



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

Fall 2022

EDSE 540 680: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum
CRN: 84737, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Kelly Liu	Meeting Dates: 9/13/22 – 11/15/22
Phone: 703-969-5459	Meeting Day(s): Tuesdays
E-Mail: kliu6@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 5:15 pm – 9:15 pm (Weekly 45 min Asynchronous)
Office Hours: N/A	Meeting Location: Off-campus Woodson HS (Rm# TBD)
Office Location: N/A	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 characteristics of students with mild disabilities. Focuses on etiology, contributing factors, conditions that affect learning, the challenges of identifying students with disabilities, and the need for academic, social, and emotional accommodations and support. Notes: Field experience required.

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

Have you met with an advisor? All students should make an appointment to meet with an advisor to outline a plan for completing coursework and non-course requirements such as testing. To make an appointment by phone or in person, go to <http://education.gmu.edu/special-education/advising/>.

Course Delivery Method

Face to face in class deliver with weekly 45 min Asynchronous

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

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); CEC Standard 2: Learning environments (InTASC 3); CEC Standard 3: Curricular content knowledge (InTASC 4,5); CEC Standard 4: Assessment (InTASC 6); CEC Standard 5: Instructional planning and strategies (InTASC 7,8) & CEC Standard 7: Collaboration (InTASC 10).

This course contains at least one Common Assessment developed by the College of Education and Human Development to assess our candidates' performance on nationally accepted standards for beginning teachers (InTASC) and our programs' performance on national accreditation standards (CAEP).

Evidence-Based Practices

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to characteristics of students with mild disabilities, etiology of mild disabilities, inclusionary practices. Evidence for the selected research-based practices is informed by meta-analysis, literature reviews/synthesis, the technical assistance networks which provide web-based resources, and the national organizations whose mission is to support students with disabilities. We address both promising and emerging practices in the field of special education. This course will provide opportunities for teacher candidates/students to take an active, decision-making role to thoughtfully select, modify, apply, and evaluate EBPs in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Required Texts

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2010). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. New York: Guilford Press. (ISBN 9781609180416) Chapters 1-3 for this class; you will use this book again for another class.

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

Recommended Texts

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

Required Resources

Access to Blackboard

Additional Readings

Peer reviewed journal articles and research studies.

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 540, the required PBA is Observation Student Profile. 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)

Observation Student Profile Paper – Final paper due November 8 by 5:00 PM.

The observation student profile provides you with the opportunity to get an in-depth understanding of a student with exceptionalities who accesses the general curriculum. You will examine his or her educational history and goals, observe in classroom settings, conduct parent or guardian interviews, and synthesize the information gathered, relating it to the content of the course. The purpose of the student profile is to help you understand the complexity of each individual case of a student with exceptional learning needs. This student profile assignment has six major sections.

**A complete description of the assignment will be highlighted during the first night of class. In addition, a complete description of the assignment can be found on Blackboard under the Assignments tab.

College Wide Common Assessment

N/A

Field Experience Requirement

A field experience is a part of this course. A field experience includes a variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, and/or teach. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings, such as schools (CAEP, 2016). Below are REQUIRED PROCEDURES FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS COURSE.

Complete the online EDSE Field Experience form. This online form will be sent to your GMU email from EDSEfld@gmu.edu on the first day of the semester. Click on the link and complete the form as soon as possible. ALL students should complete the required form, as this information is required by the state. Please direct any questions about the form to Dr. Kristen O'Brien at EDSEfld@gmu.edu.

If you are a full-time contracted school system employee and will complete the field experience at your worksite with administrator and instructor approval, you will be asked to specify the school at which you will be completing the field experience.

If you request a field experience placement, you will receive information via your GMU email about your assigned internship placement from the Clinical Practice Specialist in the College's TEACHERtrack Office. Check your GMU email regularly for important information regarding your field experience. Follow all instructions for the necessary Human Resource (HR) paperwork required to access the assigned field experience placement. Note that you may NOT arrange your own field experience placement.

2. View the EDSE Field Experience Introduction presentation. On the first week of classes and prior to representing George Mason in off-campus settings, your instructor will show a video presentation or provide a link to the presentation, which includes important information about the registration process for EDSE field experiences and tips for a successful field experience. After the presentation, sign the document provided by your instructor to indicate that you have watched the presentation and are aware of the EDSE field experience professionalism expectations.

3. Document your field experience hours. Your instructor may provide you with access to field experience documentation forms to use in documenting the hours and activities completed in your field experience placement. Your instructor will provide more directions on how to use and submit the documentation form.

4. Complete the field experience end-of-semester survey. Towards the end of the semester, you will receive an email from EDSEfld@gmu.edu with a link to an online survey. This brief survey asks you to report about important features of your field experience placement.

5. Students must be able to perform the essential functions of the practicum site assigned with or without an accommodation. Contact Disability Services (ods@gmu.edu) for questions related to accommodations.

Other Assignments

1. **Journal Article Review** – (20 points each = 40 points)

Each student will summarize **two (2)** journal articles that are relevant to working with students with disabilities. The purpose of this assignment is to identify and synthesize research-based findings that are relevant to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Articles chosen for this assignment must be from a peer-reviewed journal and should be data-based examinations of issues relevant to students with disabilities who access the general curriculum. All articles should be from current literature and should not be more than ten (10) years old.

The paper must be written in APA format and should include the following:

- Identification of the purpose of the research
- Summary of key points (Methodology)
- Relevance of the findings to educators of students with disabilities

- Reflection on how the findings could impact your professional practice

A detailed rubric will be posted on Blackboard.

2. **disAbilities in Pop Culture Analysis Project & Paper/Presentation**

(Project = 50 points):

The purpose of this assignment is to examine and reflect on ways individuals with disabilities are portrayed in popular culture. Each member of the class will choose a media genre (i.e., movie, TV series), analyze it, respond to how individuals with disAbilities are portrayed in contemporary pop culture based on the information learned in class, and create a poster/paper to share with the class. As a teacher, students should be aware of any negative stereotyping in popular media towards students with disAbilities that may affect his/her role as a classroom teacher. This assignment may require more time than anticipated, thus a written paper may be required. A grading rubric and further assignment details will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

3. **Student Observation Analysis** – (Presentation = 25 points)

Key findings from the Observation Student Profile assignment will be presented to the class in an interactive poster session. Presentations will include: student demographic information, strengths and needs (including disability characteristics), and at least 2 evidence-based interventions that could be appropriate for the student. Detailed directions and a rubric will be posted on Blackboard. This project may require a change from presentation to paper.

4. **Online supplemental instruction:** (Four Iris Modules 10 pts. each, Four Video sets 5 points each response = 60 points total). Students will alternate between viewing four Iris Center Modules (<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>) and viewing four video sets in Through Your Child’s Eyes (<https://www.understood.org/articles/en/through-your-childs-eyes>). More detail to follow in class.

Assignment Summary

Case Study	100 points
Journal Article Reviews (2)	40 points
Pop Culture Media Project	50 points
Iris Modules/Video Sets	60 points
Student Observation Analysis	25 points
Total Points:	275 points

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, stay for the duration of class, and complete all assignments. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant- active participation are expected. 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 be recreated outside of the class session. Be aware that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be made up. **Please notify me in advance by email if you will not be able to attend class.** You are allowed one (1) day of grace after which absences will impact your grade. **Three or more unexcused absences may result in an unsuccessful consequence.**

Late Work

All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Please talk with me if you need an extension. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, one (1) point per day will be deducted from your assignment grade for late papers unless I have agreed to an extension. Maximum extension is one week. Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit.

Other Requirements

Please be fully present in class. It is difficult to participate wholly in this class while texting, engaging in social media sites, tweeting, working on documents, checking email, etc. If you need to answer a call or text, please do so out in the hall.

Grading

A	=	95-100%
A-	=	90-94%
B+	=	87-89%
B	=	80-86%
C+	=	77-79%
C	=	70-76%
F	=	69% and below

***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/policies-procedures/) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-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 a designated course (EDSE 501), the mid-point self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 627, EDSE 661, and EDSE 616), and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 783, EDSE 784, and EDSE 785. 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.

Date	Topics	Assignments/Readings (due for next class)
9/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration, Introductions, Backgrounds • Introduction • Professionalism and Ethics Mandatory Video – 15 minutes • Syllabus and course overview • Review assignments • Begin discussion of disabilities • Review Text format • Review how to search for research journal articles 	Raymond Text Ch. 1-3 Overview
9/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Donald – Case study <p>Iris Module Intro: working in groups https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/bil/ Identifying journals - articles for review:</p>	Raymond Text Ch. 4 Case Study Student – Identified *Video Set TBD
9/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students with Learning Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grace – Case study <p>F.A.T. City Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3UNdbxk3xs&t=59s</p>	Raymond Text Ch. 5 <i>Checklist:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Observations arranged ➤ Interviews Arranged <p>First Journal Review Due</p>

		*Online – Iris Module TBD
10/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carter – Case study ➤ Other Health Impairment (ADHD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frank – Case study and questions 	Raymond Ch. 6 Raymond Ch. 7 *Online Video Sets TBD
10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sara – Case study (Media Presentations Time limit TBD)	Raymond Ch. 8 Media Projects Due *Online Iris Module TBD
10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cognitive and Perceptual Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Charlene – Case study • Explicit Direction 	Raymond Ch. 9 Archer and Hughes Ch. 1 *Online Video Sets TBD Second Journal Review Due
10/25	Language Characteristics Gavin – Case study Academic Learning Characteristics	Raymond Ch. 10 Archer and Hughes Ch. 2 *Online Iris Module TBD
11/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Academic Learning Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allison – Case study ➤ Social-Emotional Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sammy – Case study 	Raymond Ch. 11 Raymond Ch. 12 *Online Video Set TBD
11/8	Presentations on Student Profiles	Observation Student Profiles Due by 5:00 PM
11/15	Presentations and Closing	UPLOAD PAPERS TO VIA

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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 the [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 or support measures 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)

	Requirements	Points
Part I: Demographic and Background Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate discusses the demographic and background information related to the target student inclusive of all of the below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ etiology and diagnosis, ○ any medical conditions that exist, psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and ○ the effect these conditions can have on the student's life. • Candidate discusses skills and typical and atypical human growth characteristics of the learner. • Candidate uses nonbiased language that is sensitive to the culture, language, religion, gender disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of the learner to describe his/her background information. • Candidate describes the educational implications of the characteristics of the learner's exceptional learning needs on the learner, his/her family, and society. 	/15
Part II: Educational History, Educational Goals, Objectives, and Accommodation s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate provides a summary of the learner's educational goals, objectives and classroom accommodations and the impact of the learner's social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (if applicable). • Candidate discusses the educational history related to the target student inclusive: 	/15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the educational implication of the characteristics of the learner’s exceptionality and o the effect a learner’s exceptionality can have on his or her life. • Candidate writes a description of the student’s educational history that includes how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds may interact with the student’s exceptional condition to impact academic and life options. • Candidate describes the impact the learner’s disability has on auditory and/or information processing skills and relates levels of support to the needs of the individual. 	
Part III: School and Classroom Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate describes the school and classroom setting in the greater context of o organizations in collaboration with special education and o the continuum of placement and services available for individuals with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs. • Candidate evaluates the environmental context in terms of how well the teacher has integrated the principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment. • Candidate clearly describes how the environment’s adaptations impact the quality of learning opportunities for learners with mild to moderate exceptionalities and determines whether or not optimal learning opportunities are being provided. 	/20
Part IV: Student Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate describes the relationship between their observations and the learner’s goals, objectives, and accommodations and describes the effects the learner’s exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life. • Candidate summarizes their classroom observation experiences inclusive of an analysis of how their personal cultural biases 	/10

	and differences might affect their observation or teaching.	
Part V: Parent Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate collaborates with and interviews family who has knowledge of the learner in a culturally responsive way that demonstrates their understanding of legal matters and ethical considerations. • The candidate shows evidence of collecting data on the family system and the role of family in the student’s development and education. • Candidate shows evidence of collecting data on the perceived impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between the learner’s home and school lives and the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school personnel. Family input and concerns are documented. 	/10
Part VI: Summary, Synthesis and Reflection & Additional Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate provides recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications for the learner with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs. • The candidate demonstrates, through their recommendations, their ability to serve as an advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs and a high level of commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs. • Candidate summarizes all pertinent information inclusive of observations, interviews and background information and offers a comprehensive synthesis of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ their learner’s characteristics as compared with typical and atypical learners, 	/20

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the social and educational implications of these characteristics and ○ the effect the exceptionality has on the learner's life. 	
Writing Mechanics and Format	APA formatting and mechanics must be followed.	/10
Total		100