

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM – SPECIAL EDUCATION
EDSE 665, CS1: Families of Children with Special Needs (3 credits)

Semester and Year: Summer Term C 2011
Course Day/Time: M/W/F, 7:00-10:05pm
Course Location: GMU Fairfax campus, Finley Building 119

Instructor: Jennifer McQuillan, Ph.D
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Contact Phone: 904-476-4941 (Cell)
Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on strategies for developing culturally appropriate family-professional partnerships to benefit children with special needs, explores theories and research that support a family-centered approach, and includes family and professional rights and responsibilities in the special education process.

This course is offered as a part of the special education and early childhood education programs and is open to enrolled graduate students. It is a required course for students seeking licensure in Early Childhood Special Education and Autism Graduate certificate.

Equivalent to ECED 524

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the Early Childhood Special Education program or permission of the instructor.

Objectives/Competencies

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Discuss theories and research supporting a family-centered approach to special education.
2. Discuss the role of cultural context in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
3. Analyze personal values, beliefs and cultural biases that influence their work with families.
4. Describe underlying principles and ways to work with families that are both effective and enabling.
5. Identify strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children with special needs.
6. Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children with special needs.

7. Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family perspectives.
8. Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
9. Adopt a strengths-based problem solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to partnering with families.

*Advising contact information:

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. You may wish to contact Jancy Templeton, GMU Special Education Advisor, at jtemple1@gmu.edu or 703-993-2387. Please be prepared with your G number when you contact her.

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

Required Texts:

Turnbull, A.P., Turnbull, H.R., Erwin, E.J., Soodak, L.C., & Shogren, K.A. (2011). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Positive outcomes through partnerships and trust* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Required Recent (2009, 2010, 2011) Peer-Reviewed Journal Readings: To be determined and selected by students throughout the semester for the Annotated Bibliography.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Course's Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization

This course is a required course in GMU's Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) master's degree and licensure program and part of the 15-credit Autism Graduate Certificate. The ECSE program is an approved program of the Commonwealth of Virginia and accredited by the NCATE national teacher education accreditation system. Thus, the course content has been developed with reference to the licensure and accreditation standards for teachers of young children with disabilities identified by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Council for Exceptional Children, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children. These standards include:

1. The ability to demonstrate an understanding of the role of the family in supporting learning.
2. The ability to understand children in the context of family, culture, and community.
3. The ability to establish positive and collaborative relationships with families as partners in teaching and learning.
4. The ability to provide family-centered intervention.

In addition, the course has been developed to be congruent with the mission of the College of Education and Human Development as a unit. Specifically, the course addresses the College's commitment to families and communities, to research-based practices, and to social justice.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This is an interactive course that requires active participation of students. In-class and out-of-class readings play a critical part in preparing students for discussion. Small and large group activities will enable students to practice what they have been learning. In-class and at-home activities will be structured to encourage individuals to reflect on their own families and on the families with whom they touch each and everyday through their work.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS:

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/>].

Keep Products from This Course for Future Use in Your Professional Portfolio!

For student evaluation, program evaluation, and accreditation purposes, students will be required to submit a signature assignment from each of their Special Education courses to Taskstream, an electronic portfolio system.

A Taskstream assignment has not been assigned for this course, however; for future courses at George Mason University, students completing Midpoint and Final Portfolio courses will use Taskstream to create a full portfolio of their work based on assignments completed throughout their program. For this reason, students will need to retain electronic copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE Special Education program.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Absences:

Understanding you are individuals with full and active lives, who have made the intellectual and financial commitment to regularly attend class, there may be an instance when you are not able to attend. It is then your responsibility to make arrangements to obtain notes, handouts, and lecture details from another student (it is recommended that you have two colleagues in the course for this). Students who are absent are held responsible for the material covered and assignments due as if in attendance. Please be sure to notify the classmate(s) in sufficient time for them to be of assistance for you. You are required to notify the Instructor about absences in advance or within 24 hours after an absence. Be aware any points earned for participation in class activities, during a time of absence, will not be earned and cannot be made up. If you need to miss, for any reason, more than two class sessions, contact the Instructor immediately to discuss options for withdrawing and completing the course during another semester.

Assignments and Readings and Due Dates:

For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, be prepared for class, demonstrate professional behavior (see *Professional Disposition Criteria* at <http://www.gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions), and complete all assignments with professional quality in a timely manner. To successfully complete this course, students need to adhere to the due dates for specific readings and assignments to be completed. If you feel you cannot adhere to the schedule noted in the syllabus, please contact the Instructor immediately to discuss options for withdrawing and completing the course during another semester.

Recommended Websites to Explore:

NOTE: Internet and web resources are not the same as peer-reviewed professional journal articles. Web sites will be posted on the course Bb that contain information that your Instructor recommends out of the millions of websites on reading on the internet! Be sure that you

distinguish, however, between peer-reviewed professional journals and web resources. More about this distinction (as well as distinguishing professional journals from magazines) will be discussed in class.

Writing Resources and Support:

One type of writing support during this course is your use of relevant parts of the APA manual. As you're completing writing assignments, you may find it helpful to review parts of the APA manual, such as: For example:

- Chapter 3 on writing style (3.05 to 3.11)
- Chapter 3 on grammar (3.18 to 3.23)
- Chapter 3 on guidelines to reduce bias in language (3.12 to 3.17)
- Chapter 4 on punctuation, spelling, capitalization, italics, or abbreviations (4.01 to 4.30)
- Chapter 6 on quotations (6.03 to 6.10) Paraphrase, please (refer to other information on plagiarism in the APA manual as well as other resources and notes in this syllabus)
- Chapter 6 on reference citations in text (6.11 to 6.21)
- Chapter 6 on Reference list (6.22 to 6.32)

APA Formatting Guidelines are also available at <http://www.psywww.com/resource/apacrib.htm> This website is offered as a companion to the APA style manual. *However, it should not be considered a substitute for directly consulting the APA manual, 65th edition for standard of procedures for applying APA style.* Additional APA help URLs are available on the GSE library URL and may be available on the course Blackboard site. Caution with using web sites or resources other than the APA manual because some may have erroneous information on them.

Another type of writing support during this course is available via 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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Course requirements include readings (e.g., texts, online resources, professional journal articles that are independently accessed by students) and activities (both during and between course sessions) that prepare the student to acquire and/or increase their knowledge and skills in teaching reading and language to students with disabilities. A major requirement is implementation of a comprehensive instructional technique with a student with a disability (see the Case Study). Both formative (ungraded) and summative (graded) performance-based assessments (e.g., evaluations, projects, assignments) are used in this course. The final course grade is based on the quantity of points students earn through timely submission of high-quality summative performance-based evaluations.

Late assignments:

There are absolutely no “redo” and/or “retake” on assignments. Full earned credit given for assignments turned in on time (class start time for the due date, unless otherwise stated in this syllabus). Five percent of the total assignment points are deducted for each 24-hour period (or

portion of) that passes after the class start time for the due date. All assignments must be typed. The APA format for clear and excellent written language and technical aspects for citations and formatting must be used. Refer to the APA Publication Manual 6th edition. A final grade of Incomplete will be considered only due to extreme extenuating circumstances; please contact the Instructor.

Student Self-Management for Calculating Course Grade Based on Points Earned on Performance-Based Summative Evaluations	
Title of Performance-Based Summative Evaluations	Points Earned / Total Points
1. Annotated Bibliography	/ 20
2. Collaboration Opportunity	/ 30
3. Family Story Project	/ 30
4. Family Story Presentation	/ 10
5. Participation and Preparation for In-Class Activities	/ 10
Total # of points students can earn throughout this course	/100
<p>Students can calculate their points earned / total points available at any date in the semester to determine what their grade-to-date is. This is particularly important for students to self-evaluate their performance prior to key dates in the George Mason University schedule, such as withdrawal dates with varying tuition penalties and mid-term progress self-evaluation.</p>	

GRADING SCALE:

94 – 100	=	A
90 – 93	=	A-
87 – 89	=	B+
84 – 86	=	B
80 – 83	=	B-
70 – 79	=	C
< 69	=	F

Description of Formative and Performance-Based Summative Evaluations for this Course

Formative Progress

(ungraded tasks)

1 Formative Evaluation: Feedback Regarding Course Progress

The second type of formative evaluation relates to feedback from the Instructor regarding progress with course assignments and content. This feedback may occur during class time (note that limited opportunities during class sessions are available for individualized feedback), during individually scheduled conferences with the Instructor (note that this is the best way to receive individual feedback and should be initiated by the student as needed throughout the semester), and through work turned in throughout the semester. Additionally, participation during class discussions and application of concepts to a student's program area (e.g., students with autism) also indicates progress on summative evaluations.

Performance-Based Summative Evaluations

(scored to accumulate points for a final grade)

1 Summative Evaluation: Annotated Bibliography = 20 points

Choose an area of interest related to family collaboration and special education for students with disabilities. Areas of interests include but are not limited to: behavior management strategies, precision teaching, school-wide positive behavior support, social skills instruction, family collaboration practices, functional behavior assessments, applied behavior analysis, or teaching students with Autism or other developmental delays.

Find 5 recent (2009, 2010, 2011) peer-reviewed journal articles and complete an annotated bibliography. Complete a written annotated bibliography of no more than 5 pages in length (including a reference list) using correct APA format. Students will also present on their chosen bibliography topics in class using a PowerPoint modality. PowerPoint presentation should be 15-20 minutes.

2 Summative Evaluation: Collaboration Opportunity (Partner Work) = 30 points

This assignment requires a critical look at current practices and opportunities for partnerships with families in a chosen setting. Students will work with partners to compile a paper that: 1) describes the physical and social setting of the school/program, what opportunities there are for family collaboration, in what ways families receive messages that are welcoming, how families from varied cultures might experience the environment (Look at the entire school environment, the secretary, the PTA, the pictures on the walls etc.); 2) analyzes the practices of the program from the perspective of the readings; 3) analyzes these practices from the perspective of the families in this setting based upon your understanding of the individual and cultural perspectives of the families; 4) provides a proposal for how current practices in this program can be improved to promote family-centered practices. Provide specific references to the readings used in class from Turnbull and any other resources you used in your analysis.

3 Summative Evaluation: Family Story Project = 30 points

This is the NCATE 7 Family and Culture Performance-Based Assessment that shows evidence of meeting CEC Standard 3

By the third class, identify a family with a child with a disability whose socio-cultural context is different from your own, whose lens is likely to be different from your own. Get to know that family and use this as an opportunity to see the experience of parenting a child with a disability through a different lens. Consider this as a way to learn someone's story – how did this family come to be in this place where you have met them? What do you need to understand about their culture in order to understand them? What is their perspective about their child or children? Find at least two opportunities to interact with them in a way other than you would otherwise typically interact with them – e.g., informally away from school if possible.

Memo #1: Initial Contact. Write a (2-3 page) memo about your initial contact with the family. It should include: 1) a rationale for why you chose this family; 2) an explanation of the ways you think their culture is different from yours; 3) what you have observed about how society views the disability of their child and the culture of their family culture (from Step 2); and 4) make an honest attempt to identify and describe any assumptions you have about this family.

As you move into the next phase of the project, think about how to interact respectfully as you cross cultures. In other words, challenge yourself to hear the voices/values of others on their own terms. This will be difficult and, may be, uncomfortable. How can you get to know another person and his or her culture on his or her own terms? Ask, ask, ask. If there is something that you are seeing or hearing that seems strange, wrong, or weird to you, ask what it means to the person you are engaging with. Think about why this may be a part of their way of seeing or being in the world.

Memo #2: Interactions and reflections. Continue to meet with the family and interview the parents or guardians. Try to learn as much as you can through *meaningful* exchanges. Challenge yourself to understand the family's view of disability, and how they makes sense of the world – how the person's reality of the world is different from yours.

Consider the amount of time you have and the ease with which you'll be able to engage the person of another culture. First, arrange to spend time with the person (remember, you're not an anthropologist trying to "interview the other"...you're trying to engage respectfully with the person on his or her own terms). Do this in a relaxed framework. In other words, try not to be terribly formal. Write a memo of 5-7 pages describing your describing experience and examining your previous assumptions given new information and experience.

Memo # 3: Child Observation at a family event. Conduct an observation of the child in a family event. It can be a routine event or a special event. You must spend at least an hour with the family. Write a 5-7 page memo describing what you saw and the key events. Engage the family in an informal conversation to find out about the meanings of their actions, describing and making meaning of your learning experience with this person. You should include: 1) what you learned about the family in this second interaction 2) what you learned about yourself through

coming to know this person, and 2) what this experience might mean for you as a special educator.

4 Summative Evaluation: Family Story Presentation (In-Class Presentation) = 10 points

Each student will present what you have learned about your family story. Each student presentation will be a total of 20 minutes – from the perspective of the family engage your audience in a story telling adventure. *Be creative. Consider how you would like your story to be told.*

5 Summative Evaluation: Participation & Preparation for In-Class Activities = 10 points

Participation is graded according to the following criteria:

- Attending all classes on time, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor;
- Completing all assignments on time;
- Participating in large group discussion and activities on a regular basis, assuming a balance of leadership and participant roles;
- Participating in small group discussions and activities on a regular basis, assuming a balance of leadership and participant roles;
- Working as a collaborative group member, supporting the participation of classmates and recognizing the unique contribution of each.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Class Topics	Preparation and Assignments Due
July 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the class • Review of Syllabus • Beginning with our stories • Understanding our multiple identities and how they affect your work with families 	
July 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family System’s Perspective: Family Characteristics & Family Interaction • Identify partner for collaboration opportunity assignment 	Turnbull, Chapters 1 & 2
July 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family System’s Perspective: Family Functions & Family Life Cycle 	Turnbull, Chapters 3 & 4 Identify the family you will work with for the Family Story Project.
July 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and Public Policy Related to Partnerships: Historical and Current Roles of Parents and Families & Policies and Family and Professional Partnerships 	Turnbull, Chapters 5 & 6
July 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies and Processes for Partnerships and Desired Outcomes: Seven Principles of Partnership and Trust 	Turnbull: Chapter 7
July 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class PowerPoint Presentations on Annotated Bibliography 	DUE: Annotated Bibliography
July 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies and Processes for Partnerships and Desired Outcomes: Families as Partners in Communication and Collaboration 	Turnbull, Chapter 8

July 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies and Processes for Partnerships and Desired Outcomes: Families as Partners in Evaluation a Student 	Turnbull, Chapter 9
July 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies and Processes for Partnerships and Desired Outcomes: Families as Partners in Developing Individualized Plans 	Turnbull, Chapter 10
July 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies and Processes for Partnerships and Desired Outcomes: Families as Partners in Developing Individualized Plans and Professionals and Families as Partners for Student Outcomes 	Turnbull, Chapters 11 & 12
July 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Class time to work on Collaboration Opportunity Assignment 	
August 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Class Discussion of Collaboration Opportunity Assignments 	<i>DUE:</i> <i>Collaboration Opportunity Assignment</i>
August 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Class Family Story Presentations Facilitate Student Ratings of Instruction 	<i>DUE:</i> <i>Family Story Project</i>
August 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Class Family Story Presentations Synthesize course content 	

*Note: Syllabus is subject to change as needed. Additional required readings, typically internet resources, will be announced either via Bb and/or during class sessions. These resources supplement the text(s) and facilitate your completion of activities during the semester.