

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
College of Education and Human Development
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Spring 2006

Program: Special Education

EDSE 540: Characteristics of Students with Emotional Disturbances and Learning Disabilities

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This class covers theories and specific conditions in learning disabilities and emotional disorders. The course will study the impact of these learning and behavioral differences on academic and social/emotional performances. Diversity within student populations is addressed throughout the course. Experiential, observational, and interactive strategies, including use of technological advances are used to facilitate fulfillment of the outcomes established for the course. Field experience is required. Prerequisites: none.

Class Meetings: Tuesday 4:30pm-8:30pm
Location: Phillips School for Contemporary Education

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Office Hours: One hour before and after class

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 and case studies papers.
7. Written case study, observation reports and abstract reviews of journal articles using the American Psychological Association format.

Student Outcomes

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

- Define “learning disability” and “emotional disturbance.”
- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
- Describe the learning disabilities field from its origins to policies and practices of today.
- Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders with the education for students identified as having a “learning disability.”
- Compare at least three conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities.
- Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.
- Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.
- Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.
- Describe what an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.
- Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self-understanding and confidence in themselves as learners.
- Describe characteristics of young children and adolescents with learning disabilities and/or emotional disturbances.
- Describe at least one theory of how children develop language.
- Describe what is meant by the following as if you were describing each to a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school: a) information processing; b) constructivism; c) metacognition; d) learning styles; e) psychological needs of five learning systems; f) neuropsychology; g) neurocardiology; h) attention deficit disorder; i) developmental/maturational stages; j) stages of moral development; k) perceptual deficits; l) auditory processing disorder; m) visual processing disorder; n) visual-motor disability; o) non-verbal learning disability; p) attachment disorder; q) underachieving reluctant learner; r) finger agnosia; and s) soft signs of brain injury.
- Describe and discuss each of the following conditions for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school: a) attention disorder; b) overt aggression; c) covert antisocial behavior; d) delinquency; e) substance abuse; f) anxiety; g) obsessive-compulsive disorders; h) posttraumatic stress disorder; i) movement disorders; j) eating disorders; k) elimination disorders; l) sexual problems; m) social isolation and ineptitude; n) depression; o) suicidal behavior; p) schizophrenia; q) autism; r) Asperger’s syndrome; and s) communication disorder.

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 ED and LD 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.

Representative Required Texts

Bauer, A.M., Keefe, C.H., & Shea, T. M. (2001). *Students with learning disabilities or emotional/behavioral disturbances*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Additional Text Resources

Anderson, P. L. (1997). *Case studies for inclusive schools*. Austin, Texas: PRO-ED.Pub.

Kauffman, J. M. (2005). *Characteristics of emotional and behavioral disorders of children and youth (8th ed.)*. Prentice-Hall, Inc: Simon & Schuster/A Viacom Company.

Kauffman, J.M., Mostert, M.P., Trent, S.C. & Hallahan, D.P. (2002). *Managing classroom behavior: A reflective case-based approach (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Lerner, J. L. (2003). *Learning disabilities: Theories, diagnosis, and teaching strategies (9th ed.)*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Pullen, P. (2004). *Brighter beginnings for teachers*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Education.

Remaining Current and Up-to-Date with Issues and Instructional Strategies

Teachers of students with special needs should be familiar with current research and literature both on-line and in paper formats.

Relationship of Courses to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

EDSE 540 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 areas of Emotional Disturbance and Learning Disabilities. 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 learning disabilities in kindergarten through grade 12.

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 Graduate School of Education: Special Education

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 and Learning Disabilities**

Tentative Class Schedule

Class	Date	Topics / Assignments	Text & Chapters
1	1/3	An Introduction to Learning Disabilities and Emotional/Behavioral Disorders / Syllabus	Bauer, Keefe & Shea: Chapter 1
		Students with Learning Disabilities	
2	1/10	Learning Disabilities: A Field in Transition- Definitions, Common Elements, Characteristics & The LD Population / Discussion of Assignment List / Group Presentations: Sign-up	Bauer, Keefe & Shea: Chapter 2 Lerner: Chapter 1 ; Video Presentation
3	1/17	Learning Disabilities: Historical Perspectives and Emerging Directions Case Study: Learning Disabilities	Bauer, Keefe & Shea: Chapter 5 Lerner: Chapter 2; Anderson (1997)
4	1/24	Clinical Teaching: Supporting Learning and Behavioral Change Systems for Delivering Educational Services Theories of Learning: Implications for Learning Disabilities/The Assessment-Teaching Process	Bauer, Keefe & Shea: Chapters 10, 11 & 12 Lerner: Chapters 4, 5 & 6; Collaboration Activity
5	1/31	Implications & Theories / Factors: Biological, Family, Cultural, Gender, School & Classroom	Bauer, Keefe & Shea: Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8
		Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	
6	2/7	Emotional Disturbances: Definition: The Nature of the Problem and Prevalence: The Extent of the Problem	Kauffman: Chapters 1 & 2
7	2/14	History of the Problem: Development of the Field and Current Issues and Conceptual Models: Approaches to the Problem Case Study: Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities	Kauffman: Chapters 3 & 4; Video Presentation Kauffman (2002)
8	2/21	EBD: Current Trends / Proactive Strategies and Behavior Modification / A Look to the Future	
9	2/28	Screening to Placement Evaluation for Instruction I.E.P. Procedures	Abstract Review of Journals Due
10	3/7	ED: Biological, Family, School & Cultural Factors Medical Aspects of Learning Disabilities I.E.P. Requirements	Kauffman: Chapters 7,8, 9 & 10 Field Observation and Report Due
	3/7	Exam covering course content will be administered.	Final Exam

Course Requirements:	Range	Points	%
1. Attendance and Participation	Expected	5	5%
2. Case Study: Learning Disability	20	20	20%
3. Case Study: EBD	20	20	20%
4. Abstract Reviews of Journal Articles	15	15	15%
5. Field Observation and Report	30	30	30%
6. Final Examination	10	10	10%
	100	100	100%

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 ED/LD 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

REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and class participation are considered vital to the successful completion of the course. Participation includes thoughtful contributions to discussions, willingness to volunteer for simulations, and the sharing of examples from the field experiences that illustrate the concepts explored in class. Class activities typically include topical lectures, class discussions, review of current events, guest speakers, case analysis, simulations and oral reports.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required. Adult learners learn through independent opportunities and opportunities to engage in dialog with peers in a cooperative way which mirrors our future roles as special educators.

Case Studies

A comprehensive case study on a student with emotional or learning disabilities 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.

In-Class Chapter Presentations

Groups will work collaboratively in class to discuss and present the current educational practices and instructional strategies recommended for a particular disability.

***Abstracts of Journal Articles**

Each student will write three (3) abstract journal articles regarding students with emotional disturbances or learning disabilities in special education. Papers chosen for this requirement must be from published journals (no ERIC documents!) and should be data-based examinations of issues relevant to the ED / LD field. Appropriate sources for journal articles include:

Exceptional Children, The Journal of Learning Disabilities, Learning Disabilities Quarterly, The Journal of Special Education, Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, Remedial and Special Education, etc. If you are unsure as to the appropriateness of your article, please ask.

The purpose of the abstract is to reduce the major points of the article to a one page summary. The abstract should be typed with an APA style citation at the top of the page. Each entry should consist of two parts labeled 1.-Summary and 2.-Critique. All readings should be from current literature and should not be more that three (3) years old. You may use the author's own words to summarize. (1-2 pages, double-spaced)

(Please hand in a copy of the original article along with your abstracts.)

***Group Presentation**

Each group will give a 30 minute presentation on the area of their choice. Included in the presentation will be the following: information about identification, assessment, current educational practices, causes and etiology, and references for more information. The presenters must use a multimedia format and provide the class with a copy of references.

The purpose of the group project is threefold:

- 1.) to learn about an area of exceptionality that you know little about
- 2.) to learn to work together with other professionals toward a common goal
- 3.) to use technology to find information, prepare materials and present newly attained knowledge in an entertaining yet instructional manner.

The value of the project is 20 points.

1. 5 points will be information gathered: the accuracy, the depth, etc.
2. 5 points for the presentation: the quality of the presentation, the materials used, the multimedia nature
3. 5 points for the individualized effort: what is it that you as an individual contributed to the project
4. 5 points for references: the accuracy, the completeness, etc.

Please try to work together and achieve a group effort.

***Field Observations and Report**

Observations of students with learning disabilities and emotional disabilities 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 learning disabilities and emotional disabilities; (b) identification of teaching methods and strategies that appear to be beneficial to students with learning disabilities and/or emotional disabilities as well as those you consider inappropriate; and (c) how the observation and interactions reflect views articulated by readings from class. (1-2 pages, double-spaced)

***Exam**

Exam covering course content will be administered.

*These assignments are probable entries for the student portfolio

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Professional Behavior and Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Honor Code

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Special Needs

If you are a student with special needs you should let the instructor know within the first week of class. Documentation will be required. 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 semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Written Work

All assignments are expected to be written for clarity and edited carefully for spelling and grammatical errors. They should be typed, double-spaced with logical internal structure. Use a consistent format (such as APA) for citing and listing references.

Responsible Use of Computing

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.

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.**