



**College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

EDSE 590-5S1: *Special Education Research*

CRN: 72601, 3 - Credit(s)

Fall 2012

Instructor: Dr. Vicky Spencer	Meeting Dates: 08/27/12 - 12/19/12
Phone: 703.993.5598	Meeting Day(s): Monday
E-Mail: vspencer@gmu.edu	Meeting Times: 4:30pm - 7:10pm
Office Hours: By Appointment	Meeting Location: KA 103

Course Description:

Describes fundamental concepts and practices in educational research in special education. Covers specific applications of educational research methods to problems in special education. Emphasizes review and critique of special education research, and applied classroom research for teachers.

Prerequisite(s): None.

Advising Contact Information:

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. For assistance contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703)993-3145.

Nature of Course Delivery:

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

Learner Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and understand different methods of educational research suitable for different research purposes in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of quantitative experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of survey research in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of single subject research in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of qualitative research in special education.
- Critically evaluate education research and describe implications for educational practice.

Required Textbooks:

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

McMillan, J. H. (2011). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer* (6th ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Longman.

Recommended Textbooks:

None

Required Materials:

Other readings relevant to special education research applications may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor as indicated by the needs and interests of the class.

Additional Readings:

Most of the additional readings will be chosen by the student.

Course's Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC Standards are listed on the following website: <http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/> The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 4: Instructional Strategies and Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice. *NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional CEC standards.

Policies (Attendance and Late Work Policies):

Students are expected to attend **all** classes, arrive on time, remain in class for the duration of each session, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom, and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner. When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, lecture notes) from another class member prior to the class meeting that follows the absence. For some of the classes, students will participate in class activities which will contribute to the attendance /participation portion of the final grade. **Points missed due to absences during class activities CANNOT be made up.** Participation points can only be earned if the student is in attendance.

Two points will be deducted each day beyond the due date for work submitted late.

Grading Scale:

95 - 100% = A

90 - 94% = A-

80 - 89% = B

70 - 79% = C

<70% = F

Schedule:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. Participation, Attendance, and Drafts (20 points)

Class attendance and participation is demonstrated by attending class and being psychologically available to learn, completing and handing in assignments and drafts, and participating in class discussions/activities throughout the semester. Points are negatively affected by being late to class, demonstrating a disinterest in the material/discussions (e.g., reflection activities, small group activities, discussions, etc.), being unprepared with materials, and/or absences. Points are positively impacted by thoughtful contributions made in class, listening to the ideas of other peers, respectively, and demonstrating an enthusiasm for learning. **Participation points are given at the discretion of the instructor.** If you are not in attendance, thus not able to participate, assigned points will not be earned and cannot be made up at another time. Point values can range from 2 to 5 points.

Drafts – DUE DATES will be posted on Bb. Students will turn in sections (drafts) of the paper for feedback on particular dates (see Bb announcements). Feedback will not be given past the assigned dates.

2. *CITI Program Human Subjects Certification (5 points)*

GMU Mandatory Training for Persons Conducting Research Using Human Subjects is accessed at <http://www.citiprogram.org>. Seven learner modules in the Basic Course are required prior to conducting any research at Mason using human subjects. *This assignment will be evaluated as pass/fail.*

3. *Article Critiques & Discussion (20 points)*

Students are required to complete 2 article critiques during the course of the semester. Students are to select appropriate research articles published in the last 5 years (2008-2012) from a peer-reviewed academic journal. The article critiques will be graded on the appropriateness of the selected article, clear and thorough summary, accuracy in APA citation, and overall thoughtfulness in analysis. Students will informally present ONE of the article critiques.

4. *Research Application Project (40 points)*

The research application project is designed to provide experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating a research application project in special education. Students will employ appropriate research methodology to investigate an area of interest in their classrooms. Students will prepare a research proposal on this project using the format recommended by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). The research proposal will include an introduction, literature review, methodology, and proposed data analysis. The grading rubric will be available on the class Blackboard site.

5. *Research Project Presentation (15 points)*

Students will present their research project using powerpoint. The powerpoint should be between 7 - 10 slides and no more than 15 minutes including time for question and answer. A grading rubric will be available on Bb.

	Class Topics	Readings and Assignments Due
8/27	Course Overview Anatomy of a Research Article	McMillan Ch. 1
9/3	NO Class	Labor Day Holiday
9/10	Research Problems, Variables, Questions, & Hypothesis	McMillan Ch. 2 Complete Article Critique in class (practice) Calhoon & Fuchs (2003)
9/17	Participants & Sampling	McMillan Ch. 4 & 5

	Foundations of Educational Measurement	Share idea for research project in class
9/24	Writing the Introduction Accessing databases/conducting a literature review	McMillan Ch. 3 Speaker: Anne Driscoll DUE: CITI Training
10/1	Data Collection Techniques Experimental Research Designs	McMillan Ch. 6 & 8 DUE: Draft of Introduction (2 points) Speaker: Writing Quantitative Proposals
10/8	Qualitative Research Designs	McMillan Ch. 10 DUE: Article Critique #1 Speaker: Writing Qualitative Proposals
10/15	Non-experimental Research Designs	McMillan Ch. 7 DUE: Article Critique #2
10/22		Research & Writing DUE: Draft of Literature Review (5)
10/29	Discussion & Conclusions Review of APA Requirements	McMillan Ch. 13
11/5	Action Research	McMillan Ch. 12 Research & Writing DUE: Draft of Methods Section (5)
11/12	Designing your presentation	See Blackboard for examples
11/19	Research Presentations	
11/26	Research Presentations	
12/3	Research Presentations	DUE: Research Project
12/10		Reflection & Analysis

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:

- a.* Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b.* Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

- c.* 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.
- d.* 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/>].
- e.* 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/>].
- f.* Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g.* 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/>].

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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/Revised 06/25/12>

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

Note: *This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.*