



George Mason University
Graduate School of Education

EDSE 540 - Section 671

Characteristics of Students with Emotional Disturbance and Learning Disabilities--Spring 2011 – Cohort - Loudoun County Public Schools

REQUIRED TEXT:

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

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Class day/time: Wednesdays, 4:30-8:30 PM
Class location: Stonebridge HS, Room L516

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the characteristics of students with mild disabilities. Emphasis is placed 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. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the CEC standards in relation to the student outcomes identified in Table 1.

Evidence-Based Practices

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to the characteristics of students with mild disabilities, etiology of mild disabilities, inclusionary practices, and inclusionary practices. These EBPs are indicated with an asterisk (*) in this syllabus' schedule. 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.

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 future roles as special educators.

Alignment of Outcomes and Requirements with Key CEC/NCATE Standards

CEC/NCATE STANDARDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	COURSE REQUIREMENTS
<p>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 to influence the field of special education and the education and treatment of individuals with disabilities both in school and society.</p>	<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 behavioral disorders, students with learning disabilities students with mild intellectual disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading assignments • Small group discussion • Journal abstracts
<p>Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners Special educators understand the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define <i>learning disability, emotional disturbance, and mild</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading assignments • Small group

<p>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>	<p><i>intellectual disabilities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, 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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives. • Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self-understanding and confidence as learners. • Describe and discuss a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study report • Reading assignments • Field Observations • Final exam

<p>options. Learning differences and their interactions are the basis for individualizing instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning.</p>	<p>range of learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school.</p>	
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<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 Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussion • Class activities • Case study report • Journal Abstracts • Student presentation • Final exam

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. Missing **more than one class** or **repeated** tardiness will result in your participation grade being dropped 5 points for each additional absence/excessive tardiness. 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.
- **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 (5th 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 the 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: Please activate and forward your gmU email to your most-checked account!!!
- **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.
- 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 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 at the beginning of the course. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the ODS.

EVALUATION

POINTS

• Class Participation (attendance and in class)	100 points
• Case Study*	100 points
• Blackboard Reflections	30 points
• Journal Summaries Paper	60 points
• Final Exam	50 points

TOTAL POINTS: 340 points

*This assignment is the “signature” assignment for the student portfolio

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GMU Special Education program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your

portfolio classes to document your satisfactory progress through the GMU program and the CEC performance based standards.

GRADING CRITERIA

95-100% = A

90-94% = A-

85-89% = B

80-84% = B-

70-79% = C

< 70% = F

TASKSTREAM ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Every student 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). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. 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 a F nine weeks into the following semester.

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.**

Three Online Discussions/Reflections: (30 points – 10 points each)

Due dates: 1/19; 2/9; 2/23 by 4:00 PM

- Each class member is expected to participate online on **Blackboard's Discussion Board**. The instructor will post discussion assignments that should be addressed after selected class sessions (do not complete ahead of time), and thoughtful, detailed responses that address the topic *and* your classmates' reflections are expected ***no later than 4:00 pm of the next class session***. A total of 3 responses must be posted **ON TIME** for full credit (**no late postings will be accepted**).
- It is highly recommended that students compose their responses in a word-processing program so they can be proofread and edited prior to posting. Responses can then be copied and pasted into the Discussion

Board. Doing so also reduces the possibility that responses are “lost” before submission.

Abstracts of Journal Articles (60 points)

Due Date: 2/23

- 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. A word document of common journals is included under Course Documents on Blackboard.
- 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 an 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. All articles should be from current literature and should not be more that three (3) years old. **You must use your own words to summarize.**

*** Case Study Report (100 points)**

Due Date: 3/9

A comprehensive case study on a student with emotional or learning disability will be completed. The case study should include the following components:

- Student’s demographic data
- Description of school and student’s community
- 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)
- Educational goals and objectives, classroom accommodations

- Observational information (at least two class periods of observations specifically related to student goals, objectives, and accommodations)
- Parent interviews (related to education goals, objectives, accommodations, and any other relevant issues.)
- Additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications
- 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? Integrate at least three (3) sources from the literature with what you observed in your case study.)
- Appendices - to include student work samples, parent interview questions/answers.
- Be prepared to present your case study in class orally

*Signature assignment

Final Exam (50 points)

Due Date: 3/16 (in class)

- An exam that covers course content will be administered as an in-class examination. The exam will be based on case studies and include IEP-writing.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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

Course Calendar (subject to change based on class needs)

Class	Topics	Assignments	Due This Class Session
Jan. 12	Registration, Introductions, and Backgrounds Cohort Structure and Questions Syllabus Review Context of Special Education	Review Blackboard Site (will be logged on once GMU registers you)	Bring your textbook.
Jan. 19	Overview of Students with Mild Disabilities	Chapter 2 and 3	Read Chapters 2 and 3 Blackboard #1 DUE
Jan. 26	Students with Learning Disabilities	Chapter 5	Read Chapter 5
Feb. 2	Students with Emotional Disabilities	Chapter 4 & 9	Read Chapter 4 and 9

Feb. 9	Collaboration and Inclusive Practices Building Family Partnerships	Chapters 6 & 11	Blackboard #2 DUE Read Chapters 6 & 11
Feb. 16	Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities	Chapter 3 and 8	Read Chapter 3 & 8
Feb. 23	Writing Effective IEPs and Educational Reports Co-teaching	Chapters 6 & 7	JOURNAL SUMMARIES DUE Read Chapter 7
Mar. 2	Learning and teaching	Chapter 7 and 10	Read Chapter 7 & 10
Mar. 9	Case Study Presentations		CASE STUDIES DUE Blackboard #3
Mar. 16	Final Exam (in class)	None	In-class FINAL EXAM HAVE A GREAT BREAK!

Journal Abstracts Scoring Rubric

Journal Abstracts	Points Possible	Points Received
Abstract paragraph	25	
APA Style and Writing Quality	25	
Introduction to Student's Needs (based on your case study)	10	
Quality of Summaries	10	
Quality of Critiques	10	
Conclusion/Appropriateness of Recommendations	20	
Total Points	100	

Case Study Scoring Rubric

Case Study	Points Possible	Points Received
Writing/APA	1	
Student's Demographic Data	2	
Description of School and Neighborhood	2	
Educational History	5	
IEP Goals and Objectives	3	
Parent Interviews	3	
Additional Recommendations	3	
Summary and Synthesis	3	
Observational Information/Appendices (Student work, etc.)	3	
Total Points	25	