

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Program: Special Education**

**EDSE 501 Fall 2011 Section 001: Introduction to Special Education.**

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Meeting Dates: 8/29-12/20/11  
Class time: 4:30-7:00pm  
Class location: Prince William

**Course Description**

Survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, assessment, and support services for individuals with disabilities ranging from mild and moderate to severe. Includes the impact of disabilities on academic, social, and emotional performances. Field experience required.

Prerequisites: none.

**Student Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
- Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education.
- Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of special education.
- Describe research in etiological factors associated with all disability areas.
- Describe social, cognitive, intellectual, and academic characteristics associated with all disability areas.
- Describe historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education.
- Describe the role of families in the educational process.
- Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including technological advances.
- Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.

**Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

EDSE 401/501 is part of the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special educational professional organization in the United States. As such, the curriculum for the course includes competencies for teaching students with disabilities in kindergarten through grade 12.

The CEC Core Standards are listed on the following web site:

[http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf\\_based\\_stds/common\\_core\\_4-21-01.html](http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html)

CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include some of the following:

## Standard 1 - Foundations

### Knowledge:

- Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis for special education practice.
- Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavioral management planning and implementation.
- Relationship of special education to the organization and function educational agencies.
- Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
- Issues in definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Issues, assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services.
- Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
- Historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups.
- Impact of the dominant culture on shaping schools and the individuals who study and work in them.
- Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school.

### Skill:

- Articulate a personal philosophy of special education.

## Standard 2 - Development and Characteristics of Learners

### Knowledge:

- Typical and atypical human growth and development.
- Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities.
- Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.
- Family systems and the role of families in supporting development.
- Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
- Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Effects of various medications on individuals with exceptional learning needs.

## Standard 3 - Individual Learning Differences

### Knowledge:

- Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.
- Impact of learners' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
- Variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures and their effects on relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, family, and schooling.
- Cultural perspectives influencing the relationships among families, schools, and communities as related to instruction.
- Differing ways of learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and strategies for addressing these differences.

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. You may wish to contact Jancy Templeton, GMU Special Education Advisor, at [jtemple1@gmu.edu](mailto:jtemple1@gmu.edu) or (703) 993-2387. Please be prepared with your G number when you contact her.

### *Student Expectations*

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions [See <http://www.gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm>].

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University 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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### **Campus Resources**

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g. individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g. tutoring, workshops, writing grades, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

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### **NOTE:**

This syllabus may change according to class needs.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with instructor or special needs arrangements,

**please call and/or make an appointment with instructor as soon as possible.**

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### **Required Text**

Hallahan, D., Kauffman, J., & Pullen, P. (2012). *Exceptional learners: An introduction to special education* (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN-13: 9780137033706 ISBN-10: 0137033702

### **Highly Recommended**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. (2009). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture, discussion, cooperative group work, and participation.
2. Videotapes and other relevant media presentations.
3. Study and independent library research.
4. *Blackboard e-Education Learning System* applications.
5. Application activities, including in class evaluation of intervention research and materials.
6. Class presentations of research papers.
7. Written research paper using the American Psychological Association format.

## Evaluation

1. Class punctuality, attendance, and participation (30 points) **(Class will begin at its scheduled time, with quizzes being conducted at the beginning of class. Tardiness may result in losing credit for that classes' quiz. Excessive absences will result in no class participation points and potential withdrawal from the class.)**
  2. Child abuse training module and quiz (25 points)
  3. Quizzes (50 points)\*
  4. Research Paper (50 points)\*\*
  5. Paper presentation (30 points)
  6. Exam (50 points)\*\*
- | <b>Grading criteria:</b> |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| 95 - 100%                | = A  |
| 90 - 94%                 | = A- |
| 80 - 89%                 | = B  |
| 70 - 79%                 | = C  |
| <70%                     | = F  |

\*Quizzes are 10 points each, with grade based on student's highest five scores (out of eight quizzes).

\*\*Points will be deducted for work submitted late.

**It is recommended that students retain electronic copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE ED/LD program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards. As the program moves towards electronic portfolios, it will be even more important to have artifacts saved electronically.**

## REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

### Quizzes

Eight quizzes based on the reading content due that date will be conducted.

### Child Abuse Training Module

Students will review the online child abuse recognition training module at [http://www.vcu.edu/vissta/training/va\\_teachers/](http://www.vcu.edu/vissta/training/va_teachers/) and be tested on the definitions and indicators of child abuse and neglect, how to respond to signs of abuse and to report abuse, the legal requirements of Virginia teachers to report abuse, state support services, and the actions that follow reports of abuse. **(This is a mandatory requirement and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment – Certificate due and quiz March 30).**

### Research Paper

A research paper focusing on three empirically validated instructional strategies or interventions for

students with a specific disability will be completed. These strategies or interventions are to apply to a disability area *other than the one in which the student is currently working*. The paper will include the following components: a) introduction; b) background and historical information regarding the disability; c) characteristics of the disability including, but not limited to: cognitive/academic processing deficits, and social, communicative, and/or behavioral aspects; d) instructional strategies or interventions; e) your recommendations for professional practice or future research; f) summary and synthesis; g) appendix. At least five (5) articles from professional research journals must be included. *To earn full points, 501 students must demonstrate ability to critically analyze and interpret the research related to their chosen interventions.*

### **Presentations**

Students will develop a 10-minute class presentation focused on their research paper.

### **Exam**

Exam covering course content will be administered.

\*Signature Assignment

The signature assignment required for this course must be submitted electronically to Mason's NCATE management system, TaskStream: (<https://www.taskstream.com>).

\*Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one time course or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed, upon completion of the semester, the grade becomes an F.

### **Blackboard**

GMU's Blackboard will be used to post important information and presentations for this course and for you to check grades, complete assignments, and communicate with your classmates and instructor. You are responsible for checking Blackboard at least once a week and right before class to make sure you are informed about class/GMU issues.

Your **GMU email username and password** are entered in the Blackboard system. The following is how you will access the Blackboard to get into My Mason:

You will need your Username (Mason NetId) and strong password (PatriotPass) credentials to access this, so it is important to activate your account asap! <http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>

On MyMason, the Blackboard site Quick Link for your courses is listed on the left menu as Courses (CE) (CE Learning Management System).

You can also enter the Blackboard site for your courses by going to: <https://courses.gmu.edu> and use your same username and password as you do for My Mason.

## Course Schedule

| <b>Class</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Topic</b>   | <b>Assignment Due</b>   | <b>Readings Due</b> |
|--------------|-------------|--|---|---------------------|
| 1            | 8/29        | Introductions, Course Overview,<br>Assignment/Blackboard/Taskstream Explanation,<br>Introduction to the Field        |   |                     |
| 2            | 9/12*       | History of Special Education<br>Legislation; Understanding the IEP process;<br>Eligibility 101                       | Select Research Paper<br>topic; Quiz 1  | Chapters 1 & 2      |
| 3            | 9/19        | Eligibility (IEPs) (continued)<br>Families, Communities, Multicultural and Bilingual<br>Aspects of Special Education | Quiz 2  | Chapters 3 & 4      |
| 4            | 9/26        | Learners with Intellectual Disabilities  |   | Chapters 5          |
| 5            | 10/3        | Learners with Learning Disabilities  | Quiz 3  | Chapters 6          |
| 6            | 10/11*      | Learners with ADHD   | Copy of Child Abuse<br>Awareness Program<br>Certificate and<br>submission to TS | Chapter 7           |
| 7            | 10/17       | Learners with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders   | Optional submission<br>draft copy of Research<br>Paper; Quiz 4                  | Chapter 8           |
| 8            | 10/24       | Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders  | Optional submission<br>draft copy of Research<br>Paper; Quiz 5                  | Chapter 9           |
| 9            | 10/31       | Learners with Communication Disorders  | Quiz 6  | Chapter 10          |
| 10           | 11/7        | Learners who have Sensory Impairments: Deaf, Blind,<br>Hard of hearing, Low vision                                   | Quiz 7  | Chapters 11 & 12    |
| 11           | 11/14       | Learners with Low-Incidence, Multiple, or Severe<br>disabilities   | Quiz 8  | Chapters 13         |
| 12           | 11/21       | Learners with Physical Disabilities and Other Health<br>Impairments  | Paper Presentation;<br>Quiz 9   | Chapter 14          |
| 13           | 11/28       | Learners with Special Gifts and Talents  | Paper Presentation;<br>Quiz 10  | Chapter 15          |
| 14           | 12/5        | Review, Summary of learning objectives, Course<br>evaluations  | Submit Research<br>Paper  |                     |
| 15           | 12/12       | Final Exam completed (available on Blackboard 12/5)  | Final submit on<br>Taskstream   |                     |