



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

Fall 2013

EDSE 401 002: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 77302, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Sharon Ray	Meeting Dates: 8/26/2013 - 12/18/2013
Phone: Office (703) 993-5247 Cell (703) 673-8540	Meeting Day(s): Mondays
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Office Hours: Before/After Class or By Appointment	Meeting Location: Prince William, BRH 256

***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

Class lecture and discussion

1. Application activities
2. Small group activities and assignments
3. Video and other media supports
4. Research and presentation activities
5. 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 Office, 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.

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. P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2012). *Exceptional Learners: An introduction*

to special education. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

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

Required Resources

1. IRIS Module: What Do You See? Perceptions of Disability
<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/da-5/>

2. **Required Access to Course Blackboard Site**

Blackboard (Bb) will be used to post important information for this course. Plan to access the Bb site several times per week; announcements and resources are posted on the Bb site in between class sessions. You are responsible for accessing the materials – for printed copies, etc. prior to class. You will use the site: <http://courses.gmu.edu> and click the Login tab. Your Login and password is the same as your George Mason e-mail login. Once you enter, select the EDSE 401 course. The first night of class all handouts will be provided. After the first night, all handouts will be posted by Sunday evening before Monday's class. Students are responsible for downloading these handouts or printing hard copies for use in class from the second class onwards.

****Starting September 9th, be sure to come to class prepared with the week's handouts electronically downloaded or as hard copies (whichever works best for you)!****

Additional Readings

As needed and assigned by the instructor.

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.

Class attendance and participation are an important part of this class because of the technical nature of the information learned through the course. Attendance points are earned for each class to emphasize the importance of engaging in the learning activities and educational environment of the course. Students are expected to arrive on time, participate in all class discussions and activities, and stay until the end of class. Attendance will be maintained through the artifacts students produce during class through group and individual work. For full attendance credit during each class, students must not only attend the full class session, but actively participate, work cooperatively, and turn in high quality class products. If you are unable to make any class sessions during the semester, please contact the instructor by phone or e-mail **before** the class session where you will be absent. In the rare event of an emergency or severe sickness, each student is given 1 “grace” absence without a point penalty, **as long as the instructor is notified before the class session.** In this case, it is still the student’s responsibility to make arrangements to obtain notes, handouts, and lecture details from another student. **Attendance points missed for more than one absence or any absence without instructor contact before class cannot be made up!** **Two or more unexcused absences will result in no credit for this course.**

Late Work.

All assignments should be submitted *on or before* the assigned due date. **In fairness to students who make the effort to submit work on time, total assignment points will be deducted from your grade for late assignments.**

Late assignments will be accepted in the following manner for the Child Abuse Awareness Certificate, Reading Quizzes, Philosophy of Education, and Final Paper. **(Note: No late work will be accepted for the Final Exam or Final Paper Presentation):**

- **5% point deduction – up to 1 week late**
- **10% point deduction – 1-2 weeks late**
- **25% point deduction – 2 weeks late up through last class before exam**

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

A	=	95-100%
A-	=	90-94%
B+	=	87-89%
B	=	80-86%
C+	=	77-79%
C	=	70-76%
F	=	69% and below

Course Requirements

Requirements of this course include readings, from your textbook and professional journal articles, and activities, which include in-class individual and group work, as well as independent assignments outside of class. The goal of all work for this course is to increase your knowledge of the many facets of the special education field.

The required NCATE assignments for this course are the Child Abuse Awareness Certificate and the final paper. Child abuse awareness training is required by Virginia as part of teacher licensure (even if you are not seeking licensure, the certificate still needs to be completed as part of the course). The final paper will assist you in broadening your understanding of learners with disabilities through hands-on and multi-media research activities. You should upload these completed assignments directly to Taskstream by the start of class (4:30PM) on the due date. There are several other forms of assessment implemented in this class, including both formative and summative evaluation measures. Students are expected to complete all forms of class assessment and final grading will be based on the cumulative points that students *earn* based on their performance on all course assessments. Student performance on assignments is expected to be both timely and of high quality.

Your Philosophy of Education and Final Paper Presentation PowerPoint should be submitted via the Blackboard Digital Assignments Tab. All assignments should be submitted by the start of class on the due date (4:30PM). Assignments should not be submitted by GMU email unless there is an emergency technical issue with Blackboard. In the case of an emergency, submit your assignment to the Instructor's Blackboard email account. Assignments that are not submitted at the appropriate time ***are late***. Paper copies of assignments are also always accepted in class and should be given to the professor at the beginning of the class session on which they are due. However, for required NCATE assignments, these must also still be submitted on Taskstream. Assignments not turned at the beginning of class ***are late***. Late assignments will be accepted with a point deduction. All course assignments should be completed with college level use of content, grammar, spelling, and written expression clarity. If writing is an area of difficulty, you will need to visit the GMU Writing Center to work on these skills (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>).

Assignments submitted through the Blackboard Digital Assignments Tab or Taskstream should be labeled with filenames that correspond to: <your first initial your last name abbreviated form of the assignment's name>. I will return graded assignments to you via Blackboard or email. It is suggested that you download and save all returned assignments, as well as corresponding evaluations and comments. Below is example labeling for submission of required assignments:

SRayCert – Child Abuse Awareness Certificate

SRayPhil – Philosophy of Education

SRayPaper – Final Paper

SRayPres – Final Paper Presentation

Course Requirements Evaluation	
Assignment	Points Earned/Total Points
1. Attendance & Participation (1 pt. per class Meeting)	/13
*2. Child Abuse Awareness Certificate	/7
3. Reading Quizzes	/20
4. Philosophy of Education	/10
5. Final Exam	/15
*6. Final Paper	/25
7. Final Paper Presentation	/10
Total # of points earned	/100

***TASKSTREAM SUBMISSION REQUIRED**

The Child Abuse Awareness Certificate and Final Paper are the required NCATE assignments for this course and must be submitted digitally to Taskstream. If this is your first GMU Special Education class, you will need to self-enroll into Taskstream. There is further Taskstream information on the GMU Special Education Program website:

<http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/> .

Course evaluation and final grades will be calculated based on the individual student's point score out of the possible 100 point total.

Assignments

NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.

Child Abuse Awareness Certificate – Due September 30th (7 points)

You will complete an online child abuse awareness training module at

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cws5691/index.html

The site includes the definitions and indicators of child abuse and neglect, how to respond to signs of abuse and to report abuse, the legal requirements of Virginia teachers to report abuse, state support services, and the actions that follow reports of abuse. Quizzes and scenarios assess student understanding and a certificate of completion is awarded. Educators are required to complete this training as part of their licensure in the state of Virginia. If you have already completed this training, please submit the certificate you were previously issued. This is a required NCATE assignment that needs to be submitted to TaskStream by the due date for full credit.

Final Paper – Due November 25th (25 points)

Your final paper should be 5 to 10 pages in length, and the format for the paper is fairly flexible. Full directions and the grading rubric will be distributed in class. You may choose to describe the characteristics and the impact of a disability of your choice and make connections to how you experienced or observed this in your field experience and exploratory activity. You may choose to describe meaningful experiences from your field experience and exploratory activity and explain how that connects with the content you have learned in the course. You can also come up with an alternative format of your choice. However, please be sure to refer to the grading and Taskstream assignment rubric to make sure that you have addressed all required topics.

Your goal is to clearly show how your own perceptions of disability have changed and evolved this semester AND demonstrate that you clearly understand the important content you have learned.

Common Assignments.

There are no common assignments in this course.

Other Assignments.

Attendance and Participation - Weekly [1 point per class for a total of 13 points]

In general terms, attendance points are earned based on the Attendance Policy described in the Policies section of this syllabus. More specifically, Points for class attendance and participation are positively impacted by:

- a. attending class and being psychologically available to learn,
- b. completing and handing in weekly class assignments,
- c. participating in class discussions/activities throughout the semester,
- d. thoughtfully contributing to class discussions,
- e. listening to the ideas of other peers, respectfully, and
- f. demonstrating an enthusiasm for learning,
- g. successfully facilitating assigned group work activities, which may include guided questioning and problem solving roles,
- h. and taking initiative and leadership in class discussions and/or activities, which may include leading class discussions/activities on assigned sections of specific content.

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.), failure to guide your group's collaborative work or take leadership roles on assigned content, and/or absences. Also, please display digital etiquette during class sessions. Use of laptops may be used to observe the class PowerPoints/materials, specifically.

Additionally, the use of electronic devices that produce sound or otherwise interfere with the learning of others (i.e., cell phones, pagers, etc.) is prohibited during class. Please turn these devices off or to vibrate before the start of class.

Specific Attendance Points: Each class (13 sessions): .5 = psychologically invested, prepared, and present; .25 = participation, thoughtful contributions, completed in-class assignments, and .25 = actively guiding group discussions towards thoughtful work completion and presenting assigned content in a knowledgeable and reflective manner.

Reading Quizzes – On dates as indicated in the Course Schedule (4 quizzes x 5 points each = 20 points)

Throughout the semester 6 online reading quizzes will be conducted based on the assigned weekly readings. For each quiz, the chapter(s) assigned for that particular class session will be assessed via an online reading quiz. Each quiz will be worth 5 points, and will be open under the Blackboard Assessments Tab from the day after the previous class to the start of the class for which the readings are assigned. From the total of 6 reading quizzes, the top 4 grades will be taken and factored into each student's final grade.

Philosophy of Education – October 21st (10 points)

You will write a two-page Philosophy of Education statement. This statement should be written in narrative form and reflect your ideas and beliefs about educating individuals with disabilities. If you have already written a philosophy statement in the past, feel free to build off this statement (the requirements for this assignment will likely extend what you have already written). Your

philosophy should flow as a cohesive narrative while addressing the key ideas below. A grading rubric will be distributed in class.

My Ideas about special education

- What is a disability?
- How should a disability be handled in/by society?
- How should students with disabilities be treated in schools, colleges, and the workplace?
- What should the education of students with disabilities look like?
- What ethical considerations must I face as a special educator?
- Include a rationale for your ideas. This should be an honest description of your ideas at this moment in time.

My Ideas about my role as an educator

- Who are the students I serve? Will I serve students with disabilities?
- How can I meet the unique needs of students (and those with disabilities) within the context of my school and classroom?
- What are some barriers to meeting these unique needs?

Final Exam – Due by December 13th (15 points)

Students are expected to read text assignments by the date they are listed for discussion in class. Utilizing the companion website may be beneficial for some learners. Others may benefit from taking notes, highlighting, or marking key concepts with post-it notes. The goal is to convert your textbook into a highly valuable resource. All of the key course content will be assessed through a final exam. Key points of emphasis will include the foundation of special education, procedures of special education, and the characteristics of each disability area.

Final Paper Presentation – November 25th or December 2nd (10 points)

Students should prepare a 15-20 minute oral and visual presentation of their Final Paper. Presentation elements should incorporate all major components of the Final Paper written assignment with specifics given for each particular area. Include a PowerPoint in your presentation – please provide a digital copy for the instructor via the Blackboard Digital Assignments Tab prior to the start of class on the date of the presentation. A rubric for this assignment will be distributed in class.

Schedule

COURSE SCHEDULE		
Date	Topics	Assignments Due
8/26	Introductions and Icebreaker Syllabus and Course Expectations Field Placement Information	
9/2	NO CLASS – <i>Labor Day Holiday!</i>	
9/9	Exceptionality and Special Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the Exceptional Learner • Disability Prevalence • History of the Special Education Field Current Practices for meeting the Needs of Exceptional Learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and Identification • Inclusion • Least Restrictive Environment • Universal Design 	Read Chapters 1 & 2 Register with Field Placement Office if a placement is needed
9/16	Multicultural and Bilingual Aspects of Special Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of Diverse Populations • Multicultural Instruction 	Read Chapter 3 Reading Quiz #1
9/23	Parents and Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability – Impact on the Family • Family-Centered Approach 	Read Chapter 4 Reading Quiz #2
9/30	Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Read Chapter 5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Assessment and Educational Considerations 	<p>Reading Quiz #3</p> <p>Child Abuse Awareness Certificate Due</p>
10/7	<p>Learners with Learning Disabilities and ADHD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Assessment, Educational, & Medication Considerations 	<p>Read Chapters 6 & 7</p> <p>Reading Quiz #4</p>
10/14	No In Class Meeting – Columbus Day Holiday!	Use this week to work on your final paper activities.
10/21	<p>Learners with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Assessment and Educational Considerations • Service Delivery Models 	<p>Read Chapter 8</p> <p>Philosophy of Education Due</p>
10/28	<p>Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Assessment and Educational Considerations 	<p>Read Chapter 9</p> <p>Reading Quiz #5</p>
11/4	<p>Learners with Communication Disorders & Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech Disorders • Language Disorders • Anatomy of the Ear • Causes • Identification 	<p>Read Chapters 10 & 11</p> <p>Reading Quiz #6</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics • Assessment and Educational Considerations 	
11/11	<i>Independent Work Week</i>	Use this week to work on your final paper activities.
11/18	Learners with Blindness or Low Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anatomy of the Eye • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Assessment and Educational Considerations 	Read Chapter 12
11/25	Learners with Low-Incidence, Multiple, and Severe Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatic Brain Injury • Deaf-Blindness • Augmentative/Alternative Communication • Educational Considerations 	Read Chapters 13 & 14 Final Paper Due Final Paper Presentations
12/2	Learners with Physical Disabilities, Other Health Impairments, & Gifts and Talents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neuromotor Impairments • Orthopedic & Musculoskeletal Disorders • Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Adaptive Devices for Daily Living • Origin of Giftedness • Educational Considerations 	Read Chapter 15 Final Paper Presentations
Week of 12/9	Final Exam will be available online from Friday, 12/6/2013 to 12/13/2013	Final Exam must be submitted by the end of the day on Friday 12/13/2013

Appendix