



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

Fall 2016

EDSE 440 001: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Who Access the  
General Curriculum

CRN: 71633, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Andrea Boykin	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 08/29/16 - 12/20/16
<b>Phone:</b> 757-985-2702	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Thursday
<b>E-Mail:</b> aboykin2@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 7:20 pm - 10:00 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> By Appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> 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**

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.

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.

### **Advising Tip**

Did you know you may be able to take graduate Special Education courses now that you can later apply to your graduate degree program? For more information on taking special education coursework for Reserve Graduate Credit, talk with an advisor: <http://gse.gmu.edu/special-education/advising/>.

### **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. A field experience is a variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, tutor, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings, such as schools (NCATE, 2008). Below are REQUIRED PROCEDURES FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS COURSE

1. Prior to representing George Mason in off-campus settings, visit this site:

<http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/internships-field-experience>. The site has a comprehensive PowerPoint on the registration process and tips for a successful field experience. This is called the Field Experience Presentation. View this.

2. Complete the online field experience registration 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/assignment or not. This information is required by the state. It is important that you do this within the first two classes so that the Clinical Practice Office has sufficient time to find a placement for you.

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Please indicate how your placement will be arranged.\*

- I will need George Mason (Clinical Practice Specialist) to arrange a placement for my field experiences (including observations and/or case studies).
- I have been assigned a placement by my program for my field experiences (including observations and/or case studies).
- I will arrange my own field experience (observations and/or case studies) because I am a full-time contracted school system employee and will complete field experience at my workplace.

- 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 (Special Education, Assistive Technology, Early Childhood Special Education, Early Childhood Education PK-3, Dual Licensure Early Childhood Education PK-3 and Early Childhood Special Education only).

Fields marked with \* are required. Your preferences may not be guaranteed.

NOTE: When selecting options of “I will arrange my own...” you will be asked to specify further, and/or identify the region and/or school of your arrangement. You will also be asked to obtain permission from a school principal or school administrator. Students should keep this documentation.

- ✓ I understand that I must obtain permission from my principal/school administrator.

NOTE: It is not recommended that you work with your own child.

NOTE: If you selected the last option above, 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.

### **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:

1. Describe the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices of today.
2. Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, students with learning disabilities students with mild intellectual disabilities.
3. Define learning disability, emotional disturbance, and mild intellectual disabilities.

4. Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between normal and atypical behaviors.
5. Describe characteristics of K-12 students with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
6. Compare conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
7. Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.
8. Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self- understanding and confidence as learners.
9. 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.
10. Describe how children develop language.
11. Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.
12. Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.
13. Describe what an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.

### **Required Textbooks**

Raymond, Eileen. (2017). *Learners with Mild Disabilities: A Characteristics Approach (5/E)*. ISBN- 9780133827118

### **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 2: Learning environments; Standard 3: Curricular content knowledge; Standard 4: Assessment; Standard 5: Instructional planning and strategies; Standard 7: 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 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.*

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students may miss two classes with no grade penalty. After that, 5 points will be taken off the final grade for each additional missed class.

Students are expected to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. In addition, students are expected to demonstrate limited use of technology devices (only for note taking)

Tardiness/leaving early (more than twice) and excessive use of technology will cause 5 points to be taken off the final grade per incident.

### *Late Work.*

Late work will not be accepted without prior arrangement with the instructor. Assignments will be considered late if they are received past midnight on the assignment's due date. If such an arrangement is made, the maximum extension is one week. Only one assignment may qualify for an extension request.

### **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 *Observation Student Profile* 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**

93-100 = A

90-92 = A-

83-89 = B

80-82 = B-

70-79 = C

61-69 = D

60 = F

### **Assignments**

#### **Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required).**

##### *1. Case Study (40% of grade)*

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.
- Class presentation

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

#### **2. Article Summary (25% of grade)**

Each student will summarize one journal article that is relevant to the needs of the student/disability area chosen for their case study. Articles must be from peer reviewed published journals. The articles should be intervention studies that aim to improve the academic or behavioral outcomes of students with mild disabilities. There is no page requirement, however, the summary should include the following:

- Rationale of article
- Description of intervention
- Description of student population
- Methods
  - o Length of intervention
  - o Materials
  - o Type of assessments used
- Results
- Reflection

Article summaries should be written in APA format. Students will create PowerPoint presentations to share article summaries with their peers.

#### **Other Assignments.**

##### **3. In-Class Problem-Solving and Presentation (15% of final grade)**

Students will be divided into groups and provided a reading related to research, a topic of interest, or a professional dilemma. Using prior learning and information gained from readings, students will discuss and give a brief presentation based on reading-specific prompts. Topics can be related to interventions that can improve academic or behavioral outcomes of students with disabilities, issues in assessment, issues in placement, instruction, or identification, classroom management or collaborative teaching. Findings will be reported as a group in class.

#### 4. In-Class Exam (20% of final grade)

A final exam that covers course content will be administered.

#### Schedule

Date	Readings Due	Topic	Assignment Due
9/1		Introduction/Syllabus Overview	N/A
9/9		Library Instruction Session/ Article Review Overview	N/A
9/16	Chapter 1	Context of special education	N/A
9/23	Chapter 2, Chapter 3	Screening, assessment, and classification; educational and service delivery models	
9/30	Chapter 5, Chapter 9, Chapter 11	*Overview of students with mild disabilities; Students with Learning Disabilities (LD)	Article Review Presentations for LD
10/7	Chapter 4, Chapter 8	*Students with LD (wrap up) *Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities (ID)	Article Review Presentations for ID and Autism
10/14	Chapter 6, Chapter 12	Students with Emotional Disturbances  <b>Online class</b>	
10/21		ED Guest Presentation	Article Review Presentations for ED
10/28	Chapter 10	Language Characteristics  <b>Guest Presentation</b>	
11/4	Chapter 7	*Students with Autism *Cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and attention problems  <b>Guest Presentation</b>	Group Presentation for Classroom Management/ Behavior Strategies
11/11		*Classroom management;  <b>Online class</b>	
11/18		IEP overview and writing academic and behavioral goals	Issues in Classification and Assessment Group Presentation
11/25		<b>No Class</b>	



<b>12/2</b>		Teaching social skills; Student-student interactions	Issues Presentation: Academic Achievement
<b>12/9</b>			Case Study Poster Presentations
<b>12/16</b>			Final Exam Due