



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

Spring 2013

EDSE 501 6F1: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 17834, 3 - Credit(s)

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Cornelia Izen	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/22/13 - 05/15/13
<b>Phone:</b> 703-993-5736	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> There are no meeting days scheduled for this course. Students work independently at their own pace.
<b>E-Mail:</b> <a href="mailto:cizen@gmu.edu">cizen@gmu.edu</a> <b>Skype Name:</b> neiaizen	<b>Meeting Times:</b> See above.
<b>Office Hours:</b> Wednesdays 5:30-7:30 PM in person, via phone, or Skype. Also by appointment.	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Internet

**Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

### **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.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisite(s):** None

### **Advising Contact Information**

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703)993-3145 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

## **Nature of Course Delivery**

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

## **Field Experience Requirement**

A Field Experience is a part of this course. "Field Experiences" entail Mason students conducting activities that may involve students, parents, and/or teachers, etc. in a school setting. "Finding" an individual needed to complete a Field Experience Project/Case Study for a course may be a challenge. Mason's Field Placement Specialist, Lauren Clark [lclarkg@gmu.edu](mailto:lclarkg@gmu.edu) can assist in placing Mason students at school sites. Mason is required to track when and where Mason students complete any field experiences. Consequently, EACH PERSON ENROLLED in this course must access this link <http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf> at the beginning of the semester (if not before) and complete the information requested REGARDLESS if one needs assistance in 'finding' an individual for the project/case study or not.

## **Learner 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, behavioral 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 use of innovative technology.
- Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.
- Examine ethical considerations for the treatment of all children.

### **Required Textbooks**

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

### **Recommended Textbooks**

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

### **Required Resources**

On Blackboard

### **Additional Readings**

On Blackboard

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

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC Standards are listed on the following website:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/>. The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners, and Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences.

### **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:**

- a.** Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b.** Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- c.** 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.
- d.** 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/>].

- e. 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/>].
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

## **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>]

*For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].*

## **Course Policies & Expectations**

### **Attendance.**

This course is an asynchronous, on-demand course with no face-to-face class sessions. All instruction takes place online through the GMU Blackboard environment. You are expected to work at your own pace through course modules that can be found on Blackboard. At times, you will be asked to participate in group activities with other students who are enrolled in the course. As an on-line community, we have much to offer each other. Participation and interaction with each other will enrich your experience when taking this course. Please get to know your online cohorts through your work on course activities.

You are required to log in to establish your Mason email account and log in to Blackboard within the first week of the course. You do not receive login information in that time, you must notify your instructor.

Note: You may take the entire semester to complete the course or you may work at a faster pace. Your learning style and your schedule will dictate the pace at which you complete course modules. All work must be completed by the end date given in the course schedule.

This is a 3-credit course. Traditional 3-credit courses across a 15-week semester require an average of 45 hours of in-class time and approximately 90 hours of independent reading and

assignment completion. You should anticipate spending that amount of time to complete your coursework online and independently, regardless of the number of days or weeks in which you engage in course activities.

### **Late Work.**

Since you will be working at your own pace, you may hand in assignments as you finish them. The course schedule lists key times when your instructor will be gathering assignments for grading. If you wish to receive a grade on a particular assignment, please submit it to Blackboard by the date listed on the course schedule.

ALL assignments are due by midnight on the final day of the course. No late work will be accepted. As indicated in the Course Pacing Guide your instructor will grade all posted Module assignments on dates throughout the semester. These are not required due dates; however, if you would like to make sure you know how you are doing on the module assignments and in the course before the final date, you may post assignments by these dates and they will be evaluated.

### **Technical support:**

This course requires you to work in an online environment. Therefore, **you must have a working computer and access to the Internet at all times.** Computer malfunctions and other technological problems are your responsibility and must be resolved by you in a timely fashion.

*If you need technical assistance for gaining access to Mason's Blackboard page or your Mason email, contact ITU support at:*

703-993-8870

[support@gmu.edu](mailto:support@gmu.edu)

<http://itservices.gmu.edu/>

*If you need technical assistance with Blackboard, please contact the Blackboard support line at 703-993-8879.*

*If you are having trouble reaching the contacts listed above, direct your questions to your me and I will help you get to the right support person.*

### **Course Content**

All course content is contained in the Blackboard Learning Environment. All Module material will be available to students throughout the course. It is recommended that you work through the course in sequential order of Modules and lessons. Any questions about content or where to find something should be directed to me.

### **Communication**

The best way to contact me is through email. There is a Send Email icon on the left navigation bar of our course. My email (as well as the email of your classmates) is located here. It is also

located at the top of this syllabus. I check my email at least once a day on weekdays. I will respond to emails within 24 hours, if not sooner, on weekdays.

### **Written Work**

All Module assignments require you to synthesize material from the Course and outside sources into coherent statements of your ideas. In all cases, your writing should be data-based, meaning that you must support statements and ideas with evidence from these sources, giving these sources credit. The standard format for writing in the field of education is outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). The citation for this manual is included in the syllabus section on Recommended Texts. This is also termed “APA Style.” For an online resource, see [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org). Specifically, final Module Assignments for Modules 1 and 4 should be written in APA style, including a cover page, running head, pagination, headings (as needed), citation (as needed in Module 4 at the least) and reference pages.

For this course, students must submit their certification of completion of the Virginia Department of Education Child Abuse Recognition program. 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.

### **TaskStream Submission**

For student evaluation, program evaluation, and accreditation purposes, all students are required to submit an NCATE assignment from selected Special Education courses to TaskStream. The NCATE 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 NCATE assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/>. Students who do not submit the required NCATE assignment to TaskStream will receive a grade of Incomplete (IN) in the course. The Incomplete (IN) will change to a grade of (F) if the required signature assignment has not been posted to TaskStream by the incomplete work due date listed in the current semester’s Schedule of Classes.

### **Evaluation**

Assignments are evaluated according to posted rubrics. You can find the assignment descriptions and rubrics in each Module and also under the Course Syllabus link on the left side navigation bar in Blackboard. Grades for most reading checks will be available quickly and will post to the Grade Center (My Grades in the left side navigation bar). For module assignments (and some reading checks), your instructor will grade the assignment and post the score you earned and comments to the Grade Center. You can read the comments by clicking on the grade. If you have any questions, please contact me. If you have difficulty with an assignment, either in understanding or completing it, please contact me immediately to discuss this.

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

Item	Points Each	Total
Reading Checks	25	400
Module Assignments	150	600
Child Abuse training	REQUIRED	
Extra Credit: Initial and Midterm Course Survey	5	10
Extra Credit: GMU Final Evaluation of Course	10	10
<b>TOTAL POINTS FOR COURSE</b>		<b>1000 (plus extra credit)</b>

### Grading Scale

95-100% = A  
 92-94% = A-  
 89-91% = B+  
 85-88% = B  
 80-84% = B-  
 70-79% = C  
 <70% = F

### Assignments

#### NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.

#### Child Abuse Training Module

All students must complete the online child abuse recognition training module available at [http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated\\_reporters/cws5691/index.html](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cws5691/index.html). **This is a mandatory requirement and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment. The certificate of completion will need to be posted to your TaskStream account in order to receive your final grade in the course.** It is recommended that you post this at the start of your course. Please consult with your instructor as soon as possible if you have any questions about this assignment.

## **Common Assignments.**

### **Reading Checks**

At the end of each lesson, there is a reading check assignment. In most lessons, these checks are 5-10 multiple choice questions. You may not use any materials such as books or notes to help you complete these checks but you may take each one multiple times.

### **Module Assignments (Modules are described fully on the Course Blackboard Site)**

Module assignments are a combination of independent and group work. Modules 1 and 4 require students to write two, two to four page papers. The paper in Module 1 is a personal philosophy statement in which students will respond to specific questions given by the instructor. In addition, you will have to choose two activities from a list. You will include a summary of the activities in your paper. At the end of the course, you will review this statement and write a statement (minimum of 1-2 paragraphs) revising your original statement. In Module 4, students are asked to choose a topic related to special education, research the topic, and summarize the current knowledge on it. Module assignments for Modules 2 and 3 are slightly different. At the beginning of the course, you will be assigned to a group. Each group member will write about the disability area to which they have been assigned. Each student will post this assignment to a group Wiki. In addition, each group member will need to view the Wikis in another disability area or areas. Each member will comment on these other Wiki posts as well. See assignment description on Blackboard for further information.

### **Other Assignments.**

#### **Extra Credit) Midterm and Final Course Survey (5 points each); Final Evaluation of Course (10 points):**

A survey will be provided at the start and at the end of this course on Blackboard. Your feedback is helpful as it will be used to evaluate the online format of this course. You will receive extra credit points for completion of the midterm and final course survey. Please note: all responses to these surveys are submitted anonymously. Responses are randomly inputted onto Blackboard. **(10 points extra credit for both surveys)**

In addition, George Mason University provides an online final course evaluation at the end of the semester. This is extremely important, as it will help your instructor further refine this course for future semesters. It will also be used for annual evaluation of your instructor's teaching performance. You will receive an email from GMU with information about the final course evaluation as well as a reminder from your instructor. Once you have completed the final course evaluation, send your instructor email in order to receive extra credit points. Please note, all responses to this evaluation and midterm and final course surveys are submitted anonymously. **(10 points extra credit)**



**Schedule**

**Course Pacing Guide/Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Material</b>
Day one of course		Child Abuse Training Certificate posted to TaskStream
2/21	<i>Module 1: History of special education and disability, legislation, and issues and services</i> Lesson 1: History of special education and disability Lesson 2: Legislation Lesson 3: Issues and services	All reading checks and Module 1 assignment completed—GRADING POINT 1
3/12	<i>Module 2: Higher incidence disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Intellectual Disabilities Lesson 2: Students with Learning Disabilities Lesson 3: Students with speech/language impairments Lesson 4: Students with emotional/behavioral disorders Lesson 5: Students with autism spectrum disorders	All reading checks complete. Module 2 worksheets posted for comment in disability Wiki.
3/14		Comments for Module 2 complete—GRADING POINT 2
4/09	<i>Module 3: Lower incidence disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Other health impairments Lesson 2: Students with visual impairments, including blindness Lesson 3: Students with hearing impairments or who are deaf Lesson 4: Students with severe/multiple disabilities, including deaf/blindness or TBI Lesson 5: Students with orthopedic impairments	
4/11		Comments for Module 3 complete—GRADING POINT 3
5/06	<i>Module 4: Issues and Collaborations</i> Lesson 1: Students with special gifts and talents Lesson 2: Parents and families Lesson 3: The future of special education	FINAL DUE DATE All Course Material should be completed Revisions to Philosophy statement posted to Journal (as separate entry) Course evaluation completed—GRADING POINT 4

