



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

Spring 2014

EDSE 590 676: Special Education Research

CRN: 17958, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Katherine Bradley-Black	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/08/14 - 03/05/14
<b>Phone:</b> 703/244.7742	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Wednesday
<b>E-Mail:</b> kblack4@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 4:15 pm-8:45 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> OCL OCL

***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**

Describes fundamental concepts and practices in educational research in special education. Covers specific applications of educational research methods to problems in special education. Emphasizes review and critique of special education research, and applied classroom research for teachers.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisites:** 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) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

**Nature of Course Delivery**

*[Instructors, please revise in accordance with your specific course format]*

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, students will be able to:

- Identify and understand different methods of educational research suitable for different research purposes in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of quantitative experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of survey research in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of single subject research in special education.
- Describe and discuss basic theories and methods of qualitative research in special education.
- Critically evaluate education research and describe implications for educational practice.

### **Required Textbooks**

McMillan, J.H. (2012). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Boston: Pearson Education. ISBN-10: 0132596474; ISBN-13: 9780132596473

### **Digital Library Option**

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course **may be** available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. Please note that not all textbooks are available through this option. Visit the links below before purchasing the digital library to ensure that your course(s) text(s) are available in this format. The division and Pearson have partnered to bring you the Digital Library; a convenient, digital solution that can save you money on your course materials. The Digital Library offers you access to a complete digital library of **all Pearson textbooks** and MyEducationLabs used across the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research curriculum at a low 1-year or 3-year subscription price. Access codes are available in the school bookstore. Please visit <http://gmu.bncollege.com> and search the ISBN. To register your access code or purchase the Digital Library, visit: <http://www.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

- 1 year subscription \$200 ISBN-13: 9781269541411
- 3 years subscription \$525 ISBN-13: 9781269541381
- Individual e-book(s) also available at the bookstore link above or at <http://www.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

### **Recommended Textbooks**

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the APA (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 1-4338-0562-6; ISBN 13: 978-1-4338-0562-2

### **Required Resources**

N/A

### **Additional Readings**

As assigned, see Schedule.

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

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Masters in Special Education Program. 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 that will be addressed in this class include Standard 4: Instructional Strategies and Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice.

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

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- 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.**

Students are expected to (a) attend all classes during the course, (b) arrive on time, (c) stay for the duration of the class time and (d) complete all assignments. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant, active participation are expected. Attendance and professional participation at all sessions is very important because all of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session.

### **Late Work.**

Points will be deducted for assignments not submitted on time (the beginning of the class meeting time). Generally, points equal to half of a letter grade are deducted for each class session past due.

## **TaskStream Submission**

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, (NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE) (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete(IN). Unless the IN grade is

changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

If you have never used TaskStream before, you MUST use the login and password information that has been created for you. This information is distributed to students through GMU email, so it is very important that you set up your GMU email. For more TaskStream information, go to <http://cehd.gmu.edu/api/taskstream>

### **Grading Scale**

A	=	95-100 points
A-	=	90 - 94 points
B	=	80 - 89 points
C	=	70 – 79 points
F	=	< 70 points

### **Assignments**

#### **Performance-based Assessment (TaskStream submission required).**

None for EDSE 590

#### **Performance-based Common Assignments (No TaskStream submission required).**

**CITI Module Completion:** The CITI Module involves the completion of GMU **Mandatory** Training for Persons Conducting Research Using Human Subjects (“Group 1 Social & Behavioral Research, Basic Course”) that is accessed at <http://www.citiprogram.org>. Seven learner modules in the Basic Course are required prior to conducting any research at Mason using human subjects. In addition, if any of the optional modules relates to your research, you are can complete the appropriate module(s), 1 point each up to 3 extra credit points. These optional modules can only be opened after you finish the Basic Course. Copy certification of completion document and provide to Dr. Henderson in hard copy. No partial credit will be given on this assignment.

#### **Qualitative and Quantitative Article Review Projects**

To demonstrate beginning competency in the skills needed for special education research and analysis, students will be asked to find, review, and critique one quantitative research article and also one qualitative research article, both from peer-reviewed special education journals. It is imperative that students become familiar with using professional journals in the field of special education to inform their professional practice and be proficient in understanding articles that use both quantitative and qualitative research methods. For the reviews, each student is asked to independently read one research article that implements quantitative data collection methods and analysis (these are articles collecting numerical data and using statistical analysis) and also one

that utilizes qualitative research methods (discussion, narrative, etc.); and then complete a research question and answer sheet that asks the student to identify each article's essential elements; and critique each article's ideas and design. The student will decide which type of article will be reviewed/critiqued first whether quantitative or qualitative. Whatever is chosen for the first review/critique, the other article type will be chosen for the second article review/critique project. The review/critique question and answer sheet will be provided to students by the third class session.

### **Research Application Project:**

**Option 1:** Students will employ appropriate research methodology to investigate a problem of interest in a classroom, using group-experimental or quasi-experimental, single-subject, survey, or qualitative methodology. Students will prepare a research report on this project using the format recommended by the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). This includes Title page; Abstract; Introduction and purpose; Method (participants, materials, procedures); Findings or Results; Discussion; References. A grading rubric will be made available.

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction
  - Quantitative: specific research questions need to be stated
  - Qualitative: general problem statement needs to be presented and clarified
- Review of the literature
  - Quantitative: review of the previous research studies that have been done in this area
  - Qualitative: brief review of the previous research studies that have been completed
- Research problem statement or questions
  - Quantitative: specific, narrow questions should be presented along with a hypotheses
  - Qualitative: general, foreshadowed questions should be introduced
- Method and design
  - Quantitative: research design, participants, instruments, and procedures
  - Qualitative: research design, participants, and settings/sites
- Results
  - Quantitative: statistical explanations provided
  - Qualitative: narrative descriptions explained
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- References

**Option 2:** The research review is geared at having students get extensive experience in reviewing literature found in both the virtual and physical library facilities. For this type of paper, a student(s) can select a specific topic or intervention to investigate via the available research base. Ten original research studies on the specific topic of selection will be needed for this option and should come from peer-reviewed special education research journals. For larger groups, five studies should be added for each additional group member. **Be sure to have your research topic approved by the instructor PRIOR to beginning your journal search.** The project should be completed in sections by the students throughout the course of the semester. Time will be provided weekly for students to share and get feedback in their groups. The final research review paper should be submitted via the Assignments Tab in Blackboard and should include the following:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction
  - General Topic – presented as an area that has needed understanding, exploration, and research
    - Trends – if any trends have been found on the topic during the research, they should be briefly outlined here
    - Thesis – statement of perspective and reason for writing the review
    - Review criteria – elements used in evaluating relevant literature are specified
- Literature Reviewed – this section should be organized by the different studies reviewed
  - First study – summary and discussion
  - Second study – summary and discussion
  - Third study – summary and discussion, etc. until all studies covered
- Comparative analysis highlights the similarities and differences between studies summarized in the literature reviewed
  - Similarities (if any) between all studies presented, discussed, and evaluated
  - Differences (if any) between all studies presented, discussed, and evaluated
- Conclusion/Summary brings closure to the review
  - Key points throughout the review are summarized
  - Bigger Picture – Relevance and role of research area to larger field of special education established
- References

**Research Presentation:** Students will present the results of their research project to the class in a formal research presentation format. The presentation should not exceed 8 minutes, most of which should be spent on your method and findings. The use of audiovisual, posters, handouts, or other presentation materials is encouraged. Grading rubric is on Bb; *attach an ungraded rubric* to your assignment.

### **Other Assignments.**

Additional assignments related to the application of the concepts of the course may be given in class as appropriate.

	Attendance	Article Review	CITI Module	Research Project	Research Presentation	Total
Earn						
Points Possible	10	15x2	10	30	20	100

### Schedule

Class	Date	Big Topics	Readings/Assignments Due
<b>1</b>	1.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus and Course Expectations</li> <li>• Research Project Brainstorm</li> <li>• Chapter 1: Intro. to Educational Research</li> </ul>	
<b>2</b>	1.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to find literature</li> <li>• Conducting a literature search</li> <li>• Research Questions</li> <li>• Participants and sampling</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 1 & 2
<b>4</b>	1.29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of Educational Measurement</li> <li>• Data Collection</li> </ul>	Read Chapters 3&4  <b>CITI Module Due:</b> email certificate to kblack4@gmu.edu
<b>5</b>	2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative Research Designs</li> <li>• Experimental Research Designs</li> </ul>	Read Chapters 5 & 6  Read: <i>Odum, et al.(2005), Research in Special Education: Scientific Methods and Evidence-Based Practices</i>  <b>First Article Review Due</b>
<b>6</b>	2.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Statistical Inferences</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 7 & 8  Read: <i>Gersten, et al. (2005) Quality Indicators for Group Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research in Special Education</i>
<b>7</b>	2.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative Research design, data collection, and analysis.</li> </ul>	Read Chapter 9  Read: <i>Brantlinger et al. (2005), Qualitative Studies in Special Education</i>



			<b><i>Second Article Review Due</i></b>
<b>8</b>	2.26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-Method Design</li> <li>• Single Subject Design</li> </ul>	<p>Read Chapter 10 &amp; 11</p> <p>Read: <i>Horner, et al (2005) The Use of Single-Subject Research to Identify Evidence-Based Practice in Special Education</i></p>
<b>9</b>	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Research</li> </ul>	<p>Read Chapter 12 &amp; 13</p> <p><b><i>Research Paper Due</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Presentations Due</i></b></p>

## Appendix

### Paper Presentation Rubric

<i>Element</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Overall Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summary of key research paper point included</li><li>• Comprehensive in nature</li></ul>	/5	
PowerPoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Varied typed of information (e.g. narrative, data, charts, etc)</li><li>• Visual clarity</li><li>• Creativity &amp; Appeal</li></ul>	/4	
Research Discussion/Question Answering <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engages peers in active discussion about the research project</li><li>• Knowledgeably answers questions related to the projects' research question and surrounding details</li><li>• Acknowledges limitations of the research project</li></ul>	/4	
Oral Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highlights most pertinent research points</li><li>• Adequate voice projections</li><li>• Eye contact made with audience.</li></ul>	/4	
Detail Elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appropriate usage of standard written English grammar, spelling and clarity of expression</li><li>• APA format</li></ul>	/3	
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>/15</i></b>	

### Research Application Paper Rubric (Option 1)

<i>Element</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Title page	/1	
Abstract	/2	
Introduction	/2	
Review of the Literature	/3	
Research problem statement or questions	/4	
Method and design	/5	
Results	/4	
Discussion	/3	
Conclusions	/2	
References	/2	
Writing Style (see other rubric)	/2	
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>/30</b>	

### Research Review Paper Rubric (*Option 2*)

<i>Element</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Title Page	/1	
Abstract	/2	
Introduction	/2	
General Topic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trends</li> <li>• Thesis</li> <li>• Review Criteria</li> </ul>	/5	
Literature reviewed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First study – summary and discussion</li> <li>• Second study – summary and discussion</li> <li>• Third study – summary discussion</li> <li>• More studies – summary and discussions</li> </ul>	/7	
Comparative Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key points summarized</li> <li>• Bigger Picture – relevance and role of research area to larger field of special education established</li> </ul>	/5	
References	/3	
Writing Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate usage of standard written English grammar, spelling and clarity of expression</li> <li>• APA 6 format</li> </ul>	/2	
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>/30</i></b>	