



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

Spring 2018  
EDSE 590 DL3: Special Education Research  
CRN: 22251, 3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Nancy Cerar	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/22/18 – 05/16/18
<b>Phone:</b> 703-785-4089	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> N/A
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<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Online, Asynchronous
<b>Office Location:</b> Virtual	<b>Other Phone:</b> 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**

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. Offered by Graduate School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.

Registration Restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students with a class of Advanced to Candidacy, Graduate, Non Degree or Senior Plus.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate, Non-Degree or Undergraduate level students.

Students in a Non-Degree Undergraduate degree may not enroll.

Schedule Type: Lecture

**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 teacher candidates/students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other teacher candidates/students should refer to their faculty advisor.

### **Advising Tip**

Are you ready to apply for graduation? Students completing their program can apply for graduation on Patriotweb. If you are graduating from a Masters and certificate, be sure to apply to graduate from each program. Visit <http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/graduation/> for more information.

### **Course Delivery Method**

Learning activities include the following:

1. Recorded lecture and online discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on Monday, January 22, 2018.

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

### *Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- If Students choose to use Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool for meetings with the instructor, they will need a headset microphone. However, Collaborate meetings are not required and students can always meet with the professor in person or by phone.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player:  
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## *Expectations*

- Course Week:  
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will **start on Monday**, and **finish on Sunday**.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 4 times per week.
- Participation:  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:  
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## **Learner Outcomes**

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

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

## **Course Relationship 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, as well as those established by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support consortium (InTASC). The standards addressed in this class include CEC Standard 5: Instructional planning and strategies (InTASC 7,8) & CEC Standard 6: Professional learning and ethical practice (InTASC 9).

## **Required Textbooks**

McMillan, J. H. (2007). *Fundamentals of Educational Research* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: AB Longman.

## **Recommended Textbooks**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

## **Additional Readings**

The textbook will be used as a framework for the course. Additional readings relevant to the course will be provided by the instructor.

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

## **Tk20 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 Tk20 (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 Tk20.

For EDSE 590, the required PBA is (NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE). Failure to submit the assignment to Tk20 will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Teacher candidates/students have until five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline to upload the required PBA in order to change the course grade. When the PBA is uploaded, the teacher candidate/student is required to notify the instructor so that the "IN" can be changed to a grade. If the required PBA is not uploaded five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline and, therefore, the grade not changed, it will become an F. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to Tk20 before the PBA due date.

### **Assignments and/or Examinations**

#### **Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required)**

None

#### **College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required)**

None

#### **Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required.)**

**Final Research Project: Research Review Paper.** You will complete a traditional research review paper of a selected intervention area of your choice. **Your topic must be approved by the instructor.** You will need to collect a minimum of 8-10 original intervention research studies on a particular topic to include in your review paper. An electronic copy (posted to Blackboard) should be submitted no later than midnight on the due date. All activities for this assignment can be completed individually or in research teams. **This assignment is the signature assignment for the course.**

As part of the class activities, students will provide constructive feedback to classmates on their drafts of the literature review introduction and method, and results and discussion sections and final draft.

#### **Other Assignments**

**Participation in class activities.** Students will complete class readings to include a supplemental set of articles that reflect current special education research trends and will explore different methodologies in published special education research. Furthermore, students will participate in class activities and interactive quizzes in order to practice literature searches, reviews, and relevant research application. In addition to weekly class activities, students will be prompted to work on their Research Review Wiki Page. This work is designed to help students prepare for their final Research Review Paper assignment one step at a time.

**Human Subject CITI Training Module Completion (Pass/Fail).** GMU Mandatory Training for Persons Conducting Research Using Human Subjects 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. This assignment will be evaluated as pass/fail.

**Research Application: Mini Project.** The research application mini-project is designed to provide experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating a research application project in special education. All activities for this assignment can be completed individually or in research teams. Specific directions and a rubric for this assignment will be provided by the instructor.

\*Detailed descriptions and step-by-step instructions for each class activity and course assignments will be provided by the instructor and posted in the corresponding Learning Modules.

### **Course Policies and Expectations**

#### **Attendance/Participation**

While there are no synchronous sessions in this course, students are required to complete all weekly online assignments using the Blackboard 9.1 course management system. Active attendance and participation in the course will be seen as timely completion of assigned weekly work in the course learning modules.

#### **Late Work**

All assignments should be submitted via Blackboard by the due date. **All students will be given 24-hour grace period, from Sunday evening through Monday evening. After that time, in fairness to students who make the effort to submit work on time, points will be deducted from your grade for late assignments. Assignments will not be accepted more than 3 days late unless prior arrangement with the instructor have been made.** Allow additional time and plan for additional participation during activities that require constructive feedback.

### **Grading Scale**

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Participation in class activities	90	60%
Research Application: Mini Project	20	15%
Final Research Project: Research Review Paper	40	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Range</b>
A	94 – 100%
A-	90 – 93%
B+	86 – 89%
B	80 – 85%
C	70 – 79%
F	69 - Below

\*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. 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 or with proper citations (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

### **Class Schedule**

\*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Learning Module</b>	<b>Textbook Readings*, Weekly Assignments &amp; Activities Due</b>
Monday, January 22	1. Introduction to research methods in special education	
Monday, January 29	2. Literature searches & reviews	*Chapter 1 (pp.2-17) * <b>Introduction Forum</b>
Monday, February 5	3. Empirical article anatomy. Research problem & questions	* <b>CITI Training</b> *Chapter 3 * <b>Literature Search Scavenger Hunt</b> * <b>Research Review Wiki: Research Topic</b>
Monday, February 12	4. Experimental research designs: Group Research	*Chapter 1 (pp.17-26) *Chapter 2 * <b>Overview of Research in My Field</b> * <b>Research Review Wiki: Purpose Statement &amp; Research Questions</b>

Monday, February 19	5. Experimental research designs: Single-subject Research	*Chapter 4 and Chapter 9 (about Group Research only!) <b>*Research Review Wiki: Working on Introduction Section Draft</b>
Monday, February 26	6. Research components Part I: Participants & variables	*Chapter 9 (about Single Subject Research only!) <b>*Research Review Wiki: Completing Introduction Draft</b>
Monday, March 5	7. Research components Part II: Educational measurements & data collections	*Chapter 2 (pp. 54-59) *Chapter 5 <b>*Research Review Wiki: Method Section Draft &amp; Peer Feedback on Method</b>
Monday, March 12	<b>Spring Break</b>	
Monday, March 19	8. Discussion and conclusions. APA 6 <sup>th</sup> edition style	*Chapter 7 *Chapter 10 <b>*Research Review Wiki: Descriptions of Each Individual Study Draft &amp; Peer Feedback on Method</b>
Monday, March 26	9. Mini-Research Proposal work time	*Chapter 15 <b>*Mini-Research Application Project Outline Due</b>
Monday, April 2	10. Qualitative research design	<b>*Work on Mini-Research Application Project</b> <b>*Research Review Wiki: Results and Discussion Section Draft</b>
Monday, April 9	11. Non-experimental quantitative research design: Survey research	*Chapter 11 & 12 <b>*Mini-Research Application Project Due</b>
Monday, April 16	12. Work on Research Review Paper	*Chapter 8 <b>*Research Review Wiki: Final Research Review Draft &amp; Peer Feedback on Results and Discussion</b>
Monday, April 23	13. Mixed methods research designs	<b>*Reference List in APA Format Due</b>
Monday, April 30	14. Intelligent Research Consumer/Action research	*Chapter 13 <b>*Final Research Review Paper</b>
Monday, May 7	15. Final Assignment	*Chapter 14 <b>*Reflection Due</b>



## 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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

## GMU Policies and Resources for Students

### Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <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 <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- 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

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.**

## Appendix

### Assessment Rubric(s)

### **Rubric for Participation in Class Activities**

**Exemplary (5 points):** The student:

- Correctly completes and posts all activities on time;
- Actively participates and supports the members of the learning group and the members of the class. When appropriate provides constructive feedback to at least one of the classmates in a respectful manner.

**Adequate (1-3 points):** The student:

- Completes and posts the majority of the activities that are partially correct;
- Occasionally participates in discussions and provides feedback.

**Inadequate (0 points):** The student:

- Does not complete class activities;
- Does not actively participate in discussions and does not provide constructive feedback;
- The student may fail to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions.

### **Rubric for Final Research Project: Research Review Paper**

Effective literature reviews contain the following:

- **An introduction** that establishes an important educational problem that needs to be addressed, a logical presentation of information that leads to the purpose statement of the paper (in this case a systematic literature review). Important concepts are defined in this section as well as any background information needed to support search procedures in the methodology.

- **A method section** that has clearly replicable procedures and demonstrates competency in the search techniques learned in class (search of educational data bases with key terms, ancestry and/or descendent searches, hand searches of relevant journals), and identifies clear and reasonable decision making criteria for individual studies included in the review (inclusion/exclusion criteria).

- **A results section** that provides an overview of the characteristics of the data set, is logically organized for the reader, demonstrates that search procedures described in the method section were consistently followed, and succinctly and sufficiently describes relevant information from each of the studies reviewed. A visual representation of the findings (i.e., a table) with accurate information helps the reader to understand more thoroughly the research reviewed.

- **A discussion section** that provides a thoughtful and analytical discussion of findings and is based firmly on studies reviewed (not solely the authors opinion), and references implications for practice where appropriate. - Overall student understanding of the purpose of each of these sections of a research paper, a professional writing style (has

been thoroughly edited), and citations that are in APA format (with careful attention to 'glaring' errors).

Exemplary paper (36-40 points): Meets all of the criteria above.

Adequate paper (32-35 points): Good overall paper, lacking in one or two of the criteria for an exemplary paper.

Marginal paper (28-31 points): Overall, acceptable but with one or more significant problems. Contains some useful information, but may have substantial problems with evaluation, writing style, or review of relevant literature.

Inadequate paper (1-27 points): Paper with substantial problems in important areas such as writing, evaluation of research, overall thoughtfulness. Contains little or no information of value to special education practice.

Unacceptable/no paper (0 points): No paper turned in or paper was not approved for this assignment.

Exemplary paper	Adequate paper	Marginal paper	Inadequate	No paper
40 – 36	35 – 32	31 – 28	< 28	0