this course. Working as a member of the group will be considered as a violation of the student honor code and is likely to involve the sanctions described in that policy.

Grading

I am using contract grading for this course.

- F:** Failure to complete ten or more of the chapter quizzes at a level of 90% each and/or missing any other single element of the class (e.g. HSRB training module).
- C:** Completes each of the chapter quizzes and posts documentation for HSRB training module but has attained 90% accuracy fewer than 12 of the quizzes.
- B-:** Completes each of the chapter quizzes with 90% accuracy on at least 13 of the 15 quizzes and satisfactory completion of research ethics training. See Appendix B for ethics training information.
- B:** Completes each of the chapter quizzes with 90% accuracy on at least 14 of the 15 quizzes and satisfactory completion of research ethics training. See Appendix B for ethics training information.
- B+:** Completes requirements for grade of B and attains 90% or higher on each of the 15 chapter quizzes.
- A-:** Completes requirements for grade of B+ and satisfactory completion of the following literature review paper requirements:
 1. Introduction with at least two general references explaining the importance of the topic.
 2. Description of search procedures (data bases used, search terms, etc.).
 3. Description of search results and article selection criteria yielding at least five relevant sources.
 4. APA-formatted reference list.
- A:** Completes requirements for grade of A- and satisfactory completion of the following *additional* literature review paper requirements:
 5. Integrated review of the selected studies.

6. Summary and discussion section.
7. Abstract.
8. (Optional but recommended) Summary table of study participants or other relevant feature of the selected sources.

Note: The systematic review paper is an individual assignment that is developed in conjunction with the course instructor. If you wish to do this, you must contact the instructor and negotiate your topic and the general outline of your paper. Unapproved topics and papers that do not follow the negotiated outline may not be accepted for the grades of A- or A.

Also, this is a substantial assignment that is dramatically different from most of the term papers that students have written in their educational careers. I strongly advise that you contact me by the halfway point of our course to begin planning for this assignment.

Things to know about grading:

1. You may repeat the quizzes an infinite number of times (within the period of the course).
2. I use the score of your last attempt. That is almost always the highest score.
3. I do not average score across the different chapter quizzes. To earn a B, you must have 90% or higher on 14 of the 15 quizzes. I have an algorithm set up on my computer that counts the number of quizzes meeting or exceeding that criterion.
4. The literature review is a substantive requirement. *If you intend to complete one, you should begin working with me on the paper at least four weeks before the end of the class.* That this statement was made in the preceding section should indicate its importance!
5. The information about completing a systematic review and the supporting search procedures is contained in chapters five and six in our textbook. Make sure that you have completed the quizzes for those two chapters before beginning the review.
6. The papers are very idiosyncratic, so I do not use an elaborate checklist rubric. However, if you inspect the numbered points for the A- and A grades, you can see what I am looking for. The elements must be there and in a manner that is representative of graduate-level academic work.
7. The paper must conform to the parameters of a systematic review. A simple review, discussion, or term paper will not be adequate for either the A- or the A grade.
8. The final product must conform to the guidelines for scholarly papers set forth in the current edition of the APA Manual for Publication.

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site \(https://oai.gmu.edu/\)](https://oai.gmu.edu/) and [Honor Code and System \(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/\)](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>).

Class Schedule

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

The class schedule appears as Appendix A.

Core Values Commitment

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

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/) (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. See [Disability Services](https://ds.gmu.edu/) (<https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to [Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/) (<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>).

- [Learning Services \(learningservices@gmu.edu\)](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as the [Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development \(http://cehd.gmu.edu/\)](http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

N/A

There is no Performance-based Assessment or College Wide Assessment for this course.

Appendix A Tentative Class Schedule

Week	Week of:	Topic (what to read)	Activities Due (what to complete)
1	1/08	(Ch. 1) Evidence-Based Practices in Special Education	Getting to Know You responses
2	1/15	(Ch. 2) Research in Special Education (Ch. 3) Research in Applied Settings	EBP responses
3	1/22	(Ch. 4) Ethics in Research CITI (HSRB) Training	Research in Sp. Education Responses Applied Settings Responses
4	1/29	(Ch. 5) Identifying and Locating Special Education Research + (Ch. 6) Systematic Literature Reviews +	Ethics Responses CITI Training certificate
5	2/05	(Ch. 7) Correlation Designs (Ch. 8) Experimental Designs	Literature Review Responses Locating Research responses
6	2/12	(Ch. 9) Quasi-Experimental Designs	Correlation Responses Experimental Responses
7	2/19	(Ch. 10) Single-Case Research Designs	Quasi-Exp. Responses
8	2/26	(Ch. 11) Survey Research (Ch. 12) Qualitative Research	Single-Case Responses
9	3/04	(Ch. 13) Mixed Methods Research (Ch. 14) Program Evaluation	Survey Responses Qualitative Responses
10	3/11	(Ch. 15) Research to Practice	Mixed Method Responses Program Evaluation Responses
11	3/18	Everything needs to be loaded by this day if it is to be considered for the grade.	Research to Practice Responses Individual Research Project (if you want to be considered for the grades of A- or A)

+ These chapters explain how to do a systematic literature review.

Refer back to the grading for literature review requirements for a grade of A- or a grade of A.

Appendix B Research Ethics Training

How to Register and Access the CITI Training Program

- To begin the CITI program go to <http://www.citiprogram.org>
- The first time you access the site, click “Register Here” to create an account.
- Type “George Mason University” from the Select Your Organization affiliation box.

The screenshot shows the 'CITI - Learner Registration' interface. At the top, a blue header contains the title. Below it, a progress bar shows seven steps, with step 1 highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Select Your Organization Affiliation'. It includes a red note: 'This option is for persons affiliated with a CITI Program subscriber organization.' Below this is a text prompt: 'To find your organization, enter its name in the box below, then pick from the list of choices provided.' A red arrow points from the text 'Type “George Mason University”' in the list above to a search input box.

- **Complete all enrollment information.**

The screenshot shows the 'CITI - Learner Registration - George Mason University' interface. The progress bar now shows step 2 highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Personal Information'. It includes a red note: '* indicates a required field.' Below this are four input fields: '* First Name', '* Last Name', '* Email Address', and '* Verify email address'. Below these fields is a paragraph of text: 'We urge you to provide a second email address, if you have one, in case messages are blocked or you lose the ability to access the first one. If you forget your username or password, you can recover that information using either email address.' Below this text are two more input fields: 'Secondary email address' and 'Verify secondary email address'. At the bottom of the form is a blue button labeled 'Continue To Step 3'.

There are a few more screens but I cannot get to them because I already have an account and the system won't let me create a “dummy” account to be able to walk you through it.

- **Click the Submit button.**

Curriculum Selection:

- **Select “I am interested in Human Subjects Research Courses” – click next**
- **Select “I need to enroll in a Basic course” or “I need to enroll in a Refresher course” – click next**
- **Select the appropriate human subjects course (Group 1 or Group 2) that is relevant to your discipline and research area – click next**
- **If enrolling in the Basic course, select “I have not previously completed an approved Basic course”**
- **Affiliate with another institution if applicable, if not, select “No”**
- **Click the submit button**

Basic Course Instructions

Prior to conducting any research at Mason using human subjects, you must complete the Basic Human Subjects Research Course, which consists of several user modules. You must take the modules in the order they are shown and complete a short quiz following each one. You will not be allowed to move to the next module until you have completed each one. You do not have to complete all modules at one time. You may return to the program as many times as you need to complete the course.

You do not need to do the additional modules for EDSE 590.

When you have completed the basic course, and any applicable optional modules, you will receive a Completion Report. ORIA staff will also receive notification that you have completed the course. Please print a copy of the completion report for your records and submit a copy of it with your [Human Subjects Application](#). (For EDSE 590, just upload the document to the appropriate place in the Blackboard site.)

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) requires education on the protection of human research participants for all key personnel submitting NIH applications for grants or proposals for contracts or receiving new or non-competing awards for projects involving human research participants. The training is required for both exempt and nonexempt research involving human subjects. Mason faculty, staff and students who are key personnel for NIH funded human subjects research can fulfill the NIH training requirement by completing the CITI training.

For Questions about CITI Training

Contact irb@gmu.edu with any questions about on-line training.

Complete the training and then have the documentation sent to me by the program or download it to your computer and send it to me. I suggest downloading it and sending from your computer.

It should look something like this:

