

George Mason University

Graduate School of Education

EDUC 301 Educationally Diverse Populations: Handicapped, Gifted, Multicultural

3 Credit Hours

Spring 2011

Thursday 7:20 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

West 1004

Instructor:	Dr. Jane Simpson Dreyfuss
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Office Hours:	By Appointment

Course Description: This course introduces the psychological, sociological, educational, and physical aspects of diverse populations in today's schools for elementary and secondary education. An emphasis will be on litigation and legislation pertaining to the education of diverse populations. School-based field experience required during the course. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations are asked to notify the instructor immediately so that arrangements can be made.

Nature of Course Delivery: Students in this course will participate in individual and group activities structured around readings, discussions, and presentations.

Learning Outcomes: At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. identify important historical, philosophical, and sociological concepts underlying the role, development, and organization of public educational practice as it relates to exceptional children and multicultural education;
 2. discuss laws related to exceptional children and diversity in schools;
 3. discuss the broader educational and social context which affects the work of the public school teacher working with educationally diverse students.
 4. identify policies, programs, and pedagogy that have proven effective in ensuring the academic achievement of students in diverse elementary/secondary classrooms and schools.
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Readings and Materials:

Blackbourn, J. M., Patton, J. R., & Trainor, A. (2003). *Exceptional Individuals in Focus* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Dufour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., Gayle, K., (2010). *Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Perry, T., Steele, C., Hilliard, A. (2003). *Young, Gifted and Black*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Research Articles

Electronic Requirements

Students must have access to email and the internet, either at home, work or GMU campus. GMU provides students with free email accounts which must be accessed for information sent from the university or the Graduate School of Education. Go to [Http://mason.gmu.edu/](http://mason.gmu.edu/) for information on accessing email.

George Mason University 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 their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at www.gmu.edu. Code in the University catalog can be found online at <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html>.

George Mason University Policy on Disabilities:

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all State and local Governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has a disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474). The Disability Resource Center website is at <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>

Students are asked to turn off all cell phones before the start of class.

Course Outline/ Schedule

(Note: Reading reflections and assignments are due on the day they are cited.)

- Jan 27 Introductions; Review Syllabus; Discuss experiences with educational diversity, and how Virginia schools are held accountable for educating diverse students.

- Feb 3 What is exceptionality? Programs and services available to special needs individuals. Blackburn (Chaps.1-2).

- Feb 10 Learning and Behavioral Disorders: *Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*. Blackburn (Chaps. 3-4).

- Feb 17 Learning and Behavioral Disorders: *Emotional Behavior Disorders; Intellectual Disabilities (Mental Retardation); Autism*. Blackburn (Chaps. 5-7).

- Feb 24 Physical, Sensory, and Communicative Impairments: *Physical & Health Impairments; Blindness; Deafness, Speech Disorders*. (Chaps 8-11).

- March 3 Other Exceptional Areas/ Exceptional Perspectives: *Giftedness; Children & Youth Placed at Risk; Life- Span Service; Parent and Family Involvement* Blackburn (Chap. 12-15). **Final Deadline Reflection #1.**

- March 10 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, pp. 1-66.

- March 17 SPRING BREAK

- March 24 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, pp. 67 - 120

- March 31 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, 121-162

- April 7 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, 163-228 **Final Deadline Reflection #2.**

- April 14 *Young, Gifted, and Black: Theresa Perry, Up from the Parched Earth; Part 1: Freedom for Literacy and Literacy for Freedom*

- April 21 *Young, Gifted, and Black: Theresa Perry, Part 2: Competing Theories of Group Achievement; Part 3: Achieving in Post-Civil Rights America*
Field Experience Journal Due

- April 28 *Young, Gifted and Black: Claude Steele, Stereotype Threat & African-American Student Achievement;*

- May 5 *Young, Gifted and Black: Asa G. Hilliard III; No Mystery: Closing the Achievement Gap between Africans and Excellence;* Course Evaluations. **Final Deadline Reflection #3.**

- May 12 **Final Exam Essay Due**

Course Requirements:

1. Class Participation/ In-Class Assignments and Exit Tickets (40pts.): Active participation in whole-group and small-group interactions is a crucial element of this class. Your class participation grade will reflect the degree to which you participated in your group. Such participation can only occur when you are present and engaged. In this regard, in-class assignments and exit tickets will be used to engage your thinking on the day's topic. (3 pts X 13 class periods=39 +1=40)
2. Three Text Reflections (60 pts): Submit three reflections on assigned readings. Your reflections should refer specifically to the assigned reading, offer analysis, and make personal connections/applications. Please go beyond summarizing in order to evaluate the theory, research, and/or implications of the reading. Submit one reflection for each of the assigned texts. You may choose readings for any of the class periods assigned to the text. Submit the reflection on the date of the assigned reading. For more detailed information, see the *Rubric for Text Reflections* posted on the EDUC 301 Blackboard site. (3 reflections X 20 points each = 60 points).
3. Class Presentation (100 pts): Complete **one** of the following 20 minute class presentations. Your topic should match one of the topics in the chapters being discussed the evening of your presentation. Prior approval required. See sign-up sheet. Topic suggestions and assignment rubrics posted on EDUC 301 Blackboard site.
 - A. Chapter Highlights: Highlight key points from a section in one of our texts. Your presentation should include a brief summary of the chapter(s), engage participants in a discussion of relevant topics and include an informative handout.
 - B. Great Resource: Share a really great book, selection of music, movie, or other resource for teaching about/with educationally diverse populations. Your resource should relate to the assigned chapters. Your presentation and handout should include complete bibliographic information, summary of resource, grade level, possible classroom application and/or curriculum connections.
 - C. Litigation Presentation: Present information on a law and court case that has had an impact on educating exceptional children and/or children from diverse backgrounds. Research the court case, present background information, judicial opinions, and the case's influence on education. Connect to assigned reading. Use a PowerPoint or informative handout.

4. Field Experience Journal (10 pages) (100pts.): Ten hours of field observation are required for this course. Document your activities and observations during your field experience. Write ten one page REFLECTIVE journal entries. Your reflections should connect what you observe with appropriate class readings and /or discussions. Include questions you have about what you observe, as well as comments regarding what you learn. Assignment description, reflection topics and rubric are posted on EDUC 301 Blackboard site.

5. Final Essay (100 points): Choose a topic that interests you regarding educationally diverse populations. Read at least three professional journal articles on that topic. Write a three to five page essay synthesizing what you learned. Include comments on whether you believe the articles will influence your educational philosophy or practice. Rubric posted on EDUC 301 Blackboard site.

Grading Scale: A=100-94; A- = 93-90; B+=89-87; B=86-83; B-=82-80; C+=79-77; C=76-73; C-72-70; D=69-65

A	400 - 376	C+	319 – 308
A-	375 – 360	C	307 – 292
B+	359 – 348	C-	291 – 280
B	347 – 332	D	279 – 260
B-	331 – 320		

Evaluation: Grades will be based on the completion of course requirements and on the scope, quality, and creativity of the assignments. All assignments will be graded. All assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Each out-of-class assignment will be graded using a rubric. Assignment descriptions and rubrics are posted on EDUC 301 Blackboard site: <http://blackboard.gmu.edu>