

George Mason University

EDUC 301 Educationally Diverse Populations: Handicapped, Gifted, Multicultural
3 Credit Hours Spring 2011 Robinson A 125
Wednesday 7:20 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Instructor:	Beverly J. Worek
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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.

Readings and Materials:

1. Blackbourn, J. M., Patton, J. R., & Trainor, A. (2003). *Exceptional Individuals in Focus* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall.
2. Dufour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., Gayle, K., (2010). *Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap: Whatever It Takes*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
3. Perry, T., Steele, C., Hilliard, A. (2003). *Young, Gifted and Black*. Boston: Beacon Press.
4. Research Articles

College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Expectations

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 or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

Class Expectations

Class begins promptly at 7:20 p.m. Consistent, on-time attendance is expected. Weekly assignments will be collected at the beginning of each class and will not be accepted any other time. Students will not receive credit for bringing weekly assignments unless they stay for class. A reflection of the class experience will be collected at the end of class. If absent, it is the student's responsibility to find out what was missed.

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/>

Please turn off all electronic devices before class starts, including cell phones & computers.

Course Outline/ Schedule

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

- Jan 26 Introductions; Review Syllabus; Discuss experiences with educational diversity, and how Virginia schools are held accountable for educating diverse students.
- Feb 2 What is exceptionality? Programs and services available to special needs individuals. Blackburn (Chaps.1-2).
- Feb 9 Learning and Behavioral Disorders: *Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*. Blackburn (Chaps. 3-4).
- Feb 16 Learning and Behavioral Disorders: *Emotional Behavior Disorders; Intellectual Disabilities (Mental Retardation); Autism*. Blackburn (Chaps. 5-7).
- Feb 23 Physical, Sensory, and Communicative Impairments: *Physical & Health Impairments; Blindness; Deafness, Speech Disorders*. (Chaps 8-11).
- March 2 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 9 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, pp. 1-66.
- March 16 SPRING BREAK
- March 23 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, pp. 67 - 120
- March 30 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, 121-162
- April 6 *Raising the Bar & Closing the Gap*, 163-228 **Final Deadline Reflection #2.**
- April 13 *Young, Gifted, and Black: Theresa Perry, Up from the Parched Earth; Part 1: Freedom for Literacy and Literacy for Freedom*
- April 20 *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 27 *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.*

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>