



**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education**

**EDSE 540 670: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Who Access the
General Education Curriculum**

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Wednesdays
Jan 12-Mar 16th, 2011
4:30-8:30 PM
Fairfax HS, Room A149

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

EDSE 540 course content examines the characteristics of students with mild disabilities. Course content focuses on etiology, contributing factors, conditions that affect learning, the challenges of identifying students with disabilities, and the need for academic, social, and emotional accommodations and support.

STUDENT OUTCOMES:

The purpose of this course is to assist students in developing a solid foundation for understanding learning acquisition and behaviors of children with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities. EDSE 540 is also designed to prepare students to interact with other professionals about children with these disabilities.

Relationship of Courses to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:

EDSE 540 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Masters Degree Program. 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. Upon successful

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completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the CEC standards in relation to the student outcomes identified in Table 1 or as listed on the following web site:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to educational research and special education research designs specifically. 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.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Henley, Algozzine & Ramsey, *Characteristics of and Strategies for Teaching Students with Mild Disabilities*, 6th edition, ABLongman, ISBN 0205608388

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

Class sessions may include a variety of formats and integrate instructional technology with lecture, discussion, guest presenters, video and small group activities. Students will be expected to engage in dialog with the instructor and peers cooperatively and collaboratively; mirroring their current or future roles as special educators.

Alignment of Outcomes and Requirements with key CEC/NCATE Standards

CEC/NCATE STANDARDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	COURSE REQUIREMENTS
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices of today.• Compare the history of education for students with emotional and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading assignments• Small group discussion• Journal abstracts

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<p>to influence the field of special education and the education and treatment of individuals with disabilities both in school and society.</p>	<p>behavioral disorders, students with learning disabilities students with mild intellectual disabilities.</p>	
<p>Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners Special educators understand the similarities and differences in human development and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ELN). Special educators understand how exceptional conditions interact with the domains of human development and they use this knowledge to respond to varying abilities and behaviors. Special educators understand how disabilities impact families, and the individual’s ability to learn, interact socially, and live as contributing community members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define <i>learning disability, emotional disturbance, and mild intellectual disabilities</i>. • Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between <i>normal</i> and <i>atypical</i> behaviors. • Describe characteristics of young children and adolescents with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and/or mild intellectual disabilities. • Compare at least three conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities and/or mild intellectual disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading assignments • Small group discussions • Case Study
<p>Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences Special educators understand the effects that an exceptional condition has on learning in school and throughout life. Special educators understand that beliefs, traditions,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives. • Identify various procedures and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study report • Reading assignments • Field Observations • Final exam

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<p>and values across and within cultures affect relationships among and between students, families, and school. Special educators seek to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the disability to affect academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. Learning differences and their interactions are the basis for individualizing instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning.</p>	<p>practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self-understanding and confidence as learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and discuss a range of learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school. 	
<p>Standard 6: Language Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which disabilities can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe at least one theory of how children develop language.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussion • Class activities • Final exam
<p>Standard 8: Assessment Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems. • Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems. • Describe what an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussion • Class activities • Case study report • Journal Abstracts • Student presentation • Final exam

	Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.	
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GENERAL EDSE 540 CLASS 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 **10 point class participation grade for each class**. 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. **Please notify me *in advance* 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 class study and preparation time weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments. **The result of late work will be the loss of 10 points per day until the assignment is received by the instructor.** Individual situations will be addressed with students outside of class.
- **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

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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 the class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the Dean's Office.**

- **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 703/993-2387). 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.

GMU STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g.,

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individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].

- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>]

GSE faculty may add at the conclusion:

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

RHT faculty may add at the conclusion:

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

EVALUATION

POINTS

- | | |
|---|------------|
| • Class Participation (attendance and in class) | 100 points |
| • Case Study Paper* | 100 points |
| • Journal Summaries Paper | 100 points |
| • Final Exam | 100 points |

TOTAL POINTS: 400 points

***This assignment is the "signature" assignment for the student portfolio. Students are required to post the signature case study in GMU's portfolio TASKSTREAM site no later than Wednesday, March 2nd, 2011. Failure to post a signature case study for evaluation under Standards 2 & 3 will result in an INCOMPLETE grade for the course until posted.**

GRADING CRITERIA

95-100% = A

90-94% = A-

85-89% = B

80-84% = B-

70-79% = C

< 70% = F

TaskStream

Students must retain electronic copies of all graded course products to document their progress in the Special Education program. Products from these classes are likely to become part of your individual performance based assessment portfolio (EDSE 791 & 792).

Each course in the program has an identified signature assignment. A signature assignment is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC standard(s) connected to the course. A signature assignment is evaluated in two manners. The first is for a grade based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for GSE program evaluation. Each student must add the identified signature assignment for each course into the TaskStream portfolio system. Additionally, students completing the portfolio courses will build their portfolios electronically via TaskStream (<https://www.taskstream.com/pub/>). In order to assure your signature assignments for these courses will be (a) included in your electronic portfolio and (b) available for your instructor to evaluate in connection with the GSE program evaluation, you must electronically add the completed signature assignment to your electronic portfolio, via TaskStream.

The electronic submission to TaskStream is likely to be in addition to the version you submit to your instructor for a graded evaluation. Instructions for submitting work to TaskStream will be provided to you.

MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

100 points: Class Attendance and Participation (10 points each class)
Completion of weekly class activities, participation in class discussions, and project presentation update discussions throughout the semester. **Points missed due to absences can not be made up. Excessive absences can result in additional penalties and potential withdrawal from class.**

100 points: Case Study Report (100 points)
Due Date WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2nd, 2011
A comprehensive case study on a student with emotional disability, learning disability, intellectual disability, or high functioning autism will be completed. **A MODEL PAPER WILL BE PROVIDED.** The case study should include the following components:

- Student's demographic data (**Draft 2/2**)
- Description of school and student's community (**Draft 2/2**)

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- Educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, pre-referral interventions, results of multidisciplinary evaluation, special education classification, description and location of educational service provision, related services) **(Draft 2/2)**
- Educational goals and objectives, classroom accommodations **(Draft 2/2)**
- Observational information (at least two class periods of observations specifically related to student goals, objectives, and accommodations) **(Draft 2/9)**
- Parent interviews (related to education goals, objectives, accommodations, and any other relevant issues.) **(Draft 2/9)**
- Additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications **(Draft 2/9)**
- Summary and synthesis (comparison of student's characteristics with those described in the textbook or other research, **i.e., which characteristics were identified in your student? So What? What have you learned from this case study about teaching students with learning disabilities?** **(Draft 2/9)**)
- Appendices - to include student work samples, parent interview questions/answers. **(Draft 2/9)**
- **CASE STUDY IS DUE March 2nd, 2011.** Be prepared to **present your case study in class orally on one of the following dates: March 2nd, 9th, or 16th, 2011.** Be creative in your presentation style!

100 points: Abstracts of Journal Articles (100 points)

Due Date WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16th, 2011

- Each student will summarize three (3) journal articles that are relevant to the needs of the student chosen for the case study. Papers chosen for this requirement must be from peer-reviewed published journals (no ERIC documents!) and should be data-based examinations of issues relevant to the ED / LD field. Appropriate sources for journal articles include: Exceptional Children, The Journal of Learning Disabilities, Learning Disabilities Quarterly, The Journal of Special Education, Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, Remedial and Special Education, Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, etc... **PLEASE DO NOT USE A STUDY WHICH IS NOT INTERVENTION RESEARCH.**
- The purpose of this assignment is **twofold: first** to identify research-based findings that are relevant to the needs of your case study student and **second**, to distill the major points of the article to a one-page summary. The abstract should be typed and include an

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introduction to the students needs, followed by 3 summaries with an APA style citation at the top of the page. Each entry should consist of two parts labeled 1.-Summary and 2.-Critique. Finally, a conclusion that ties together the 3 summaries' findings should be presented as an action plan for assisting the student to meet an identified need. A "so what" section is asked to state what you have learned about the student to enhance your teaching practice. **A MODEL PAPER WILL BE PROVIDED.** All articles should be from current literature and should not be more than seven years old. **You must use your own words to summarize but be sure to cite liberally!**

100 points: Take Home Final Exam (100 points)

Due Date WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9th, 2011 NO LATER THAN 11:00 PM

- An exam that covers course content will be provided as a take home examination. The exam will be based on case studies and other class related topics. It will be provided on the second night of class and you may choose to work on it throughout the semester as information is shared and discussed.

Course Calendar (subject to change based on class needs)

Class	Topics	Assignments	Due This Class Session
Wednesday, January 12th (1)	Registration, Introductions, and Backgrounds Cohort Structure and Questions Syllabus Review + Education Library Overview Context of Special Education Introduction- review of exceptionalities & legislation	Chapters 1 & 2	N/A

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<p>Wednesday, January 19th (2)</p>	<p>Overview of Students with Mild Disabilities</p>	<p>Read Chapters 1 & 2; start thinking about a student for case study assignment</p>	<p>Read Chapters 1 & 2</p>
<p>Wednesday, January 26th (3)</p>	<p>Students with Learning Disabilities</p>	<p>Chapter 5</p>	<p>Read Chapter 5</p> <p>Please select the student that you will use for the case study by this date.</p>
<p>Wednesday, February 2nd (4)</p>	<p>Students with Emotional Disabilities</p> <p>Classroom Management</p> <p>Guest Speaker- TBD</p>	<p>Chapter 7 & 10</p>	<p>Read Chapters 4, 9, & 10</p> <p>First four sections of DRAFT case study paper DUE:</p> <p align="center"> -Student Demographics -Description of School and Neighborhood -Student's Educational History -Student's Current Areas of Need </p>
<p>Wednesday, February 9th (5)</p>	<p>Students with Learning Disabilities, cont.</p> <p>Access to the Curriculum, Accommodations, Modifications</p> <p><u>Guest Speaker -- Instructional Best Practices</u></p>	<p>Chapters 4 & 9</p>	<p>Read Chapters 6, 7, & 8</p> <p>Last sections of DRAFT case study paper DUE::</p> <p align="center"> -Observations -Parent Interview Summary -Student Interview Summary -Instructional Recommendations -So What -Summary and Synthesis of Case Study -References -Appendices </p>
<p>Wednesday, February 16th (6)</p>	<p>Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities</p>	<p>Chapter 3 & 8</p>	<p>Read Chapter 3 & 8</p>

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<p>Wednesday, February 23rd (7)</p>	<p>Students with High Functioning Autism</p> <p>Writing Effective IEPs and Educational Reports</p> <p>Co-teaching</p> <p>Guest Speaker- TBD-Asperger's</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Co-teaching</p>	<p>Chapters 6 & 7</p>	<p>Read Chapters 6 & 7</p>
<p>Wednesday, March 2nd (8)</p>	<p>Collaboration and Inclusive Practices</p> <p>Review journal studies paper/APA format</p> <p>BEGIN Case Study Presentations</p>	<p>Chapters 6 & 11</p> <p>BEGIN case study presentations</p>	<p>Read Chapter 6</p> <p>CASE STUDY PAPER DUE</p> <p>Start Case Study Presentations</p> <p>PLEASE POST YOUR CASE STUDY IN TASKSTREAM NO LATER THAN TODAY!</p>
<p>Wednesday, March 9th (9)</p>	<p>Building Family Partnerships</p> <p>Case Study Presentations</p>	<p>Chapters 6 & 11</p>	<p>Read Chapter 11</p> <p>Case Study Presentations</p> <p>TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM DUE NO LATER THAN 11:00 PM TONIGHT</p>
<p>Wednesday, March 16th (10)</p>	<p>LAST CLASS</p> <p>Case Study Presentations</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Finish Case Study Presentations</p> <p>Course Evaluations</p> <p>JOURNAL SUMMARIES PAPER DUE</p>

Case Study Assignment Rubric

Case Study	Points Possible (100)	Points Received
Writing Style Mechanics/APA	10 points	
Student Demographic Information	10 points	
Description of School and Neighborhood	10 points	
Educational History	10 points	
IEP Goals and Objectives	10 points	
Parent Interviews	10 points	
Instructional Recommendations	10 points	
Summary and Synthesis	10 points	
Observational Information/Appendices (student work, etc...)	10 points	
Presentation of Case Study	10 points	
TOTAL POINTS	_____/100 POINTS	
COMMENTS:		

Journal Abstracts Scoring Rubric

Journal Abstracts	Points Possible (100)	Points Received
Writing Style/Quality Mechanics/APA	10 points	
Introduction to Student's Needs (based on your case study)	10 points	
Quality of Summaries	30 points	
Quality of Critiques	30 points	
Conclusion/Appropriateness of Recommendations	20 points	
TOTAL POINTS	_____/100 POINTS	
COMMENTS:		