



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

EDSE 540-679: *Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the
General Curriculum*

CRN: 80913, 3 - Credit(s)

Fall 2012

Instructor: Dr. Nicole Conners	Meeting Dates: 09/13/12 - 11/15/12
Phone: 571-423-4178 office 703-309-9232 cell	Meeting Day(s): Thursdays
E-Mail: nconners@gmu.edu	Meeting Times: 4:30pm - 8:30pm
Office Hours: By Office Appt	Meeting Location: Chantilly HS, Room 244

Course Description:

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.

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

Field Experience Requirement:

A Field Experience is a part of this course. "Field Experiences" entail Mason students conducting activities that may involve students, parents, and/or teachers, etc. in a school setting. "Finding" an individual needed to complete a Field Experience Project/Case Study for a course may be a challenge. Mason's Field Placement Specialist, Lauren Clark lclarkg@gmu.edu can assist in placing Mason students at school sites. Mason is required to track when and where Mason students complete any field experiences. Consequently, EACH PERSON ENROLLED in this course must access this link <http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf> at the beginning of the semester (if not before) and complete the information requested REGARDLESS if one needs assistance in 'finding' an individual for the project/case study or not.

Learner Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Describe the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices of today.
- Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, students with learning disabilities students with mild intellectual disabilities.
- Define learning disability, emotional disturbance, and mild intellectual disabilities.
- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between normal and atypical behaviors.
- Describe characteristics of K-12 students with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
- Compare conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
- Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.
- Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self- understanding and confidence as learners.
- Describe and discuss a range of learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school.
- Describe how children develop language.
- Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.
- Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.
- Describe what an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.

Required Textbooks:

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

Recommended Textbooks:

N/A

Required Materials:

N/A

Additional Readings:

Additional in-class readings will be assigned.

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 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners, Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences, Standard 6: Language, and Standard 8: Assessment, Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice, and Standard 10: Collaboration. *NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional CEC standards.

Policies (Attendance and Late Work Policies):

- **Attendance:** students are expected to (a) attend all classes during the course (b) be actively involved in on-line activities (c) arrive on time and stay for the duration of class time. Lack of attendance and professional participation at all sessions (online and in class) with significantly diminish the impact of the course and interfere with creating a collaborative learning community. As such, absences from any portion of the course are strongly discouraged. Lack of participation by a student for any two weeks will result in a recommendation that the student drop the course(s). **Please notify me *in advance* by phone or email if you will not be able to attend class.**
- **Withdraw:** If you are unable to meet the participation requirements of the course(s) it is strongly recommended that you drop the course. Withdrawing from the course is not an automatic process. You must inform the instructor in writing if you wish to withdraw from the course. Failure to notify the instructor will result in an "F" on your official George Mason University transcript.

- **Late Work & Workload:** In-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements require outside class time. Students are expected to allot class study and preparation time weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments. **The result of late work will be the loss of 10 points per day until the assignment is received by the instructor.** Individual situations will be addressed with students outside of class.

- **Written and Oral Language:** **APA Style** is the standard format for any written work in the College of Education. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) You are required to use APA guidelines for all course assignments. This website links to APA format guidelines: <http://apastyle.apa.org>

- We will use **person-first language** in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). We will also strive to replace the term “Mental Retardation” with “Intellectual Disabilities” in our oral and written communication in accordance with terminology choices in the disability community.

- **Academic Integrity:** Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper APA citation. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. **Evidence of plagiarism or any other form of cheating in the class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the Dean’s Office.**

TaskStream Submission:

For student evaluation, program evaluation, and accreditation purposes, all students are required to submit an NCATE assignment from selected Special Education courses to TaskStream. The NCATE assignment required for this course must be submitted electronically to Mason’s NCATE management system, TaskStream: (<https://www.taskstream.com>).

Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit NCATE assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. Students who do not submit the required NCATE assignment to TaskStream will receive a grade of Incomplete (IN) in the course. The Incomplete (IN) will change to a grade of (F) if the required signature assignment has not been posted to TaskStream by the incomplete work due date listed in the current semester’s Schedule of Classes.

Grading Scale:

95 - 100% = A

90 - 94% = A-

80 - 89% = B

70 - 79% = C

<70% = F

Evidence-Based Practices:

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

Schedule:

Course Calendar (subject to change based on class needs)

Class	Topics	Assignments	Due This Class Session
Thursday, Sept. 13th, 2012 (CLASS 1)	Registration, Introductions, and Backgrounds Cohort Structure and Questions Syllabus Review Big Picture Ideas for Course	N/A	N/A
Thursday, Sept. 20th, 2012 (CLASS 2)	Context of Special Education Introduction-review of exceptionalities & legislation Overview of Students with Mild Disabilities	Read Chapters 1 & 2; start thinking about a student for case study assignment	Read Chapters 1 & 2

	-creating student centered learning environment		
Thursday , Sept. 27th, 2012 (CLASS 3)	Students with Learning Disabilities PDSA Model	Chapter 5	Read Chapter 5 Please select the student that you will use for the case study by this date.
Thursday, Oct. 4th, 2012 (CLASS 4)	Students with Emotional Disabilities – GUEST SPEAKER Classroom Management	Chapter 4, 9, & 10	Read Chapters 4, 9, & 10 First four sections of DRAFT case study paper DUE: -Student Characteristics + Impact of Disability + Strengths/Challenges -Description of School and Neighborhood -Student’s Educational History -Student’s Current Areas of Need + Services
Thursday, Oct. 11th, 2012 (CLASS 5)	Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities PDSA Model for Instruction- learning targets, formative assessment, reflection, re-teach, as needed Review journal studies paper/ APA format	Chapter 3 & 8	Read Chapter 3 & 8 Last sections of DRAFT case study paper DUE:: -Observations -Parent Interview Summary -Student Interview Summary -Instructional Recommendations/Needs -Summary and Synthesis of Case Study (So What? How is this important to me?) -References -Appendices

<p>Tuesday, Oct. 18th, 2012</p> <p>(CLASS 6)</p>	<p>Students with High Functioning Autism</p> <p>Writing Effective IEPs and Educational Reports</p>	<p>Chapters 6 & 7</p>	<p>Read Chapters 6 & 7</p>
<p>Thursday, Oct. 25th, 2012</p> <p>(CLASS 7)</p>	<p>Focus on Learning: Student -Centered Learning ;Planning and Teaching; Ongoing Assessment</p> <p>Specialized Instruction</p> <p>Building Family Partnerships</p>	<p>Chapter 11</p>	<p>WORK ON CASE STUDY PAPER, FINAL EXAM, AND JOURNAL SUMMARIES PAPER</p> <p>Read Chapter 11</p>
<p>Thursday, Nov. 1st, 2012</p> <p>(CLASS 8)</p>	<p>Access to the Curriculum, Accommodations, Modifications</p> <p>Specialized Instruction and Evidence-Based Practices</p>	<p>Chapters 4 & 9</p>	<p>Read Chapters 4 & 9</p> <p>CASE STUDY PAPER DUE</p> <p>GUEST INSTRUCTOR</p> <p>PLEASE POST YOUR CASE STUDY IN TASKSTREAM NO LATER THAN TODAY!</p>
<p>Thursday, Nov. 8th, 2012</p> <p>(CLASS 9)</p>	<p>Collaboration and Inclusive Practices</p> <p>Specialized Instruction and Supports (special education)</p> <p>Co-teaching</p> <p>Case Study</p>	<p>Chapters 6 & 11</p> <p>BEGIN case study</p>	<p>Read Chapter 6 & 11</p> <p>Case Study Presentations</p>

	Presentations	presentations	
Thursday, Nov. 15th, 2012 (CLASS 10)	LAST CLASS Specialized Instruction and Supports (special education) Case Study Presentations	Chapters 6 & 11	Finish Case Study Presentations JOURNAL SUMMARIES PAPER DUE FINAL EXAM DUE Course Evaluations

EVALUATION

POINTS

- | | |
|---|------------|
| • Class Participation (attendance and in class) | 100 points |
| • Case Study Paper* | 100 points |
| • Journal Summaries Paper | 100 points |
| • Final Exam | 100 points |

TOTAL POINTS: 400 points

100 points: Class Attendance and Participation

Completion of weekly class activities, participation in class discussions, and project presentation update discussions throughout the semester. **Points missed due to absences cannot be made up. Excessive absences can result in additional penalties and potential withdrawal from class**

100 points: Student Case Study

Due Date Thursday, November 1st, 2012

A comprehensive case study on a student with emotional disability, learning disability, intellectual disability, or high functioning autism will be completed. **A MODEL PAPER AND HEADING OUTLINE WILL BE PROVIDED.**

The case study should include the following components:

- Student's characteristics, disability , & strengths/challenges (**Draft 10/4**)
- Description of school and student's community (**Draft 10/4**)
- Educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, pre-referral interventions, results of multidisciplinary evaluation, special education classification, description and location of educational service provision, related services) (**Draft 10/4**)
- Educational goals and objectives, classroom accommodations, & services (**Draft 10/4**)
- Observational information (at least two class periods of observations specifically related to student goals, objectives, and accommodations) (**Draft 10/11**)
- Parent interviews (related to education goals, objectives, accommodations, and any other relevant issues.) (**Draft 10/11**)
- Additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications (**Draft 10/11**)
- Summary and synthesis (comparison of student's characteristics with those described in the textbook or other research, **i.e., which characteristics were identified in your student? So What? What have you learned from this case study about teaching students with disabilities?** (**Draft 10/11**))
- Appendices - to include student work samples, parent interview questions/answers. (**Draft 10/11**)

CASE STUDY IS DUE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1st . Be prepared to **present your case study in class orally on one of the following dates: Nov. 8th; or Nov. 15th, 2012.** Be creative in your presentation style! (see provided examples)

100 points: Abstracts of Journal Articles

Due Date THURSDAY, November 15th , 2012

- 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 field. Appropriate sources for journal articles include: Exceptional Children, The Journal of Learning Disabilities, Learning Disabilities Quarterly, The Journal of Special Education, Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, Remedial and Special Education, Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, etc... **PLEASE DO NOT USE A STUDY WHICH IS NOT INTERVENTION RESEARCH.**
- The purpose of this assignment is **twofold: first** to identify research-based findings that are relevant to the needs of your case study student and **second**, to distill the major points of the article to a one-page summary. The abstract should be typed and include an introduction to the students needs, followed by 3 summaries with an APA style citation at the top of the page. Each entry should

consist of two parts labeled 1.-Summary and 2.-Critique. Finally, a conclusion that ties together the 3 summaries' findings should be presented as an action plan for assisting the student to meet an identified need. A "so what" section is asked to state what you have learned about the student to enhance your teaching practice. **A MODEL PAPER WILL BE PROVIDED.** All articles should be from current literature and should not be more than seven years old. **You must use your own words to summarize but be sure to cite liberally!**

100 points: Take Home Final Exam

Due Date THURSDAY, Nov. 15th, 2012

- An exam that covers course content will be provided as a take home examination. The exam will be based on case studies and other class related topics. It will be provided on the second night of class and you may choose to work on it throughout the semester as information is shared and discussed. Please email your FINAL EXAM to the instructor by the time frame noted above or please hand in a copy of your final exam on the last night of class.

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](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/Revised%2006/25/12)

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.*