

**EDSE 540, Cohort 669; Fall 2010**

**George Mason University**  
**Graduate School of Education**

**EDSE 540: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Who Access the General Education Curriculum (Section 669)**

**Fall 2010; FCPS Cohort 23**

**Instructors:** Jill E. Jakulski, Ph.D.

**Phone:** cell: 703-380-2289  
work: 703-426-7300

**Email:** [jjakulsk@gmu.edu](mailto:jjakulsk@gmu.edu)

**Class day/time:** Thursdays, 4:30-8:30 PM  
September 16th – November 18th

**Class location:** Fairfax HS, Room A149

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

EDSE 540 covers Examines the characteristics of students with mild disabilities. Emphasis 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. The course will also examine the impact of learning and behavioral disabilities on academic and social/emotional performance. Diversity within student populations is addressed throughout the course. Experiential, observational, and interactive strategies are used to facilitate fulfillment of the outcomes established for this course. Field experience is required.

Prerequisites: none

**STUDENT OUTCOMES:**

The purpose of this course is to assist students in developing a solid foundation for understanding learning acquisition and behaviors of children with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities. EDSE 540 is also designed to prepare students to interact with other professionals about children with these disabilities. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the CEC standards in relation to the student outcomes identified in Table 1.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Henley, Algozzine & Ramsey, *Characteristics of and Strategies for Teaching Students with Mild Disabilities*, 6th edition, ABLongman, ISBN 0205608388

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:**

Class sessions may include a variety of formats and integrate instructional technology with lecture, discussion, guest presenters, video and small group activities. Students will be expected to engage in dialog with the instructor and peers cooperatively and collaboratively; mirroring their current or future roles as special educators.

Alignment of Outcomes and Requirements with key CEC/NCATE Standards

CEC/NCATE STANDARDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	COURSE REQUIREMENTS
<p><b>Standard 1: Foundations</b> Special educators understand the field as an evolving and changing discipline based on philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view, and human issues that have historically influenced and continue to influence the field of special education and the education and treatment of individuals with disabilities both in school and society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices of today.</li> <li>• Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders with the education for students identified as having a learning disability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading assignments</li> <li>• Online group discussion</li> <li>• Class activities</li> <li>• Final Exam</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners</b> Special educators understand the similarities and differences in human development and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ELN). Special educators understand how exceptional conditions interact with the domains of human development and they use this knowledge to respond to varying abilities and behaviors. Special educators understand how disabilities impact families, and the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as contributing community members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define <i>learning disability</i> and <i>emotional disturbance</i>.</li> <li>• Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between <i>normal</i> and <i>atypical</i> behaviors.</li> <li>• Describe characteristics of young children and adolescents with learning disabilities and/or emotional disturbances.</li> <li>• Compare at least three conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading assignments</li> <li>• Online group discussions</li> <li>• Case Study</li> <li>• Field Observations</li> <li>• Class activities</li> <li>• Final Exam</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences</b> Special educators understand the effects that an exceptional condition has on learning in school and throughout life. They understand that beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures affect relationships among and between students, families, and school. They seek to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the disability to affect academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. Learning differences and their interactions are the basis for individualizing instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.</li> <li>• Identify procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self-understanding and confidence as learners.</li> <li>• Describe/discuss a range of learning disabilities and emotional disturbances for a parent; suggest possible interventions for home and school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study report</li> <li>• Reading assignments</li> <li>• Field Observations</li> <li>• Class activities</li> <li>• Final exam</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 6: Language</b> Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which disabilities can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe at least one theory of how children develop language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group discuss</li> <li>• Class activities</li> <li>• Case study report</li> <li>• Final exam</li> <li>• Field Observations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard 8: Assessment</b> Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.</li> <li>• Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.</li> <li>• Describe what an IEP is and how it is developed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group discussion</li> <li>• Class activities</li> <li>• Case study report</li> <li>• Student presentation</li> <li>• Final exam</li> </ul>

### **Evidence-Based Practices**

EDSE 540 course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to etiology of mild disabilities and inclusionary practices. These EBPs are indicated with an asterisk (\*) in this syllabus. 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 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.

### **CLASS 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 to earn the **10 point class participation grade for each class**. 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 necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Please notify me *in advance* by phone or email if you will not be able to attend class.
- **Workload:** In-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements require outside class time. Students are expected to allot class study and preparation time weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments. **The result of late work will be the loss of 10 points per day until the assignment is received by the instructor.** Individual situations will be addressed with individual students outside of class.
- **Written and Oral Language:** **APA Style** is the standard format for written work in the College of Education. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) You are required to use APA guidelines for all course assignments. This website links to APA format guidelines: <http://apastyle.apa.org>. We will use **person-first language** in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). We will also replace the term “Mental Retardation” with “Intellectual Disabilities” in our oral and written communication in accordance with terminology choices in the disability community.
- **Academic Integrity:** Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper APA citation. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. **Evidence of plagiarism or any other form of cheating in the class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the Dean’s Office.**
- **Email:** Please note that your GMU email will be used often by GMU while you are a student. It is very important for you to set up your GMU email account. Please activate and forward your gmu email to your most-checked account!

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- **Be an Informed Student:** Negotiating all the requirements for your Master’s and/or VA Licensure is extremely complex. It is recommended that you schedule a phone/email or in-person appointment with the Special Education Advisor, Jancy Templeton ([jtemple1@gmu.edu](mailto:jtemple1@gmu.edu) 703/993-2387). Doing so each semester will ensure that you rectify any outstanding issues, are timely with all necessary paperwork, and are ultimately in good standing to graduate on time.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC\\_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform the instructor, in writing at the beginning of the course. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the ODS.

### EVALUATION

• Class Participation (attendance and in class)	20 points
• Case Study Paper*	20 points
• Journal Summaries Papers	20 points (total)
• Strategy Presentations	20 points
• Final Exam	20 points

### POINTS

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**TOTAL POINTS: 100 points**

\*This assignment is the “signature” assignment for the student portfolio. Students are required to post the signature case study in GMU’s portfolio TASKSTREAM site no later than Thursday, November 4th. Failure to post a signature case study for evaluation under Standards 2 & 3 will result in an INCOMPLETE grade for the course until posted. <https://www.taskstream.com/pub/>

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GMU Special Education program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes to document your satisfactory progress through the GMU program and the CEC performance based standards.

### GRADING CRITERIA

95-100% = A  
90-94% = A-  
85-89% = B  
80-84% = B-  
70-79% = C  
< 70% = F

## MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

### **Attendance and Participation (20 points)**

Attendance and participation are essential. Class time will provide opportunities for (1) completion of and preparation for a variety of activities, (2) contribution of effective teaching strategies and content application ideas during discussion, and (3) reflection on readings, assignments, and your past experiences. Students are expected to be consistently well-prepared to participate in class as active, thoughtful discussants. This means that you must prepare all assigned readings prior to coming to class. After two absences two points per day absent will be deducted.

### **Abstracts of Journal Articles (20 points)**

On four occasions, each student will summarize one journal article, based on practical, research-based interventions that are relevant to the topics being studied. Articles chosen for this requirement must be from peer-reviewed published journals (no ERIC documents!) and should be data-based examinations of issues relevant to the ED/LD/ID field. Appropriate sources for journal articles include: *Exceptional Children*, *The Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Learning Disabilities Quarterly*, *The Journal of Special Education*, *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, *Remedial and Special Education*, *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, etc. A word document of common journals is included under Course Resources on Blackboard.

The purpose of this assignment is twofold: first to identify research-based findings that are relevant to the field of special education, to distill the major points of the article to a one- or two-page summary. The abstract should be typed (double spaced) and following APA style. An APA style citation should be included at the top of each article. After summarizing the article, discuss how you, as a teacher, might apply the intervention(s). All articles should be from current literature and should not be more than three (3) years old. You must use your own words to summarize. The abstract should be 2-3 pages. At least one sample will be provided on Blackboard.

### **Presentation on Strategies/Interventions (20 points)**

Each student will choose an area of interest (e.g. reading, writing, math, behavioral management) and will investigate research-based strategies/interventions on the area of interest. Based on this investigation, each student will prepare a 10-minute presentation on the interventions investigated. The presentation should include an introduction to the topic, description of the intervention (s) and examples of how to apply the strategy intervention. In addition, a hands-on activity should be developed as part of the presentation as well as hand-outs for classmates. A minimum of two strategies/ interventions should be discussed. If desired, students may opt to work as a group of up to four students.

### **Case Study\* (20 points)**

As a signature assignment for this course, a comprehensive case study on a student with mild disabilities will be completed. This case study will include the following components: a) student's demographic data; b) description of school and neighborhood; c) educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, pre-referral interventions, results of multidisciplinary evaluation, special education classification, placement); d) IEP goals, objectives, classroom accommodations; e) observational information (at least two class-period observations specifically related to IEP goals, objectives and accommodations); f) teacher interviews (related to IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations, and other accommodations or relevant issues not included on IEP); g) your

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additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications; h) summary and synthesis (comparison of student's characteristics with those described in the textbook, i.e., Which characteristics were identified in your student? Integrate at least three sources from the literature with what you observed in your case study); and I) appendices such as student work samples, teacher interview questions/answers. A sample case study will be provided on Blackboard.

### **Exam (20 points)**

Exam covering course content will be administered. 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 required submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester

**Course Calendar**  
(subject to change based on class needs)

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Due This Class Session</b>
<b>September 16th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration, Introductions, and Backgrounds</li> <li>• Cohort Structure and Questions</li> <li>• Syllabus Review</li> <li>• Context of Special Education</li> </ul>		N/A
<b>September 23rd</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context of Special Education and Important Legislation, cont.</li> <li>• Overview of Students with Mild Disabilities</li> </ul>	Chapters 1 & 2	Journal Summary # 1
<b>September 30th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with Learning Disabilities</li> </ul>	Chapter 5	Confirm student for case study.
<b>October 7th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the Curriculum, Accommodations, Modifications</li> <li>• <i>Guest Speaker –AT</i></li> </ul>	Chapter 7 & 10	Journal Summary # 2
<b>October 14th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with Emotional Disabilities</li> <li>• Classroom Management</li> <li>• <i>Guest Speaker</i></li> </ul>	Chapters 4 & 9	
<b>October 21st</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities</li> <li>• <i>Guest Speaker</i></li> </ul>	Chapter 3 & 8	Journal Summary # 3
<b>October 28th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students with High Functioning Autism</li> <li>• Writing Effective IEPs and Educational Reports</li> <li>• Co-teaching</li> </ul>	Chapters 6 & 7	
<b>November 4th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration and Inclusive Practices</li> </ul>	Chapters 6 & 11	Journal Summary # 4 <b>CASE STUDY PAPER DUE</b>
<b>November 11th</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with and Supporting Parents</li> <li>• Building Family Partnerships</li> <li>• Strategy Presentations</li> </ul>	Chapters 6 & 11	Strategy Presentations Take-home exam- due no later than 11:00 PM
<b>November 18th</b>		N/A	Finish Strategy Presentations Course Evaluations

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points (out of 20) \_\_\_\_\_

**Journal Abstracts**

**Scoring Rubric**

<b>Evaluation Standard</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Partially Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Did Not Meet Expectations</b>	<b>Points Earned</b>
<b>Full Citation of Journal Article</b> (2 points)	written in its entirety, in correct APA format	written in its entirety, in correct APA format with minimal errors	not written in its entirety and/or in APA format	
<b>Topic Rationale</b> (2 points)	rational/reasons specific to why the strategy was selected	rationale included, but with limited information	not included	
<b>Purpose and Research Questions</b> (2 points)	purpose and research questions clearly stated in understandable terms	purpose and/or research questions not clearly stated	purpose and/or research questions not included	
<b>Participants</b> (2 points)	number, ages/grades, gender, setting, population (gen ed, spec ed)	missing/partial information specific to number, ages/grades, gender, setting and/or population	participant information not included	
<b>Intervention</b> (2 points)	clear and detailed description of the intervention being tested		information about intervention limited and/or unclear	
<b>Results of the Study</b> (5 points)	overall results summarized, describing efficacy of intervention (or lack there-of)	summary of results and efficacy of intervention lacked depth for thorough understanding	summary and/or efficacy of intervention not included	
<b>Reflection</b> (5 points)	thoughtful and detailed reflection of: a) the intervention being studied; and b) how the new learning might influence your practice as an educator	reflection lacked depth and/or thoughtful reflection of the intervention and how it may impact you as an educator	reflection not included	

**Notes:**



## Guidelines: Case Study

Components:

1. Introduction
  - a. Provide general context with citations and areas to be covered.
2. Description of case
  - a. Student demographic data
  - b. Description of school and neighborhood
  - c. Educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, pre-referral interventions, results of multi-disciplinary evaluation, special ed classification, and placement)
  - d. IEP goals and objectives, classroom accommodations
3. Observation and interviews
  - a. Observational information (at least two class-period observations specifically related to IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations)
  - b. Interviews with relevant people (related to IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations, and other accommodations or relevant issues not included on IEP).
4. Analysis
  - a. Your additional research-based recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications.
5. Summary and synthesis
  - b. Comparison of student's characteristics and effective interventions with those described in the textbook and other resources (e.g., which characteristics were identified in your students? What interventions should work? **Integrate sources from literature with what you observed in your case.**
6. Appendices
  - a. Student work samples
  - b. Teacher interview questions/answers
  - c. Observation field notes

*To protect identities, pseudonyms should be used for all individuals and buildings.*

**Case Study Rubric (20 pts)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_

	<b><u>Exceeds Expectations</u></b>	<b><u>Meets Expectations</u></b>	<b><u>Below Expectations</u></b>
Observations <b>2 pts.</b>	Greater than two observations	Two observations ( <i>of 45 minutes or more each</i> )	Less than two observations
Introduction <b>2 pts.</b>	Introduction provides general context with citations and areas to be covered	Introduction provides general context and areas to be covered	Introduction does not identify areas to be covered and/or provide general context
Description <b>2 pts.</b>	Provides detailed description of all components listed in <i>point 1 above</i> , including specific examples for each component.	Provides detailed description and examples for at least 4 components, and provides limited information about other components	Provides limited description and examples of components, or missing a component
Observational information <b>2 pts</b>	Detailed information about observations specifically related to student IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations	Information about observations related to student IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations	Information about observations is not focused on student IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations
Teacher interviews <b>2 pts.</b>	Thorough and specific information is reported concerning student IEP goals, objectives, accommodations, and other accommodations or relevant issues not included on IEP	Information reported is related to IEP goals, objectives, accommodations, and other accommodations or relevant issues not included on IEP	Information is general and/or does not include all of the following components: information related to IEP goals, objectives, accommodations, and other accommodations or relevant issues not included on IEP
Analysis <b>4 pts.</b>	Logical recommendations w/ thorough & detailed support based on observations, interview, and literature. Recommendations highlight critical issues.	Logical recommendations with some support based on observations, interview and literature.	Illogical recommendations with little support based on observation, interview, and literature.
Summary and synthesis <b>4 pts.</b>	Thorough and detailed description of student characteristics with those described in the textbook and more than 3 additional sources from literature.	Some comparison of student characteristics with those described in the textbook and 3 additional sources from literature.	General or incomplete description of student characteristics compared with textbook. Less than 3 additional resources from literature.
Appendices <b>1 pt.</b>	Relevant, thorough, organized and readable examples of student work, teacher interview questions/ answers, and copies of field notes.	Organized and readable examples of student work, teacher interview question and answers, and copies of field notes.	Unorganized or unreadable examples of student work, teacher interview questions and answers, and copies of field notes.
APA style <b>1 pts.</b>	Paper is well-organized, writing is clear and easy to follow, provides correct citations and references in APA style, and free from spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.	Writing lacks clarity or organization in parts, and has a few APA style errors, or a few mechanical errors.	Writing lacks clarity and organization, with some APA style or mechanical errors.

**Notes:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategy Presentation**

The presentation should include an introduction to the topic, description of the intervention (s) and examples of how to apply the strategy intervention. In addition, a hands-on activity should be developed as part of the presentation as well as hand-outs for classmates. A minimum of two strategies/interventions should be discussed.

**Scoring Rubric**

<b>Evaluation Standard</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Partially Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Did Not Meet Expectations</b>	<b>Points Earned</b>
<b>Introduction of the strategy</b> (4 points)	researched-based strategy clearly articulated	researched-based strategy vaguely articulated	researched-based strategy NOT articulated	
<b>Strategy Rationale</b> (3 points)	rational/reasons specific to why the strategy was selected	rationale included, but with limited information	not included	
<b>Strategy/ Intervention</b> (5 points)	clear and detailed description of the intervention being tested	information about intervention limited	information about intervention is unclear	
<b>Hands on Activities</b> (3 points)	hands on activities or handouts included in presentation	LIMITED hands on activities or handouts included in presentation	hands on activities or handouts NOT included in presentation	
<b>Reflection</b> (5 points)	thoughtful and detailed reflection of: a) the intervention being studied; and b) how the new learning might influence your practice as an educator	reflection lacked depth and/or thoughtful reflection of the intervention and how it may impact you as an educator	reflection not included	

**Notes:**