

**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
EDSE 665 Families of Children With Special Needs
Loudoun County, Section 6M7 (Autism Cohort)**

Professor: Sheryl Asen, Ph.D.

Office Hours: By appointment

E-mail: sasen@gmu.edu; e-mail is checked at least once per day, M – F

Phone: 703-993-5448; voice mail is checked once or twice per week

Note: On Tuesdays and Thursdays, voice mail and email will not be checked after 1:00 p.m. On these days, for emergencies only, after 1:00p call (do not text) 571-215-5320.

Course Location: Stone Bridge HS, room 409, Loudoun County Public Schools

Course Dates & Time: Tuesdays, Sept. 13, 2011 – Nov. 15, 2011, 4:30p – 8:30p

This syllabus is dynamic—it may change according to emerging needs, formative evaluation of the course, and unpredicted opportunities....

“The ways in which families are formed, function and evolve vary greatly from country to country, as do perceptions of the family's role in society. But in any culture, the family provides the natural framework in which individuals -- especially children - receive the emotional, financial and material support indispensable to their development. It is within the family that children learn the values that will guide them for the rest of their lives. It is within the family that they form their earliest relationships, learn to communicate with others and interact with the world around them. It is within the family that the notion of human rights becomes a reality lived on a daily basis. If tolerance, respect and equity permeate family life, they will translate into values that shape societies, nations and the world.”

— Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General (1997 – 2006), 2001 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

Course Description

EDSE 665 Families of Children With Special Needs 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. Includes family and professional rights and responsibilities in the special education process. *Prerequisite: Admission to the Early Childhood Special Education program or permission of the instructor.*

Nature of Course Delivery

Students:

- Construct knowledge through in class small and large group activities and through course assignments, including independent study and research;
- Reflect on practices, personal skills, and orientations;
- Assess their growth related to course content; and
- Provide constructive feedback to peers.

Interactive and teaming strategies are used to facilitate fulfillment of the outcomes established for the course. Instructor and student led class experiences and presentations incorporate a variety of formats, which may include whole and small group activities, discussion, demonstration, guest presenters, use of media/technologies, and lecture. The instructor at times will use Socratic dialog and problem-solving tools and techniques. Students are expected to know and use e-mail for course communication with the professor and other students and to use Blackboard for course assignments and sharing.

Course Student Outcomes

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Discuss theories and research supporting a family-centered approach to special education.

- Discuss the role of cultural context in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
- Analyze personal values, beliefs, and cultural biases that influence their work with families.
- Describe underlying principles and ways to work with families that are both effective and enabling.
- Identify strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children with special needs.
- Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children with special needs.
- Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family perspectives.
- Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
- Adopt a strengths-based problem solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to partnering with families.

Products from this class may become part of your individual professional portfolio, which is used in your portfolio classes and documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards. It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE program.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Standards

This course is a required course in GMU's Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) master's degree and licensure program. 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:

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

Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant communication, collaboration, and consultation. 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.

Required Texts & Materials

- Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., Erwin, E.J., Soodak, L.C., & Shogren, K.A. (2011). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality* (6th ed.). Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall.
- Use of online resource materials from the IRIS Center:
<http://iriscenter.com/resources.html>
- Additional resources and readings are assigned as necessary, as per instructor discretion.

Course Expectations – Part I

- Students are required to (a) attend all classes during the course, (b) arrive on time, including back from break(s), (c) stay for the duration of the class time, (d) participate in all class activities (both face-to-face and via Blackboard or other electronic means), and (e) complete all assignments on time. Attendance and professionally relevant, active participation that demonstrates proper professional behavior are expected in all class sessions and interactions for a grade of B or better. The GMU CEHD Professional Dispositions (<http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm>) serve as a minimum standard for class member behavior.
- Attendance at all sessions is very important. Many of the activities in class that contribute to building and revising conceptual models and personal orientations are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Information, activities, guest speakers, and role plays will be presented in class that are not a part of the text and can be experienced only in the class. **Students who miss class time will be required to complete additional assignments determined by the instructor.** These may include but are not limited to writing a 3-5 page paper with references on any or all topic(s) addressed in the class during which the student was absent. The work must be submitted by the start of the next class session to be considered on time. The requirements for all class learning activities apply to the “missed class” assignments.
- **Attendance points missed for any absence without instructor contact before class cannot be made up. Two (2) or more unexcused class session absences will result in no credit for this course.** If you feel you cannot adhere to the assignment and class schedule noted in the syllabus, please contact the Instructor immediately to discuss options for withdrawing and completing the course during another semester.
- Many course handouts, slide presentations, and class assignments will be posted on Blackboard. Students are responsible for accessing these materials, having materials available for each class, and **electronically submitting assignments to the instructor, using designated file name protocols and prior to use in class, materials to share in student conducted class activities.**
- In-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements require outside class time. Students are expected to allot **at least** two hours per course meeting hour (or **at least** 8 hours per week for this course) for **class session preparation** (reading, study, planning, etc.). This is **in addition to** time devoted to assignments that take the place of class time and time devoted to completing course out of class major learning activities.
- All learning activity assignments are required to be completed and submitted on time. **When the format for assignment response is print/hard copy, to be considered handed in on time the print/hard copy must be received by the instructor by the start of the class session by which**

the assignment is due. Additionally assignments are to be submitted on time to the class Blackboard site in appropriate assignment drop boxes ***using designated file name protocols.*** Assignments that are not submitted in the required format(s) at the required time are ***late***, even if they later are handed in (hard copies to the instructor) and/or accepted for submission via the drop box. ***If an assignment is not submitted on time IN PRINT/HARD COPY it is LATE even if submitted on time electronically!!!***

- Your GMU e-mail address and the instructor's GMU e-mail address are the only e-mail addresses that will be used for communication in this course. Student e-mail is accessed at <http://masonlive.gmu.edu>. ALL communication regarding coursework, enrollment issues, advising, internship and important program listserv announcements are sent to students via their Mason email accounts. Students are held responsible for this information. Failing to check your Mason email or citing technical difficulties does not relieve you of this responsibility. Please make sure your GMU e-mail is activated and checked daily for communications from the instructor as well as for university announcements. Any student who experiences technical issues or who has questions with regard to activating and/or accessing his/her MasonLive email account should contact the ITU Support Center directly (and immediately!) at 703-993-8870.
- Please send outgoing e-mail messages to the instructor and class members only through your GMU e-mail account and NOT through the GMU Blackboard site or through your personal e-mail account(s). The instructor will not reply to e-mail that is sent from the Blackboard account nor will the instructor with any regularity check e-mail in her Blackboard account.
- All student work may be shared in future courses and professional development taught by Dr. Sheryl Asen. Author credit explicitly will be given to the student authors for their work.

Assessment of Course Requirements

The major portion of your learning in this course will be the result of your personal involvement with an investigation of the materials and topics and of your application of the principles to your own situation. The instructor's role is to facilitate and to provide a favorable environment in which learning can take place. The major responsibility necessarily rests with the student.

All assignments, to receive full credit, must reflect graduate-level conception, planning, creativity, and execution, including accuracy of spelling, syntax, and grammar, and must include all components of the assignment, including following file formatting and naming conventions described in the syllabus (see individual assignment descriptions for examples).

Input from the student is required for assessment of some assignments (quality and evaluation of overall student growth and mastery); however, final grading is based on the judgment of the instructor. As noted in the syllabus, for some course assignments, students are required to submit a self-assessment and/or reflection. The self-assessments and reflections will earn points for Attendance and Participation (see below) and must be completed thoughtfully for the assignment reflected upon to be considered complete. The course assessment tools used by the instructor are provided separately.

Grading Scale

94 – 100 points = A
90 – 93 points = A-
86 – 89 points = B+
80 – 85 points = B
70 – 79 points = C
< 70 points = F

The instructor may award additional points beyond an assignment's weight to the evaluation of a student's work. The instructor may also award plus (+) or minus (-) components to a project grade or to the course grade based on class community and individual effort as demonstrated through participation, collaboration, cooperation, contribution, leadership, effort, and other collegial and scholarship factors.

A request for assignment of a course grade of Incomplete (IN) must be discussed in advance with the instructor will be considered only under circumstances that sufficiently warrant the extension for final submission of course assignments.

Major Learning Activities

"It is not good enough to have a good mind; the main thing is to use it well."

-- Rene Descartes

Course participants wishing to suggest other learning activities and/or other modes of expression for all assignments may, **with prior instructor approval**, substitute these for a required activity and/or format.

Activities V and VI are noted with an asterisk (*). The asterisk indicates that these assignments may be completed by pairs of students, rather than individually. Submissions from teams, however, to receive full credit, must reflect input and final product results indicative of a collaborative, two person effort. Students who choose to team must discuss projected outcomes with the instructor and have instructor approval to do so.

I. Attendance and Participation (9% of final grade)

The dynamic for participation and the resulting course credit is achieved through active, thoughtful, deliberate participation in and completion of all course activities (both in and outside of class meeting time), conducting oneself professionally, and treating all respectfully. Assignment self-assessments will be considered as addressing requirements I.B and I.C below for the class session on which they are due. Other important components of this part of the grade include but are not limited to the following:

A. Attendance in class. Included in attendance are:

- Promptness (getting to class and back from breaks on time),
- Being present for the full duration of class, and
- Appropriate time allocation to activities and assignments both in and out of class face-to-face meeting time.

For unexcused absences, students will lose 1 point per clock half-hour of class time missed; however, **two (2) or more unexcused class session absences will result in no credit for this course.** See "Course Expectations" Part I and Part II for more information.

B. Preparedness: Coming to class prepared with required materials, including:

- All assignments due are completed and submitted on time and
- Demonstration of being psychologically available to learn.
- If a student does not have required materials for more than two class sessions, that student will earn 0 points (that is, no attendance and participation points will be awarded) for all aspects of attendance and participation (I.A, I.B, and I.C) for any session, past, present, or future, for which that student was/is not prepared.

C. Participation: Demonstrates professional dispositions and actively engages in class activities.

Participation includes but is not limited to:

- Contributing thoughtfully and fully to class activities and discussions,
- Listening to the ideas of others,
- Assisting positive class dynamics (disruptive or off-task use of electronics or other items negatively influences class dynamics),
- Demonstrating enthusiasm for learning,
- Taking initiative in class discussions without dominating the discourse and may include leading discussions on assigned content, and

- Facilitating group work.

II. Families, Professionals, and Exceptionality Responses (36% of final grade)

All students in the course are responsible for reading the course text chapters according to the course calendar. For each of the 12 course text chapters students create a response log to process topics according to the following categories: strategies, guidelines, “keep in mind” facts, and interesting/intriguing ideas. After creating a chapter’s log, students add reflection statements that capture how the content personally is meaningful. These logs and reflections are shared weekly in class for summative activities. (See the course calendar for an exception to the required response for chapter 6, due the last class.)

III. Interviews (15% of final grade)

Students interview someone in a family group with a child with disabilities. The interviewee either is a parent/guardian or putative parent, sibling, extended family member (e.g., grandparent; aunt or uncle; fictive kin), or the person with disabilities (who, for purposes of the assignment, should be old enough to productively participate in an interview). Interviews focus on the family’s experiences with the member with disabilities. For example, interviews may explore how the family member perceives the roles, responsibilities, “rules”, joys, and challenges of being part of their family in consideration of the member with disabilities.

Classmates interviewing the same type of family member (e.g., parent) will meet to formulate at least 3 interview questions, which will be approved by the instructor. In a written account, students will: provide relevant background information (e.g., the family role of the interviewee in relation to the family member with disabilities; what the child’s disabilities are and when they were identified); list the original questions they developed and provide analytic, summative statements that capture interviewee responses, categorized by emergent themes; and reflect on something the interviews brought into focus for them about working with families of students with special needs. A concluding statement will identify something to further contemplate about this course’s content that emerges from the interview experience and reflection. Interviews will be used for an in class activity on the assignment due date.

Interviewees are assured that this is a course assignment and no specific identifying information is submitted. In the written submission, students use no identifying labels (e.g., names of people, schools, school divisions, locations). Further guidelines for conducting interviews will be shared in class.

IV. Cultural Diversity Assessment and Plan (10% of final grade)

Students complete the checklist *Promoting Cultural Diversity and Cultural Competency: Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Services and Supports to Children, Youth, & Families* (to be provided by the instructor). This checklist is intended to heighten the awareness and sensitivity of personnel to the importance of cultural diversity and cultural competence in human service settings. Students are asked to respond to the checklist items, identify their personal strengths regarding aspects of providing supports for cultural diversity, and create action goals for improving their personal practices. The exercise concludes with a student overall reflection about what that student learned from the assignment.

V. Popular Culture Portrayals* (15% of final grade)

Students construct an original activity based on a cultural artifact that represents a child with disabilities and/or his/her family. The purpose of the activity (~30 minutes) is to assist family members and/or professional colleagues and/or students with disabilities in understanding the perspectives of key individuals in families with children with special needs. Cultural artifacts may be a single item or a combination of items, such as a book, graphic novel, movie, video, song, poem, podcast, or piece of visual art. Topics ideas will be discussed in class. Students will not duplicate artifacts (e.g., use of a specific book title) within the class.

The assignment includes creating a handout that will enable someone to implement the activity. The handout includes the following components and any additional materials necessary for implementation: activity title; intended outcomes/goals; target audience; needed resources/materials; sequential implementation/lesson plan. The activities and handouts will be shared in class through brief descriptive presentations (*not* through implementing the activity in class).

VI. Family Resource Aid* (15% of final grade)

Students construct an information brochure (bi-fold or tri-fold; 2 sided; at least 8.5" x 11" when opened) and/or a fact sheet (2 sided 8.5" x 11" paper) and/or other easily accessible communication aid (e.g., web page; podcast) designed to introduce members of families with children with special disabilities to ***a topic that supports family needs***. The topics must be relevant to meeting needs of families with students with disabilities. Topics ideas will be discussed in class. Students will not duplicate topics within the class.

Each class member shares his/her resource artifact in a presentation to the class. The presentation includes an overview of the topic, intended use of the resource aid (e.g., audience; purpose[s]), why this resource is relevant to the intended audience, and why the resource aid is relevant to the student's role(s) when working with families of special needs children. The presentation's descriptive background (as noted in the previous sentence) is recorded in a succinct written statement submitted to the instructor as accompaniment to the resource aid.

EDSE 665-6M7 Fall 2011 Course Calendar

*** = Evidence Based Practices**

The course syllabus is dynamic—it may change according to students’ needs, formative evaluation of course effectiveness, and unpredicted opportunities and events.

- For **ALL** assignments that require written/hard copy work, **to be considered submitted on time:**
 - The print version must be handed in no later than the start of the designated class at which the assignment is due.
 - The electronic version must be submitted in the Blackboard drop box by the due date and time.
- **Please bring your course textbook to each class session.**

Class	Topics for Class This Week	Assignments for Next Class
<p>Class 1 9/13/11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Life That’s Chosen Me</i> • Introductions • Our big ideas about the roles of families* • Course Overview / Syllabus / Assignments • Registration & Other Housekeeping • Jigsaw & response log activity: Historical and Current Roles of Parents and Families* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: family culture; family subsystems* 	<p>For 9/20/11 class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Turnbull et al., chapters 1 and 2 • Bring to class your chapters 1 and 2 response logs and reflections.
<p>Class 2 9/20/11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Characteristics • Family Interaction* • How families help children learn* • Interviews with family members* • Popular culture portrayals of families with special needs children* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: family functions; family life cycle* 	<p>For 9/27/11 class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Turnbull et al., chapters 3 and 4 • Bring to class your chapters 3 and 4 response logs and reflections. • IRIS module: Cultural and Linguistic Differences*; For the activity box on Perspectives & Resources p. 7, briefly respond to 2 of the questions; include supporting details.
<p>Class 3 9/27/11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Diversity responses, surveys, and resources* • Family Functions* • Family Life Cycle* • IRIS: Collaborating with Families* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: partnerships* • Preparation for field trip to the Loudoun County Family Resource Center* 	<p>For 10/4/11 class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Turnbull et al., chapters 7 • NOTE: chapter response logs are not due until 10/11/11 • Visit the Loudoun County Parent Resource Center web site through www.lcps.org. (Due to web site upgrades, the PRC materials may not be available until just before our visit.) • By 11:00p Sunday, 10/2/11: Submit to the instructor via email at least one question for each of the topics: resources for families; supporting families. Questions will be shared with next week’s guest speaker from the Loudoun County Parent Resource Center.

Class	Topics for Class This Week	Assignments for Next Class
Class 4 10/4/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class field trip to the Loudoun County Parent Resource Center* • Guest speaker: Allyson Pate • We will meet at the Parent Resource Center, 20 Union Street NW, Leesburg (571-252-2185). • Be prompt. • Bring your own refreshments (there are no food resources in the building or nearby and no time during the program to leave the premises). 	For 10/11/11 class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Diversity Assessment & Plan assignment due. • Bring to class your chapter 7 logs and reflections. • IRIS: Guiding the School Counselor: An Overview of Roles and Responsibilities – Perspectives & Resources pages 2 -6; Respond: How do school counselors assist in working with families with special needs children?
Class 5 10/11/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on our visit to the PRC* • IRIS module response* • Guest speakers from LCPS on the roles of social workers and of school counselors in working with families* • Principles of Partnership & Trust* • Cultural Diversity plans* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: meeting basic needs; partnering for student outcomes* 	For 10/18/11 class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Turnbull et al., chapters 11 and 12 • Bring to class your chapters 11 and 12 response logs and reflections. • Bring draft of interview assignment.
Class 6 10/18/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review of draft of interview assignment. • Meeting Basic Needs* • Partnering for Student Outcomes* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: communicating with families* 	For 10/25/11 class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview assignment due. • Read Turnbull et al., chapter 8 • Bring to class your chapter 8 response log and reflection
Class 7 10/25/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing interview results and insights* • Communication and Collaboration with Families (including Sheehey & Sheehey article and interview)* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: evaluating a student 	For 11/1/11 class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring draft of popular culture portrayals assignment. • Read Turnbull et al., chapter 9 • Bring to class your chapter 9 response log and reflection
Class 8 11/1/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review of draft of popular culture assignment • Families as Partners in Evaluating a Student* • Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: individualized plans* • Dealing with Difficult People* 	For 11/8/11 class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular culture assignment due. • Read Turnbull et al., chapter 10 • Bring to class your chapter 10 response log and reflection

Class	Topics for Class This Week	Assignments for <i>Next Class</i>
Class 9 11/8/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentations: popular culture portrayal assignment* ● Families as Partners in Developing Individualized Plans* ● Activating prior knowledge/linking content to your life: policies and family/professional partnerships* ● 	For 11/15/11 class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family Resource Aid assignment due. ● Read Turnbull et al., chapter 6. ● For your chapter 6 response log, write 3 goals for your personal professional growth to foster family-professional partnerships.
Class 10 11/15/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family Resource Aid presentations* ● Family/Professional Partnerships: our goals * ● Assessments and Evaluations 	Rest and Relaxation!!! YEA YOU!!!

Additional Notes

Course Expectations – Part II

Absences: There may be an instance when you are not able to attend class. If this unlikely event should occur, it is your responsibility to: (a) notify the instructor in advance via e-mail and voice mail (both are checked daily and up until 3 hours before class starting time), (b) notify all presentation teammates sufficiently in advance if you are part of a team with a presentation due on the day you cannot attend, and (c) arrange for collection and promptly obtain notes, handouts, lecture details, and explanations from another student. Students who are absent are held responsible for the material covered and assignments due as if in attendance and as outlined in the course syllabus. Class attendance is crucial to course competence. Please do not request permission to miss a class--you must make your own decision.

Late Work:

- Twenty percent (20%) of the available points for the assignment will be deducted for late submissions during the first week after the due date. After one week from the due date, assignments will be penalized an additional 10% of the total available score for each week they are late. Thus, an assignment that is two weeks late is able to obtain only 70% of the points for the assignment regardless of the quality of the work. **After three weeks, the assignment will no longer be accepted and a score of zero will be entered into the grade book for that assignment.**
- The point deduction will be made after the grading is complete. For example, in the case of an assignment initially worth 10 points that is handed in one week late for which the student score is 9 out of 10 points, the student's grade would be a 9 (of 10) points earned minus 20% of the assignment total points, which is 2 points, resulting in a grade of 7 points. If the assignment is 2 weeks late, the student's grade would be a 9 (of 10) points earned minus 30% of the assignment total points, which is 3 points, resulting in a grade of 6 points.
- **The date that the assignment was received in hand as a print/hard copy by the instructor will be considered the date submitted.** Submitting an assignment late does not alter the due dates of the other assignments and prevents timely feedback regarding their work that may be of value in later assignments. Strive to keep up with the assignment schedule so that you will be able to have appropriate formative evaluation and feedback from your instructor across the semester.

Use of Computers, Cell Phones, PDAs, iPads, and other electronic devices: The use of computing/electronic devices during class is permitted only for educational purposes relevant to the class. Checking e-mail, surfing the web, using applications software, or working on material other than the current class activity are considered distractions and counter productive unless the instructor in advance acknowledges an explicit, specific need for the access of information or other uses (e.g., to collate and organize information into a graphic tool). Students engaging in such conduct during class time will not be permitted use of devices in class and the breach will be considered in assessing class participation as non-attendance for one hour and for the topic at the time of the indiscretion. For each repeated offense, the penalty will be reapplied. If, for emergency reasons, you must be available via cell phone, please seek permission from the instructor in advance of class and, if access is granted, place your cell phone on vibrate and mute the ring tone to avoid class disruption.

Use APA guidelines from an APA manual for all course assignments. Some Internet sites attempt to reduce the APA manual to only a few pages. Often there are errors on these websites, nor do the websites give clear, high quality information on writing. All assignments for this course are scored according to the written language and technical aspects of organizing and citing content using the APA style.

Use person-first language in class discussions and written assignments. Please refer to “Guidelines for Non-Handicapping Language in APA Journals”.
<http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html>

Subscribe to the GMU/GSE Special Education list serve if you do not already receive list serve announcements. Please subscribe to the GMU/GSE Special Education list serve to receive important program updates and announcements. You can subscribe or unsubscribe the listserv via e-mail:

- Address an e-mail message to listserv@listserv.gmu.edu
- Put the following in the body of the message: subscribe SPECIAL-EDUCATION-PROGRAM-L yourfirstname yourlastname
- A confirmation message will be sent to your e-mail address asking you to confirm your subscription request. You must reply to this message with ok in the body of the message. Leave the subject unchanged.

Use the GMU Blackboard site to refer to, post, and access important information for this course.
<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Use the GMU Special Education Cohort web site:

http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped_cohort_program/

This site includes information to assist cohort participants, including announcements, a cohort handbook, and cohort specific information. For additional assistance with cohort and outreach program queries, please contact Pam Baker (pbaker5@gmu.edu).

General Directions for Assignments

Please retain a copy of each of your assignments in addition to copies submitted.

Written components for all assignments should: be printed via electronic means (e.g., using word processing); are due on the dates and times indicated; and must be submitted both in print and electronically as noted in this syllabus. Consult with the instructor in advance if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the successful effort to submit assignments on time, grades will reflect promptness (or degree of delinquency).

All work must follow sensible, well-known guidelines. Documents created in word processing should be:

- Double-spaced,
- Have at least 1” margins all around,
- Use a common legible type (e.g., Arial; Times New Roman), and
- Use a 12-point font in black (though color may be used for hyperlinks or when necessary for distinguishing points for which color is required).

All work must include the student’s name, course-section (EDSE 665-6M7), and date of the submission/version. For Word and PDF documents, include this information **and** pagination in a document header and/or footer; for PowerPoint files, note the identifying information in the first slide.

Electronic copies of written work must be in either MS Office applications (Word or PowerPoint) or Adobe Acrobat (PDF format). For images and sound/video, JPG or GIF files and wav and mp4 files are acceptable when such format use is appropriate. Please do not use Publisher or BMP files. If you have questions about file formats, contact the instructor.

For electronic file names, **do not use any spaces or non-alphabetic or numeric characters in file names** (e.g., do not use dashes, underscores, or dots/periods embedded in the file name stem). Start the file name with your LastF (for last name first initial; use your middle initial as well if

someone in the course has the same first and last name). Follow your name with a product description (e.g., FamilyResourceAid or FamResAid for your family resource). Use upper and lowercase letters to distinguish components (e.g., AsenSCultDivPlan to signify the last name, first initial, assignment topic). If you have questions, contact the instructor. Files that are not named using the convention protocol described above may be returned to the student, particularly as sometimes files named otherwise cannot be opened by different computer operating systems and applications versions.

Example of YES!: AsenSFamResAid.doc

Example of NO!: Sheryl_A. pop_cult.pub

If you experience difficulties with the writing process, documentation of your work and efforts with the GMU Writing Center to improve your skills must be submitted to the instructor. (See Campus Resources in this syllabus.)

Please note that for all course related activities, student and family privacy must be protected in all written, visual, and oral communication. Please refrain from including any information that would jeopardize compliance with FERPA regulations

(<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>).

TaskStream

Keep products from this course for possible 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. Students need to retain electronic copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE Special Education program.***

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/>].