



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

Summer 2016

EDSE 401 C01: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 41163, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Ms. Donna Sacco	Meeting Dates: 06/27/16 - 07/30/16
Phone: 703-851-7636	Meeting Day(s): Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday
E-Mail: dsacco@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 3:45 pm - 6:45 pm (T & R) 8:30 am - 11:30 am (S)
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30 - 3:30 Finley Room 205 Also by appointment	Meeting Location: Krug Hall 14 - Fairfax

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.

Schedule Type: LEC

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

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
2. Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education.
3. Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of special education.
4. Describe research in etiological factors associated with all disability areas.
5. Describe social, cognitive, behavioral and academic characteristics associated with all disability areas.
6. Describe historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education.
7. Describe the role of families in the educational process.
8. Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including use of innovative technology.
9. Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.
10. Examine ethical considerations for the treatment of all children.

Required Textbooks

Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2014). *Exceptional learners: An introduction to special education, 13th ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Recommended Textbooks

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

Required Resources

Please check Blackboard site regularly.

Additional Readings

As assigned. Any additional readings will be posted on 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 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: Learner development and individual learning differences; Standard 3: Curricular content knowledge.

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 George Mason University Disability Services and inform their instructor, in writing, as soon as possible. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. [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 foundational 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 and/or by a roll-call. 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/arrive late/leave early. 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.**

Regardless of the reason for absence, it is still the student’s responsibility to make arrangements to obtain notes, handouts, and lecture details from another student and make-up activities from that class session (in-class activities, etc.). ***Attendance points missed without instructor contact before class cannot be made up!***

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 assignment(s). Late assignments will be accepted in the following manner for the Exploratory Activities (completed in class), Child Abuse Awareness Certificate, Philosophy of Education, and Final Paper (NOTE: No late work will be accepted for the Final Exam or Final Paper Poster Presentation): →5% deduction – up to 3 days late →10% deduction

– 4-7 days late →25%+ deduction – 8 or more days or late (until last class before exam) [no work will be accepted after this date]

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN BY THE DATE OF THE FINAL EXAM. NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS TIME. FAILURE TO TURN-IN PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSIGNMENTS WILL RESULT IN AN INCOMPLETE (IN) FOR THE COURSE

Communication.

Your GMU email address and the instructor's GMU email address are the only email addresses that will be used for communication in this course. Student email is accessed at <http://masonlive.gmu.edu>. ALL communications regarding coursework, enrollment issues, advising, internship and important listserv announcements are sent to students via their Mason email accounts. Students are held responsible for this information. I will check email daily and respond within 24 hours. Please keep this timeline in mind if you have questions about assignments.

Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit the *Abuse/Neglect Certificate and Final Paper* to Tk20 through Blackboard (regardless of whether the student is taking the course as an elective, a onetime course or as part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Tk20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Tk20 (through Blackboard) will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Tk20 submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Grading Scale

Undergraduate Grade Scale:

A = 100 - 93%

A- = 92 - 90%

B + = 89 - 87%

B = 86 - 84%

B- = 83 - 80%

C + = 79 - 77%

C = 76 - 74%

C - = 73 - 70%

D = 69 - 63%

D- = 62 - 60%

F = Below 60%

Assignments

Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required).

1. *Child Abuse Training Module* [150/1000 points]

All students must complete the online Child Abuse Recognition training module available at

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cws5691/index.html. If you have already completed the training module, you will just need to post your certificate (or evidence of completion on your teaching license) to Blackboard Assignments.

2. *Disability Specific Paper* [aka Final Paper posted on Blackboard (300/1000 points)]. Specific directions are provided in the Appendix and on Blackboard.

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required).

Other Assignments.

1. *Class Attendance and Participation Activities* [10 points per week x 15 weeks = 150/1000 points] - Class attendance and participation (e.g. discussion, asking questions, taking notes, etc.) is pivotal to the learning community. Therefore, students are expected to arrive on time, be present for each session and participate by engaging with the content of the class. Participation including before-class discussion posts and in-class exploratory learning activities (e.g. journaling, knowledge acquisition/demonstration, and interactive activities, etc.) is pivotal to the learning community. Therefore, from-time-to-time in class activities will be assigned to enhance the learning environment. Students are expected to participate in such activities.
2. *Philosophy of Education Paper* [submitted to Blackboard (150/1000 points)] - This paper serves as a reflective paper that utilizes personal experiences, knowledge gained, readings, the field experience and other items to develop one's individual philosophy or approach to special education. This work should be as reflective as possible and should be at least 2 pages in length and not exceed 6 pages (page limit does not include references, title page, etc.). For a complete description, please see the Appendix.
3. *Disability Specific Poster Presentation* [delivered in class (100/1000 points)] - This assignment is reflective of the knowledge gained in the course and the content of the final paper. This presentation should be on a single piece of poster board and cover (a) the characteristics of the disability that you selected, the learning needs of the individuals with the disability that you selected, (b) lifespan issues related to the disability that you selected, and (c) how the disability (that you selected) is similar and different to other types of disabilities. Please be as creative as possible. Outside of covering a-c, this assignment is flexible. Have fun with this assignment! This assignment will be further discussed in class and a rubric will be given prior to the assignment due date.
4. *VIRTUAL Final Exam* [150/1000 points] - Since this class is a foundational course upon which future content and classroom experiences are based, this course will include a

VIRTUAL final exam in order to assess your knowledge and prepare you for engaging in the field of special education.

Students should plan to bring an internet accessible device to class to complete activities and review materials that are presented in class. [If you need assistance with this, please let me know—we will work together on this item.]

Schedule

(Subject to change.)

Date	Topics	Readings & Assignments Due on this date.
Class #1 6/28/16	Introduction to the Course Syllabus and Course Expectations Field Placement Information	None
Class #2 6/30/16	Librarian Visit - APA format History of Special Education	Chapter 1
Class #3 7/2/16	The Cycle of Special Education	Chapter 2
Class #4 7/5/16	Multicultural & Bilingual Aspects of Special Education Parents and Families	Chapter 3 Chapter 4
Class #5 7/7/16	Learners with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities	Chapter 5
Class #6 7/9/16	Child Abuse Awareness Training Module NO CLASS MEETING Complete online module by SATURDAY	Child Abuse Awareness Certificate due by 11:59 PM on 7/9 on Blackboard
Class #7 7/12/16	Learners with Learning Disabilities Learners with ADHD	Chapter 6 Chapter 7 Philosophy of Education Paper due by 3:45.
Class #8 7/14/16	Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)	Chapter 8
Class #9 7/16/16	Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders Guest Speaker	Chapter 9 <i>Draft of final paper due in class if you would like help before turning it in for a grade.</i>
Class #10 7/19/16	Learners with Communication Disorders Learners who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Chapter 10 Chapter 11

Date	Topics	Readings & Assignments Due on this date.
Class #111 7/21/16	Learners with Blindness or Low Vision	Chapter 12
Class #12 7/23/16	Learners with Low-Incidence, Multiple, & Severe Disabilities	Chapter 13
Class #13 7/26/16	Learners with Physical Disabilities & Other Health Impairments	Chapter 14 Final Paper Due
Class #14 7/28/16	Learners with Special Gifts and Talents Final Paper Poster Presentation	Chapter 15 Final Paper Poster Presentation
Class #15 7/30/16	Virtual Final Exam Due by 11:30 AM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This exam may be taken ONCE anytime between 7/28 (7:30PM) and 7/30 (11:30AM). Please manage your time appropriately. The instructor will be available for assistance prior to the closing of the exam. There will be a dedicated help time between 8:30 and 11:30AM on 7/30. (This is for technical assistance only. I cannot help you answer the questions.) If you would like a paper-based version of the exam, please let the instructor know no later than 7/26. If you select this option, you must report to the professor's office to complete the exam on 7/30 at 8:30AM and it must be turned in by 11:30 AM. 	Virtual Exam Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Appendix

All rubrics will be posted on Blackboard.

Philosophy of Education Assignment

Given your previous experiences and the material you have read, write at least a two-page but no more than six-page description of your personal philosophy of special education, citing any sources you use. For the philosophy statement, address the following questions (and any others you feel necessary) in a narrative format:

Part one: 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?

- What preconceived notions or biases have I identified and/or been working through since beginning this course (or in the past)?

Include a rationale for your ideas. This should be an honest description of your ideas at this moment in time (not just a description of what can be found in the text).

Part two: My Ideas about my role as an educator

- Who are the students I serve or plan to 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?
- How does my personal identity and privilege play into my role as an educator?
- What goal did you set at the beginning of this course and how have you progressed toward reaching it?

Requirement	Points
Ideas about Special Education Salient characteristics special education and writer’s ideas/opinions are clearly described. Ethical considerations as well as bullet points above are addressed.	<u> /45</u>
Ideas about Role as an Educator Educator’s ideas in relation to the role are clearly described. Identity and privilege as well as bullet points above are addressed.	<u> /45</u>
Information Synthesis Student demonstrates goals and areas of personal growth in knowledge about learners with disabilities and as an educator. Student integrating what has been learned through experiences and other coursework. Student goes beyond “surface” when discussing ethical considerations, identity, and progress toward goals.	<u> /35</u>
APA Style Writing is clear and easy to understand. There are few to no grammar errors/typos. References are correctly cited in APA format.	<u> /25</u>
Total Points	/150

Final Paper (Blackboard/TK20 Assignment)

The final paper is an opportunity to show growth in your knowledge about learners with disabilities. You will select one disability area and demonstrate your knowledge of (a) the characteristics of the disability, (b) learning needs of individuals with the disability, (c) lifespan issues related to the disability (including impact of a disability on the individual and the family), and (d) how the disability is similar and different to other types of disabilities (e.g., mild, severe, sensory). To show this growth you will combine what you have learned from coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings) with independent learning activities (IRIS modules, field experiences, and exploratory activities). Your independent learning activities will include the following:

1. **The IRIS module *Perceptions of Disability*** located at <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/da/chalcycle.htm>
Start the module at “CHALLENGE.” Answer the questions under the headings of “Initial Thoughts,” “Wrap Up,” and “Assessment.” FYI- This will be completed earlier in the semester.
2. **At least one field experience** designed to further your understanding on the impact of a disability on a student’s learning, his/her family, and his/her school experience. These experiences might include:
 - a. Observation of a student with a disability. If you are already teaching, take this opportunity to explore a disability with which you are less familiar (in other words, do not observe your own classroom).
 - b. Interview of a parent, administrator, or teacher of a student with a disability.
 - c. Completion of additional IRIS modules (<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources.html>)
 - d. Other instructor approved activity.

Note: Most students in this class make arrangements on their own for the field based activity (e.g., observing in a school where they are working, interviewing someone they already know who is a teacher or parent of a child with a disability, making arrangements with a peer in class, or completing additional IRIS modules). If you would like to complete a field experience in a K-12 setting (and you don’t have your own contacts), please discuss this with me. Please do **NOT** make “cold calls” to schools/families asking to observe or interview.

3. **At least one exploratory activity** designed to better understand the experience of having a disability. These activities might include watching a full-length movie or several episodes of a television show, reading a book (e.g. fictional/memoir), or reviewing how disability is represented in the media that help you explore of the impact of a disability on a person’s life. Your exploratory activity sources might include:
 - A. Movies
 - B. Television
 - C. Books
 - D. Media (e.g., newspapers, Internet)

Please see Blackboard for the list generated on the first night of class. You may also choose to visit the following websites for ideas:

http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_film/film.html

http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_irismedia/irismedia.html

<http://www.nlcdd.org/resources-books-movies-disability.html>

<http://lits.columbiasc.edu/edenslibrary/disabilities.htm>

Paper Guidelines

Your paper should be 5 to 10 pages. The format for the paper is fairly flexible. You may choose to describe the characteristics and the impact of the selected disability 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 Blackboard/TK20 assignment rubrics 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. Regardless of how you choose to approach this assignment, your paper should address the following areas:

A. Disability Characteristics

What are some characteristics of the disability? For example:

- What is its prevalence? Is it a high- or low- incidence disability?
- How is it diagnosed?
- Are physical/medical issues associated with this disability?
- Are there social or behavioral implications associated with this disability?

B. Learning Needs

How does the disability affect learning? For example:

- What areas of learning might be impacted by this disability?
- What teaching strategies might benefit learners with this disability?
- What IEP considerations might be needed?
- What accommodations might students with this disability need?
- Where might a student with this disability receive services? (Think LRE.)
- What skills will teachers need to work with students who have this disability?

C. Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Individual and Family)

How does having this disability impact an individual? For example:

- What are early childhood issues that need to be considered?
- What are community issues that need to be considered?
- What are post-secondary (after high school – job, college, independent living) factors that need to be considered?
- What impact does having this disability have on social relationships? What is the impact of the disability on family? For example:
 - What daily living skills might be impacted by this disability?
 - How does this disability impact family dynamics?
 - What information do families need to advocate for their children who have disabilities?

D. Similarities and Differences to Other Disabilities

How is this disability similar and different to other disabilities (or other disability areas)?

For example:

- Is there a difference in the prevalence of the chosen disabilities?
- What are differences in possible school placements for students with the selected disabilities?
- What types of instructional strategies or accommodations/modifications may be different for students with the chosen disabilities?

Note: For this category, you should contrast your selected disability with **TWO** other disabilities or disability areas. For example, if my paper were on students with ADHD (mild disability), I might contrast it to severe disabilities (or a specific disability such as Cerebral Palsy) AND sensory disabilities (or a specific disability such as blindness).

E. Appendices

In addition, you should provide the following artifacts within an appendix:

- 1) Your response to the **required IRIS module-** Perceptions of Disability
- 2) Evidence of your chosen **field experience**.
 - This might include notes from an interview, drawings/notes from a classroom observation, responses to a relevant IRIS module (other than Perceptions of Disability), etc.
- 3) Evidence of completion of at least one **exploratory activity** related to how disability is portrayed in the media:
 - Movie(s): Evidence would include the name of the movie, the date the movie was watched, a brief summary of the plot (including type(s) of disabilities portrayed), and a personal reflection that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.
 - Television: Evidence would include the name of the television show(s), all dates shows were watched, a brief summary of the plot (including type(s) of disabilities portrayed), and a personal reflection of all shows that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.
Book: Evidence would include the name of the book, an indication of the type of book (fiction, biography, junior fiction), a brief summary of the plot (including type(s) of disabilities portrayed), and a personal reflection that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.
 - Media: Evidence would include a log of the title of each article, the date it was located, a brief description of the content of the article (including type(s) of disability portrayed), and a personal reflection of all articles that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.

Note: Appendices do not need to be typed.

Requirement	Points
Disability Characteristics Salient characteristics of the disability are clearly described. Requirements related to identification for special education are included.	<u> </u> /50
Learning Needs Learning needs associated with the chosen disability are clearly described including relevant IEP considerations.	<u> </u> /50
Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Family) A clear description of the impact of the disability across the lifespan is provided.	<u> </u> /50
Similarities and Differences to Other Disabilities The paper compares and contrasts the chosen disability with <u>2</u> other disabilities (or disability categories: mild, severe, or sensory).	<u> </u> /50
Information Synthesis Student demonstrates personal growth in knowledge about learners with disabilities. Student demonstrates completion of independent learning activities (IRIS modules, field experiences, and exploratory activities) by integrating what was learned through these experiences with learning from other coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings).	<u> </u> /75
APA Style Writing is clear and easy to understand. There are few to no grammar errors/typos. References are correctly cited in APA format.	<u> </u> /25
Total Points	/300

Blackboard/TK20 Assignment Evaluation Rubric

Your paper will be evaluated based on the following rubric for accreditation purposes. Your scores here will be used for program improvement purposes and will not impact your grade in the course. However, if you “do not meet competency” in any area, you should continue to focus on this area in future coursework as this is an important competency in special education.

	1 Does Not Meet Competency	2 Meets Competency	3 Exceeds Competency
Disability Characteristics	Information on salient characteristics of the chosen disability is missing or inaccurate. Information on requirements related to identification for special education services is missing or inaccurate.	Indicates clear understanding of the salient characteristics (physical, medical, learning, and/or social/emotional as appropriate) of the chosen disability that are required for eligibility for special education services. Demonstrates understanding of legal aspects and regulatory requirements in special education (e.g., laws and regulation; evaluation issues, etc.).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, indicates an understanding of historical and/or contemporary issues related to the chosen disability.
Learning Needs	Information on learning needs (academic, social, and/or behavioral as appropriate) associated with the chosen disability is missing or inaccurate.	Indicates clear understanding of learning needs (academic, social, and/or behavioral as appropriate) associated with the chosen disability. Demonstrates understanding of IEP considerations for learners with the disability (e.g., least restrictive environment; academic, social, and/or behavioral services; related services; transition needs, etc.).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, indicates a clear understanding of teaching practices that are effective for students with the chosen disability.
Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Family)	Information on impact of the disability across the lifespan is missing or inaccurate.	Indicates clear understanding of the impact of the disability across the lifespan (e.g., IFSP, transition, post-secondary concerns, etc.).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, indicates understanding of impact on the individual’s family (e.g., family dynamics, due process, advocacy, etc.).

	1 Does Not Meet Competency	2 Meets Competency	3 Exceeds Competency
Relationship to other Disabilities	Chosen disability is not compared and contrasted with <u>2</u> other disabilities (or category of disabilities) or information presented is inaccurate.	Demonstrates understanding of range of disability categories by comparing and contrasting the chosen disability with <u>2</u> different disabilities (or disability categories: mild, severe, or sensory).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, addresses similarities and differences in teaching practices across populations.