

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**Graduate School of Education**  
**EDSE 540: Section 632, Spring 2006**

**EDSE 540: Characteristics of Students with Emotional Disturbance & Specific Learning Disabilities**

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**Office Hours:** Scheduled by appointment

**Day, Time, & Location:** Mondays, 4:30-8:30 P.M. (12/19/05-3/13/06); Bldg. 100, Rm. 32, Ind. Hill

**Course Description:**

EDSE 540 presents theories and specific conditions in learning disabilities and emotional disorders. The course will study the impact of learning and behavioral disabilities on academic and social/emotional performance. Diversity within student populations is addressed throughout the course. Experiential, observational, and interactive strategies are used to facilitate fulfillment of the outcomes established for the course. Skill in the use of email and electronic file exchange (e.g., WORD and PowerPoint) is a prerequisite for this course. Field experience is required.

**Student Outcomes:**

The purpose of this intensive, knowledge-based course is to assist graduate students in developing a solid foundation for understanding learning acquisition and behaviors of youngsters with learning disabilities and/or emotional disturbance. EDSE 540 is also designed to prepare graduate students to interact with other professionals about students with these disabilities. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate outcomes listed in Table 1.

**Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization:**

EDSE 540 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE) program for teacher licensure in Virginia. Course content is aligned with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)/Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) performance-based standards for the preparation and licensure of special educators. As such, the learning objectives for this course include many of the competencies for curriculum and methods for teaching individuals with emotional disturbance and learning disabilities kindergarten through grade 12. Course curriculum for EDSE 540 is aligned primarily with Standard #2 and #3 of *CEC's Special Education Content Standards for Beginning Teachers of Special Education*. Acknowledging the multidimensional nature of teaching, ESDE 540 draws secondarily from most CEC/NCATE Standards.<sup>1</sup> Table 1. describes the CEC/NCATE standards in relation to student outcomes and course requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> *Standard 1: Foundations. Special educators understand the relationships of organizations of special education to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies; Standard 4: Instructional Strategies. Special educators possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction. Special educators select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote challenging learning results in general and special curricula and to appropriately modify learning environments; Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social*

**Table 1.**

**ALIGNMENT OF OUTCOMES & REQUIREMENTS WITH KEY CEC/NCATE STANDARDS**

<i>CEC/NCATE CONTENT STANDARDS</i>	<i>STUDENT OUTCOMES</i>	<i>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</i>
<p><b>Standard 1: Foundations</b> Special educators understand the field as an evolving and changing discipline based on philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view, and human issues that have historically influenced and continue to influence the field of special education and the education and treatment of individuals with disabilities both in school and society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices today.</li> <li>• Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders with the education for students identified as having a learning disability.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reading assignments, small group discussions, case studies</i></p>
<p><b>Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners</b> Special educators understand the similarities and differences in human development and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ELN). Special educators understand how exceptional conditions interact with the domains of human development and they use this knowledge to respond to varying abilities and behaviors. Special educators understand how disabilities impact families, and the individual's ability to learn, interact socially and live as contributing community members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define <i>learning disability</i> and <i>emotional disturbance</i></li> <li>• Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between normal and atypical behaviors</li> <li>• Describe characteristics of young children and adolescents with learning disabilities and/or emotional disturbances</li> <li>• Compare at least three conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reading assignments, small group discussions, group presentations</i></p>

<i>CEC/NCATE CONTENT STANDARDS</i>	<i>STUDENT OUTCOMES</i>	<i>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</i>
<p><b>Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences</b> Special educators understand the effects that an exceptional condition has on learning in school and throughout life. Special educators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Case studies, , class activities, final exam</i></p>

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*Interactions. Special educators help their general education colleagues to integrate individuals with disabilities in environments with their nondisabled peers and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions; Standard 6: Language. Special educators match their communication methods to an individual's language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences; Standard 7: Instructional Planning. Special educators facilitate instructional planning in a collaborative context including the individual with exceptionalities, families, professional colleagues, and personnel from other agencies as appropriate; Standard 8: Assessment. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making; Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice. Special educators practice in multiple roles and complex situations across wide age and developmental ranges and across diverse cultures. Their practice requires ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations. Special educators engage in professional activities and participate in learning communities that benefit students with disabilities, their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. Special educators are aware of how their own and others' attitudes, behaviors, and ways of communicating can influence their practice.*

<p>understand that beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures affect relationships among and between students, families, and school. Special educators seek to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the disability to affect academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. Learning differences and their interactions are the basis for individualizing instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self-understanding and confidence as learners.</li> <li>• Describe and discuss a range of learning disabilities and emotional disturbances for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Standard 6: Language</b> Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which disabilities can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe at least one theory of how children develop language.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Small group discussions, class activities, final exam</i></p>
<p><b>Standard 8: Assessment</b> Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special education and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.</li> <li>• Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.</li> <li>• Describe what an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is and how it is developed.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Small group discussions, class activities, case studies, final exam</i></p>

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<sup>2</sup> These include 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. These also include 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; K0 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.

**Required Text:**

Bauer, A., Keefe, C., & Shea, T. (2001). *Students with learning disabilities or emotional/behavioral disorders*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

**Tentative Calendar (subject to change based upon needs of course)**

<i>Class</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Assigned Readings</i>
12/19/05	Introduction/Course Overview & Expectations/Introduction to APA Style	
1/9/06	LD & ED Defined/Statistics/Evolving Service Delivery/Historical Perspective	Chapters 1&2
1/23/06	Developmental Context/Biological Factors and Temperament	Chapters 3&4
1/30/06	Cognitive, Language & Social-Emotional Characteristics/Family Factors	Chapters 5&6 <i>Literature Reviews</i>
2/6/06	School & Classroom Factors; Cultural Diversity & Gender	Chapters 7&8 <i>Literature Reviews</i>
2/13/06	LD & ED Assessment/Eligibility/IEP	Chapter 9 <i>Case Studies Due</i>
2/20/06	Supporting Learning and Behavior Change in Classroom & School/ Inclusion	Chapters 10, 11, & 12
2/27/06	Adolescents and Adults with LD & ED	Chapter 13 <i>Literature Reviews</i>
3/6/06	Our Goal: Prevention & Early Intervention	Chapter 14 <i>Literature Reviews</i>
3/13/06	Final Exam	

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

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions. At the GSE website, right side, click on Professional Dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/appolicies/#TOC\\_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/appolicies/#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 semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703/993-2474 to access the DRC.

**Evaluation:****Percent of Grade:**

- Class attendance and participation 20
- Case Study (1 LD or 1ED) 40
- Final Exam 40

**Grading Criteria:**

95-100%	=A
90-94%	=A-
85-89%	=B+
80-84	=B
70-79%	=C
<70%	=F

***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, 1 point per class will be deducted for work submitted after the due date.***

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE special education 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. ***In particular, the case study assignment should be retained from this class for your portfolio.***

<b>Assignments and Evaluation Criteria Follow:</b>
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**Class Participation**

Several in-class assignments will comprise the class participation grade for this course. Since these are in-class assignments from class participation, there will be no make-up assignments. These include:

- 1) Analysis of LD case (1 pt.)
- 2) LD assessment and eligibility quick quiz (2 pts.)
- 3) ED assessment and eligibility quick quiz (2 pts.)
- 4) Social skills activity (1 pt.)
- 5) GMU application confirmation or statement of graduate study plan (1 pt.)\*
- 6) Literature review (3 pts.)\*
- 7) Literature review presentation (2 pts.)\*
- 8) Reactions/reflections of literature reviews (2 pts. each of four sessions for a total of 8 pts.)\*

\*The description for these assignments follows.

## **GMU Confirmation of Application or Statement of Graduate Study Plan**

Option #1: Students pursuing a graduate degree in special education through GMU are required to provide written confirmation of application to the George Mason University Graduate School of Education special education program. Written confirmation of application may be submitted by one of two methods: 1) a copy of an email from a GMU official confirming the receipt of your completed application; or 2) a copy of your official letter of acceptance from GMU.

Option #2: For students who are taking EDSE 540 as a stand-alone class, a typewritten statement will be submitted to this effect including your personal academic plan and timeframe for endorsement, including applicable courses you have already taken.

***Due Date: Anytime prior to and including 3/13/06***

## **Literature Review, Presentation, and Written Reaction/Reflections**

A short literature review utilizing three references from scholarly sources will be required as part of the class participation grade. The literature review will be a maximum of 2 double-spaced pages excluding cover sheet and reference page, using 12 point, double-spaced font. Papers will be graded for content, APA style (text citations, reference page), grammar, and spelling.

A brief presentation of the literature review not to exceed 10 minutes will be made in class corresponding with relevant class lecture topics. Sign-up sheets will be provided in class during the first two class meetings for students to select the area of their choice for review.

Written reaction/reflections will be collected following each of the literature review presentations. Reactions will be made regarding the content of the literature review only and will not address the presenter's style. Quality, not quantity, of written response will be considered.

***Due Dates: 1/30, 2/6, 2/27, and 3/6/06.***

Case Study Observation Form

**Observation Evaluation**  
*George Mason University*  
*Graduate School of Education*

Dear Cooperating Teacher,

Thank you for agreeing to allow a GMU graduate student observe in your class and conduct a case study as part of field experience requirements for EDSE 540, *Characteristics of Students with Emotional Disturbances and/or Learning Disabilities*. Objectives of the field experience are outlined in the course syllabus. Please complete the evaluation and return to the student upon completion of the required observation in a **sealed envelope with your signature on the seal**.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Semester/Year: **Spring, 2006**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

*Please rate the student in the following areas:*

Use 2 for Excellent, 1 for Satisfactory, or NA, if not observed.

**PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Promptness, preparedness)

**PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Initiating discussion, asking questions of you)

**PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Cooperation, confidentiality)

**PROFESSIONAL SKILLS** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note taking, documentation & rapport with students)

**COMMENTS:** *(Use back of form if more space is needed.)*

**Please initial dates and times observed by above student:**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Timeframe \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_ Timeframe \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Timeframe \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_ Timeframe \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER SIGNATURE(S)** \_\_\_\_\_

## ED and LD Case Studies

**Objective:** A case study will be completed to review eligibility and IEP, observe instructional practices, and assess each case.

**Activity:** Using the following format, students will:

- Observe one student identified with learning disabilities or one student identified with emotional disturbance a minimum of *three 30- minute observations*; however, more observations may be completed at your discretion.
- Complete a case study for the student.

**A.** Give the form on the previous page to the teacher whose student you are observing to document and rate your observation. This will be submitted to the instructor along with completed case studies.

**B.** Contents of the Case Studies

- a) Student's demographic data
- b) Description of school and neighborhood
- c) Educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, disability, placement)
- d) IEP goals and objectives; classroom accommodations
- e) Observational information
- f) Teacher interview regarding student program, needs, approaches
- g) 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.)
- i) Appendices – Specifically – student work samples, teacher interview questions/answers

You may complete your case studies anytime prior to the due date, but they may not be submitted any later than the due date for full credit to be considered. *You may not observe a student you teach or your own child*, but may observe a student who is on another teacher's caseload in your school or who you do not directly teach, even if that student is on your caseload. The main focus is to determine what is being done in conjunction with the IEP, the student's interaction with the environment, student response to instructional and behavioral intervention, a synthesis, and recommendations, if any. To maintain confidentiality, you will omit any identifying information regarding the student you observe, other than the student's school, primary disability, secondary disability if applicable, age, grade, services, IEP goals, objectives, and classroom accommodations. Use a pseudonym for the student's report.

*Use 12-point font, double-spaced format, with each case study being no more than six pages, excluding cover sheet, teacher interview questions, and student products.*

***Due Date: 2/13/06***

<b>Case Study Scoring Rubric</b>		
<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<p><b>Exemplary:</b> Three or more observations are made for the case study. Each of the components of the case study as outlined in the syllabus is clearly addressed <u>in correct order with appropriate headings for each section</u>. The composition of students and adults is clearly described. Activities observed and instructional materials used are specifically identified. Observer describes how staff does/does not adjust instruction to address individual needs. The observer displays reflection and perspective when describing reactions and impressions. Writing mechanics and style are error-free. Paper is written in 12-point, double-spaced font and does not exceed 6 pages in length, excluding cover sheet and appendices. Teacher interview questions, student work sample(s), and sealed observation letter are included.</p>		
<p><b>Adequate:</b> Three observations are made for the case study. Good overall report with each of the components as outlined in the syllabus clearly addressed in correct order with appropriate headings for each section. The observer is descriptive and displays reflections and perspective when describing reactions and impressions. The paper is written in 12-point font, double-spaced, and does not exceed 6 pages, excluding cover page, and appendices. Minor errors in writing style may be present.</p>		
<p><b>Inadequate:</b> Three observations are completed for the case study. Contains some useful information, but may have some substantial problems with observations made, writing style or reaction to the activity. One or more significant problems, such as omission of a section, failure to include appendices, extended over 6 pages in length, not written in appropriate 12-point, double-spaced font, or student is identified with a disability other than LD or ED.</p>		
<p><b>0-2 points will be assigned for each area listed, as follows:</b></p>		
<b>Three or more observations completed</b>	<b>All outlined components included</b>	
<b>Observations were at least 30 minutes each</b>	<b>Components were in outlined order</b>	
<b>Signed record of observations submitted</b>	<b>Components had headings</b>	
<b>Signed record submitted in sealed envelope</b>	<b>Spelling was correct</b>	
<b>Body of paper 6-page limit not exceeded</b>	<b>Grammar was correct</b>	
<b>Case study double spaced</b>	<b>Information was thorough</b>	
<b>12 point font used</b>	<b>Observations were descriptive</b>	
<b>Appendices included</b>	<b>Case study information summarized</b>	
<b>Teacher interview questions attached</b>	<b>Synthesis/comparison to literature made</b>	
<b>Student work sample(s) attached</b>	<b>Student identified as LD or ED</b>	