



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

Spring 2020

EDSE 401: Introduction to Special Education

Section: DL1, CRN: 10171

Section: 6V1, CRN: 23377

3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Kristen O'Brien	Meeting Dates: 1/21/2020 – 5/13/2020
Phone: 703-993-3917 (office)	Meeting Day(s): Net
E-Mail: kmerril2@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): Asynchronous
Office Hours: By appointment	Meeting Location: N/A; Online
Office Location: Finley 208-B	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 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 in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

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
2. Application activities
3. Video and other media supports
4. 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 January 20, 2020.

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

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

- 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/

Expectations

- Course Week:
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Monday at 12:00 am, and finish on Sunday at 11:59 pm.
- 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 **not** self-paced. 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

(Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: 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* (14th ed.). Pearson.

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Required Resources

On Blackboard

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 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 (Tk20 submission required)

N/A

College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required)

N/A

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required)

N/A

Other Assignments

- **Beyond the Modules Activities:** During Week 1 of the course, there are two Beyond the Modules Activities (Child Abuse Recognition Training and Dyslexia Awareness Module), **which are both required for a passing grade in the course.**
- **Module Activities:** 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, a module assignment, and a self-reflection. Each lesson includes a reading, lecture, video or media component, and a reading check. Below are brief summaries of the module activities; *see Blackboard for detailed directions and grading rubrics.*
 - **Reading Checks:** At the end of each lesson, there is a reading check assignment. In most lessons, these checks are 5-10 multiple choice or true-false questions. These reading checks assess your understanding and recall of the chapter in the textbook you were assigned. You may use materials such as books or notes to help you complete these checks, but **you may take each reading check no more than twice.**
 - **Module Self-Reflections:** At the end of each lesson, there is a module self-reflection in which you will read statements about special education topics and write a written reflection. You will analyze, judge, and apply module content within your reflections.
 - **Module Assignments:**

- **Modules 1 and 4 Assignments** require students to write individual APA-style papers:
 - The Assignment 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.
 - The Module 4 assignment is the Final Paper in the course. You will likely use information from the other module assignments to inform the final paper. 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 based on course activities. (Please see the Appendix for a detailed description of the Final Paper and Blackboard for additional details/resources).
- **Modules 2 and 3 Assignments** are intended to help you collect information from multiple types of sources to dig deeper into one disability group for each. At the beginning of the module, you will choose a disability group (high incidence or low incidence) that corresponds to the module’s focus.

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

All course work will be online in an Asynchronous format.

Late Work

Work is considered on time if it is submitted by 11:59 p.m. EST on the date that it is due. Work can be turned in early, but all late work will receive a 10% point deduction off the resulting grade for each calendar day. For example, on a 25-point Reading Check, there would be a 2.5 point deduction (10%) per day, so if a student submitted the Reading Check one day late and earned 20 out of 25 points, their final grade would be 17.5 points. **After one week from the due date or after the last day of class (whichever comes first), assignments will no longer be accepted and a score of zero will be entered into the grade book for that assignment.**

Grading Scale

To compute your final course grade, divide total “earned points” by total “possible points” for percentage.

A = 95-100%	A - = 90-94%	B+ = 86-89%	B = 80-85%	B- = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	D = 72-65%	F = < 65%
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Course Action Items	Earned Points	Possible Points
Beyond the Modules Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Abuse Recognition training • Dyslexia Awareness Module 		100 (50 points each) REQUIRED for a passing grade in the course

Reading Checks		400 (25 points each)
Module Self-Reflections		100 (25 points each)
Module 1 Assignment		100
Module 2 Assignment		75
Module 3 Assignment		75
Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper)		150
TOTAL POINTS FOR COURSE		1000

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced (see <https://oai.gmu.edu/> and <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). 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 new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>. 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 for graduate students and within initial courses (EDSE 241, EDSE 361, and EDSE 311) for undergraduate students. 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.

	Topics	Deliverables	Due Dates Submit to Blackboard by 11:59 pm EST
Week 1	<p>Complete all readings and activities listed on Blackboard for each topic below</p> <p><i>Course Overview</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review the syllabus and Blackboard site AND make sure you have ordered the required textbook <p><i>Beyond the Modules</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the Child Abuse Recognition Training Complete the Dyslexia Awareness Module 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Child Abuse Recognition Training http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cwse5691/story_html5.html Dyslexia Awareness Module http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/index.shtml 	<p>All week 1 activities due: Sunday, Jan. 26</p>

Week 2	<i>Module 1: History of Special Education, Disability, Legislation, Issues, and Services</i> Lesson 1: History of Special Education and Disability Lesson 2: Legislation	1. Lesson 1 Reading Check 2. Lesson 2 Reading Check	All week 2 activities due: Sunday, Feb. 2
Week 3	<i>Module 1: History of Special Education, Disability, Legislation, Issues, and Services</i> Lesson 3: Issues and Services	1. Lesson 3 Reading Check 2. Module 1 Assignment 3. Self-Reflection 1	1. Reading Check due: Friday, Feb. 7 2 & 3. Assignment & Self-reflection due: Sunday, Feb. 9
Week 4	<i>Module 2: Higher Incidence Disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Intellectual Disabilities Lesson 2: Students with Learning Disabilities	1. Lesson 1 Reading Check 2. Lesson 2 Reading Check	All week 4 activities due: Sunday, Feb. 16
Week 5	<i>Module 2: Higher Incidence Disabilities</i> Lesson 3: Students with Speech/Language Impairments Lesson 4: Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	1. Lesson 3 Reading Check 2. Lesson 4 Reading Check	All week 5 activities due: Sunday, Feb. 23
Week 6	<i>Module 2: Higher Incidence Disabilities</i> Lesson 5: Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	1. Lesson 5 Reading Check 2. Module 2 Assignment 3. Self-Reflection 2	1. Reading Check due: Friday, Feb. 28 2 & 3. Assignment & Self-reflection due: Sunday, Mar. 1
Week 7	<i>Module 3: Lower Incidence Disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Other Health Impairments Lesson 2: Students with Visual Impairments, Including Blindness	1. Lesson 1 Reading Check 2. Lesson 2 Reading Check	All week 7 activities due: Sunday, Mar. 8
Week 8	Spring Break	No Course Activities	Monday, Mar. 9-Sunday Mar. 15
Week 9	<i>Module 3: Lower Incidence Disabilities</i> Lesson 3: Students with Hearing Impairments or Who are Deaf Lesson 4: Students with Severe/Multiple Disabilities, Including Deaf/Blindness or TBI	1. Lesson 3 Reading Check 2. Lesson 4 Reading Check	All week 8 activities due: Sunday, Mar. 22
Week 10	<i>Module 3: Lower Incidence Disabilities</i> Lesson 5: Students with Orthopedic Impairments	1. Lesson 5 Reading Check 2. Module 3 Assignment 3. Self-Reflection 3	1. Reading Check due: Friday, Mar. 27 2 & 3. Assignment & Self-reflection due: Sunday, Mar. 29
Week 11	<i>Module 4: Giftedness, Collaboration, and Looking to the Future</i>	1. Lesson 1 Reading Check	All week 10 activities due:

	Lesson 1: Students with Special Gifts and Talents		Sunday, Apr. 5
Week 12	<i>Module 4: Giftedness, Collaboration, and Looking to the Future</i> Lesson 2: Parents and Families	1. Lesson 2 Reading Check	All week 11 activities due: Sunday, Apr. 12
Week 13	<i>Module 4: Giftedness, Collaboration, and Looking to the Future</i> Lesson 3: The Future of Special Education	1. Lesson 3 Reading Check 2. Self-Reflection 4	1. Reading Check due: Apr. 17 2 & 3. Assignment & Self-reflection due: Sunday, Apr. 19
Week 14	Final Paper: Use feedback from all previous module activities and assignments to write the final paper	Nothing due this week – this is a working week Apr. 20-Apr. 26	
Week 15	Course Wrap-up: 1. Complete and submit the Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper) 2. Complete the Course evaluation	1. Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper) 2. Course Evaluation (link will be posted in blackboard)	Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper) due: Sunday May 3

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 <https://ds.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 <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

- As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at [703-380-1434](tel:703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at [703-993-2380](tel:703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling [703-993-8730](tel:703-993-8730), or emailing titleix@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 <http://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

Module 4 Assignment Details

The final Module Assignment (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 five areas 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	What are some characteristics of the disability, for example: <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	How does the disability affect learning? For example: <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.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>What is the impact of the disability on family? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 to and different from 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 (e.g., IRIS modules, 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 highly 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.

Grading Rubric

Final Paper Requirements	Possible Points	Earned Points
Disability Characteristics Salient characteristics of the disability are clearly described. Requirements related to identification for special education are included.	25	

Learning Needs Learning needs associated with the chosen disability are clearly described including relevant IEP considerations.	25	
Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Family) A clear description of the impact of the disability across the lifespan is provided.	25	
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).	25	
Information Synthesis Student demonstrates personal growth in knowledge about learners with disabilities. Student demonstrates completion of independent learning activities (e.g., IRIS modules, exploratory activities) by integrating what was learned through these experiences with learning from other coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings).	40	
APA Style Writing is clear and easy to understand. There are few to no grammar errors/typos. References are correctly cited in APA format.	10	
Total Points	150	