



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

Spring 2015

EDSE 703 001: Creating a Collaborative Culture

CRN: 21410, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Carlyn Floyd	Meeting Dates: 1/20/2015 - 5/13/2015
Phone: 703-201-9809	Meeting Day(s): Wednesdays
E-Mail: cfloyd3@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 4:30 pm-7:10 pm
Office Hours: by apt	Meeting Location: Fairfax-Finley #119

***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 leaders in school settings with an opportunity to gain the skills needed to facilitate collaborative environments supportive of all learners. Topics of study include the impact of diversity on educational settings, developing a vision effective communication teaming and coteaching techniques, family professional partnerships, implementing schoolwide change initiatives, alternative dispute resolution, and maintaining a positive school climate. Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3Hours 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. This class is a combination of online and face to face sessions
2. Class lecture and discussion and online discussions / activities
3. Application activities
4. Small group activities and assignments
5. Video and other media supports
6. Research and presentation activities
7. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard – must have access to BB with video and sound

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define collaboration, consultation, and teamwork and explain the essential characteristics of each.
- Demonstrate the ability to synthesize principal and concepts from public policy, legislation, research data and literature in the context of collaboration among and between families, professional and interagency partnerships.
- Identify variables that may facilitate or constrain participation in collaboration, consultation or teamwork settings.
- Identify and apply collaboration and communication concepts, principles, and skills among families, professionals at the individual, building, district, and agency level.
- Articulate and apply best practices in the development and implementation of collaborative instructional teams among and between professionals, families and agencies.
- Demonstrate communication skills of listening avoiding communication roadblocks, dealing with resistance, being appropriately assertive and resolving conflicts.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify and effectively apply a variety of problem solving, alternative dispute resolution and decision making techniques at the individual, group, building district and interagency levels.
- Identify and implement a variety of planning process models for integrating the family, school and community.

Required Textbooks

Holcomb, E. L. (2009). *Asking the right questions: Tools for collaboration and school change* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual* (6th ed., 2nd printing). Washington, DC: Author.

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

None – see blackboard

Required Resources

None – see blackboard

Additional Readings

None – see blackboard

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 Special Education Leadership Graduate Certificate. 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 6: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice & Standard 7: Collaboration. (Updated Fall 2014 to align with the revised CEC Standards)

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.

- For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (see Professional Disposition Criteria), and complete all assignments with professional quality and in a timely manner.
- When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, notes, syllabus revisions, etc.) from another class member prior to the class meeting that follows the absence. Be aware that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be reclaimed.

- 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.
- The use of electronic devices that record class or photograph individuals or materials may not be used without instructor permission.
- Computers may be used to take notes during class, but they may not be used for internet exploration or other non-class activities during class time.
- Routine access (daily) to electronic mail and Blackboard for communication and assignments is crucial to participation in this class.
- For each in-class hour devoted to this course content, students are expected to spend at least 3 hours outside of class on course related assignments, which is a typical in-class to out-of- class ratio for graduate level coursework.
- Retain electronic copies of all course products for use during the portfolio phases of the M.Ed. or licensure programs.
- Exemplary work should be considered for presentation or publication opportunities.

Late Work.
See above

TaskStream Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, *Collaboration Plan* 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	=	94 – 100 percent	A-	=	90 – 93 percent
B+	=	86 – 89 percent	B	=	80 – 85 percent
C	=	70 – 79 percent	F	=	Below 70 percent

Assignments

Performance-based Assessment (TaskStream submission required).

- **Collaboration Plan for Creating School Change: 45 points** - Students will develop a situation-specific Collaboration Plan to enhance the education of exceptional learners in their own educational environment. The plan will address each of the 5 primary questions established in the course readings (i.e. Where are we now?, Where do we want to go?, How will we get there?, How will we know we are there?, and How will we sustain focus and momentum?). This plan should identify the specific tools used (or to be used) to address each of the questions and include the information produced by each (e.g., results of the Exploratory of Current Setting assignment would be included). Students should explore relevant data as they plan how to address the situation. Students should explore relevant literature/documentation as they plan how to address the situation. They should supplement these reviews with actual experiences and interviews with key appropriate personnel (e.g., teachers, administrators, community agency representatives, parents, students and school staff) as needed to build an effective plan for change. Students must provide a supported rationale for the processes they used to build the plan and for the changes they now propose. Once the initial 5 primary questions are addressed, the bonus (ch 7) questions should be tackled. Finally, a plan for managing conflicts should be included in order to plan for any disputes that may arise from the change initiative you proposed. Develop a written document synthesizing your ideas and presenting the Collaboration Plan. Include key points addressing the questions, mediation, justification for plan design, literature regarding the topic, and anticipated implications for practice and/or policy. Summarize your learning. Be sure this plan is sequential and cohesive for how to address the situation. (10-12 pages – including cover and references – paper is 25 points)
 - Develop a one-half-hour presentation of implementation plan with follow-up discussion questions and Blackboard prompts. Discussion leader will post discussion points 24 hours prior to the assigned week of discussion.(15 points)
 - Develop a brief overview of your plan that can be shared on BB for others to read. When printed, this summary should not exceed 2 pages (e.g. bulleted narrative, up to 12 PowerPoint slides, brochure, etc.). Develop prompts for an in-class discussion of your ideas so you can glean feedback from others. (5 points)
 - Complete a written reflection regarding the feedback given (final paragraph – included in the 45 points - on Taskstream submission) and make changes to your plan as needed (put changes in **bold** in your Taskstream submission).

Note: The final Collaboration Plan is the required Signature Assignment for this course. Therefore, a rubric detailing how this assignment will be evaluated for the course and in TaskStream will be posted in BB.

Performance-based Common Assignments (No TaskStream submission required). (none for this class)

Other Assignments.

1) Participatory Activities (10 points)

Collaboration requires engagement. Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in all assignments, group activities, and class discussions. Active participation includes the asking of questions and the presentation of one's own understanding with regard to the readings and class sessions as well as interactive discussion and participation in activities with other class members. Active participation also includes listening and respectful consideration of the comments of others. This will require all students to complete the required readings, activities, and assignments for that specific class meeting in advance. Additional required materials and activities (e.g. supplemental readings, cases for review, external websites, discussion forums, etc.) will be available in Blackboard's Course Content section in a folder labeled by Week Number or will be provided in hardcopy.

Additionally, during each class meeting there will be the opportunity to earn point(s) for successful completion of graded in-class activities (e.g. case analysis, reflection activities, small group activities, discussion of readings, etc.). If students are not in attendance, thus not able to participate and contribute to class when these activities occur, assigned points cannot be earned. One cannot earn full points for active participation while texting, tweeting, surfing the internet, or engaging in other forms of multi-tasking behaviors.

2) Application Activities (25 points)

These are self-assessment and reflective activities to be completed outside of class that apply the readings and/or extend class discussions. Some will be handed out in hardcopy while others will be posted to BB.

3) Exploratory of Current Setting (20 points)

Submit a brief paper (4-6 pages including cover and references) describing your current context, your role within that context, and your goals for leadership in the future. Identify a specific area to target as in need of change via more effective collaboration. Use your Holcomb text to select and employ at least 3 tools to help you address the *Where are we now?* and *Where do we want to go?* questions. Summarize what you learned in the narrative and include any raw data/forms in the appendix. This information will contribute to your subsequent collaboration plan.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments DUE
1/21 online	On BB – introductions and online activity	<i>Due by 7 PM 1/23 on BB under Discussion Board</i>
1/28	Intro to Text; Discussion of Syllabus Overview of Collaboration Assessing the Situation: Where are we now?	Holcomb Ch 1
2/4 Online	Application Activity 1	<i>Due by 7 PM 2/6 on BB under Course Content</i>
2/11	Identifying Different Collaboration Styles Finding the Vision: Where do we want to go?	Holcomb Ch. 2, 3
2/18 online	Application Activity 2	<i>Due by 7 PM 2/20 on BB under Course Content</i>
2/25	Strategies for Dealing with Different Collaboration Styles Taking action: How will we get there?	Holcomb Ch. 4
¾ online	Application Activity 3	<i>Due by 7 PM 3/6 on BB under Course Content</i>
3/11	Assessing Progress: How will we know we are getting there? Value-added: The Importance of Different Perspectives	Holcomb Ch. 5 <i>Exploratory of Current Setting DUE</i>
3/18 online	Application Activity 4	<i>Due by 7 PM 3/20 on BB under Course Content</i>
3/25	Sustaining Change: How will we sustain focus and momentum? Conflict and Resistance: Issues we can count on	Holcomb Ch. 6
4/1 – spring break	No class or activity planned	
4/8	Dispute Resolution Techniques for Special Education The Role of Special Education Leaders in the Development of Collaborative Culture	Materials in Folder on BB class
4/15 online	Application Activity 5	<i>Due by 4 PM 4/15, then by 10 PM on 4/17 on BB under Course Content</i>
4/22	Presentations	Collaboration Plan due by 5PM 4/22 Presentations Today!
4/29	Powerful Questions to Shape Practice Instructional Collaboration Methods Specific to Special Education: Co-teaching, UDL, and more	Holcomb Ch. 7
5/6	Discussion and Reflective Activities	Collaboration Plan due to TS by 5PM 5/6, changes in bold per directions
5/13	Last Day of the Semester	

Appendix