



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

Fall 2013

EDSE 401 DL1: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 77301, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Margaret Weiss	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 8/26/2013 - 12/18/2013
<b>Phone:</b> 703.993.5732	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Asynchronous
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<b>Office Hours:</b> By appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Internet

***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.*

**Course Description**

Provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Content includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, assessment, and support services of and for individuals with disabilities ranging from mild and moderate to severe levels of varying disabilities. Includes the impact of disabilities on academic, social, and emotional performances. Field experience required.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisite(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. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3145 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

## **Nature of Course Delivery**

*[Instructors, please revise in accordance with your specific course format]*

Learning activities include the following:

1. Online lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and writing activities

## **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 Office, [internsh@gmu.edu](mailto:internsh@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.

*The Module 1 assignment requires you to observe or interview those involved in special education or visit a classroom or meeting. This is considered a field experience even if you do not need assistance in arranging it. You must register with the Field Experiences office as described above but complete the form stating that you do not need assistance in finding a placement. If you do need assistance, please let me know. You may be able to visit the school of one of your classmates*

## **Learner Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
- Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education.
- Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of special education.
- Describe research in etiological factors associated with all disability areas.
- Describe social, cognitive, behavioral and academic characteristics associated with all disability areas.
- Describe historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education.
- Describe the role of families in the educational process.

- Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including use of innovative technology.
- Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.
- Examine ethical considerations for the treatment of all children.

### **Required Textbooks**

Hallahan, D., Kauffman, J., & Pullen, P. (2012). *Exceptional learners: An introduction to special education* (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. (ISBN-13: 9780137033706 ISBN-10: 0137033702)

### **Digital Library Option**

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course is available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. The division and Pearson have partnered to bring you the Digital Library; a convenient, digital solution that can save you money on your course materials. The Digital Library offers you access to a complete digital library of **all Pearson textbooks** and MyEducationLabs used across the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research curriculum at a low 1-year or 3-year subscription price. Access codes are available in the school bookstore. Please visit <http://gmu.bncollege.com> and search the ISBN.

- 1 year subscription \$200 ISBN-13: 9781269541411
- 3 years subscription \$525 ISBN-13: 9781269541381
- Individual e-book(s) also available at the bookstore link above or at <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/>. Search by author, title, or ISBN.

### **Recommended Textbooks**

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

### **Required Resources**

Access to the Internet and Blackboard login

### **Additional Readings**

Included in Blackboard site.

### **Course Relationships 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 that will be addressed in this class include Standard 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners, and Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences.

### **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- 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. [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>]

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

## **Course Policies & Expectations**

### **Attendance.**

All instruction takes place online through Mason's Blackboard environment.

This is a 3-credit graduate level course. Traditional 3-credit courses across a 15-week semester require an average of 45 hours of in-class time and approximately 90 hours of independent reading and assignment completion. This course includes the same amount of content as a traditional 15-week course. As you budget your time for the course, keep in mind the importance of allotting an appropriate amount of time for course preparation, reading assignments, lesson activity completion, and longer module assignments. All of the course content is available to you. I would recommend you review it and develop a schedule for yourself. I have had many students fail the course because they did not allocate time and ran out of it at the end. Please note that **all** work for the course and the upload of your TaskStream requirements must be completed by the end date given in the Course Schedule.

### **Participation and Completing Work Online**

This is both an interactive and independent course that requires a high level of self-direction, communication, and problem solving on your part. You will learn from the material provided and from one another. This is a self-paced course so everyone's schedule will vary. You are responsible for all communication that occurs during the time of the course. Please check your Mason email frequently, even after you have finished all components of the course. If something is missing or I need to contact you, I will send you communication through your Mason email.

### **Participation Requirements and Technical Support**

This course requires you to work in an online environment. Therefore, you must have a working computer and access to the Internet at all times. Computer malfunctions and other technology problems are your responsibility and must be resolved by you in a timely fashion.

*If you need technical assistance for gaining access to Mason's Blackboard page or your Mason email, contact ITU Support at  
703-993-8870  
[support@gmu.edu](mailto:support@gmu.edu)  
<http://itservices.gmu.edu/>*

*If you need technical assistance with Blackboard, please contact the Blackboard support line at 703-993-8870.*

*If you are having trouble finding something within the course, direct your questions to me.*

### **Late Work.**

**ALL** assignments are due by midnight on the final day of the course. No late work will be accepted. As indicated in the Course Pacing Guide, I will grade all posted assignments on dates throughout the semester. These are not required due dates; however, if you would like to make sure you know how you are doing on the Module Assignments and in the course before the final due date, you may post assignments by these dates and they will be evaluated. You may also finish the course by any of these dates and receive your final grade.

### **Communication**

The best way to contact me is through email. There is a Send Email icon on the left navigation bar in our course. My email (as well as the emails of your classmates) is located here. I check my email at least once a day on weekdays. I will respond to emails within 24 hours, if not sooner, on weekdays.

### **Evaluation**

Assignments are evaluated according to posted rubrics. You can find the assignment descriptions and rubrics in each Module. Grades for most reading checks will be available immediately after you finish and will post to the Grade Center (My Grades in the left side navigation bar). For Module assignments (and some reading checks), I will grade the assignment and post the score you earned and my comments to Grade Center. You can read the comments by clicking on the grade. If you have any questions, please contact me. If you have difficulty with an assignment, either in understanding it or completing it, please contact me immediately to discuss.

All Module assignments require you to synthesize material from the Course and outside sources into coherent statements of your ideas. In all cases, your writing should be data-based, meaning that you must support statements and ideas with evidence from these sources, giving these sources credit. The standard format for writing in the field of education is outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). The citation for this manual is included in the section entitled, Recommended Texts. This is also termed “APA Style.” For an online resource, see [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org). Specifically, final Module Assignments for Modules 1 and 4 should be written in APA style, including a cover page, running head, pagination, headings (as needed), citations (as needed), and reference pages.

### **TaskStream Submission**

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit these assessments, Abuse/Neglect Certificate and Final Paper to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result

in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete(IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

If you have never used TaskStream before, you **MUST** use the login and password information that has been created for you. This information is distributed to students through GMU email, so it is very important that you set up your GMU email. For more TaskStream information, go to <http://cehd.gmu.edu/api/taskstream>

### **Grading Scale**

100-93%	A
92-90%	A-
89-83%	B
82-80%	B-
79-73%	C
72-70%	C-
60-69%	D
<60%	F

### **Assignments**

#### **NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.**

##### *Child Abuse Training Module*

All students must complete the online Child Abuse Recognition training module available at [http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated\\_reporters/cws5691/index.html](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cws5691/index.html). If you have already completed the training module, you will just need to post your certificate (or evidence of completion on your teaching license) to TaskStream.

##### *Module 4 Final Paper*

Module 4 Final Paper assignment is also a required assignment that must be uploaded to TaskStream. Specific directions are posted on Blackboard.

**These are mandatory requirements and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment. The Certificate of Completion and the Module 4 Final Paper will need to be posted to your TaskStream account in order to receive your final grade in the course.**

### **Common Assignments.**

None

### **Other Assignments.**

*(Please see Blackboard for specific directions and rubrics.)*

### **Reading Checks (any 14 of the 16 at 25 points each/ 350 points)**

At the end of *each lesson*, there is a reading check assignment. In most lessons, these checks are 5-10 multiple choice questions. These reading checks assess your understanding and recall of the chapter in the textbook you were assigned. You may not use any materials such as books or notes to help you complete these checks but you may take each one multiple times.

### **Module Assignments (4 at 150 points each/600 points; all directions and rubrics posted in Blackboard)**

Module assignments are a combination of independent and group work. Modules 1 and 4 require students to write papers individually. The paper in Module 1 is a personal philosophy statement. It also requires you to choose two activities from a list of school- and community-based options. You will include a summary of the activities in your paper. In Module 4, students must integrate information from all of their course experiences to write a paper about one disability area.

Assignments for Modules 2 and 3 are slightly different. Once you complete the Module lessons, you will choose a disability area from the Module and post your choice to the Discussion Board. (If there are already five students who have posted for a disability area, please choose another one.)

Once you have completed your worksheets for the Module, you will post them to your disability area Wiki.

After posting your worksheets, choose a DIFFERENT disability area Wiki, read over the postings, and comment on the group information provided. Each comment should be posted to the group comment Wiki and include how the information related to at least one aspect of the Module.

### **Schedule**



### Course Pacing Guide/Schedule

Date	Topic	Material
8/26	Course is opened in Blackboard	Students begin work on Course Introduction. Students may begin work on course material.
9/16	GRADING POINT 1—All assignments and reading checks posted by this date will be graded within 48 hours. If all of your assignments are completed and posted, a final grade will be generated.	
10/7	GRADING POINT 2—All assignments and reading checks posted by this date will be graded within 48 hours. If all of your assignments are completed and posted, a final grade will be generated.	
11/4	GRADING POINT 3—All assignments and reading checks posted by this date will be graded within 48 hours. If all of your assignments are completed and posted, a final grade will be generated.	
11/25	GRADING POINT 4—All assignments and reading checks posted by this date will be graded within 48 hours. If all of your assignments are completed and posted, a final grade will be generated.	
12/11	GRADING POINT 5—All assignments and reading checks posted by this date will be graded within 48 hours.	FINAL DUE DATE  All Course Material should be completed  Course evaluation completed