

George Mason University (GMU) - Graduate School of Education (GSE)
Special Education Cohort Program
Fairfax County Public Schools Cohort VI
Spring 2005

EDSE 791, Section 02: Midpoint Portfolio (1 semester hour credit)

Performance-Based Assessment of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards

Individual Portfolio Development taken when students have completed 4 to 6 EDSE courses and before enrolling in a 7th EDSE course.

Instructor: Dr. Jane A. Razeghi
Associate Professor
Special Ed & Alt Ed
Krug Hall, Rm 105
703-993-2055

Mailing Address:
Graduate School of Education-GMU
4400 University Drive, **MS 1F2**
Fairfax, VA 22030
Fax: 703.993.3681

COURSE DATES/TIMES/LOCATIONS:

Fridays – 4:30 – 7:30, Robinson B111

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an opportunity for students to develop their professional portfolio. This serves as the vehicle to assess whether they are meeting the standards of their professional organization, the Council for Exceptional Children.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will have:

- Completed a midpoint performance-based professional portfolio that is organized by program specifications in alignment with the CEC content area standards.
- Presented this portfolio to program faculty and peers.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

EDSE 791: Midpoint Portfolio is the first part of two portfolio courses; EDSE 792 is the final portfolio course. These courses are part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program required for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in Special Education and the Master's of Education Degree (M.Ed.). The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by CEC, the major special education professional organization in the United States (see the CEC standards on the following web site: <http://www.cec.sped.org>) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). This course addresses the following CEC/NCATE standards:

1. **Foundations**
2. **Characteristics of learners**
3. **Individual learning differences**
4. **Instructional strategies**
5. **Learning environments**
6. **Language**
7. **Instructional planning**

8. Assessment
9. Ethics and professional practice
10. Collaboration

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

Learning activities include the following: Class lecture, peer review and discussion, cooperative learning, application activities, and class presentation of portfolios. This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.

EXPECTATIONS:

The Graduate School of Education has the following expectations:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See 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 semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The use of electronic devices that produce sound or otherwise interfere with the learning of others (i.e., cell phones, pagers, etc.) is prohibited during class.
- For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (see attached Professional Disposition Criteria), and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner.
- When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, notes, syllabus revisions, etc.) from another class member (not from the instructor (s)) prior to the class meeting that follows the absence.
- Exemplary work may be kept and shared in the future.
- Routine access (daily) to electronic mail and the internet for communication and assignments is crucial to participation in this class; students are **required to activate** their GMU email account; if desired, follow mail forwarding procedures to have email sent to your ISP email address. GMU makes such accounts available at no cost to students.
- For each in-class hour devoted to EDSE 791 content, students are expected to spend 2 hours outside of class on course related assignments (30 hrs. during the semester).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **Midpoint Portfolio & related documents**
- **Portfolio development and presentation**
- **Active participation in reviewing student portfolios**
- **Program critique**

The portfolio is a collection of artifacts and reflective entries that represent your professional experiences, competencies and growth over a period of time. The portfolio is assembled in a 3-ring binder (3-4 inches deep) that contains an abundance of the student's best artifacts collected throughout the graduate program from a variety of activities, such as course assignments, field experiences, classroom observations, reflective pieces, publications, letters of acknowledgement, and awards. Each section and document/artifact should be presented in a plastic sleeve for ease in inserting and removing items. The midpoint portfolio will be expanded during the final portfolio course.

The professional portfolio is carefully organized to assess the level of competence the student has achieved. It is important to note that this is both a process and a product. As the student reviews, selects, and reflects on his/her collected artifacts, the process of self-assessment is undertaken. Together the course instructor and the student evaluate the degree of competence that the student has achieved. At the end of the student's program, during the final portfolio course, the assessment portfolio may be shared with external evaluators, such as school administrators. A passing score on the final portfolio is required in order to be approved for the graduate special education certificate and the master's degree.

Evaluation

- a. Class attendance and participation
- b. Portfolio development and presentation

Grading Criteria (see attached Evaluation of GSE Special Education Candidate Midpoint Portfolio scoring rubric)

- Satisfactory
- In Progress
- No Credit

PROPOSED MIDPOINT PORTFOLIO CLASS AGENDA. EDSE 791, 001

Session	PORTFOLIO PIECE DUE	CLASS ACTIVITIES
Class 1: Friday February 4	Overview of class requirements	In-class reading of how to select artifacts for the portfolio (from course packet), discussion of how to select documents for section II of the portfolio, and review of class logistics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of CEC Content Standards • Draft portfolio entry form for an artifact
Class 2: Friday February 25	Guidelines for Portfolio Use in Initial Teacher Education Due this class session: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two artifacts and completed entry forms for each. 2. Identify 3 additional artifacts/documents to be included in the portfolio. 	Discuss readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of Initial Teacher Education Portfolios. • Revisit discussion of how we know if an artifact/document addresses a particular CEC standard. • Peer and instructor review of 2 artifacts/documents included • How to draft narrative
Class 3: Friday March 11	Lyons, N. (1998). Reflection in teaching: Can it be developmental? A portfolio perspective. Teacher Education Quarterly, 25(1), 115-127. Due this session: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Narrative 2. Five artifacts/documents & completed entry forms for each 3. Portfolio notebook with tabs and beginning table of contents 4. Five (5) blank copies of the Reviewer Forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of narrative in light of the article on Reflection in teaching. • Peer and instructor review of narratives
Class 4: April 8	Zeichner K., Wray, S. (2004). The teaching portfolio in US teacher education programs: what we know and what we need to know. Teaching and Teacher Education, 17, 613-621. Due this session: Completed Midpoint Portfolio <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revised narrative 2. Portfolio binder with cover 3. Table of Contents 4. Tabs for each section 5. Five revised, completed entry forms with matching artifacts Resume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss narrative in light of the Zeichner article.
Class 5:	Presentation of portfolio to instructor	By appointment or on April 22, 2005

REPRESENTATIVE FORMAT FOR PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT

Portfolio Content:

- **Cover** – Be creative. Include personal identification information. Use color and graphics to individualize your portfolio.
- **Prepare a tab for each section of the notebook.** The first tab – table of contents.
- **Table of Contents** – This list of contents should make it easy for you and your reviewers to locate specific parts of your portfolio. It should be obvious to the reader that you have organized materials carefully and logically. Identify each tab and standard; list the artifacts that relate to each standard indicating from which course or experience the artifact was produced.

I. Introductory Narrative

Prepare a narrative to accompany the portfolio. Include a description of the approach you took to building your portfolio, including

- a. Your rationale for the approach taken
- b. A brief summary of the portfolio contents and where/when produced
- c. Discuss your experience in creating a portfolio.
 - What was most surprising to you about the process of creating the portfolio?
 - What was difficult?
 - What was easy?
 - What did you learn in the process?
 - Compare your **current** professional competencies with those you possessed **when you started** the program.
- d. How your coursework at GMU relates to you as a learner and how you will integrate the CEC standards and your skills/knowledge to your future practice in Special Education.
- e. Reference to specific examples (from section II of portfolio) to illustrate your reflections on how you are meeting CEC Content standards.

The major part of this section is a reflection on how your coursework at GMU relates to **you as a learner**, how you have met the **CEC Content standards** (what showed your skills/knowledge) and how you integrate the skills/knowledge you have gained to your **future practice in Special Education**.

II. A section for each of the ten CEC Content Standards with accompanying documents/artifacts (for the midpoint only 5 entries & artifacts are required; one artifact may be used to address 2 standards). By your final portfolio, you will have at least 3 entries for each standard. There should be a tab for each of the following:

1. Foundations
2. Characteristics of learners
3. Individual learning differences
4. Instructional strategies
5. Learning environments
6. Language
7. Instructional planning
8. Assessment
9. Ethics and professional practice
10. Collaboration

- A. **Include an entry** form for each document/artifact that addresses the CEC Professional Content Standards listed above.

Two parts to each entry form (attached here):

- What is the artifact? (case study; PowerPoint presentation; teaching evaluation; lesson plan; video-tape, literature review; or other).
- How does it relate to the standard above? (use language of the standard to explain how it relates).

B. Artifacts* (2 or 3 for each standard). Select two or three artifacts from your completed courses that demonstrate your competence with each of the ten CEC Professional Standards. Try to include a VARIETY of artifacts that show the breadth of your experience, skills, and knowledge. Artifacts may include: student work samples, journal article reviews, photos, assessments, observations, lesson plans including student assessment and lesson feedback from your cooperating teacher or supervisor, course work from your classes, behavior support plans, field observations, research papers, and other relevant items.

*Note: When possible, each artifact should include the comments and grades from your instructors.

- **Resume**

Present your professional experiences, education, and awards in no more than 2 – 3 pages. Be sure to highlight your professional experiences, and education.

- **Program Critique:** (present as a separate document rather than in the portfolio)

Based on the information contained in your portfolio and your personal experiences, suggest changes you view as needed in your GMU program. What components of your GMU program did you find helpful and that you would suggest as experiences for other students in your specialty area.

Sample PORTFOLIO ENTRY FORM 
Based on CEC Professional Standards

Program Concentration: _____ ED/LD _____ ED/LD/MR X M.Ed.
Course Number/Title where document/artifact was produced: _____ EDSE 501 _____
Semester course taken: Fall/03 Instructor(s): Dr, T. Hopkins

Special Education Content Standard #1 **Foundations**



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 exceptional needs both in school and society. Special educators understand how these **influence professional practice**, including assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and program evaluation. Special educators understand how **issues of human diversity** can impact families, cultures, and schools, and how these complex human issues can interact with issues in the delivery of special education services. They understand the **relationships of organizations of special education** to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies. Special educators use this knowledge as a ground upon which to construct their own personal understandings and philosophies of special education.

Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

1. **What is this artifact?** (case study; PowerPoint; teaching evaluation; lesson plan; video; literature review; response to exam question)

This artifact is an interview of a parent who has a child with a disability. This is an alternative assignment to a case study and field observation.

2. **How does it relate to the standard above?** (use language of the standard to explain how it relates)

*This document relates to the standard above because it includes specific components of how human diversity **can impact families, cultures, and schools**. It demonstrates the relationship between organizations of special educators **to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies**. It compares student characteristics with those described in the text and other integrated reading source  It also demonstrates a **historical** point of view and shows **evidence-based** principles and theories in pr  in the special education field today.*

SAMPLE PORTFOLIO ENTRY FORM 
Based on CEC Professional Standards

Program Concentration: _____ED/LD _____ED/LD/MR ___X___M.Ed.
Course Number/Title where document/artifact was produced: EDSE 501 Intro to SpEd
Semester course taken: Fall 2003 Instructor(s): Dr. Suzanne Tochtermann

Special Education Content Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners

Special educators know and **demonstrate respect** for their students first as unique human beings. Special educators understand the **similarities and differences in human development** and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ELN)^{1/}. Moreover, special educators understand how **exceptional conditions** can **interact** with the domains of human development and they **use this knowledge to respond to the varying abilities and behaviors of individual's** with ELN. Special educators understand how the experiences of individuals with ELN can *impact families*, as well as the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as fulfilled contributing members of the community.

Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

1. **What is this artifact?** (case study; PowerPoint; teaching evaluation; lesson plan; video; literature review; response to exam question)

This artifact is an interview with the mother of a 15 year old male with autism.

2. **How does it relate to the standard above?** (use language of the standard to explain how it relates)

This artifact relates to the above standard because it documents **how the experiences of individuals with ELN can impact the family as well as the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as fulfilled contributing members of the community.** This artifact documents the full picture of what it is like to be the mother of a child with autism. It is evident that the impact the child had on his parents' relationship and on his own ability to learn contributed to his inability to interact socially and live as a fulfilled contributing member of the community.

Example of the beginning of a portfolio narrative.....

Rationale

The purpose of this portfolio is to fulfill the graduate requirement for the Graduate School of Education (GSE) at George Mason University (GMU). The contents are meant to be representative of the ten performance-based CEC standards, reflecting course content, material and experiences. What is also the intention of these artifacts is the reflection of my growth as a graduate student and a special education teacher. While in the GMU program I have met the CEC standards about to be presented through hands-on, comprehensive projects designed to reflect the most current theories and practices in the field today. What was theory on Tuesday nights when we met for class would quickly become practical application the next day. For two years I have read, researched and applied the lessons learned weekly. From this I am a stronger teacher, yet still learning, and can say with confidence that I am aware of the changes in the field around me. These portfolio contents symbolize the experience and knowledge gained during the past two years 2002-2004 in the GMU cohort. The cohort was the first of its kind between Prince William County Schools (PWCS) and GMU, offering both the certification process with the possibility of a Master's Degree in Special Education.

The design of this portfolio is twofold. First is the Introductory Narrative section, describing the rationale and purpose of this collection. Next is the standard and artifact section wherein the ten CEC standards are identified and defined, along with artifacts representative of them. In creating this portfolio it was intended to present the artifacts so that someone with no experience in special education could read the entries and understand the foundation of the professional principles and practices. It was also the

Example of a Table of Contents

- I. Narrative
- II. CEC Objectives
 - 1. Foundations**
 - a. Group Power Point Presentation-Characteristics of Learning Disabilities
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education
Kay Cooper
 - b. Position paper comparing and contrasting Prince William County
Code of Behavior to Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS)
EDSE 502- Classroom Management and Applied Behavior Analysis
Mike Friedman
 - c. Final Exam
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education
Kay Cooper
 - 2. Development and Characteristics of Learners**
 - a. Case Study of a student with a learning disability
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education
Kay Cooper
 - b. Reaction paper-“The Trouble with Evan”
EDSE 540- Characteristics of Students with ED/LD
Dr. Janice Winters
 - c. Group Power Point Presentation on the typical development
milestones of adolescents
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education
Kay Cooper
 - 3. Individual Learning Differences**
 - a. Classroom observation of a student with ELN (Exceptional
Learning Needs)
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education
Kay Cooper
 - b. Case study of a student with ELN (Exceptional Learning Needs)
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education
Kay Cooper
 - c. Reaction Paper- “All Our Children”
EDSE 540- Characteristics of Students with ED/LD
Dr. Janice Winters

Midpoint Portfolio Reviewer Form (Informal)

Name of Person Whose Portfolio You Are Reviewing _____ Date _____

Completed by: (check one & include signature)

___ peer reviewer: Name(s) _____

___ faculty member: Name _____

___ other (school division staff) Name _____

Each document/artifact has an accompanying entry form. Review the student's entry form for each artifact and provide written feedback. Use the back for additional comments. Respond to the statements with the following rating scale:

- 5 = strongly agree
- 4 = agree
- 3 = agree somewhat, but could be more clearly written
- 2 = disagree

	Statement	Self Review	Peer 1	Peer 2	Professor
1	The Table of Contents clearly delineates the contents of the portfolio and it is easy to find documents.				
2	The Introductory Narrative makes it clear what is contained in the portfolio, how it's organized, and how it relates to the portfolio developer.				
3	In the Introductory Narrative it is clear that the writer reflects on what was learned as a result of the GMU coursework and program.				
4	The Introductory Narrative discusses how the CEC knowledge and skills gained through the courses will be integrated into the person's future practice in spec ed.				
5	Course name or experience from which each artifact was produced is included on each entry form .				
6	On each entry form it is clear what the artifact is (lesson plan; lit review; teaching evaluation, etc.)				
7	On entry forms, it is clear how each artifact relates to the standard for which it is included; what knowledge and/or skill(s) are gained as a result of completing the artifact; and the language of the standard is used (in the response). The author clearly presents why he/she included a particular document/artifact.				
8	Five completed entry forms are included.				
9	More than 2 of the CEC standards are addressed.				
10	A brief resume is included.				

Please note **missing or incorrect parts** of the entry forms below. Or use this space for other relevant **comments**. Use the back of this form to continue comments, if needed.

Evaluation of GSE Special Education Candidate Midpoint Portfolio

Student Name:

Date:

Number of Artifacts:

Level	Requirement	Yes	No	Comment
Midpoint Portfolio	5 artifacts included			

CEC Content Standards

CEC Content Standard	Standards Alignment		Artifacts Contribute to Candidate Mastery of the Standard		All Artifacts are Student's Work	
	In Progress	Satisfactory	In Progress	Satisfactory	Yes	No
Student must identify each artifact included (PPT; case study; curriculum unit; etc.)	No clear connection between the artifacts and the standard	Artifacts address content of standard	Artifacts demonstrate inadequate candidate knowledge and skill base in standard	Artifacts demonstrate adequate knowledge and skill base in standard		
1. Foundations 1. 2. 3.						
2. Characteristics of Learners 1. 2. 3.						

CEC Content Standard	Standards Alignment		Artifacts Contribute to Candidate Mastery of the Standard		All Artifacts are Student's Work	
	In Progress	Satisfactory	In Progress	Satisfactory	Yes	No
Student must identify each artifact included (PPT; case study; curriculum unit; etc.)	No clear connection between the artifacts and the standard	Artifacts address content of standard	Artifacts demonstrate inadequate candidate knowledge and skill base in standard			
3. Individual Learning Differences 1. 2. 3.						
4. Instructional Strategies 1. 2. 3.						
5. Learning Environments 1. 2. 3.						
6. Language 1. 2. 3.						
7. Instructional Planning 1. 2. 3.						

CEC Content Standard	Standards Alignment		Artifacts Contribute to Candidate Mastery of the Standard		All Artifacts are Student's Work	
	In Progress	Satisfactory	In Progress	Satisfactory	Yes	No
Student must identify each artifact included (PPT; case study; curriculum unit; etc.)	No clear connection between the artifacts and the standard	Artifacts address content of standard	Artifacts demonstrate inadequate candidate knowledge and skill base in standard			
8. Assessment 1. 2. 3.						
9. Ethics and Professional Practice 1. 2. 3.						
10. Collaboration 1. 2. 3.						

Narrative:

Element	In Progress	Satisfactory
1. Description of Portfolio Development	Not Provided	Includes description of the approach taken to develop portfolio and a rationale for the approach
2. Reflections on how they have developed as a learner through their GMU program	Not Provided	Reflections are clear and delineate how coursework at GMU relates to the student as a learner
3. Reflections on how they will integrate the knowledge and skills gained into their future practice in special education	Not Provided	Reflections demonstrate how they will integrate the skills/knowledge gained at GMU to their future practice in special education.
4. Reflections on how they have met CEC standards	Not Provided	Reflections demonstrate how they have met the CEC standards
5. Reflections refer to artifacts in portfolio	Not Provided	Reflections refer to artifacts in Section II of the portfolio

Resume Included: Yes No

Program Critique Included: Yes No

Final Decision:

Satisfactory

Student has submitted at least 5 artifacts that are his or her own work, that align with the CEC standards, and that demonstrate satisfactory mastery of elements of the CEC standards (see program entry forms). Narrative addressed 3 out of 5 elements of the narrative in a satisfactory manner. Post script is included.

In Progress

Student has NOT submitted at least 5 artifacts that are his or her own work, that align with the CEC standards, and that demonstrate satisfactory mastery of elements of the CEC standards OR has NOT addressed 3 out of 5 elements of the narrative in a satisfactory manner OR has not included a program critique or post script.

Other Comments:

Reviewer Name: _____ Reviewer Signature: _____