

**George Mason University**  
**Graduate School of Education**  
**Program: Special Education**  
**EDSE 792: Section 618 (1 credit)**

Instructor: C. Yvonne Balfour, Ph.D.  
Time: 5:00-9:00 on selected Tuesday evenings from 9/13 – 12/13/05  
Location: Winchester/Frederick Cohort – James Wood Middle School  
Phone: (w) 703-669-1450 (h) 540-338-6385  
Email: [cbalfour@gmu.edu](mailto:cbalfour@gmu.edu)  
Consult Hours: by appointment before or after class

### **Course Description**

This course provides an opportunity for students to complete their GMU - GSE portfolio. This serves as the vehicle to assess whether they are meeting the standards of their professional organization, the Council for Exceptional Children. Co-requisites: Must be taken concurrently with last EDSE internship and/or EDSE course work in the program.

### **Student Outcomes-Upon completion of the course, students will have:**

- Participated in cooperative learning experiences.
- Completed a final performance-based portfolio that is organized by program specifications in alignment with the CEC core and specialty area standards.
- Presented this portfolio to program faculty and peers.

### **Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

EDSE 792 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure within the Commonwealth of Virginia. 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/ps/perf\\_based\\_stds/common\\_core\\_4-21-01.html](http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html)). This course addresses CEC/NCATE standards by meeting midpoint evaluations.

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

Learning activities include in-class discussions as well as peer and instructor reviews of portfolio entries.

### **Expectations**

The Graduate School of Education has the following expectations:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://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](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](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

## Content/Activities of Classes

Class 1: review of CEC and NCATE standards, overview of class requirements, sample presentation formats, and discussion of documents for use in portfolio sections.

Class 2: Bring in completed entry forms to share with classmates. Share past course documents/artifacts and discuss how they address particular standards. Peer review of drafts of your new portfolio entries.

Class 3: Individual conference with instructor to review final portfolio.

## Evaluation

- Class attendance and participation
- Portfolio development and presentation
- Portfolio submission-hardcopy (temporary)

## Grading Criteria

- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

## Format for Portfolio Development

- Table of Contents that is reader-friendly, enabling readers to find materials easily. The Table of Contents should make it clear to a reader that you have organized materials carefully and logically.
- The Following Three Sections:
  - Introductory Narrative (**2<sup>nd</sup> entry**): You will likely write this last: Prepare a narrative to accompany the portfolio. Include a description of the approach you took to building your portfolio, the rationale for this approach, and brief summary of the portfolio contents. 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 standards (what did you do to show your skills/knowledge), and a general discussion of how you have or will integrate the skills/knowledge you have gained into your practice in Special Education. Be sure to refer to specific examples (from section II of portfolio) to illustrate the reflections you are making.
  - The actual 10 sections, 1 for each standard in the portfolio with accompanying documents/artifacts.\* Your final portfolio will have at least three entries for each standard. Please review the notes taken at the mid portfolio meeting to see what additional entries above the three are required. On the entry form for each document/entry form there is a section on the reasoning behind the use of this particular document/artifact. In that section put the necessary information to indicate why you selected this artifact and how it demonstrated competence/knowledge of the standard. **It is critical that your entry speak to how your learning in this area will inform your practice as a special educator.**

\*You may have a separate document section in this part of your portfolio. If you do so, number the documents and use the number and a brief explanation when referencing them in your write-ups. (i.e., "...Document #3, a math lesson plan, shows my competence in this standard by ...")

- Post Script (**2<sup>nd</sup> entry**): When you have finished all of the above tasks, write a post-script of about two pages in which you discuss your experience in creating a portfolio. What was most surprising to you about the process? What was hard? What was easy? What did you learn in the process? Upon review of the information contained in your portfolio,

what changes would 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.

**Material that is on the GMU/GSE Blackboard under Balfour's *EDSE 791a: Midpoint Portfolio* course entry:**

- This syllabus
- Portfolio entry forms – ED/LD
- Rubric for scoring Portfolio
- CEC Content Standards - Matrix