



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

Fall 2019

EDSE 401 001: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 71048, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Carlos Lavin	Meeting Dates: 08/26/2019 – 12/18/2019
Phone: (919) 259 1820	Meeting Day(s): Thursday
E-Mail: clavin@gmu.ed	Meeting Time(s): 4:30 pm – 7:10 pm
Office Hours: Thursday 3:00 - 4:15 and after class	Meeting Location: Fairfax, KH 14
Office Location: Finley 206	Other Phone: N/A

- **Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Teacher Candidates/Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-requisite(s): None

Course Description

Provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, assessment, and support services 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.

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 teacher candidates/students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other teacher candidates/students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Advising Tip

Are you interested in learning more about careers in special education? Contact a special education advisor early in your program to make the most of your undergraduate program. Go to <http://gse.gmu.edu/special-education/advising/> to schedule a meeting.

Course Delivery Method

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, teacher candidates/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.

Professional Standards

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, as well as those established by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support consortium (InTASC). The standards addressed in this class include CEC Standard 1: Learner development and individual learning differences (InTASC 1,2) & CEC Standard 3: Curricular content knowledge (InTASC 4,5).

Required Textbooks

Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2014). *Exceptional learners: An introduction to special education*, 14th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Recommended Textbooks

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

Required Resources

Students will need computer access to Blackboard and GMU's online library in order to access additional resources and to complete course assignments. Class presentations and supplementary materials will be posted on Blackboard, and students should bring a copy (printed or digital) of the materials needed for the class to take notes on the content. 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, let me know)

Additional Readings

Any additional readings will be posted on Blackboard

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to Tk20 (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to Tk20.

For *EDSE 401*, the required PBA is (NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE). Please check to verify your ability to upload items to Tk20 before the PBA due date.

Assignments and/or Examinations

Performance-based Assessment (NO Tk20 submission required)

College Wide Common Assessment (NO TK20 submission required)

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required)

- A. **Disability Specific Paper [Final Paper] (25 points):** This final paper is posted on Blackboard AND Tk20. Directions for the paper are provided in the Appendix and on Blackboard. More information about this assignment (including the grading rubric) will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.
- B. **Child Abuse Training Module (10 points):** All students must complete the online Child Abuse Recognition training module available at http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cwse5691/story_html5.ht

[ml](#)

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 the designated location on Blackboard. More information about this assignment will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.

- C. **Dyslexia Awareness Module (10 points):** All students must complete the online Dyslexia Awareness Module available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/index.shtml>

This is a mandatory requirement and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment.

After completing the module, you will print/save a copy of the certificate of completion for verification. **The certificate of completion will need to be posted to Blackboard to receive your final grade in the course.** More information about this assignment will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.

Other Assignments

- D. **Class Attendance and Participation [12 sessions at 1 points each = 12 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. Three in-class assignments will each count 6 points. The dates are already selected, but only the instructor knows when they will take place. **[total= 30 points]**
- E. **Philosophy of Education Paper [10 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.
- F. **Disability Specific Presentation [15 points]** – This assignment is reflective of the knowledge gained in the course and the content of the final paper. This presentation can be done in a variety of formats. Students can create a powerpoint, posterboard, infographic, video, etc. that can be shared with the class. The presentation should 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.

Assignment	points
Disability Specific Paper	25
Child Abuse Training Module	10
Dyslexia Awareness Module	10
Class Attendance and Participation	30
Philosophy of Education Paper	10
Disability Specific Presentation	15
Total	100

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Class attendance and participation are an important part of this class. Attendance points will be given 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 if you will be absent/arrive late/leave early.

In-Class assignments: Three in-class assignments will each count 6 points. The dates are already selected, but only the instructor knows when they will take place.

Participation: Being present in class and ready to be part of the discussion.

Late Work

All assignments should be submitted on or before the assigned due date.: Late assignments are subject to the following penalties: 10% deduction-1-7 days late, 25% deductions 8 or more days late (unit last class before the final exam) [no late work will be accepted after Dec 9th]

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN BY THE DATE OF THE LAST CLASS. 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.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	% of points
A+	96-100
A	90-95
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	60-69
F	<60

*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own or with proper citations (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in at least two points in each student’s program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, and a university supervisor’s evaluation during internship. In special education licensure programs, the self-evaluation is an online survey distributed via email upon program entry, and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 783, EDSE 784, and EDSE 785. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is ‘occasionally evident’ or ‘rarely evident,’ the student takes steps to grow as an educator. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/epo/candidate-dispositions>.

Class Schedule

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Date	Topic	Assignments due
8/29 Week 1	Introductions Syllabus/Blackboard Review	None
9/5 Week 2	Exceptionality and Special Education	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining Exceptional Learners • Prevalence • History of Special Education 	
9/12 Week 3	<p>Current Practices for Meeting the Needs of Exceptional Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and Identification • IEPs • Placement • Teachers' Role in Special Education 	
9/19 Week 4	<p>Multicultural and Bilingual Aspects of Special Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural Instruction • Assessment of Diverse Populations <p>Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Educational Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment 	<p>Philosophy of Education Paper due before 11:59pm</p>
9/26 Week 5	<p>Learners with Low-Incidence, Multiple, and Severe Disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Traumatic Brain Injury • Deaf- Blindness • Educational Considerations 	

<p>10/3 Week 6</p>	<p>Carlos at a conference</p>	
<p>10/10 Week 7</p>	<p>Learners with Emotional & Behavioral Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Educational Considerations • Assessment 	
<p>10/17 Week 8</p>	<p>Learners with Communication Disorders and Who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Language Disorders • Anatomy of the Ear • Identification • Causes • Characteristics • Educational Considerations • Assessment 	
<p>10/24 Week 9</p>	<p>Learners with Blindness or Low Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Anatomy of the Eye • Identification • Causes • Characteristics 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Considerations • Assessment 	
10/31 Week 10	<p>Learners with Learning Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Educational and Medication Considerations • Assessment 	
11/7 Week 11	<p>ADHD and Other Health Impaired</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Educational and Medication Considerations 	
11/14 Week 12	<p>Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Educational Considerations • Assessment 	Final Paper Draft Due on 4/14 to the instructor (optional)
11/21 Week 13	<p>Learners with Physical Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence • Causes • Identification • Characteristics • Educational and Medication Considerations 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Work on papers	
11/28	THANKSGIVING	
12/5 Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment & Gifted and Talented • Origin of Giftedness • Educational Considerations 	<p>Final Paper Due by 4:00pm on 4/24 to Blackboard.</p> <p>Child Abuse Awareness Certificate Due by 11:59PM on 4/30 to Blackboard</p> <p>Dyslexia Awareness Certificate Due by 11:59PM on 4/30 to Blackboard</p>
12/12 Week 15	Final Presentations and Final Class	Final Presentation in Class

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason

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.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

Appendix
Assessment Rubric(s)

Disability Specific Paper

The Final Paper is an opportunity to show growth in your knowledge about learners with disabilities. **Select one disability area** and demonstrate your knowledge of all four topics outlined in Paper Guidelines below. Combine what you have learned from coursework, independent learning, and the exploratory activity you completed in this Module.

Paper Guidelines:

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 your approach this assignment, your paper must address the following areas:

A. Disability Characteristics	<p>What are some characteristics of the disability, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>How does the disability affect learning? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)	<p>How does having this disability impact an individual? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the 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	<p>How is this disability similar and different to other disabilities (or other disability areas)? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>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).</p>
E. Information Synthesis	<p>Integrate what was learned through independent learning activities (IRIS modules, field experiences, and exploratory activities) and from other coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings to demonstrate knowledge about learners with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key takeaways for this paper? • How do you tie all the ideas you presented throughout this paper together?

Additional Final Paper Details:

- ✓ Be sure to include all required topics as outlined in the paper guidelines above.
- ✓ There is no minimum or maximum page length, but typically students' papers are around 10 pages.
- ✓ The paper should be written in APA format and style (see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/> for help with APA)
- ✓ I recommend using the headings you see in the Grading Rubric below to organize your paper.
- ✓ Notice the synthesis portion of the paper is the most heavily weighted and therefore should receive the most attention. This section will likely have citations from outside sources to support your ideas and demonstrate your learning.

Final Paper Requirements	Possible Points	Earned Points
<p>Disability Characteristics</p> <p>Salient characteristics of the disability are clearly described. Requirements related to identification for special education are included.</p>	4	
<p>Learning Needs</p> <p>Learning needs associated with the chosen disability are clearly described including relevant IEP considerations.</p>	4	
<p>Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Family)</p> <p>A clear description of the impact of the disability across the lifespan is provided.</p>	4	
<p>Similarities and Differences to Other Disabilities</p> <p>The paper compares and contrasts the chosen disability with <u>2</u> other disabilities (or disability categories: mild, severe, or sensory).</p>	4	
<p>Information Synthesis</p> <p>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).</p>	6	

<p>APA Style</p> <p>Writing is clear and easy to understand. There are few to no grammar errors/typos. References are correctly cited in APA format.</p>	<p>3</p>	
<p style="text-align: right;">Total Points</p>	<p>25</p>	

Grading Rubric