When we do the best that we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another. –Helen Keller

Course Description

This class covers theories and specific conditions in mental retardation and provides advanced study of persons with mental retardation, ranging in age from preschool to adult. Topics include: historical development of the field of mental retardation; theoretical models of mental retardation; etiological factors; characteristics; models of assessment and intervention, including technological advances; issues and trends, including legislation and litigation. The course will study the impact of mental retardation on academic and social/emotional performances. Field experience is required. Prerequisites: none.

Student Outcomes

As a result of active participation, completion of readings, research, and other activities in this course, students will be able to:

- Define “mental retardation.”
• Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
• Describe the historical development of the field of mental retardation.
• Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of mental retardation.
• Describe research in etiological factors associated with mental retardation.
• Describe social, cognitive, intellectual, and academic characteristics associated with mental retardation.
• Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including technological advances.
• Discuss issues and trends in the field of mental retardation, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.
• Demonstrate knowledge of the federal and Virginia laws and standards of learning, and agencies that require and provide for transition, vocational, and rehabilitation services for students with disabilities at the elementary/secondary school level (middle & high school).
• Demonstrate the ability to plan and develop a model lesson plan based on the Virginia Standards of Learning that includes appropriate, research-based instructional methods and adaptations for students with disabilities at the secondary level. Products: Lesson plans, accommodations, adaptations, modifications and assessments
• Identify and develop research-based instructional and adaptive strategies for successfully including and planning for students with disabilities at the secondary level in both regular (math, science, social studies, English, etc.) academics and special education classroom environments.
• Demonstrate the ability to integrate/infuse career development and vocational skills into the general education curricula, as well as justify the importance of such integration.
• Demonstrate an awareness of the importance and ability to implement instruction necessary in life skills, employment skills, self-advocacy, independent living, and functional skills, as well as be able to discuss how these might be infused into the curricula at the elementary/secondary level and prepare students for a culturally diverse world.
• Identify the role and responsibilities of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams as they strive to incorporate transition requirements into the IEP and/or develop an Individual Transition Plan (ITP).
• Develop Individual Transition Plans (ITPs) for the implementation or modification of transition to work programs for students with disabilities.
• Identify and describe vocational, employment, supported employment, other opportunities and models, as well as the other types of vocational and postsecondary programs available that could be available to benefit students with disabilities.
• Identify organizations, services, networks, and the variety of state and local agencies that maximize the interagency effort involved in the transition process for students with disabilities.
• Describe elementary/secondary level intervention research and the associated issues in intervention research including technological advances as applied to individuals with disabilities.

**Relationship of Courses to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

EDSE 542 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education area of Mental Retardation. 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 emotional disturbances and mental retardation in kindergarten 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 Mental Retardation disability-specific standards (Standard 1: Foundations; Standard 2: Development and characteristics of learners; Standards 3: Individual learning differences) and some of the following CEC Core standards:

**Standard 1 - Foundations**

Knowledge:

• 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 educational agencies.
• Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
• Issues in 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 within a continuum of services.
• Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
• Historical points of view and contribution 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.
Skill:
- Articulate personal philosophy of special education.

Standard 2 - Development and Characteristics of Learners

Knowledge:
- 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 families 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

Knowledge:
- 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 in 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:
1. Class lecture, discussion, and participation.
2. Videotapes and other relevant media presentations.
3. Study and independent library research.
4. Applications with relevant hardware and software.
5. Application activities, including in class evaluation of intervention research and materials.
6. Class presentations of case studies papers.
7. Written case study and observation reports using the American Psychological Association format.
Representative Required Texts


Other readings from original research assigned by instructor.

Companion websites

The ARC of the United States www.thearc.org

American Association for Mental Retardation www.aamr.org

No Child Left Behind www.ed.gov
State of Virginia Department of Education www.pen.k12.va.us

Center For Advancement Of Learning at Muskingum College Learning Strategies Database http://muskingum.edu/~cal/database/database.html

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition: www.ncset.org

LDOonline: www.ldonline.org

Info on policy issues, legislation & best practices: ideapractices@ideapractices.org

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth: www.ncwd-youth.info

The Transition Coalition: http://www.transitioncoalition.org/

**HONOR CODE**

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, **plagiarizing**, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the even that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the university Catalog or Website at www.gmu.edu.

**NOTE:**

This syllabus may change according to class needs. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with instructor or need special arrangements, please call and/or make an appointment with instructor as soon as possible. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703) 993-2474.
Evaluation

1. Class attendance and participation  10%
2. Field observation report      15%
3. Lesson Plan                  10%
4. Case study                   25%
5. Issue Analysis and presentation  20%
6. Final Project                 20%

Points will be deducted for work submitted late.

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

Grading criteria

95 –100% = A
90 – 94% = A-
80 – 89% = B
70 – 79% = C
< 70%   = F

ASSESSMENT OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

All assignments should be typed and are due on the dates indicated. Consult with the instructor in advance if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, points per day will be deducted from your grade for late papers. Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit. All assignments should reflect graduate level spelling, syntax, and grammar. If you are deficient in any of these areas, you will need to document your work with the GMU Writing Center during this course to improve your skills.

Course participants wishing to suggest other learning activities may, with instructor approval, substitute these for a required activity. The major portion of your learning in this course will be the result of your personal involvement in the materials provided and in your application of the principles to your own situation. My role in your learning is to be a facilitator and to provide a favorable situation in which learning can take place; however, the major responsibility must necessarily remain with you.
REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade)

Attend and participate in all class sessions. Except for a limited number of previously approved absences, attendance is expected at all class meetings. You must call or e-mail the instructor before the class meeting, if you feel you need to be absent. Otherwise no credit will be given for any work completed during the evening.

*Field Observations and Report (15% of final grade):

Observations of students with mental retardation in school settings will be completed. Observation reports containing information including the following: (a) student-teacher and student-student interactions in classrooms or other organized settings that serve students with mental retardation; (b) identification of teaching methods and strategies that appear to be beneficial to students with mental retardation as well as those you consider inappropriate; and (c) how the observation and interactions reflect views articulated by readings from class. (10 hours)

*Case Study (25% of final grade):

A comprehensive case study on a student with mental retardation will be completed. This case study will include the following components: (a) student’s demographic data; (b) description of school and neighborhood; (c) educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, placement); (d) IEP goals and objectives, classroom accommodations; (e) observational information; (f) teacher interviews; (g) additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications; (h) summary and synthesis (Comparison of student’s characteristics with those described in the textbook, i.e., Which characteristics were identified in your student? Integrate sources from the literature with what you observed in your case study.); and (i) appendices such as student work samples, teacher interview questions/answers.

Issue Analysis and Presentation (20% of final grade)

In conjunction with the instructor choose a topic, which has direct relationship to the themes discussed in the class sessions. The instructor must approve the topic for analysis by January 29, 2004. This written report should not exceed five pages. Have sufficient copies of the paper for the instructor and your colleagues.

Unit and Lesson Plan (10% of final grade) Rubric provided.

The career integration lessons (mini-unit) should cover approximately three-four class periods and use the appropriate grade level Standards of Learning (SOLs) to teach in a content area (math, science, social studies or other secondary academic area of your choice) at an identified secondary level. Make this something you or another secondary teacher could actually use. These lessons are to include a variety of activities, teaching
strategies, and assessment tools to match the needs of the learners, the topic being taught, and the resources available. In your lesson plans, you should have the students engaged in hands-on activities at least half of the time. In addition to career education, the mini-unit could integrate government, math, art, or another subject area in a series of lessons. You are to find and/or create each activity to be completed by the students. **If you select a published activity you must cite the reference.**

**Step 1. Standards of Learning.**
Obtain a curriculum (often referred to as a program of study) from general education at the secondary level.
Locate and clearly identify the related standards of learning (SOLs). Check the professional library in your school system and/or the one in the on-campus GMU library for copies of curricula, programs of study for a variety of school systems in this area, and for copies of the SOLs. (SOLs can be found on the Virginia Department of Education website: www.pen.k12.va.us)

**Step 2. Integration of Career Development within an Academic Mini-Unit.**
Using the general education curriculum (or program of study) and the standards of learning (SOLs), develop a series of lessons (mini-unit) so that it integrates career development activities.

**Step 3. Mini-Unit Calendar.**
Develop calendar that identifies each day’s topic(s) and activities. This should provide an overview of the content to be studied and activities for each day of the unit. Relevant SOL(s) should be indicated.

**Step 4. Adaptations & Accommodations.**
For this unit, demonstrate (in general) how you would adapt the content and/or methods of presentation to meet the needs of students with disabilities, especially those with learning disabilities, mental retardation (as a special educator you may be responsible for some aspects of MR), and emotional disabilities.
Each lesson plan should include a table or bulleted outline (at the end) illustrating how these 3 different types of disabilities will be addressed and accommodated.

**Step 5. Format**
Format for the lessons (detailed outline, materials, staffing, resources, etc.)

**Step 6. Unit Objectives and the Career Development Objectives.**
Identify the Standards of Learning (SOLs) upon which the lessons are based. List general education objectives for each lesson. These are to be based on the Standards of Learning (SOLs) that you identified. Please indicate which ones and for which grade level and subject that you select.
Then, rewrite them to infuse the career concepts. Examples will be presented in class.

**Step 7: Assessment Plan for the Lessons/Mini-Unit.**
Summarize the multiple forms of assessment (formal and informal) that will be embedded in the lesson/mini-unit. You will develop at least two forms of assessment: Formal assessment, including one test for the overall unit. This goes beyond just the lesson-by-lesson assessments, forcing you to look at the total unit. Informal assessment. Describe and provide actual examples of how the students' learning will be assessed both formally and informally and where to find the assessment activities. Include a discussion of how the results of each assessment will be used in instructional decision-making.

*Final Project: May 6, 2004 (10% of final grade)*

The final project will incorporate all course content. Student’s will be given a case study to analysis and develop a transition plan appropriate to meet the needs of the individual presented in the case study.

**Case Study Presentation**

- a. Provide the essential student’s demographic data.
- b. Include a brief description of school and neighborhood.
- c. Education history and IEP Goals and Objectives
- d. Observation Information
- e. Teacher Interview
- f. Recommendations, Accommodations, Modifications
- g. Summary and synthesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4 Exemplary</th>
<th>3 Adequate</th>
<th>2 Marginal</th>
<th>1 Inadequate</th>
<th>0 Unacceptable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Demographic data</td>
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<td>Description of school and neighborhood have been described adequately</td>
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<td>Education history and IEP goals and objectives</td>
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<td>Observation information</td>
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<td>Teacher interview have been identified and adequately described</td>
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<td>Recommendations, Accommodations, and modification</td>
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<td>Summary and synthesis</td>
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4 = Exemplary 3 = Good 2 = Acceptable 1 = Inadequate 0 = Unacceptable
### Lesson Plans Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identification of <strong>grade level</strong></td>
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<td>2. Identification of secondary <strong>curriculum area/subject</strong></td>
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<td>3. Identification of <strong>skill</strong>, if relevant</td>
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<td>4. <strong>SOL</strong> indicated</td>
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<td>5. <strong>Objective/goal stated in measurable terms</strong></td>
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<td>6. Objective/goal is re-written to include a <strong>career education</strong></td>
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<td>concept that is also measurable</td>
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<td>- Student</td>
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<td>- Conditions</td>
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<td>- Behavior</td>
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<td>- Criterion</td>
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<td>7. Materials are listed</td>
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<td>8. Opening statement or activity that is <strong>interesting &amp; attention-getting</strong>. What will you say &amp; do?</td>
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<td>9. <strong>Lesson Body</strong>. These are the steps in &quot;direct &amp; initial instruction&quot;. This is the time that you spend teaching; you intend to evaluate each student to see if they have your stated objective(s) based on the relevant SOL(s). Often this is a task analysis. Use bullets, rather than extensive narrative to present your sequential steps.</td>
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<td>- Are these steps clearly evident and can you tell the difference between &quot;activity (ies)&quot; and the direct instruction?</td>
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<td>- Is <strong>guided</strong> (described in text) or <strong>extended</strong> practice planned for?</td>
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<td>- <strong>Time estimate</strong> for each section of the body?</td>
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<td>10. <strong>Activity (ies)</strong> - these are planned (goal &amp; rationale w/beginning, middle, &amp; closing tasks). They may lead up to lessons, be part of lessons, follow up lessons, or extend lessons. As you read the plan, can you clearly tell the difference?</td>
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<td>- What is the purpose of the activity (opening – to gain attention; to motivate; to extend learning or provide guided practice?)</td>
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<td>- It is well planned, are steps &amp;/or process clear?</td>
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<td>11. <strong>Closing</strong> for the lesson (activities have closings, too).</td>
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<td>12. <strong>Student evaluation</strong>. This should relate directly to your measurable objectives: Does it? How do you know the student &quot;got it&quot;? What instructional decisions will you be able to make based on</td>
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this information?

13. **Teacher evaluation.** How do you know you got the lesson across?
   - That your lesson was interesting?

14. **Follow-up activities** were planned
    - to review (described in text)
    - to extend learning (described in text)
    - to provide independent practice (described in text)

4 = Exemplary    3 = Good    2 = Acceptable    1 = Inadequate    0 = Unacceptable
**Class Agenda for Fall 2003 EDSE 542** (subject to change)

*These assignments are probable entries for the student portfolio*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter Assignment(s)</th>
<th>Assignment Due This Session</th>
<th>MIC. and Guest Speakers</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 22, 2004</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>January 29, 2004</td>
<td>Historical Perspectives</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>February 6, 2004</td>
<td>Terminology and Definition</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td>February 12, 2004</td>
<td>Observation Experiences</td>
<td>Secure Observation site</td>
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<td>February 19, 2004</td>
<td>Assessment of mental retardation</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation</td>
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<td>February 26, 2004</td>
<td>Individual rights and legal issues</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation</td>
<td>Dr. Bob Pasternack</td>
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<td>March 4, 2004</td>
<td>Biological sources of mental retardation; prevention efforts</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11, 2004</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 18, 2004</td>
<td>Psychosocial aspects of mental retardation</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 25, 2004</td>
<td>Characteristics of individuals with milder forms of mental retardation</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1, 2004</td>
<td>Characteristics of individuals with more severe forms of mental retardation</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation</td>
<td>View: Educating Peter</td>
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</table>
| April 8, 2004    | Developmental aspects and educational programming: Infancy and early childhood, school years, and transitional years | Chapter 9  
Chapter 10  
Chapter 11 | Issue Analysis and Presentation | Read: Educating Ashley  
View: Graduating Peter |
<p>| April 15, 2004   | Adult years: Life in the community                | Chapter 12             | Issue Analysis and Presentation | Cathy Healy            |
| April 22, 2004   | Family considerations                             | Chapter 13             | Issue Analysis and Presentation Case Study Due Presentations |                         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 29, 2004</td>
<td>Assistive technology applications</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
<td>Issue Analysis and Presentation, Case Study Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6, 2004</td>
<td>Final Project</td>
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<td>Final Project Due All Assignments Due</td>
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