



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

Spring 2015

EDSE 540 002: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the  
General Curriculum

CRN: 17979, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Jill Jakulski	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 1/26/2015 - 5/11/2015
<b>Phone:</b> 703-380-2289 (cell)	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Mondays
<b>E-Mail:</b> jjakulsk@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 7:20 pm-10:00 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Arlington-ARLFH 476

**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
- d. 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**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition  
American Psychological Association

## **Required Resources**

Blackboard access/use  
Taskstream access/use

## **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 and Participation (20 points)**

- 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 to earn the participation grade. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant and 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 losing your participation grade for the course. Please notify me *in advance* by phone or email if you will not be able to attend class.

### **Late Work**

- Unless we have agreed *in advance* about an alternate due date, assignments/tasks are due when assigned. Assignments will be penalized by 10% of the total points possible for each day late when not agreed to in advance. Students are typically afforded only one extension with prior notice per course, and a maximum of one week is the maximum extension time period allotted.

### **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

A+	4.00	Satisfactory/Passing
A	4.00	Satisfactory/Passing
A-	3.67	Satisfactory/Passing
B+	3.33	Satisfactory/Passing
B	3.00	Satisfactory/Passing
B-	2.67	Satisfactory*/Passing
C	2.00	Unsatisfactory/Passing
F	0.00	Unsatisfactory/Failing

- Although a B- is a satisfactory grade for a course, students must maintain a 3.00 average in their degree program and present a 3.00 GPA on the courses listed on the graduation application.

## ASSIGNMENTS

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

#### Case Study Report (30 points) → *Due Date: 04/20*

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).**

**Summaries of Journal Articles** (20 points) → *Due Date: 03/16*

- Each student will summarize three (3) journal articles that are relevant to the needs of the student chosen for the case study. 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 findings of the three summaries should be presented. Included in this, you are to provide reflective commentary as to what you have learned as a result of your readings/summarization, and how that could relate to supporting the needs of the student for whom you are writing a case study.
- Papers chosen for this requirement must be from peer-reviewed published journals should be data-based examinations of issues relevant to the Mild Disabilities field. A word document of common journals is included under Course Documents on Blackboard.

**In-Class Exam** (20 points) → *05/11*

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

**Blackboard assignment(s)** (10 points) → *date tbd*

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

CLASS	TOPICS	DUE <u>THIS CLASS SESSION</u>
01/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions and Backgrounds</li> <li>• Syllabus/Assignment Explanation and Review</li> </ul>	
02/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context of Special Education</li> <li>• Introduction/Review of Exceptionalities and Legislation</li> <li>• Issues in Assessment and Identification</li> </ul>	Read Chapters 1 & 2 student identified for case study –report back
02/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues in Instruction and Placement</li> <li>• Universal Design for Learning</li> <li>• Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities</li> </ul>	Read Chapters 3 and 4
02/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners with Learning Disabilities</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 5
02/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners with Learning Disabilities, cont.</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 5
03/02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 6
03/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GMU Spring Break –no class</li> </ul>	
03/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders, cont.</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 6 <i>journal summaries due</i>
03/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners with ADHD and Other Disorders and Conditions</li> <li>• Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders</li> </ul>	Read Chapters 7 & 8
03/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Class/Assignments (details tbd)</li> </ul>	tbd
04/06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders, cont.</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 8
04/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive and Perceptual Characteristics</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 9
04/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Characteristics</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 10 <i>case study due</i>
04/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic and Learning Characteristics</li> <li>• Social/Emotional Characteristics</li> </ul>	Chapters 11 and 12
05/04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations of Case Studies and Intervention Recommendations</li> <li>• Review for Final Exam</li> </ul>	
05/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Exam</li> </ul>	Final Exam

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Journal Abstracts Scoring Rubric**

<b>Journal Abstracts</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Points Received</b>
<b>Writing Style/Quality Mechanics/APA</b>	2.5 points	
<b>Introduction to Student's Needs (based on your case study)</b>	2.5 points	
<b>Quality and Thoroughness of Summaries</b>	5 points	
<b>Quality of Critiques</b>	5 points	
<b>Conclusion/Thoughtfulness of Recommendations</b>	5 points	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	_____/20 POINTS	
<b>COMMENTS:</b>		

## EDSE 540 Case Study Rubric

	<b>Does Not Meet Expectations (0 - 1)</b>	<b>Meets Expectations (2 - 4)</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations (5 - 6)</b>
<b>Demographic and Background Data</b> CEC/IGC Standards 2, 3	provides partial demographic and background information, giving only a limited view of the learner with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs	discusses the demographic and background information related to the target student inclusive of etiology and diagnosis, any medical conditions that exist, psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and the effect these conditions can have on the student's life; discusses skills and typical and atypical human growth characteristics of the learner; demonstrates sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of the learner through their nonbiased description of the background information	discusses the demographic and background information related to the target student inclusive of etiology and diagnosis, any medical conditions that exist, psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and the effect these conditions can have on the student's life; discusses skills and typical/atypical human growth characteristics of the learner; demonstrates sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of the learner through their nonbiased description of the background information; describes educational implications of the characteristics of learner's exceptionality and the impact of the learner's sensory impairments, physical and health exceptional learning needs on the learner, their family, and society
<b>School and Classroom Information</b> CEC/IGC Standards 1, 3	provides a description of the school and classroom setting but does not examine the impact of the environment's adaptations on the learning opportunities for learners with mild to moderate exceptionalities	describes the school and classroom setting in the greater context of the relationships of organizations of special education and the continuum of placement and services available for individuals with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs; evaluates the environmental context in terms of the how well the teacher has integrated the principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment; however, it is not clearly evident how the environment's adaptations impact the quality of learning opportunities for learners with mild to moderate exceptionalities	describes the school and classroom setting in the greater context of the relationships of organizations of special education and the continuum of placement and services available for individuals with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs; evaluates the environmental context in terms of the how well the teacher has integrated the principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment; clearly describes how the environment's adaptations impact the quality of learning opportunities for learners with mild to moderate exceptionalities and determines whether or not optimal learning opportunities are being provided
<b>Educational History, Educational Goals, Objectives, and Accommodations</b> CEC/IGC Standards 2, 3	provides a partial educational history related to the target student -does not include the educational implications of the characteristics of the learner's exceptionality and the effect a the exceptionality can have on life; writes a description of the student's educational history which fails to demonstrate that they are active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the student's exceptional condition to impact academic and life options; summarizes the learner's educational goals, objectives and classroom accommodations but does address the impact of the learner's academic and social abilities, attitudes, and values on instruction and career development	discusses the educational history related to the target student inclusive of the educational implications of the characteristics of the learner's exceptionality and the effect a learner's exceptionality can have on his or her life; writes a description of the student's educational history which demonstrates that they are active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the student's exceptional condition to impact academic and life options; provides a summary of the learner's educational goals, objectives and classroom accommodations and the impact of the learner's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (if applicable)	describes the learner's educational history inclusive of the educational implications of the characteristics of the learner's exceptionality, the effect a learner's exceptionality can have on his or her life, the impact of the learner's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (if applicable); writes a description of the student's educational history which demonstrates that they are active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the student's exceptional condition to impact academic and life options; summarizes the learner's educational goals, objectives and classroom accommodations and the impact of the learner's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (if applicable); describes the impact the learner's disability may have on auditory and information processing skills and relates levels of support to the needs of the individual

	<b>Does Not Meet Expectations (0 - 1)</b>	<b>Meets Expectations (2 - 4)</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations (5 - 6)</b>
<b>Student Observation and Parent Interview</b> CEC/IGC Standards 3, 9, 10	does not describe the relationship between their observations and the learner's goals, objectives, and accommodations or describe the positive effects the learner's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life; provides an incomplete description of the parent interview which lacks information about the family system and role of family in the student's development and culture	summarizes classroom observation experiences inclusive of an analysis of how their personal cultural biases and differences might affect their observation or teaching; describes relationship between observations and learner's goals, objectives, and accommodations and describes the positive effects the exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life; collaborates with and interviews family who has knowledge of the learner in a culturally responsive way that demonstrates understanding of legal matters and ethical considerations; based on the interview, the collects data on the family system and the role of family in the student's development and education; collects data on the perceived impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between the learner's home/school lives & the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school staff; family input and concerns are documented	comprehensively summarizes their observation experiences inclusive of an analysis of how their personal cultural biases and differences affect their observation or teaching; describes the relationship between their observations and the learner's goals, objectives, and accommodations and describes both the positive and negative effects the learner's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life; describes the perceived impact of their student's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (if applicable); collaborates with and interviews family who has knowledge of the learner in a culturally responsive way that demonstrates their understanding of legal matters and ethical considerations; Based on the interview, the collects data on the family system and the role of family in the student's development and education; also collects data on the perceived impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between the learner's home and school lives and the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school personnel; Family input and concerns are documented as are ways in which the demonstrated their respect for variations in beliefs, traditions, and values for the family's culture and acted within the CEC's Code of Ethics during the interview
<b>Summary, Synthesis and Reflection &amp; Additional Recommendations</b> CEC/IGC Standards 1, 2, 3, 9	provides incomplete recommendations, educational accommodations, and modifications for the learner with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs; provides an incomplete summary of pertinent information which does not include all information collected	provides recommendations, educational accommodations, and modifications for the learner with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs; The recommendations provided demonstrate the 's ability to serve as an advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs and demonstrate a high level of commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs; summarizes all pertinent information inclusive of observations, interviews and background information and offers a comprehensive synthesis of their learner's characteristics as compared with typical and atypical learners, the social and educational implications of these characteristics and the effect the exceptionality has on the learner's life	provides recommendations, educational accommodations, and modifications for the learner with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs; the recommendations provided demonstrate the 's ability to serve as an advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs and demonstrate a high level of commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs; The demonstrates, through their recommendations, their ability to serve as an advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs and demonstrate a high level of commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs; summarizes all pertinent information inclusive of observations, interviews and background information and offers a comprehensive synthesis of their learner's characteristics as compared with typical and atypical learners, the social and educational implications of these characteristics and the effect the exceptionality has on the learner's life; analyzes how their own cultural biases and differences affect their interactions with students and their families

## APPENDIX

### **Guidelines for the Observation Case Study**

The observation case study provides you with the opportunity to get an in-depth understanding of a student with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs. You will examine his or her educational history and goals, observe in classroom settings, conduct parent or guardian interviews, and synthesize the information gathered, relating it to the content of the course. The purpose of the case study is to help you understand the complexity of each individual case of a student with a disability. This case study assignment has six major sections. Each section should be labeled with the heading given below. The paper should be formatted using APA style with related documents and samples in the Appendix.

### **Part I: Demographic and Background Data**

- A. Select a student with exceptional learning needs who accesses the general curriculum and you would like to study. Verify with school officials that you have permission to access confidential records for that student and that you may contact the student's parents or guardians. If you do not have access to a student with exceptional learning needs, please talk with your instructor.
- B. Create a pseudonym to use throughout your project. (It is of the utmost importance that the identity of your student remains confidential. If school officials or parents ask, your case study will be evaluated by your instructor and will be posted to TaskStream, Mason's accreditation database. This database is password protected and is only used as a repository for student artifacts. Information from the database is never available for public view.)
- C. Provide a thorough description of your student, including
  - a. student strengths and challenges
  - b. demographic information;
  - c. disability diagnosis and etiology;
  - d. any medical conditions that exist;
  - e. psychological and social-emotional characteristics; and
  - f. any other information relevant to the student's academic achievement (e.g., has moved repeatedly, has significant family changes).

\*Do not include the student's educational history –it is included in Part III.
- D. Identify and provide examples of the skills and characteristics of your student that are (a) similar to their peers (typical growth and development) and (b) those skills and characteristics that are dissimilar (atypical).
- E. Identify the educational implications of the characteristics in C and D.

### **Part II: Educational History, Goals, Objectives, and Accommodations**

- A. Describe your student's educational history, including
  1. schools attended;
  2. reason for initial referral;
  3. pre-referral interventions (if available);
  4. results of multidisciplinary evaluation;
  5. special education classification;
  6. description and location of educational service provision; and
  7. related services provided.
- B. From the student's IEP, summarize the educational goals and objectives and identify the classroom accommodations.

- C. Describe the impact of your student's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development. Does your student's disability have an impact on auditory and information processing skills? If so, describe.
- D. Evaluate how the levels of support correspond to the needs of the individual.

### **Part III: School and Classroom Information**

- A. Give a description of your student's school, including
  - a. demographics of students;
  - b. staffing; and
  - c. continuum of services for students with exceptional learning needs.
- B. Describe your student's educational placement. What special education and general education services are provided? In what locations or ways are the services provided?
- C. Evaluate how this placement is the Least Restrictive Environment to address the student's specific skills and characteristics, as described in Part I.
- D. Describe the classroom(s) in which the student participates, including
  - a. number of students;
  - b. content area; and
  - c. curriculum standards used.

### **Part IV: Student Observation**

Observe at least two class periods of instruction for your student.

- A. Summarize your observations, including
  - a. content area;
  - b. teachers and service providers involved;
  - c. length of observation;
  - d. placement of student in classroom;
  - e. interactions of student with teacher(s) and other students;
  - f. learning activities; and
  - g. level of engagement of student with activities.
- B. Describe how what you observed corresponded to your student's IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations.
- C. Describe the effects your student's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life in school.

### **Part V: Family Member Interview and analysis of information**

Interview at least one of your student's parents, guardians, or family member who is knowledgeable of the student's goals and needs. (\*if you are an IA, you can interview the classroom teacher) \*\*questions for parents and questions for teachers will be posted to Blackboard

- A. Begin your interview with questions about the family, focusing on developing a collaborative relationship. Ask questions that gather information about the family system and the role of family in the student's development and education, respecting differences across families. (parent questions provided for interview)
- B. Ask the parents about their child's educational goals, objectives, and accommodations. What was the process used in developing these? Did they feel they had a role in their development? Do they feel these goals, objectives, and accommodations are appropriate and will provide benefit for their child?

- C. Effective special educators communicate effectively with families of students with exceptional learning needs from diverse backgrounds. Please be sure that you consider the following as you speak with the parents:
- ways in which you can foster a respectful and beneficial relationship with the family within the bounds of ethical practice;
  - characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family;
  - the potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between your student's home and school lives; and
  - ways in which you can demonstrate your respect for variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures; also consider the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school personnel (include a statement about how you addressed these items with specific examples).

### **Part VI: Summary, Synthesis, Recommendations, SO WHAT, and Final Reflections**

- A. Summary- Write a brief, one paragraph summary (referring to relevant pages in your case study as necessary) of your student including all pertinent information obtained throughout the observations, interviews and background information review. Provide enough detail that a stranger could walk into the classroom and identify your student from your summary alone.
- B. Synthesis- Compare your student's characteristics with those described in the textbook or other course readings for a student with the identified disability. How are they similar and different? Are the described implications similar or different? How do your student's characteristics compare to typical development? Provide specific examples.
- C. Recommendations- Given the information you have compiled about your student and your learning from the course...
- Do you think your student is receiving the services and supports he or she needs? Provide a rationale for your response.
  - If you could provide recommendations to the IEP team about effective instruction to match the characteristics of your student, what would they be? Provide a rationale for your response.
- D. So What? You have now completed a comprehensive case study. So what? How will you think about students differently now that you have completed this assignment? What can you take away with you and apply to all of your students in the future?
- E. Final reflection
- How did your personal cultural biases and differences affect your interactions with this student and his or her family during this case study process?
  - How does the development of this case study address CEC Standards 1, 2, 3, 9, and 10?

**Part VII: Appendix- work samples, interview questions, etc...** (required) Include student work samples relevant to your case study specifics, parent interview questions and answers. Other relevant materials may be included but are optional.

**Part VIII: Mechanics and APA Format.** Proofread all papers prior to turning in a final product. APA format for all papers is required.