



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

Spring 2022

EDSE 241 001: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum
CRN: 15829, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Reagan L. Mergen	Meeting Dates: 1/24/22 – 5/18/22
Phone: 503-730-3451 (text only)	Meeting Day(s): Monday/Wednesday
E-Mail: rmergen@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 10:30 am – 11:45 am
Office Hours: 12-1 Wednesdays OR by appointment	Meeting Location: Fairfax; PETRSN 2413
Office Location: Finley 217	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

Examines the academic, social, and behavioral characteristics of individuals with disabilities who access the general curriculum, including students with learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, intellectual disability, autism, and attention deficit disorder. Focuses on etiology, contributing factors, impact on life and family, the challenges of identifying students with disabilities, and the need for intensive instruction, accommodations, and support.

Course Overview

EDSE 241 focuses on the academic, social, and behavioral characteristics of individuals with disabilities who access the general curriculum and the impact these characteristics have on school, family, and life outcomes. The course examines the etiology, contributing factors, identification process, and required intensive instruction of these disabilities.

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

Would you like the opportunity to work on campus with students with special needs? The LIFE Program (<http://masonlife.gmu.edu/>) is an innovative post-secondary program at Mason for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire a university experience in a supportive academic environment. A variety of employment opportunities are available.

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

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. State the federal definitions of various disabilities including learning disability, emotional disability, other health impairment, intellectual disability, and autism spectrum disorder.
2. Describe the history and evolution of these disability categories.
3. Describe the characteristics of individuals with these disabilities and
 - a. Age-span and developmental issues;
 - b. Levels of severity;
 - c. Cognitive functioning;
 - d. Language development;
 - e. Emotional and behavioral adjustment;
 - f. Social development;
 - g. Medical aspects; and
 - h. Cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic factors.
4. Describe how educational environments impact students with disabilities, including the concept of multi-tiered systems of support and least restrictive environment.
5. Identify motivational factors that build self-understanding and confidence of individuals with disabilities who access the general curriculum.
6. Define and describe Explicit Instruction and its components, including opportunities to respond, scaffolding, specific feedback, modeling, guided practice, and independent practice.
7. Identify the educational implications of the characteristics of disabilities.
8. Identify the career and lifelong implications of the characteristics of students with disabilities who access the general curriculum.

9. Summarize the similarities and differences between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers.
10. Describe the role of the special education teacher in programs for students who access the general curriculum.

Professional Standards

(Council for Exceptional Children [CEC] and the 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).

Required Texts

Raymond, E. B. (2017). *Learners with mild disabilities: A characteristics approach* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2010). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. New York: Guilford Press.

Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Additional Readings

Available on Blackboard

Course Performance Evaluation

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

VIA 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 VIA (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 VIA.

For EDSE 241, the required PBA is Case Study Report. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to VIA before the PBA due date.

Assignments and/or Examinations
Performance-based Assessment
(VIA submission required)

Case Study Report

Given documents, work samples, and teacher reports, each student will develop a case study report of a student with a high-incidence disability. The report will include four sections: demographic and background information; educational history, goals, objectives, and accommodations; school and classroom information; and synthesis. The synthesis will focus on the similarities and differences between the case study student and course information, citing specific texts and experiences. The grading rubric is attached in Appendix A.

College Wide Common Assessment
(VIA submission required)

Not applicable

Microteaching (2 @10 points): For this assignment, students will be assigned a small group and will teach a lesson sample from the Archer and Hughes (2011) text to the group. An assignment description and grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.

Case Study Discussion (10 points): Each student will be assigned a case study from the Raymond text. On the scheduled course meeting date for that case study, the student will be required to conduct a small group session to discuss the case, identify the characteristics of the student that match the high-incidence disability discussed in class, and describe the potential educational implications of the characteristics. An assignment description and grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.

Lab Experiences and Reflection (3 @10 points each): Throughout the semester, there will be three lab experiences, including interviewing special education faculty, observing classrooms, and the like. The lab experience will take place during class time and students will write a guided reflection on the experience for submission by the next class session.

Professionalism and Engagement (27 @ 3 points each): Attendance, punctuality, and active participation during each class session and assigned activity are expected. For each session, students will earn for the following expectations:

- Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and remain in class for the duration of each session. Refer to the Attendance Policy below for detailed expectations.
- Engagement & Professional Behavior: Throughout all classes, students are expected to demonstrate professional and ethical behavior in the classroom, and complete all assignments (including those completed in class, out of class, or on Blackboard) with professional quality, integrity, and in a timely manner. Students are expected to read all assigned readings prior to class and to actively participate in discussions and activities during class sessions.

Assignment Summary

Course grades are calculated by summing the points earned on assignments and dividing by the total possible points. Grades are designed to indicate your success in completing assignments, not the level of effort you put into them.

Case Study Report	50 points
Microteaching	20 points
Case study discussion	10 points
Lab experiences and reflection	30 points
Engagement and professionalism	81 points
Total Points	191 points

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Class attendance and professional participation at all sessions is very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Students are expected to (a) attend all classes during the course, (b) arrive on time, (c) remain in class for the duration of each session, (d) actively participate and demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom, and (e) complete all assignments with professional quality and on time. All assigned readings should be completed prior to class. (Note: assigned readings may be added or removed as the semester progresses.)

Late Work

To successfully complete this course, students need to adhere to all due dates for readings and assignments. All assignments should be submitted on or before the assigned due date. To be considered on time, assignments must be submitted by the start of class on the due date, unless otherwise noted by the instructor. On all assignments, full credit is available for those submitted on time. For every 24-hour period that an assignment is late, a 5% point deduction will occur. After one week from the due date (or until the last class session per the syllabus, whichever comes first), assignments will not be accepted. Please contact the instructor in advance if there is a problem with submitting your work on time.

Grading

A	95-100%
A-	90-94%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%

C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site](https://oai.gmu.edu/) (<https://oai.gmu.edu/>) and [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<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 [Policies and Procedures](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>). Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. Professional dispositions are an essential function of a special educator’s job, indicating that these dispositions are critical to develop and assess in special education licensure programs. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in at least three points in each student’s program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, a self-evaluation at the mid-point of their program, and a university supervisor’s evaluation during internship. In special education graduate licensure programs, the initial self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 241, EDSE 361, EDSE 311), the mid-point self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 445, EDSE 465, and EDSE 419), and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 482, EDSE 483, and EDSE 484. In addition to these three designated evaluation times, instructors may complete instructor-rated disposition assessments other times throughout the program. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is rated as “not proficient,” 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.

Week		Topics	Readings Due	Assignments Due
1	• 1/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to High Incidence Disabilities • Course Overview & Syllabus Review 	Raymond p. 3-13; 30-box on 42; 50-61	
	• 1/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive and Perceptual Characteristics 	Raymond chp 9	Padlet Intro

Week		Topics	Readings Due	Assignments Due
2	• 1/31	• Case study discussion	Charlene, p. 206-207	Discussion questions p. 207
	• 2/2	• Language Characteristics	Raymond chp 10	
3	• 2/7	• Case study discussion	Gavin, p. 233	Discussion questions p. 235
	• 2/9	• Academic Learning Characteristics	Raymond chp 11	
4	• 2/14	• Case study discussion	Allison, p. 262-263	Discussion questions p. 263
	• 2/16	• Social-Emotional Characteristics	Raymond chp 12	
5	• 2/21	• Case study discussion	Sammy, p. 290-293	Discussion questions p. 293
	• 2/23	• LAB 1		Reflection due before next class
6	• 2/28	• Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Raymond chp 4	
	• 3/2	• Case study discussion	Donald, p. 95	<i>Case study report section 1 draft due</i>
7	• 3/7	• Learners with learning disabilities	Raymond chp 5	
	• 3/9	• Learners with learning disabilities		
<i>SPRING RECESS (3/14-3/20)</i>				
8	• 3/21	• Case study discussion	Grace, p. 112	<i>Case study report section 2 draft due</i>
	• 3/23	• LAB 2		Reflection due before next class
9	• 3/28	• Learners with emotional or behavioral disorders	Raymond chp 6	
	• 3/30	• Case study discussion	Carter, p. 134	<i>Case study report section 3 draft due</i>
10	• 4/4	• Learners with difficulties in attention, communication, and physical functioning	Raymond chp 7	
	• 4/6	• Case study discussion	Frank, p. 155	
11	• 4/11	• Learners with autism spectrum disorder	Raymond chp 8	
	• 4/13	• Case study discussion	Sara, p. 172	<i>Case study report section 4 draft due</i>

Week		Topics	Readings Due	Assignments Due
12	• 4/18	• LAB 3		Reflection due before next class
	• 4/20	• Designing lessons in skills and strategies	Archer & Hughes chp 1 and chp 2	
13	• 4/25	• Microteaching		Microteaching (application 2.3 p. 41 and application 2.4 p. 44)
	• 4/27	• Designing lessons in vocabulary and concepts	Archer & Hughes chp 3	
14	• 5/2	• Microteaching		Microteaching (Figure 3.2 p. 78 and Figure 3.3 p. 80); Case study assignment
	• 5/4	• Wrap up		

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: See [Core Values](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>).

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/) (<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 [Disability Services](https://ds.gmu.edu/) (<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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to [Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/) (<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 “Non-confidential 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 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development](http://cehd.gmu.edu/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/>).

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

Grading Rubric: Case Study Report

Criteria	Earned Points	Possible Points
Report		
Demographic and Background Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Etiology and diagnosis • Medical conditions • Social-emotional characteristics • Typical and atypical learning characteristics • Educational implications of these characteristics 		10
Educational history, Educational goals, Objectives, and Accommodations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of goals, objectives, and accommodations • Educational history (to include previous schools, previous evaluations) 		10

School and Classroom Information Description of school and classroom setting Least restrictive environment necessary/recommendation		5
Synthesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize all pertinent information • Provides comprehensive synthesis of characteristics compared with nondisabled peers • Social and educational implications of these characteristics • Impact of characteristics outside of school 		15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing mechanics and format; inclusion of/citation of course and additional materials 		5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafts turned in 		Up to 5 pts
Total		50