GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
FAST TRAIN PROGRAM
EDSE 501: Introduction to Special Education in International Schools
Spring 2010
ONLINE COURSE

Teresa C. Hopkins, Ph.D.
Office Hours: via email
Phone: 703.791.7368
Email: thopkin2@gmu.edu
On Campus Contact: Dawn Beatty, FAST TRAIN Programs, 703.993.3602

Course Meeting Dates/Times:
 This 15-week semester course will be taught on-line, using *Blackboard* course software
(http://courses.gmu.edu/).The course will begin on Thursday, January 21.

Course Description:
This course provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Content includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, including existing and emerging technologies, assessment and support services of/for individuals with disabilities. The course will study the impact of disabilities on academic and social/emotional performance. Field experience is required.
Prerequisites: none.

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

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations
EDSE 501 is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in special education in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization in the United States. As such, the curriculum for the course includes competencies for teaching students with disabilities from preschool through grade 12.

The CEC Standards are listed on the following web site:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html

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

Standard 1: Foundations

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

Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners

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

Standard 3 Individual Learning Differences

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

Nature of Course Delivery:
Due to the international residence of enrolled students, the course is delivered entirely online.

Required Text:
Hallahan, D. P., & Kauffman, J. M. (2009). 11th Ed. *Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education.* Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
Additional course readings will be provided by instructor.

Course Requirements:
EDSE 501 will meet on-line at: http://courses.gmu.edu/ weekly. As a community of on-line learners, it is incumbent upon each of us to participate regularly and complete weekly assignments. Students will also be expected to complete fieldwork, to complete collaborative group projects and to undertake self-guided learning. The success of an online class is based large on engagement and interaction among participants and collaborative learning.

Evaluation:

- Discussion Board   20 %
- Field Experience   30 %
- Internet Log/Report   25 %
- Final Exam   20%
- Child Abuse Online Training   5 %

Grading Criteria:

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

GSE Syllabus Statements of Expectations:
 The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See 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 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 Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See **www.gmu.edu/student/drc**

Honor Code:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor: Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will face appropriate consequences. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at www.gmu.edu.

TaskStream:
Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course is required to submit signature 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/taskstream/
Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream may result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN).

Description of Assignments:

Discussion Board (DB) Postings (20%) – Students are required to post responses to questions placed on Discussion Board. The discussion postings should be thorough and thoughtful. .

Note: Postings should only be made during the week the topic is discussed unless otherwise specified. Once the week ends all messages should be directed toward the new topic.

2. **A Field Experience (30%)** will be required. The purpose of the field experience is to learn more about special needs students in international schools. Each participant should complete approximately twenty hours of observations and interviews resulting in a final Field Experience report. The Field Experience may involve interviews with the teacher(s) or parent(s), observations of students, team-teaching or group lessons (with special needs teacher or regular classroom teacher). The participant will keep a daily/weekly dated journal of the Field Experience. When submitting the final report also include

documentation such as logs, permission forms, reflections, evaluations and other documentation supporting your experiences. The field experience report should have three main sections: 1) School Description; 2) Fieldwork Journal 3) Evaluation of the Support Program. The report should be word processed and double-spaced. A Rubric can be found on Blackboard**.** The report with documentation is the final product of your field experience and should reflect information learned in the course including readings from the text and other sources. **Field experience report with documentation will be due on April 21 or before and will be submitted as an email attachment(s) and to Assignment Dropbox.**

3.   **The Internet Log/Report (25%)** is designed to increase the participants' familiarity with information that is available through the use of technology. First select a topic of interest related to students with special needs in international schools. Conduct a Net Search on the web identifying information relative to the topic. Read and review the information and select a minimum of **five** sources for the development of a 5-6 page written report on the selected topic (approximately one page per source). The report should include a description of the source, a summary of the issues and an opinion/analysis/reflection. This summary should include an opinion on how the participant could apply the information to a teaching position at an international school. Reports will be submitted via Assignment Dropbox. **Internet Log/Report will be due on March 3 or before and will be submitted to Assignment Dropbox.**

4. **Final Exam (20%) – due May 5 to Assignment Dropbox.   Child Abuse Online Training: (5%)** – **due Feb. 17 to TaskStream.**   These are the two signature assignments for the course and must be posted on the student's account in TaskStream: http://www.taskstream.com/
The child abuse training can be found at: http://www.vcu.edu/vissta/training/va teachers/
Upon completion of the Child Abuse training, the certification of completion must be posted on TaskStream. Once the final exam has been graded, the instructor will provide each student with a rubric that must be posted on TaskStream.

Course Outline, Topics and Text Readings:

Students will be asked to consider each of these weekly topics in direct relationship to the themes, research-based perspectives, methodology considerations, and other issues as they exist in international school environments. Students will be asked to become reflective learners and educators in their understanding of research-based suggested practices and the form and function of special needs services in their own settings. Listed below are the anticipated readings for each week.

WEEK 1 Jan 21 – Jan. 27
Topic: Introduction to Blackboard
Assignments: Introduce yourself on Discussion Board.
         Review the syllabus and other information on Blackboard
         Become familiar with TaskStream

WEEK 2 – Jan. 28 – Feb. 3
Topic: Exceptionality & Special Education
Text Readings: Chapter 1

WEEK 3 – Feb. 4 – Feb. 10
Topic: Integration, Inclusion, and Support of Positive Outcomes
Text Readings: Chapter 2

WEEK 4 – Feb. 11 – Feb. 17
Topic: Multicultural and Bilingual Aspects of Special Education; Parents & Families
Text Readings: Chapters 3 & 4
Child Abuse certificate due to be posted on TaskStream on Feb. 17

WEEK 5 – Feb. 18 – Feb. 24
Human Growth and Development Activity

WEEK 6 – Feb. 25 – March 3
Topic: Specific Learning Disabilities (discussion focusing on characteristics and identification(RtI & discrepancy model)
Text Readings: Chapter 6
Internet Log due March 3

WEEK 7 – March 4 – March 10
Topic: Specific Learning Disabilities (discussion focusing on instructional needs & accommodations)
Text Readings: Chapter 6

WEEK 8 – March 11 – March 17
Learners with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders
Text Readings: Chapters 7 & 8

WEEK 9 – March 18 – March 24
Topic: Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Text Readings: Chapter 5

WEEK 10 – March 25 – March 31
Topic: Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders
Text Readings: Chapter 12

WEEK 11 – April 1 – April 7
Topic: Learners with Blindness or Low Vision
Text Readings: Chapter 11

WEEK 12 – April 8 – April 14
Topics: Communication Disorders
Text Readings: Chapter 9

WEEK 13 – April 15 – April 21
Topics: Learners with Low-Incidence, Multiple, and Severe Disabilities
Text Readings: Chapters 13, 14
Field Experience report with documentation due on April 21

WEEK 14 – April 22 – April 28
Topic: Learners with Special Gifts & Talents
Text Readings: Chapter 15

WEEK 15 – April 29 – May 5
Topic: Learners who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Text Readings: Chapter 10
Final exam due on May 5.

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George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Professional Performance Criteria
Dispositions for A Career Educator

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The Virginia Department of Education promotes maintaining standards of professional competence and requires applicants for licensure to possess good moral character. Students must meet CEHD grading standards and course requirements as well as *demonstrate professional performance* in the areas required of professional educators: communication, collaboration and professionalism. Therefore, the College of Education and Human Development expects its students to develop and exhibit the following:

Commitment to the Profession
> Promoting exemplary practice
> Excellence in teaching and learning
> Advancing the profession
> Engagement in partnerships

Commitment to Honoring Professional Ethical Standards
> Fairness
> Honesty
> Integrity
> Trustworthiness
> Confidentiality
> Respect for Colleagues and students

Commitment to Key Elements of Professional Knowledge
> Belief that all individuals have the potential for growth and learning
> Persistence in helping individuals succeed
> High standards
> Safe and supportive learning environments
> Systematic planning
> Intrinsic motivation
> Reciprocal, active learning
> Continuous, integrated assessment
> Critical thinking
> Thoughtful, responsive listening
> Active, supportive interactions
> Technology-supported learning
> Research-based practices
> Respect for diverse talents, abilities and perspectives
> Authentic and relevant learning

Commitment to Being a Member of A Learning Community
> Professional dialogue
> Self-improvement
> Collective improvement
> Reflective practice
> Responsibility
> Flexibility
> Collaboration
> Continuous, lifelong learning

Commitment to Democratic Values and Social Justice
> Understanding systemic issues the prevent full participation
> Awareness of practices that promote equity and access
> Respects the opinion and dignity of others
> Appreciates and integrates multiple perspectives

I understand my responsibility to develop and maintain professional behaviors and dispositions that are associated with career professionals in education.

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Signature   Date

References: Virginia DOE, INTASC, NEA Code of Ethics, Graduate School of Education