

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Program: Special Education**

**EDSE 440/540 Summer 2012 - Section CS1: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the General Education Curriculum.**

Instructor:	Dr. Michael Repie	Meeting Dates:	07/02/12 – 08/03/12
Phone:	(703) 531-6115 (day)	Class time:	MWF 7:00–10:05 pm
Email:	<a href="mailto:mrepie@gmu.edu">mrepie@gmu.edu</a>	Class location:	Kellar Annex 102

**Course Description**

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. 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 mild 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. CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include some of the ED and LD disability-specific standards (Standard 1: Foundations; Standard 2: Development and characteristics of learners; Standard 3: Individual learning differences) and some of the CEC Core Standards: 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](http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html)

**Alignment of Outcomes and Requirements with Key CEC/NCATE Standards (Table 1)**

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>• 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>• 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. Special educators understand that beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures affect relationships among and between students, families, and school. Special educators 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 various 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 and discuss a range of learning disabilities and emotional disturbances for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Study</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>• Class activities</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</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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class activities</li> <li>• Case study report</li> <li>• Final exam</li> </ul>

develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress.	<p>strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe what an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.</li> </ul>	
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## Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

EDSE 540 is part of the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Emotional Disturbance and Learning Disabilities. The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special educational professional organization in the United States. As such, the curriculum for the course includes competencies for teaching students with emotional disturbances and learning disabilities in kindergarten through grade 12.

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. You may wish to contact Jancy Templeton, GMU Special Education Advisor, at [jtemple1@gmu.edu](mailto:jtemple1@gmu.edu) or (703) 993-2387. Please be prepared with your G number when you contact her.

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

### Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University 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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

## 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 [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

## Evidence Based Practices

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to characteristics of students with mild disabilities, etiology of mild disabilities, and inclusionary practices. These EBPs are indicated with an asterisk (\*) in the syllabus' schedule. 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.

## Nature of Course Delivery

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture, discussion, cooperative group work, and participation.
2. DVDs and other relevant media presentations.
3. Study and independent library research.
4. *Blackboard e-Education Learning System* applications.
5. Application activities, including in class evaluation of intervention research and materials.
6. Class presentations of case study papers.
7. Written case study and observation reports using the American Psychological Association format.

## Required Text

Henley, M., Ramsey, R., & Algozzine, R. (2009). *Characteristics of and Strategies for Teaching Students with Mild Disabilities* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

## Highly Recommended

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. (2009). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

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### NOTE:

This syllabus may change according to class needs.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with instructor or special needs arrangements, **please call and/or make an appointment with instructor as soon as possible.**

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## Evaluation

1. Class attendance and participation (30 points) (**Excessive absences will result in no class participation points and potential withdrawal from the class.**)
2. Field observation report (75 points)
3. Case study (100 points)
4. Case study presentation (30 points)

\*\*Points will be deducted for work submitted late (5 points for each day late).

**It is recommended that students retain electronic copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE ED/LD program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards.**

## Grading criteria

### Graduate Grading

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

### Undergraduate Grading

95 – 100%	= A
90 – 94%	= A-
87 – 89%	= B+
84 – 86%	= B
80 – 83%	= B-
77 – 79%	= C+
74 – 76%	= C
70 – 73%	= C-
60 – 69%	= D
<60%	= F

## REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

### **Field Observations and Report:**

Observations of students with mild disabilities in school settings will be completed.

Observational reports containing information including the following: a) student-teacher and student-student interactions in classrooms or other organized settings; b) identification of teaching methods and strategies that appear to be beneficial to students with learning disabilities and/or emotional disabilities as well as those you consider inappropriate; and c) how the observation and interactions reflect views articulated by readings from class. The observations should focus on the class as a whole with the examples of specific interactions (e.g., illustrate your assertion of student-teacher interactions through observed examples). At least three class-period observations should occur to assure adequate information on interactions and teaching methods.

### **\*\*Case Study:**

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 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. \*\*Signature assignment.

The signature assignment required for this course must be submitted electronically to Mason's NCATE management system, TaskStream: (<https://www.taskstream.com>). Case Study (Dual submission under CEC #2 Development & Characteristics of Learners AND CEC #3 Individual Learning Differences).

\*\*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 TOPICS

Date	Reading Due	Concepts	Assignments Due
July 2		Introduction; Syllabus	
July 6	Chapter 1	Context of special education	
July 9		Screening, assessment, and classification; educational and service delivery models; Field Observation rubric	
July 11	Chapter 2, 5	*Overview of students with mild disabilities; Students with Learning Disabilities (LD)	Tentative schedule for minimum of 5 observations and 1 teacher interview
July 13	Chapter 4	*Students with Emotional Disturbance (ED)	
July 16	Chapter 3	*Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities (ID)	
July 18		Biological and family factors influencing LD, ED, and ID	
July 20		School and cultural factors influencing LD, ED, and ID	
July 23		The legal, judicial, and educational systems serving individuals with emotional/behavioral disorders; Facets of disordered behavior	
July 25	Chapter 7, 8	*Learning and teaching; Instructing students with mild disabilities; Cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and attention problems; Review	
July 27	Chapter 9, 10	*Classroom management; Teaching social skills; Student-student interactions	Field Observations and Case Study Report and Case study presentations
July 30	Chapter 11	Building family partnerships	Case study presentations
August 1			Case study presentations
August 3			Exam Date