

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**EDSE 628: Elementary Reading, Curriculum, and Strategies for**  
**Students with Disabilities who Access the General Education**  
**Curriculum**  
**Fairfax 18 Section 655**  
**Spring 1, 2010**

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**Course Days:** Tuesdays, January 5-March 2 (9 sessions)  
**Location:** Fairfax HS Room A149  
**Course Time:** 4:30-9:00 pm

“When the uncapped potential of a student meets the liberating art of a teacher, a miracle unfolds”

~Mary Hatwood Futrell

“Remember in elementary school you were told that in case of fire you have to line up quietly in a single file from smallest to tallest? What is the logic in that? What, do tall people burn slower?”

~Warren Hutcherson

## **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.

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to Elementary Curriculum learning strategies, constructing effective lessons, and literacy supports. These EBPs are indicated with an asterisk (\*) in this syllabus. Evidence for the selected research-based practices is informed by meta-analysis, literature reviews/synthesis, the technical assistance networks which provide web-based resources, and the national organizations whose mission is to support students with disabilities. We address both promising and emerging practices in the field of special education. This course will provide opportunities

for students to take an active, decision-making role to thoughtfully select, modify, apply, and evaluate EBPs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

## **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 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](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 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: (selected competencies)

- 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.

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.

#### 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.

### **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.

7. Written activities using the American Psychological Association (APA) format.

## Required Text

Vaughn, S. & Bos, C. S. (2009). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

## College Of Education and Human Development Statement Of Expectations:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/professional-disposition/> for a listing of these dispositions.

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 must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/deanofstudents/honorcode/> for the full honor code.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in this 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://ods.gmu.edu/> or call 703-993-2474 to access the ODS.

## Course Expectations:

- **Attendance:** Students are expected to (a) attend all classes during the course, (b) arrive on time, (c) stay for the duration of the class time and (d) complete all assignments to earn the **5-point class participation grade**. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant, active participation are expected. Attendance and professional participation at all sessions is very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Missing **more than one class** or **repeated** tardiness/leaving early will result in the loss of this 5-point participation grade. Please notify me **in advance or as soon as possible** by phone or email if you will not be able to attend class.

- **Workload:** In-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements require outside class time. Students are expected to allot approximately three hours for class study and preparation for *each* credit hour weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments.
- **Written and Oral Language: APA Style** is 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.) You are required to use APA guidelines for all course assignments. This website links to APA format guidelines: <http://apastyle.apa.org/>  
We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). We will also strive to replace the term “Mental Retardation” with “Intellectual Disabilities” in our oral and written communication in accordance with terminology choices in the disability community.
- **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 APA citation. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. 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 Dean's Office.
- **Email:** Please note that your GMU email will be used exclusively for this course and your Blackboard account requires the username and password for your GMU email account: Please activate and forward your gmU email to your most-checked account! Go to <http://mail.gmu.edu>. Click on Options tab at the top of the page. Click on Settings link on the left of the page. Type in your most-checked email account in the box labeled Mail Forwarding.
- **Be an Informed Student:** Negotiating all the requirements for your Master's and/or VA Licensure is extremely complex. It is recommended that you schedule a phone/email or in-person appointment with the Special Education Advisor, Jancy Templeton ([jtemple1@gmu.edu](mailto:jtemple1@gmu.edu) 703/993-2387). You may also schedule with the Cohort Advisor, Terry Werner ([twerner@gmu.edu](mailto:twerner@gmu.edu) 703-993-2064). Doing so each semester will ensure that you rectify any outstanding issues, are timely with all necessary paperwork, and are ultimately in good standing to graduate on time.



## Assessment of Course Requirements:

EVALUATION	POINTS
• Class Participation (attendance and in class)	5
• Blackboard Discussion Board	5
• Research Review*	30*
• Unit Plan	30
• Group Presentation	30
	<u>Total</u> 100

### \*TASKSTREAM SUBMISSION: Electronic Portfolios

This assignment is the “signature” assignment for the student portfolio and must be submitted digitally to Taskstream, your electronic portfolio. **You should enter it as the signature assignment for CEC standard 4.** If you’ve never submitted to TaskStream before, you will need to self-enroll into TaskStream. You can access the Special Education website for information on TaskStream and other GMU-specific information: <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/taskstream/>. Every class you take in this program will have a signature assignment that must be submitted. In addition, you will be submitting other documents from your courses to complete your portfolio electronically. Always save electronic copies of your work!!

\*Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one time course or part of an undergraduate minor). 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.

### GRADING CRITERIA

95-100% = A  
90-94% = A-  
85-89% = B  
80-84% = B-  
75-79% = C  
< 75% = F

- All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Consult with me **in advance** if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, 5 points per day will be deducted from your assignment grade for late papers **unless** I have agreed to an extension (may be used one time

only). Maximum extension is 6 days. Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit.

- All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will be required to document your work with the GMU Writing Center during this course to improve your skills.
- Course participants wishing to suggest other learning activities may, with my approval, substitute these for a required activity.

## **Using Blackboard:**

**GMU's** Blackboard will be used to post important information and presentations for this course and for you to check grades and communicate with your classmates.

You should check Blackboard at least once a week and right before class to make sure you are informed about class/GMU issues.

Your GMU email address must be activated in order to use the **Blackboard** system.

The following is how you will access **Blackboard**:

Enter the URL <http://mymason.gmu.edu> into your browser location field.

Your GMU user name and current password are used to login. You will begin using Blackboard following class session #2 of this course.

## **Major Learning Activities:**

***(Please note that student and family privacy must be protected in all written and oral communication. Please refrain from including any information that would jeopardize compliance with FERPA regulations)***

### **I. Research Review (30% of final grade)**

***Note: This assignment must be submitted to Task Stream before a grade can be given. Submit this paper as the signature assignment for CEC Standard 4.***

Each student will locate and analyze 5 articles from peer-reviewed special education journals that summarize research on a given facet of elementary instruction for students with disabilities who access the general curriculum.



Select 5 **research articles from professional journals** (a list of commonly used peer-reviewed journals is available to you on the external links section of Blackboard).

- The focus of the articles must pertain to an elementary level research-based strategy (ies) for teaching reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, and social skills for individuals with mild disabilities (ED, LD, and/or, MR)

**or**

- the focus must be on cognitive strategies in self-regulation, metacognition, study skills, attention, memory, or motivation for individuals with mild disabilities of elementary age.

Prepare an **introduction** to the topic and your findings, a written **summary of each research article**, including the complete citation, with a special emphasis on the participants, strategies, materials, and findings. Do not simply copy the abstracts, but write in your own words what was undertaken in the study and the results. Finally, write a **conclusion** of the summaries **as a whole**, and what the **implications for practice** are for the elementary special education teacher—in other words, based on your research review, what should the elementary special education teacher implement in the classroom for students with mild disabilities?

## II. Reading Unit (30% of final grade)

Individually or in a small group, prepare an elementary reading unit plan, that is, a 1.5-2-hour block for 5 days that incorporates the 5 components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics/alphabetic principle, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) each day. You will use the Active Teaching Model (see Blackboard) to structure the lesson. The unit plan should address specific well-defined skills from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Elementary (Grades 1-5) SOLs (<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/go/Sols/home.shtml>) in Reading (You'll look under the English SOLs to find Reading standards). Your unit plan must include the following items:

- A **unit overview** including the Grade level, SOL(s), **Measurable** Unit objectives, and reference to the lesson in which each is introduced.
- 5 lesson plans structured according to the Active Teaching Model
- Samples of at least one activity (worksheet, graphic organizer, etc.) for **each** lesson that show differentiation for students with ELN.
- Evidence of at least one instructional strategy from your text that is geared to assist a student to access, organize and/or recall the reading material. The strategy must be highlighted or noted in the plan and a sample of the content integrated into the strategy must be present, e.g. a first letter mnemonic devised to teach the steps in passage comprehension)
- Each day's lesson must have some form of assessment. Assessments may be informal (teacher observation) or formal. However 2 formal sample assessments for the unit are required. One should be a pre-test or mid-unit

check, and the other an end of unit assessment. One may be a traditional test like those provided by publishers, (with some adaptations noted) or a cbm (curriculum-based assessment). You may be creative, but make sure you address your objectives.

- If you use commercially available lessons, parts of lessons, or assessments, **YOU MUST CITE THE SOURCE!!!!**
- Identify and show evidence of the use of technology. This may be something you use to instruct, or software you used to construct student worksheets, templates or assessments. It also includes websites used as sources for information, or instructional materials.
- Include a reference section for your unit.

### **III. Group Presentation: Elementary Instructional Strategy Training (30% of final grade)**

Your group will present a strategy to be used to help students acquire or retain content area information or skills. Your group will be assigned an instructional area such as Reading, Writing, Spelling, Math, Science, Social Studies or Study Skills and will teach the rest of the class the strategy. Your strategy should have broad application to be considered effective.

Your presentation should include an introduction which features a statement of the challenges the strategy is meant to address, a research section describing/ supporting the effectiveness of the strategy (at least 3 references), a detailed description of how to implement the strategy, a handout for each of your classmates summarizing the strategy, examples of how the strategy can be adapted for different ages/grades, and a resource/reference section. You will have 45 minutes for your presentation, and each group member must contribute equally to the development and presentation of the content.

### **IV. Class Participation: (5% of final grade)**

- Active and thoughtful participation in class and collaboration with peers in class activities
- Evidence that readings have been completed and student is prepared for class.
- ***No more than 1 absence/no excessive tardiness/leaving early***

### **V. Blackboard Discussion Board (5% of final grade)**

- Comprehensive response to both prompt and classmates' postings

## Research/Review Rubric (30 points possible)

	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate	Missing
<p><b>Background/Introduction</b>            Student provides a clear and focused introduction to the topic of research. Content area or strategy is fully described (5 points)</p>					
<p><b>Summaries of Studies:</b>            Each study is thoroughly yet concisely described and own conclusions are drawn about each study. Citations are accurate, studies/articles are current (no more than 8 years since published) (10 points)</p>					
<p><b>Reflection</b>            Summarizes conclusions about the studies as a whole <b>and</b> provides implications for practice for the elementary special educator. Includes rationales for the statements made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depth of reflection &amp; depth of linkages to other course readings, course content, and teaching in general.</li> </ul> (10 points)					
<p><b>Writing</b>            Reflection is written to graduate-level standards, in APA style, and there are <u>very few</u> writing or printing errors. (5 points)</p>					

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit Plan (30 points possible)

	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate	Missing
<p><b>Overview</b>            Student(s) provide a clear introduction to the unit including Students/Teachers, grade level, SOLs addressed, <i>measurable</i> objectives, and links to lessons (5 points)</p>					
<p><b>Lessons</b>            5 Complete lessons are provided following the Active Teaching Model. Samples of student activities are provided. (10 points)</p>					
<p><b>Instructional Strategy(ies)</b>            are identified for the unit and rationales provided as to how they will help students with disabilities access the standards and improve reading skills. Use of technology in lesson planning is evident (5 points)</p>					
<p><b>Assessment</b>            One for each lesson is described, along with 2 samples of formal assessments for the entire unit. (5 points)</p>					
<p><b>Writing</b>            Reflection is written to graduate-level standards, in APA style, and there are <u>very few</u> writing or printing errors. A reference section is included (5 points)</p>					

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

## Group Project Presentation (30 points possible)

	Exemplary	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate	Missing
<b>Overview</b> Students provide a clear statement of need for strategy, supporting research, and application for strategy across age/grade levels (5 points)					
<b>Handouts</b> Give an overview and steps to teach the strategy to elementary students. Concise and effective. (5 points)					
<b>Presentation</b> All group members participate, Presentation sticks to time limit, is lively, interesting, and it is clear that much preparation has gone into its development (10 points)					
<b>Resource/Reference Section</b> It will be clear to peers how to find out more about the strategy and how to apply it. Citations are in APA style (5 points)					
<b>Electronic Collaboration</b> The presentation is submitted electronically to the instructor and is intelligible to anyone who accesses Blackboard (5 points)					

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Proposed Class Schedule

Session Date	Topic	Reading to do <i>after</i> this session	Assignments Due <i>this</i> Class Session
1 1/5	Course Introduction Enduring Understandings Planning and Instructional Delivery	Chapters 1, 2	GMU email account ready
2 1/12	Collaboration and IEP development RTI*	Chapters 3, 5	
3 1/19	Classroom Management and Behavior*	Chapter 4	Discussion Board due by 9am
4 1/26	Oral Language and Reading*	Chapters 6, 7	Research Review due
5 2/2	Reading*	Chapter 8	
6 2/9	Language Arts*	Chapter 9	
7 2/16	Content Area Learning, Vocabulary, Study Skills*	Chapter 10	Unit Plan due
8 2/23	Mathematics*	Chapter 11	
9 3/2	Learning from each other: Best practices in elementary instruction		Group Project due

*This syllabus is subject to change to meet class needs*