



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

Fall 2019

EDSE 501 DL1: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 71940; 3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Michael Repie	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 08/26/2019 – 12/18/2019
<b>Phone:</b> 703-531-6178	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Online
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<b>Office Hours:</b> N/A	<b>Meeting Location:</b> On-line
<b>Office Location:</b> Off Campus	<b>Other Phone:</b> 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 lifespan. 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**

Did you know that students in "quick admit" and non-degree status are restricted in the number of classes they can take? Students planning to complete a program should apply as soon as possible. Apply at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/admissions/steps>.

## 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

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 26, 2019.

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

### *Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:  
[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player:  
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### *Expectations*

- Course Week:  
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our course will start on August 26, 2019, and finish on December 18, 2019.  
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 2 times per week.
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:  
Please be aware that this course is self-paced, but students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### **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., (2019). *Exceptional Learners: An introduction to special education, 14<sup>th</sup> ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson

### **Recommended Textbooks**

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

### **Additional Readings**

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 501*, 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 (Tk20 submission required)**

N/A

### **College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required)**

N/A

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

#### **Module 4 Assignment (Learners with Disabilities Final Paper)\*\***

The final Module Assignment (or 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). See Appendix for more information on the Module 4 Assignment.

## **Child Abuse Module**

All students must complete the online child abuse recognition training module available at [http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated\\_reporters/cwse5691/story.html](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cwse5691/story.html). **This is a mandatory requirement and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment.**

**The certificate of completion will need to be posted to your Tk20 (through Blackboard) in order to receive your final grade in the course.** It is recommended that you post this at the start of your course. Please consult with your instructor as soon as possible if you have any questions about this assignment.

### **Dyslexia Awareness Module**

As of July 1, 2017, every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license in VA is required to complete awareness training, provided by the VA Department of Education, on the indicators of dyslexia as well as the evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia. Therefore, all students taking this *Introduction to Special Education* course 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.**

Individuals completing the module should print/save a copy of the certificate of completion for verification. **The certificate of completion will need to be posted to your Tk20 (through the Assessment tab in Blackboard) in order to receive your final grade in the course.** It is recommended that you post this at the start of your course. Please consult with your instructor as soon as possible if you have any questions about this assignment.

### **Reading Checks**

At the end of *each lesson*, there is a reading check assignment. In most lessons, these checks are 5-10 multiple choice questions. These reading checks assess your understanding and recall of the chapter in the textbook you were assigned. You may not use any materials such as books or notes to help you complete these checks but you may take each one two times.

### **Module Assignments**

- **Modules 1 and 4** require students to write two to four page papers individually.
  - The paper in Module 1 is a personal philosophy statement. It also requires you to choose two activities from a list of school- and community-based options. You will include a summary of the activities in your paper.
  - In Module 4, you must choose a topic related to special education, research the topic, and write about it. You will likely use information from the other module assignments to inform the final paper.
- **Modules 2 and 3** are intended to help you collect information from multiple types of sources to dig deeper into one disability group for each. You will be assigned to a disability group in the Discussion Board that corresponds to the modules focus.

### **Other Assignments**

On Blackboard

### **Course Policies and Expectations**

#### **Attendance/Participation**

N/A Online – Available August 26, 2019 – December 18, 2019

### Late Work

All work for the course is due no later than 5 pm on December 18, 2019! No work will be accepted after that time!

### Other Requirements

On Blackboard

### Grading Scale

95 – 100% = A

90 – 94% = A-

80 – 89% = B

70 – 79% = C

<70% = F

### Evaluation

This course is set up in module form. Each module is focused on a certain topic in special education and contains a similar structure. Each module contains individual lessons and a module assignment. Each lesson includes a reading, lecture, video or media component, and a reading check. The course point breakdown is:

Course Action Items	Earned Points	Possible Points
Beyond The Modules Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Professional Child Abuse training</li><li>Dyslexia Awareness Module</li></ul>		REQUIRED for a passing grade in the course (50 points each) 100
Reading checks		(25 points each) 400
Module Self-Reflections		(25 points each) 100
Module 1 Assignment		100
Module 2 Assignment		75
Module 3 Assignment		75
Module 4 Assignment		150 (final paper)
TOTAL POINTS FOR COURSE		1000

\*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.

*This is a SUGGESTED schedule for your work.*

Timeframe	Topic:	Material:
August – September	Blackboard overview <i>Module 1: History of special education and disability, legislation, and issues and services</i> Lesson 1: History of special education and disability Lesson 2: Legislation Lesson 3: Issues and services	Child Abuse Training Certificate and Dyslexia Awareness Module posted to Tk20 All reading checks and Module 1 assignment completed
September – October	<i>Module 2: Higher incidence disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Intellectual Disabilities Lesson 2: Students with Learning Disabilities Lesson 3: Students with speech/language impairments Lesson 4: Students with emotional/behavioral disorders Lesson 5: Students with autism spectrum disorders	All reading checks complete. Module 2 worksheets posted for comment in disability Wiki. Comments for Module 2 complete
October – November	<i>Module 3: Lower incidence disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Other health impairments Lesson 2: Students with visual impairments, including blindness Lesson 3: Students with hearing impairments or who are deaf	All reading checks complete. Module 3 worksheets posted for comment in disability Wiki.



Timeframe	Topic:	Material:
	Lesson 4: Students with severe/multiple disabilities, including deaf/blindness or TBI Lesson 5: Students with orthopedic impairments	
November – December	<i>Module 4: Issues and Collaborations</i> Lesson 1: Students with special gifts and talents Lesson 2: Parents and families Lesson 3: The future of special education	Comments for Module 3 complete FINAL DUE DATE All Course Material should be completed Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper) Due Course evaluation completed

### 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](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should

be directed to <http://coursesupport.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)

#### Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper)

The final Module Assignment (or 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:

1. what you have learned from coursework (e.g., lectures, videos, articles, and textbook readings),
2. independent learning activities you have completed (e.g., IRIS modules, field experiences), and
3. the exploratory activity you completed in this Module.

#### **Paper** **Guidelines**

Your paper should be 5 to 10 pages. The format for the paper is fairly flexible, but will be typed in APA format. You should 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 should describe meaningful experiences from your field experience and exploratory activity and explain how that connects with the content you have learned in the course. Please be sure to refer to the grading and 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 (35 points)**

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 (35 points)**

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) (35 points)**

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

- 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 (35 points)**

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?

**E. APA formatting and citations (10 points)**

**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).