

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**EDSE 540 Section 5S1 (3 credits)
Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Who Access the General Curriculum
Spring 2012**

Instructor: Anna (Anya) Evmenova, Ph.D.

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Office hours: By appointment

Class Dates: January 23-May 16

Class Times: 4:30-7:10pm

Location: Kellar Annex 1 3807

"We know that equality of individual ability has never existed and never will, but we do insist that equality of opportunity still must be sought." Franklin Delano Roosevelt

COURSE DESCRIPTION

EDSE 540 examines the characteristics of students with mild disabilities. Emphasis 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.

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

<http://www.cec.sped.org> (Professional Standards tab; What Every Special Educator Must Know)

REQUIRED TEXT

Henley, M., Ramsey, R., & Algozzine, R. (2009). *Characteristics and strategies for teaching students with mild disabilities* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Blackboard Site

Blackboard website (<http://mymason.gmu.edu>) will be used for posting course materials, announcements, and discussion boards. Please check it regularly.

CEC/NCATE STANDARDS	KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS
Standard 1: Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models, theories, philosophies, and research methods that form the basis for special education practice (ICC1K1) • Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management planning and implementation (ICC1K2) • Issues in definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds(ICC1K5) • Issues, assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services (ICC1K6) • Family systems and the role of families in the educational process (ICC1K7) • Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school (ICC1K10) • Definitions and issues related to the identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC1K1) • Historical foundations, classic studies, major contributors, major legislation, and current issues related to knowledge and practice (IGC1K3) • Continuum of placement and services available for individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC1K5) • Principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment (IGC1K8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate personal philosophy of special education (ICC1S1)
Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities (ICC2K2) • Family systems and the role of families in supporting development (ICC2K4) • Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ICC2K5) • Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs (ICC2K6) • Etiology and diagnosis related to various theoretical approaches (IGC2K1) • Psychological and social-emotional characteristics of individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC2K4) 	
Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life (ICC3K1) • Impact of learners' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (ICC3K2) • Impact disabilities may have on auditory and information processing skills (IGC3K2) • Impact of multiple disabilities on behavior (IGC3K3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate levels of support to the needs of the individual (ICC3S1)

Standard 6: Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects of cultural and linguistic differences on growth and development (ICC6K1) • Impact of language development and listening comprehension on academic and non-academic learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC6K1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use strategies to support and enhance communication skills of individuals with exceptional learning needs (ICC6S1)
Standard 8: Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal provisions and ethical principles regarding assessment of individuals (ICC8K2) • Laws and policies regarding referral and placement procedures for individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC8K2) • Types and importance of information concerning individuals with exceptional learning needs available from families and public agencies (IGC8K3) • Procedures for early identification of young children who may be at risk for exceptional learning needs (IGC8K4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather relevant background information (ICC8S1) • Interpret information from formal and informal assessments (ICC8S5) • Use assessment information in making eligibility, program, and placement decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (ICC8S6)
Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one's teaching (ICC9K1) • Methods to remain current regarding research-validated practice • Sources of unique services, networks, and organizations for individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC9K1) • Organizations and publications relevant to individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC9K2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice within the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards of the profession (ICC9S1) • Act ethically in advocating for appropriate services (ICC9S3) • Demonstrate commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs (ICC9S5) • Demonstrate sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of individuals (ICC9S6) • Use verbal, nonverbal, and written language effectively (ICC9S8) • Access information on exceptionalities (ICC9S10) • Demonstrate commitment to engage in evidence-based practices (ICC9S13) • Ethical responsibility to advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs (IGC9S2)
Standard 10: Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles of individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, and school and community personnel in planning of an individualized program (ICC10K2) • Concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs and strategies to help address these concerns (ICC10K3) • Culturally responsive factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, school personnel, and community members (ICC10K4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs (ICC10S1) • Collaborate with families and others in assessment of individuals with exceptional learning needs (ICC10S2) • Foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals (ICC10S3) • Communicate with school personnel about the characteristics and needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs (ICC10S9) • Communicate effectively with families of individuals with exceptional learning needs from diverse backgrounds (ICC10S10)

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to characteristics of students with mild disabilities, etiology of mild disabilities, 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

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture, discussion, cooperative group work, and participation.
2. Videotapes and other relevant media presentations.
3. Study and independent library research.
4. *Blackboard e-Education Learning System* applications.
5. Application activities, including in class evaluation of intervention research and materials.
6. Class presentations of case study papers.
7. Written case study and observation reports using the American Psychological Association format.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

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-points class participation grade**. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant, active participation are expected and very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Missing **more than one class or repeated** tardiness/leaving early will result in losing your participation grade for the course. Please notify me *in advance* by phone or email if you will not be able to attend class.

Note: It is IMPOSSIBLE to participate fully in this class while texting, Facebooking, tweeting, working on documents, etc. Please be fully present in class:)

Workload:

In-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements involve outside class time. Students are expected to allot approximately three hours for class readings and preparation for each credit hour weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments.

Written and Oral Language:

APA Style 6.0 Edition 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 6.0 format for all course assignments. Please use the following website for 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 general 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 all your GMU courses: Please activate and forward your GMU email to your most-checked account! Go to <http://mail.gmu.edu>. Click on Options tab at the top of the page. Click on Settings link on the left of the page. Type in your most-checked email account in the box labeled Mail Forwarding.

Be an Informed Student

Negotiating all the requirements for your Master’s and/or VA Licensure is extremely complex. It is recommended that you schedule a phone/email or in-person appointment with the Special Education Advisor, Jancy Templeton (jtemple1@gmu.edu 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.

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/>].

Core Values Commitment

- The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

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/>].

MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Three online Discussions/Reflections: (15% of final grade)

Due dates: by 9:00 am the day of class

- 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 session, and should include thoughtful, detailed responses that address the topic and your classmates' reflections are expected no later than 9:00 am the day of next class session. A total of 3 posts and at least 3 responses to your classmates must be posted **ON TIME** for full credit (**no late postings will be accepted**).
- Students will complete discussion assignments in small groups and will take turn presenting a brief summary of discussion in class.
- 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.

2. Case Study Report (30% of final grade)

Due Date: May 1st

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

- Students demographic and background data
- Description of school and classroom information
- Educational history and Educational Goals, Objectives, and Accommodations
- Observation 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 that you would make for the student
- Summary and synthesis (comparison of student's characteristics with those described in the textbook or other research. Integrate at least three (3) sources from literature with what you observed in your case study)
- Appendices - to include students work samples, parent interview questions/answers and any other pertinent items.
- Be prepared to present your case study in class orally

Note: Detailed description of the case study assignment is available on the Blackboard and will be discussed in class before the due date.

3. Journal Articles Paper (25% of final grade)

Due Date: April 17th

- 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 LD/ED/ID field. A **research study** includes a “**methods**” section and a “**results**” section.
- 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 articles to a concise summary.
- The paper should include (a) an introduction to the case study students' needs addressed in the articles (1-2 paragraphs); (b) APA 6.0 style citation for each article; (c) one-page summary AND critique of major research components for each article (3 pages total); and (d) finally, a conclusion that ties together the 3 summaries findings as an action plan for assisting the student to meet an identified need (1-2 pages).

Major research components include:

1) Motivation/Problem Statement: What is the problem or research question? Why do we care about the problem? What practical or theoretical gap is this research filling?

2) Methods/Procedure/Approach: What did the author actually do to get the results? (e.g. analyzed 30 writing samples, interviewed 17 students)

3) Results/Findings/Product: As a result of completing the above procedure, what did the author learn/invent/create?

4) Conclusion/Implications: What are the larger implications of these findings, especially for the problem/gap identified in step 1? How would you improve this study?

NOTE: You must use your own words to summarize and be sure to cite liberally! Please use articles from the following journals. All articles should be from current literature and should not be more than five (5) years old.

Learning Disabilities	Learning Disabilities Research and Practice Journal of Learning Disabilities Exceptional Children Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal Learning Disability Quarterly
Intellectual Disabilities	Journal of Intellectual Disabilities Journal of Special Education American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Journal of Intellectual Disability Research
Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	Behavior Disorders Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Preventing School Failure
Autism	Autism: International Journal of Research and Practice Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders

4. Final Exam (20% of final grade)

Due Date: Given in class on May 7th

An exam that covers course content will be administered. The exam will be based on case studies and other class related topics. More specific will be provided before the due date.

EVALUATION

• Class Participation (attendance and activities)	10
• Blackboard Activities	15 (3 x 5 pts. ea.)
• Case Study Report *	30*
• Journal Summaries Paper	25
• Final Exam	20
Total	100

TaskStream Submission

This assignment (Case Study Report) is the NCATE Assessment and must be submitted digitally to TaskStream under *Spring 2012 EDSE 540 5S1 Evmenova* link. You need to make sure you self-enroll into Taskstream (unless you've already done it before). You will be emailed directions as to how to enroll through your GMU email.

Every student registered for any EDSE course including this semester is required to submit NCATE Assessments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime 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 semester, the grade becomes an F.

GRADING CRITERIA

Grade	Points
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A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	86-89
B	80-85
C	70-79
F	69-below

NOTE: This syllabus may change according to class needs. If you need course adaptations or accommodations due to a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with instructor or special needs arrangements, please call and/or make an appointment with instructor as soon as possible.

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE

Class	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings <u>AFTER</u> This Class	Assignments <u>DUE</u> <u>THIS</u> Class Session
1. January 24	Syllabus Review Foundations of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire Books • Explore Blackboard • Chapter 1 • Chapter 2 	
2. January 31	Overview of Students with Mild Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 • Case Study Guidelines 	<i>Informal: Identify a student for the case study</i>
3. February 7	Students with Learning Disabilities Guest Speaker: Todd Johnson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 • Selections from NCLD website 	Discussion Board 1
4. February 14	Students with Emotional Disturbance Students with ADHD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 	
5. February 21	* Classroom Management and Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 	<i>Informal: Read and bring article #1 to class</i>
6. February 28	Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 • Selections from the ARC website 	Discussion Board 2
7. March 6	* Teaching Social Skills Guest Speaker: Mason LIFE Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 	<i>Informal: Read and bring article #2 to class</i>
No Class (March 13) - Spring Break			
8. March 20	* Learning and teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 	<i>Informal: Case Study Draft</i>
9. March 27	* Family Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 	Discussion Board 3
10. April 3	* Inclusive Classrooms and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 	<i>Informal: Read and bring article #3 to class</i>
11. April 10	* Quality Instruction for Students with Mild Disabilities No class: Online Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout 	
12. April 17	* Quality Instruction for Students with Mild Disabilities		Journal Articles Paper
13. April 24	Presentations of Case Studies		Case Study Presentation
14. May 1	Presentations of Case Studies and Review		Case Study Paper Submission to Taskstream
15. May 7	Final Exam		

Note: Additional readings may be provided by the instructor in class.

Blackboard 3 Online Discussion/Reflections Rubric	5 Exemplary	4 Good	3 Acceptable	2 Inadequate	1 Unacceptable
<p>Background Student has clearly completed the discussion prompt or activity prior to developing written response. Response is on time!</p>					
<p>Quality Addresses all aspects of discussion starter/prompt. Reacts on both prompt and classmates' responses (very important!)</p>					
<p>Reflection Summarizes thoughts about articles read or information received and includes rationales for the statements made. Depth of reflection & depth of linkages to other course readings, teaching, and learning in general.</p>					
<p>Collaboration Student incorporates classmates' responses into own response. Acknowledges differences of opinion appropriately. Recognizes and validates multiple viewpoints.</p>					
<p>Writing Reflection is written to graduate-level standards and there are very few writing and printing errors.</p>					

Case Study Assignment Rubric

Case Study	Points Possible (30)	Points Earned
Writing Style Mechanics/APA	1 point	
Demographic and Background Data	2 points	
School and Classroom Information	2 points	
Educational History	3 points	
Educational goals, objectives, and accommodations	3 points	
Student Observations	3 points	
Parent Interviews	3 points	
Additional Recommendations	3 points	
Summary, Synthesis, and Reflection	5 points	
Appendices (with annotations)	3 points	
Case Study Presentation	2 points	
TOTAL POINTS	30 POINTS	
COMMENTS:		

Note: Rubric for the NCATE Assessment is available on the Blackboard and will be discussed in class prior to the due date.

Journal Articles Paper Scoring Rubric

Journal Abstracts	Points Possible	Points Earned
Writing Style/Quality Mechanics/APA	3 points	
Introduction to Student's Needs (based on your case study)	3 points	
Quality of Summaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation/Problem Statement • Methods • Results • Conclusion/implications 	5 points	
Quality of Critiques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation/Problem Statement • Methods • Results • Conclusion/implications 	5 points	
Conclusion/Appropriateness of Recommendations	9 points	
TOTAL POINTS	25 POINTS	
COMMENTS:		