

**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
Program: Special Education**

Course Title

**EDSE 628: Elementary Reading and Other
Curriculum and Strategies for Mild Disabilities:
Emotional Disabilities, Learning Disabilities,
Mild Mental Retardation**

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Course Description

This course applies research on teacher effectiveness, teacher accountability, instructional approaches, and advances in technology at the elementary level for individuals with mild disabilities. Course content includes curriculum and instructional strategies in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and social skills; cognitive strategies in self-regulation, study skills, attention, memory, and motivation; and peer-mediated instruction including cooperative learning and peer tutoring. Prerequisites: Enrollment in teaching licensure or in a graduate degree program in education.

Student Outcomes

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

- describe elementary level intervention research and the associated issues in intervention research as applied to individuals with mild disabilities;
- describe and implement elementary level research-based curriculum and strategies for teaching reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, and social skills for individuals with mild disabilities;
- describe and implement elementary level research-based cognitive strategies in self-regulation and metacognition, study skills, attention, memory, and motivation for individuals with mild disabilities;
- describe and implement elementary level research-based strategies for peer mediation, including peer tutoring and cooperative learning, for individuals with mild disabilities;
- develop and implement strategies in curriculum and strategies to correspond with the Virginia Standards of Learning.

Relationship of Courses to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Emotional

Disturbance and Learning Disabilities, and Mental Retardation. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization. As such, the learning objectives for this course cover many of the competencies for elementary curriculum and strategies for teaching individuals with emotional disturbances, learning disabilities, and mild mental retardation.

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:

Standard 4 - Instructional Strategies

Skills:

- Use strategies to facilitate integration into various settings.
- Teach individuals to use self-assessment, problem solving, and other cognitive strategies to meet their needs.
- Select, adapt, and use instructional strategies and materials according to characteristics of the individual with exceptional learning needs.
- Use strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments.
- Use procedures to increase the individual's self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem.
- Use strategies that promote successful transitions for individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Standard 5 - Learning Environments and Social Interactions

Knowledge:

- Demands of learning environments.
- Basic classroom management theories and strategies for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Effective management of teaching and learning.
- Teacher attitudes and behaviors that influence behavior of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Social skills needed for educational and other environments.
- Strategies for crisis prevention and intervention.
- Strategies for preparing individuals to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world.
- Ways to create learning environments that allow individuals to retain and appreciate their own and each others' respective language and cultural heritage.
- Ways specific cultures are negatively stereotyped.
- Strategies used by diverse populations to cope with a legacy of former and continuing racism.

Skills:

- Create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Identify realistic expectations for personal and social behavior in various settings.
- Identify supports needed for integration into various program placements.
- Design learning environments that encourage active participation in individual and group activities.
- Modify the learning environment to manage behaviors.
- Use performance data and information from all stakeholders to make or suggest modifications in learning environments.
- Establish and maintain rapport with individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
- Teach self-advocacy.
- Create an environment that encourages self-advocacy and increased independence.
- Use effective and varied behavior management strategies.
- Use the least intensive behavior management strategy consistent with the needs of the individual with exceptional learning needs.
- Design and manage daily routines.
- Organize, develop, and sustain learning environments that support positive intracultural and intercultural experiences.
- Mediate controversial intercultural issues among students within the learning environment in ways that enhance any culture, group, or person.
- Structure, direct, and support the activities of paraeducators, volunteers, and tutors.
- Use universal precautions.

Standard 7 - Instructional Planning

Knowledge:

- Theories and research that form the basis of curriculum development and instructional practice.
- Scope and sequences of general and special curricula.
- National, state or provincial, and local curricula standards.
- Technology for planning and managing the teaching and learning environment.
- Roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator related to instruction, intervention, and direct service

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 strategy and application papers.
7. Written strategy, application and/or research papers using the American Psychological Association format on relevant intervention research or application activity project subject to prior approval by the instructor.

Relevant readings will be assigned

Representative Required Text

Bos, C.S., & Vaughn, S.R. (1998). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems.* Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Other Recommended Texts

Mastropieri, M.A., & Scruggs, T.E. (2002). *Effective instruction for special education (3rd ed.)*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Mercer, C.D., & Mercer, A.R. (1998). *Teaching students with learning problems (5th ed.)*. Columbus, OH: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

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.**

Evaluation

1. Class attendance and participation
2. Strategy assignment and presentation
3. Application/research paper
4. Paper presentation
5. Online learning

Points will be deducted for work submitted late.

Grading criteria

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

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.

REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

***Strategy Paper and Presentation**

Select an intervention research article from a professional journal (e.g., *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, *Behavioral Disorders*, *Education and Treatment of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*). Prepare a written description of that research with a special emphasis on the strategies and materials and findings. Prepare and present a presentation that displays the information (this can be done in a variety of ways, including poster, using technology, etc.).

Due: Week 8 or 9

***Application Project or Research Paper Option**

Option 1: Use the strategy from the strategy assignment. Implement this intervention in your own class and describe the results. Your paper should describe the *participants* (students), *method* (including *materials* and *procedures*), and *results* (e.g., results of pre-post testing and student opinion survey). You need not replicate exactly the conditions of the article, but include copies of the materials you designed to implement the project. Paper should be 10-15 pages in length.

Option 2: Choose a curriculum and strategies area relevant to elementary level and write a paper describing interventions involving students with learning or behavioral disorders. The paper must include 15 references, 10 of which must provide original empirical data. The paper should include *Introduction*, *Description of Studies*, *Summary*, *Conclusions*, and *Implications for Practice*. Paper should be 10-15 pages in length.

Due: Week 13 or 14

***Presentation (10 points):**

Present your paper/project succinctly in a 10-minute presentation. Turn in copies of overheads, handouts, and summaries. Evaluation will be based on content, organization, use of overheads and other media, and presentation style.

Due: Week 13 or 14

***Online Learning**

Respond weekly to quizzes, reflections, or discussions covering the assigned readings. This will be available through *Blackboard* and will be completed electronically. ****More information will be provided in class****

*These assignments are probable entries for the student portfolio

COURSE TOPICS/AGENDA

Week 1	Introduction: Assignments; overview; effective instruction
Week 2	Learning Styles: How do children learn?; learning theories
Week 3	Language Learning: How do children learn language?; theories
Week 4	Early Literacy: Phonemic/phonological awareness; phonics; grammar; spelling
Week 5	Reading: The “Reading Continuum”; strategies; motivation and affect
Week 6	Reading: Fluency; Comprehension
Week 7	Writing: The “Writing Continuum”; strategies
Week 8	Math: Supporting math; literacy & math; Strategy Paper Sharing
Week 9	Content Areas: Science & Social Studies resources, study skills for content-area textbooks and other materials; Strategy Paper Sharing
Week 10	Study Skills & Memory: Study skills; organization; memory; memory processes; strategies for improving memory
Week 11	Assessment, Planning for Instruction & Reading Programs: Authentic assessment; test-taking strategies (for teacher-made and standardized tests); how to use assessments to effectively plan instruction; a look at a variety of programs and resources
Week 12	Professionalism & Parent Communication: Collaborating with colleagues, dealing with parents
Week 13	Attention & Instructional Strategies: Attention; attentional characteristics; focusing and self-monitoring of attention; peer tutoring; cooperative learning strategies; graphic organizers Application Project/ Research Paper Sharing
Week 14	More Strategy Sharing Centers/Work Stations; Application Project/ Research Paper Sharing



*** PLEASE NOTE ***

This agenda is subject to change as needs arise!