



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

Spring 2015

EDSE 540 001: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the  
General Curriculum

CRN: 10526, 3 - Credits

*“My heart is singing for joy this morning. A miracle has happened! The light of understanding has shone upon my little pupil's mind, and behold, all things are changed” -- Annie Sullivan*

*“He who opens a school door, closes a prison” -- Victor Hugo*

<b>Instructor:</b> Carmen Rioux-Bailey	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 1/20/2015 - 5/5/2015
<b>Phone:</b> 202-302-3223 (mobile)	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Tuesdays
<b>E-Mail:</b> criouxba@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 4:30 pm-7:10 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> Tues and Weds by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Fairfax-Krug Hall #17

**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**

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. Notes: School-based field experience required. Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3 Hours of Lab or Studio per week: 0

**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) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

### **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 may include observations of a school setting or case studies of individual students. Below are procedures that students need to follow based on their specific situation:

**REQUIRED PROCEDURE FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS COURSE:** Complete the online field experiences form [<http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>] at the beginning of the semester (if not before) and complete the information requested **REGARDLESS** if you need assistance in 'finding' an individual for the project/case study or not. This information is required by the state.

**OPTION 1:** Request a placement online through the Clinical Practice Office

- Complete the online request form and indicate that you need George Mason (Clinical Practice Specialist) to arrange a field placement, (including observations and/or case studies). It is important that you do this within the first two classes so that the field placement office has sufficient time to find a placement for you.

**OPTION 2:** Arrange for your own placement and complete the online field placement form indicating that you do not need assistance finding a placement due to one of the following situations:

- a. I will arrange my own field experiences (observations and/or case studies) because I am a full-time contracted school system employee and will complete field experience at my workplace.
- b. I will arrange my own field experiences (observations and/or case studies) because I am conducting a case study or individualized child portfolio with an individual outside of the school system. (Note: It is not recommended that you work with your own child.)
- c. I will arrange my own placement for my field experiences, (including observations and/or case studies) because my instructor has offered access to a student(s) inside of a school system. (Note: an email from the host teacher and the administrator is required to be sent to [cuanseru@gmu.edu](mailto:cuanseru@gmu.edu). The email serves as documentation of the approval. The administrators must approve all visitors in their school.)

If you are a consortium student that does not attend GMU, please complete the GMU online field placement form. Select an item from one of those listed in Option 2. You need to make sure that you follow the procedures for field placement at your university to identify a placement or report that you have a placement. Contact your faculty liaison for more information.

### **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.

### **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**

Raymond, Eileen. (2012). *Learners with Mild Disabilities: A Characteristics Approach* (4/E). ISBN-10: 0137060769 • ISBN-13: 9780137060764

### **Digital Library Option**

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course **may be** available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. Please note that not all textbooks are available through this option. Visit the links below before purchasing the digital library to ensure that your course(s) text(s) are available in this format. 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. To register your access code or purchase the Digital Library, visit:

<http://www.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

- 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.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

### **Recommended Textbooks**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN 9781433805615

### **Required Resources**

Access to Blackboard

### **Additional Readings**

As Assigned.

### **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, Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences, Standard 6: Language, and Standard 8: Assessment, Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice, and Standard 10: Collaboration.

### **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/the-mason-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.

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. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant, active participation are expected. Attendance and professional participation at all sessions is 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 *the loss of five points off your final grade..* 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 ☺

### Late Work.

All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Consult with me **in advance** if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, 5 points per day will be deducted from your assignment grade for late papers **unless** I have agreed to an extension (may be used **one time** only for **one assignment only**). Maximum extension is 1 week. Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit.

## TaskStream Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, *Observation Case Study* 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

95-100% = A

90-94% = A-

80-89% = B  
70-79% = C  
< 70% = F

## Assignments

### Performance-based Assessment (TaskStream submission required).

#### 1. Observation Case Study Report (30% of final grade)

**Due Date: 3/31**

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

- Student's demographic data
- Description of school and student's community
- 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)
- Educational goals and objectives, classroom accommodations
- Observational 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
- 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? Integrate at least three (3) sources from the literature with what you observed in your case study.)
- Appendices – to include student work samples, parent interview questions/answers.
- Be prepared to present your case study in class orally
- Must be submitted to Taskstream!

### Performance-based Common Assignments (No TaskStream submission required).

#### 2. Summaries of Journal Articles (30% of final grade)

**Due Date: 4/14**

Each student will summarize three (3) journal articles that are **relevant to the needs of the student chosen for their 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 Mild Disabilities 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. A word document of common journals is included under Course Documents on Blackboard.

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 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. All articles should be from current literature and should not be more than 10 years old. **You must use your own words to summarize. Don't forget a reference page!**

### **3. Final Exam (25% of final grade)**

**Due Date: (in-class exam) 5/12**

An exam that covers course content will be administered. The exam will be based on case studies and will include IEP-writing.

### **Other Assignments.**

#### **4. 3 Blackboard Discussion Boards (15% of final grade, 5 pts apiece)**

**Due Dates: 2/3, 2/17, 3/3 by 9am (so I have time to read and grade before class that day)**

Provide a comprehensive response to both the prompt and at least 2 classmates' postings. NO late submissions will be accepted. To earn the full 5 points you must submit your postings by the due date and time (9am the day of class). Your response should address the discussion board topic AND reflect your reaction to at least 2 of your classmates' postings.

### **Schedule**



<b>CLASS</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS to do <i>after</i> this session</b>	<b>DUE <u>THIS</u> CLASS SESSION</b>
Class 1 1/20	Syllabus Review	Ensure successful entry to Blackboard for this course Chapter 1	
Class 2 1/27	Perspectives on Disability	Identify Case Study Student Chapter 2	
Class 3 2/3: <b>Online Class</b>	*Universal Design for Learning <b>Complete IRIS module</b>	Complete placement paperwork for Case Study student	Discussion Board 1 by 9am
Class 4 2/10	*Issues in Assessment and Identification	Chapter 3	Share idea for case study
Class 5 2/17	*Issues in Instruction and Placement	Chapter 4	Discussion Board 2 by 9am
Class 6 2/24	Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Chapter 5	
Class 7 3/3	Learners with Learning Disabilities	Chapter 6	Discussion Board 3 by 9am
3/10	Happy Spring Break!		
Class 8 3/17	Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Chapter 7	

Class 9 3/24	Learners with ADHD and Other Disorders and Conditions	Chapter 8	
Class 10 3/31	Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Chapter 9	Case Study Paper and submission to Taskstream
Class 11 4/7	Cognitive and Perceptual Characteristics	Chapter 10	
Class 12 4/14	Language Characteristics	Chapter 11-12	Journal Articles Paper due
Class 13 4/21	Presentations of Case Studies and Intervention Recommendations		
Class 14 4/28	Review for Final Exam	Review course Materials for Final	
Class 15 5/5	Final Exam		Final Exam

**Appendix**

All rubrics and other course information can be found on Blackboard.