

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Education
Special Education Program
Fall 2005

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EDSE 401/501 (sect.001): INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

CLASS TIME: Thursdays, 7:20 - 10:00, September 1 - December 15

LOCATION: Lecture Hall, Room 1

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Content includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, and needs, educational strategies, including existing and emerging technologies, assessment and support services of/for individuals with disabilities. The course will study the impact of disabilities on academic and social/emotional performance. Field experience is required. Prerequisites: none.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

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

- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between "normal" and "atypical" behaviors.
- Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education.
- Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of special education.
- Describe research in etiological factors associated with all disability areas.
- Describe social, cognitive, intellectual, and academic characteristics associated with all disability areas.
- Describe historical points of view and contributions of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education.
- Describe the role of families in the educational process.
- Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including technological advances.
- Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation, litigation, and use of innovative technology.

RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

EDSE 501 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in special education in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization in the United States. As such, the curriculum for the course includes competencies for teaching students with disabilities from preschool through grade 12.

The CEC standards are listed on the following web site:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html

CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include some of the following CEC Core Standards:

Standard 1: Foundations

- Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis for special education practice.
- Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management, planning, and implementation.
- Relationship of special education to the organization and function of educational agencies.
- Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
- Issues with definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Issues, assurances, and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement with a continuum of services.
- Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
- Historical points of view and contributions of culturally diverse groups.
- Impact of the dominant culture on shaping schools and the individuals who study and work in them.
- Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school.

Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners

- Typical and atypical human growth and development.
- Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities.
- Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family. Family systems and the role of facilities in supporting development.
- Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
- Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Effects of various medications on individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences

- Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.
- Impact of learners' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
- Variations on beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures and their effects on relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, family and schooling.
- Cultural perspectives influencing the relationships among families, schools, and communities as related to instruction.
- Differing ways of learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and strategies for addressing these differences.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

Learning activities include the following:

- Class lecture, discussion and participation
- Videotapes and other relevant media presentations
- Study and independent library research
- Applications with relevant hardware and software
- Application activities, including in-class evaluation of intervention research and materials
- Class presentations
- Written case study and observation reports using American Psychological Association format.

REQUIRED TEXT

Hallahan & Kauffman, (2003). Exceptional Learners: Introduction to Special Education (9th ed.). Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA.

Note:

This syllabus may change according to class needs. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or you have emergency medical information to share with the instructor or need special arrangements, *please call and/or make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.*

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <Http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing at the beginning of the course. See <www.gmu.edu/student/drc> or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

EVALUATION

• Class attendance and participation	75
• Field observation report (2)	100 (50 each)
• Case Study	75
• Blackboard.com assignments	75 (25 per assignment)
• Article Summary (2)	50 (25 each)
• Teacher Interview	20
• Completion of Child Abuse Activity/Quiz	5
• Final Exam	100

Total 500

Note: All assignments should be typed and are due on the dates indicated. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, **points will be deducted for work submitted after due date (10% per week)**.

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GMU Special Education program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes to document your satisfactory progress through the GMU program and the CEC performance based standards.

GRADING CRITERIA

475-500	=A
450-474	=A-
400-449	=B
350-399	=C
<350	=F

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Attendance and participation points are earned weekly. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class and points awarded accordingly. Dates for participation points will vary.
2. Weekly readings from the text and other sources will be required. The student is expected to share acquired information and reactions during class discussion.
3. Two field observations will be required. These classroom observations will occur in a disability *other than one in which the student is currently working*. The student will complete a structured observation form and will share their experiences during class discussion.
4. Blackboard.com will be used for at least six hours of class contact time. Various assignments related to course reading and requirements will be completed online at the Blackboard site.
5. Article Summary -students will read a research article from a professional journal that is relevant to one of the topics discussed in class and addresses a strategy or best practice. The 1-2 page review should provide a short summary of the major points of the article, as well as the student's reaction to the article.
6. Teacher Interview reports will be submitted based on the assignment description and rubric presented in class. Class discussion following the interviews will also take place.
7. A comprehensive case study on a student with disabilities will be completed. This case study will include specific components, compare student's characteristics with those described in the textbook and integrate sources from other readings.
8. A final exam will be given to assess knowledge and understanding of student outcomes.

*** See "Course Documents" section of our Blackboard site for rubrics and more information regarding the assignments for this class. ***

EDSE 401/501 Assignment Schedule

(Fall 2005)

Class	Date	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
1	Sept. 1	Introductions Course Overview Assignment Explanation/Discussion Blackboard.com		
2	Sept. 8	Legal Issues Current Trends & Issues The Eligibility Process		Ch. 1 & 2
3	Sept. 15	Learning Disabilities ADD/ADHD and OHI		Ch. 5 & 6
4	Sept. 22	Media and Special Education Issues	Blackboard Activity	journals
5	Sept. 29	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	First Field Observation Report	Ch. 7
6	Oct. 6	Mental Retardation High Incidence Disabilities	Child Abuse Quiz	Ch 4
7	Oct. 13	Vision Impairments Physical Disabilities Traumatic Brain Injury	Second Field Observation Report First Field Observation Report	Ch 10 and 11
8	Oct. 20	Communication Disorders Hearing Impairments	Child Abuse Quiz	Ch 8 & 9
9	Oct. 27	Autism Spectrum Multiple Disabilities	Second Field Observation Report	Ch 11
10	Nov. 3	Roles of the General Ed and Special Ed Teachers	Teacher Interview Report Post APA Reference for 11/17 Article Summary	
11	Nov. 10	Multicultural and Bilingual Issues Gifted Special Education Students Traumatic Brain Injury	Case Study Report	Ch 3, 11 & 13
12	Nov. 17	Traumatic Brain Injury	Blackboard Activity (Article Summary)	
13	Dec. 1	Understanding the IEP Process	Blackboard Activity (IEP Process)	Blackboard
14	Dec. 8	Parental Involvement and Family Issues		Ch. 14
15	Dec. 15	Review and Wrap Up	Final Exam	