

**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
Program: Special Education
Fall 2010**

EDSE 501 Section 6G1 Introduction to Special Education

Professor: Pamela H. Baker, Ed. D.

Office Hours: Before class and by appointment

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Credit Hours: 3

Course Times: 4:30 – 8:30 P.M. on Fridays; 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. on Saturdays

Course Dates: 8/27/10, 8/28/10, 9/17/10, 9/18/10, 9/24/10, 9/25/10

Fieldwork & Blackboard: Self-scheduled supplemental work for a minimum of 9 hours

Course Description

This course provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Content includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, including existing and emerging technologies, assessment, and support services of/for individuals with disabilities ranging from mild/moderate to severe levels of varying disabilities. The course will study the impact of disabilities on academic and social/emotional performances. Field experience is required. Prerequisites: none.

Nature of Course Delivery

Learning activities may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Class lecture and discussion
- Application activities and assignments
- Small group activities and assignments
- Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard
- Research and presentation activities
- Video and other media supports

Learner Outcomes

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

- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
- Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education.
- Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of special education.
- Describe research in etiological factors associated with all disability areas.

- Describe social, cognitive, intellectual, and academic characteristics associated with all disability areas.
- Describe historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education.
- Describe the role of families in the educational process.
- Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including technological advances.
- Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.

Relationship of Courses to Professional Standards

EDSE 501 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education. The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization in the United States. As such the curriculum for the course includes competencies for teaching students with disabilities from preschool through grade 12.

The CEC Standards are listed on the following web site:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/default.htm#Standards> then click on “Initial Content Standards” to view.

CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include some of the following CEC Core standards:

Standard 1 - Foundations

Knowledge:

- Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis for special education practice.
- Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management planning and implementation.
- Relationship of special education to the organization and function of educational agencies.
- Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
- Issues in definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Issues, assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services.
- Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
- Historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups.
- Impact of the dominant culture on shaping schools and the individuals who study and work in them.
- Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school.

Skill:

- Articulate personal philosophy of special education.

Standard 2 - Development and Characteristics of Learners

Knowledge:

- Typical and atypical human growth and development.
- Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities.
- Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.
- Family systems and the role of families in supporting development.
- Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
- Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Effects of various medications on individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Standard 3 - Individual Learning Differences

Knowledge:

- Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.
- Impact of learners' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
- Variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures and their effects on relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, family, and schooling.
- Cultural perspectives influencing the relationships among families, schools, and communities as related to instruction.
- Differing ways of learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and strategies for addressing these differences.

Required Texts

Friend, M. (2008). *Special education: Contemporary perspectives for school Professionals* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson.

This text has a companion website at: <http://www.ablongman.com/friendintro2e/> . There is also a link for the previous edition that includes helpful cumulative timeline and flashcard functions at http://wps.ablongman.com/ab_friend_specedu_1 .

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Other Required Resources

Blackboard

Check Blackboard weekly for additional course materials at <http://courses.gmu.edu>

TaskStream

Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/taskstream/>. Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed, upon completion of the required submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Other readings may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

Suggested Materials (as needed)

Any guide to writing mechanics that may enhance accuracy of style as needed.

When seeking additional information, it is helpful to access the variety of professional journals for current data. Some suggestions include (see text for additional listings):

<i>Exceptional Children</i>	<i>Teaching Exceptional Children</i>
<i>Journal of Special Education</i>	<i>Intervention for School and Clinic</i>

Student Responsibilities

George Mason University Email: Every student is required to establish a GMU email account to access Blackboard (BB) and other important university correspondence that will be sent to GMU email accounts only. Once an email account has been established, it is possible to forward email sent to the GMU account to another email account. Students are responsible for any information shared electronically and should check e-mail regularly. Emails sent via BB do not forward to your regular account.

George Mason Blackboard: <http://courses.gmu.edu>. From this link, you will find a variety of materials related to this course. The site will be updated as the course progresses. **Students are responsible** for any information shared via Blackboard and should check the site regularly

George Mason Patriot Web: <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu>. This is a self-service website for students, faculty, and staff of George Mason University. A wealth of useful links, information, and online forms are available on this website including program of studies details, application for graduation, request for transfer of credit, and internship application.

Cohort Information: Please visit Blackboard at <http://gmucommunity.blackboard.com> and begin by entering the User Name “cohort” followed by the Password “cohort” then click “login” to access a variety of materials including the Frequently Asked Questions Guide, Enrollment forms, Textbook information, and TaskStream support.

Advising Contact Information: Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through the special education program. You may wish to contact Jancy Templeton, GMU Special Education Advisor, at jtemple1@gmu.edu or 703-993-2387. When contacting her, be prepared to provide your G number.

APA Style: The standard format for any written work in the College of Education. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) or to access one of the internet sites that provides a summary of this information. All work produced outside of class must be typed unless otherwise noted.

Academic Integrity: Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own.

Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper citation. Evidence of plagiarism or any other form of cheating in this class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the registrar. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. The instructor reserves the right to submit your work to **turnitin** or **safeassign**, plagiarism detection services, for an integrity assessment as needed.

Graduate School of Education Dispositions Criteria: Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> for a listing of these dispositions.

George Mason University Honor Code: Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/> for the full honor code. The honor code defines student and faculty conduct to promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community. The honor code deals specifically with cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing.

Responsible Use of Computing: Students must agree to abide by the university policy for the responsible use of computing. See <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>

Students with Disabilities: 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, at the beginning of the semester. See <http://www2.gmu.edu/dpt/unilife/ods/> or call 703-993-2474 to access the ODS.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (see 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 prior to the class meeting that follows the absence. Be aware that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be reclaimed.
- 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. Please turn these devices off or to vibrate before the start of class.
- The use of electronic devices that record class or photograph individuals or materials may not be used without instructor permission.
- Computers may be used to take notes during class, but they may not be used for internet exploration or other non-class activities during class time.
- Exemplary work may be kept and shared in the future (with your consent, of course!). Expect to spend approximately 3 hours out of class for every hour in class to complete readings and assignments.
- Routine access (daily) to electronic mail and Blackboard for communication and assignments is crucial to effective participation in this class.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Below are the basic weights of the various kinds of work required for the course, but students should always bear in mind that grading is primarily a judgment about your performance on a particular assignment. Grades are designed to indicate your success in completing assignments, not the level of effort you put into them.

Your performance in the course will be rated upon the following

Participation Activities	18%
Discussion Board Activities	14%
Exploratory Activities	25%
Child Abuse Awareness Program*	8%
Final Exam*	35%
Total	100%

Note: *Points will be deducted for work submitted late.* This includes any items that are not submitted upon request due to class absence or tardiness. This includes items initiated or modified during class as well as those listed in the syllabus.

It is recommended that students retain electronic and hard copies of ALL course assignments. Products from this class can become part of one's individual professional portfolio used to document satisfactory progress towards licensure as based on the CEC

standards. The final exam and child abuse certification are mandatory components of the course (regardless of who teaches it) and they are **probable entries for the student portfolio*.

ASSIGNMENTS

Class Preparation: Students are expected to read text assignments by the date they are listed for discussion in class. Utilizing the companion website may be beneficial for some learners while others may benefit by taking notes, discussing, highlighting, or by marking key concepts with post-it notes. The goal is to convert your text into a valuable resource.

Participation in Class Activities: Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in all assignments, group activities, and class discussions. Active participation includes the asking of questions and the presentation of one's own understanding with regard to the readings and lectures as well as interactive discussion and participation in activities with other class members. Active participation also includes listening and respectful consideration of the comments of others. This will require all students to complete the required readings, activities, and assignments for that specific class meeting. Additionally, during each class meeting there will be opportunities to earn point(s) for successful completion of graded in-class activities. If you are not in attendance and thus not able to participate when these activities occur, assigned points cannot be earned.

Discussion Board Activities: Students are expected to complete specific activities listed online to further explore class topics. Please refer to the Discussion section of Blackboard, then click on the specific topic or individual links to participate.

Exploratory Activities: Each adult learner brings varying levels of experience to introductory courses such as this. In order to address your differing backgrounds, you will select activities from a menu of options so that you can tailor this portion of the course to address your own educational needs as you build an emerging philosophy of special education. You should refer to the separate handout for details regarding this assignment.

***Child Abuse Awareness Program:** Students will complete an online child abuse awareness training module at http://www.vcu.edu/vissta/training/va_teachers/. The site includes the definitions and indicators of child abuse and neglect, how to respond to signs of abuse and to report abuse, the legal requirements of Virginia teachers to report abuse, state support services, and the actions that follow reports of abuse. Quizzes and scenarios assess student understanding and a certificate of completion is awarded. You will post the certificate to TaskStream.

***Comprehensive Final Exam:** A comprehensive exam covering key course content will be administered. Key points of emphasis include the foundations of special education, procedures of special education, and the characteristics of each disability area. You will post a summary sheet, including your final grade, to TaskStream.

Grading criteria**

- 94 – 100% = A
 90 – 93% = A-
 87 – 89% = B+
 80 – 86% = B
 70 – 79% = C
 <70 = F

***Traditional rounding principles apply (i.e. .5 rounds up)*

COURSE TOPICS

Class Session	Date	Topics/Directions	Readings and Assignments Due
1.	8/27/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of Class Logistics • Introduction to Special Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Contact Cards
2.	8/28/10 A.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations of Special Education *Historical perspectives *Legal mandates *Ethical practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 • Verify BB Access
3.	8/28/10 P.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cycle of Special Education *Referral *Evaluation & Eligibility *IEPs & Placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2
Online Session		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions on Blackboard for Discussion Board One 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due by midnight on 9/3/10
Online Session		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions on Blackboard for Discussion Board Two 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due by midnight on 9/10/10
Online Session		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow link in syllabus to complete the Child Abuse Awareness Program • Establish TaskStream Access 	
Field Hours		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Exploratory Activities 	
4.	9/17/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cognitive Continuum *G/T *MR (aka ID) *MD *DD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 8, 14, & 15 • Child Abuse Awareness Program Certificate Due • Post to TaskStream under CEC #9
5.	9/18/10 A.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dynamic Due: ED/LD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 5 & 7

6.	9/18/10 P.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *SLI *Autism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 9 & 12
7.	9/24/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Physical Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *OI *ADHD *OHI *TBI • The 504 Issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 6 & 13 • Exploratory Activities Paper Due
8.	9/25/10 A.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sensory Arena <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *VI *HI *Deaf-Blindness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 10 & 11
9.	9/25/10 P.M.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Issues in Special Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Multiculturalism *ELL *Collaboration & Co-teaching *Other • Review and Wrap-up activities • Complete Final Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 3 & 4 • Final Exam Due • Post Exam Verification Form (with grade) to TaskStream under CEC#1 by midnight on 9/28/10 so your final grade can be released

NOTE: Syllabus is subject to change as needed. Common sense and instructor discretion will be the governing forces in dealing with any circumstances that may arise that are not explicitly addressed in this syllabus. Inclement weather cancellations will shift content to online delivery format and do not excuse students from completion of requirements.