

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**EDSE 791 Section 001 (1 credit)  
Midpoint Portfolio Fall 2009  
Wednesday 9/16, 10/21, 11/16, 12/9; 4:00-6:40  
Thompson Hall 221**

**Other Participating Universities: Radford University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Old Dominion University, and James Madison University**

*Prerequisite and co-requisite: must be taken after completion of the fourth EDSE (or university special education prefix) course or concurrently with the fourth or fifth EDSE (or university special education) prefix course in the program.*

**PROFESSOR**

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**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 Portfolio focusing on their performance in courses as related to CEC Standards.
- Participated in cooperative learning experiences in which peer feedback is provided and received.
- Discussed how portfolios are used by professionals to integrate, reflect upon, and provide evidence of accomplishments regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions required of their profession.
- Presented their Midpoint Portfolio to program faculty and peers.
- Provided program evaluation feedback on the GMU graduate program of study via electronic web based survey.

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

Learning activities include the following: Instructor demonstrations and descriptions, peer review and discussions, cooperative learning, application activities, and class presentation of portfolios.

Online support course materials are available at George Mason's Blackboard (Bb) site  
<http://gmucommunity.blackboard.com>.

**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 standards:

<b>1. Foundations</b>	<b>6. Language</b>
<b>2. Characteristics of Learners</b>	<b>7. Instructional Planning</b>
<b>3. Individual Learning Differences</b>	<b>8. Assessment</b>
<b>4. Instructional Strategies</b>	<b>9. Ethics and Professional Practice</b>
<b>5. Learning Environments</b>	<b>10. Collaboration</b>

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no required texts for this course.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time and prepared, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner.
- The use of electronic devices that produce sound or otherwise interfere with the learning of others (i.e., cell phones, pagers) is prohibited during class. Please turn these devices off before the start of class.
- With permission from the student, exemplary work may be kept and shared in the future.
- Routine daily access to GMU email (or university email) and the internet for communication and assignments is required to participate in this class; students are required to activate and use their GMU email account (university) when communicating with the instructor.
- Regularly check Blackboard announcements (at least weekly) and GMU email for class updates.
- We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). Please refer to "Guidelines for Non-Handicapping Language in APA Journals" <http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html>.
- If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with me or need special arrangements, **please call and/or make an appointment with me the first week of class.**
- During course sessions, you will receive and give feedback to peers on drafts of their Midpoint Portfolio work. Additionally, GMU students are encouraged to use the George Mason University Writing Center for support in writing (support needs will vary among students). The web site for the Writing Center is: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>. Many resources are available both on site and on the web, and students can now conveniently register online for appointments. Students at other universities should utilize writing support resources at their own universities.

*TaskStream:* <https://www.taskstream.com/>

TaskStream is the platform for those Special Education students seeking their M.Ed. degree and/or licensure to build an electronic portfolio for EDSE 791 (Midpoint Portfolio) and EDSE 792 (Final Portfolio). Any student who completes Midpoint Portfolio from Fall 2007 forward must complete their portfolio electronically. Directions for submitting documents to TaskStream are located at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/taskstream>.

George Mason Blackboard: <http://gmucommunity.blackboard.com> From this link, follow the directions to get into this semester's Midpoint Portfolio class. On this EDSE 791 Midpoint Portfolio course site, you will find grading rubrics, sample activities and papers, APA resources, syllabus, etc.

NON GMU Students: Your login for Blackboard Community is: *x\_first name.last name* For example John Smith's username would be: *x\_john.smith* Your password is: *bbcommunity*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Develop the Midpoint Portfolio's documents (e.g., Introductory Narrative (IN) and Artifact Worksheets (AW)).
  - Submit drafts of documents for Instructor feedback by the due date, and make refinements accordingly.
  - Provide and receive peer feedback on drafts of documents, and make refinements accordingly.
  - Submit required Midpoint Portfolio documents to TaskStream [www.taskstream.com](http://www.taskstream.com) by the due date(s).
    - **This includes a midpoint introductory narrative which consists of five instructor approved student selected assignments and all of the signature assignments that you have completed to date.**
- Present the Midpoint Portfolio.

**Absences:** If you are already aware or anticipate that you cannot attend 100% of the four class sessions, participate the entire time, and submit assignments as indicated by due dates in the syllabus, please notify the instructor and your adviser immediately so that alternative arrangements for your successful completion of this course at another time can be arranged.

**Note:** Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester has been required to begin submitting signature assignments with accompanying artifact entry forms to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. As of Summer 2009 two changes were made: (a) the Artifact Entry Forms are no longer being used in the Taskstream evaluation process, and (b) you are now required to submit **twenty** artifacts for final portfolio instead of thirty. These will consist of **ten** signature assignments and **ten** student selected assignments. You may only use each assignment once to support a standard.

## GRADING CRITERIA

### GMU & JMU

- Satisfactory – student has successfully completed course requirements and successfully presented portfolio.
- No Credit – student has not provided sufficient work to evaluate progress toward meeting portfolio requirements.

### Radford, VCU, ODU

A	<p>Student completed all course requirements and successfully presented their portfolio. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attending all class sessions and being an active participant in all in-class activities.</li><li>• Writing an introductory narrative that is approved by the instructor and has been submitted to TaskStream.</li><li>• Submitting at least 4 Artifact Worksheets that received instructor approval.</li><li>• Submitting at least 5-10 aligned artifacts (5 student selected and all of the signature assignments that you have completed to date) to TaskStream that have been approved by the instructor.</li><li>• Provide feedback to peers on Artifact Worksheets and Introductory Narrative using peer review forms.</li><li>• Present portfolio to instructor during scheduled time</li></ul>
B	<p>Student completed all course requirements and successfully presented their portfolio as outlined in requirements to receive an A, however, student submitted work (artifact worksheets, narratives, and CEC artifact alignment) requires more than one round of revisions prior to approval.</p>
C	<p>Student does not complete 1 or more of the course requirements as outlined in requirements to receive an A, but does receive instructor approval for the introductory narrative.</p>
F	<p>Student does not complete 1 or more of the course requirements as outlined in requirements to receive an A, and does not receive instructor approval for the introductory narrative.</p>

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <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 Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform the instructor, in writing, the first week of class. See <http://www2.gmu.edu/dpt/unilife/ods/> or call 703-993-2474 to access ODS.

## PROPOSED COURSE SCHEDULE

Session	PORTFOLIO COMPONENT DUE	Class/Group Activities
<b>Class 1: 9/16 (face to face)</b>	<p><u>Bring to Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC Standards and the course syllabus to <u>all</u> class sessions. For each class, specific materials to bring are noted.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, if you find it helpful to have the following materials to use during class, bring these to future classes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personal laptop computer</li> <li>2. Highlighters</li> <li>3. Post-it notes</li> <li>4. Pens/pencils to write feedback for peers</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and describe the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards.</li> <li>2. Describe National Council for Accreditation in Teacher Education (NCATE) and how the CEC Standards relate to the Mason programs and NCATE.</li> <li>3. Discuss Professional Portfolios and how they are used for assessment and reflection.</li> <li>4. Review the course syllabus and class logistics.</li> <li>5. Discuss how to select artifacts to match CEC Standards.</li> <li>6. Identify and describe content on an Artifact Worksheet.</li> <li>7. Discuss peer review process.</li> <li>8. Writing jargon-free summaries.</li> <li>9. Describe how the process and content for the Artifact Worksheets comprise a foundation for some components of the Introductory Narrative.</li> <li>10. Identify and describe the sections of the Introductory Narrative (IN).</li> </ol>
<b>Sept 30</b>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> Within two weeks after Class 1, submit drafts of the Artifact Worksheets on <u>two</u> Signature Assignments and <u>two</u> Student Selected Assignments to the Blackboard “drop box” so (a) the instructor can provide you electronic feedback, (b) you have time to review the feedback and seek clarification if necessary, (c) you can revise these Artifact Worksheets and resubmit if you need to, and (d) then you can make revisions and bring them to Class 2 for peer-review.</p>	

**NOTE:** Throughout the semester, there are due dates for submitting drafts to the instructor so that you can receive and act on instructor feedback. **You must submit your draft by the date specified for this course in order to receive instructor feedback. Late submissions compromise your capacity to receive and act on instructor feedback. Late submissions will impact the grade you earn in this course.**

Session	PORTFOLIO COMPONENT DUE	Class/Group Activities
<b>Class 2: 10/21 (face to face)</b>	<u>Bring to Class:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two completed Artifact Worksheet drafts on Signature Assignments and Two completed drafts for Student Selected Assignment for peer review (refer to actions since Class 1: They are now revised based on Instructor feedback two weeks ago).</li> <li>Copies of the AW and IN Peer-Review Forms</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the peer-review process (refer to the forms you brought to class).</li> <li>Facilitate peer reviews of each person's four Artifact Worksheets.</li> <li>Identify remaining artifacts to be included in midpoint portfolio.</li> <li>Demonstrate how to complete and edit the Introductory Narrative.</li> <li><b>The Introductory Narrative will include: 5 instructor approved student selected assignments and all of the signature assignments completed to date.</b></li> <li>Model how to use the Peer-Review Forms for the Introductory Narrative as a self-evaluation process.</li> <li>Schedule each person's Midpoint Portfolio presentation date and time.</li> <li>Discuss the process for the presentation.</li> </ol>
<b>Nov 4</b>	<b>ACTION:</b> Within two weeks after class 2, submit all student selected Artifacts and signature assignments to TaskStream. Remember that once you submit work to TaskStream, it will be rated. The instructor will review/rate these submissions prior to your Midpoint Portfolio Presentation.	
<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>ACTION:</b> Prior to Class 3, write a draft of your Introductory Narrative and submit to Bb for review. By this point, all four of your Artifact Worksheets should be completed and revised based on peer/self/instructor feedback, and in excellent shape for content and format.	

Session	PORTFOLIO COMPONENT DUE	Class/Group Activities
<b>Class 3: 11/16 (online)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Class does not meet face to face, however instructor is available to meet individually with students for questions/document review.</li> <li>2. Students may use this time to meet with groups face to face or online</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete peer reviews of introductory narrative online or face to face.</li> <li>2. Make final revisions to introductory narrative.</li> </ol>
<b>By Dec. 2</b>	<b>ACTION:</b> At least one week prior to your Midpoint Portfolio Presentation, your Introductory Narrative must be submitted to the Instructor for review. Submit your IN to the course Bb drop box, and alert the Instructor via e-mail that your IN is ready to be reviewed. Electronic feedback will be provided to you within 3-4 days from when you send the e-mail. Plan carefully so you have time to make refinements prior to your Midpoint Portfolio presentation.	

Session	PORTFOLIO COMPONENT DUE	Class/Group Activities
<b>Class 5: Dec. 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize your Introductory Narrative, submit the IN to TaskStream, and be prepared to present your Midpoint Portfolio on your scheduled presentation date/time (which may be during the 5<sup>th</sup> class session or another date/time, depending on what you signed up for during Class 2).</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation of portfolio to by scheduled appointment.</li> </ol> <p><b>NOTE: Presentations will occur in small groups based on site. Faculty from each university will be invited to join the instructor for final presentations.</b></p> <p><i>*Note that your entire Midpoint Portfolio is already located on TaskStream, so you do not need to bring anything for the presentation itself to your Midpoint Portfolio Presentation.</i></p> <p><i>Your artifacts will be reviewed prior to your Midpoint Portfolio Presentation. Read those reviews prior to your Midpoint Portfolio Presentation.</i></p>

## REPRESENTATIVE FORMAT FOR PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENTS

### Introductory Narrative

- (USE TEMPLATE on Bb) *Note: Final instructor approved IN is added, in the appropriate location, to TaskStream.*
- Prepare a narrative to accompany as well as introduce the reader to your portfolio, a performance based assessment measure to showcase your development and growth in the graduate program. The Narrative must include the following required elements:
  - Introductory or Opening paragraph
  - Rationale for Building Portfolio
  - Experiences When Creating the Portfolio
  - Professional Standards for CEC (Standards 1 – 10)
  - Connection Among Coursework, Learning Experiences, and Professional Standards
  - Philosophy of Teaching
- 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 demonstrates your skills/knowledge) so far and how you integrate the skills/knowledge you have gained to your **current or future practice in Special Education**.

#### For Final Portfolio

- Within the introductory narrative, students must demonstrate an understanding of each of the CEC standards, standard by standard, using at least 2 artifacts as exemplars of how the standard has been met (for final portfolio).

#### For Midpoint Portfolio

- Students are expected to address as many standards as they can, based on the number of artifacts completed to date. Students, when possible, should select artifacts that enable them to reflect on an entire standard in their introductory narrative. However, it is possible to only have one artifact listed per standard for midpoint portfolio.

### Artifacts

#### For Final Portfolio

- Students are required to select at least 20 artifacts from their completed graduate coursework to demonstrate their understanding of the essential elements of each of the CEC standards. These artifacts are posted as individual files to TaskStream as well as discussed within the Introductory Narrative.
- Of the 20 artifacts:
  - 10 artifacts must be from signature assignments
    - A signature assignment is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC standard(s) connected to the course. Signature assignments are predetermined for each special education and are already aligned with a specific standard.



- 10 artifacts must be student selected assignments
  - Students should include a VARIETY of artifacts that show the breadth of their 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. The included artifacts must be part of your GMU special education graduate program of study.
- Students must select 20 unique artifacts (no double dipping!)
- When possible, each artifact should include the comments and grades from your instructors. Translated this means the graded artifact is preferred – not required when included in your portfolio.

#### For Midpoint Portfolio

- Students are required to select at least five instructor approved student selected assignments and all of the signature assignments that you have completed to date.

#### **Presentation (for Midpoint)**

- Upon submission of their final introductory narrative and 5-10 artifacts to Taskstream, students will present their final portfolio to their instructor. Presentations must occur by the last week of class to be considered for a satisfactory grade.
- Presentations will occur in person (or videoconference). Presentations will last between 20-30 minutes.
- Students should be prepared to discuss their rationale for their portfolio development, how they have met the essential elements of the CEC standards through their coursework, how they have grown as a learner, and how they will apply what they have learned through their coursework to their profession.