



**College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Spring 2013

EDSE 540 5S1: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities who Access the
General Curriculum

CRN: 10690, 3 - Credit(s)

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| Instructor: Dr. Kristy Park | Meeting Dates: 01/22/13 - 05/15/13 |
| Phone: 703.993.5251 | Meeting Day(s): Tuesdays |
| E-Mail: kparke@gmu.edu | Meeting Times: 4:30PM-7:10PM |
| Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:00 and by appointment | Meeting Location: Off-campus Building, KA 102 |

***Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.*

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.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-requisite(s): None

Advising Contact Information

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703)993-3145 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Nature of Course Delivery

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion

2. Small group activities and assignments
3. Video and other media supports
4. Research and presentation activities

Field Experience Requirement

A Field Experience is a part of this course. "Field Experiences" entail Mason students conducting activities that may involve students, parents, and/or teachers, etc. in a school setting. "Finding" an individual needed to complete a Field Experience Project/Case Study for a course may be a challenge. Mason's Field Placement Specialist, Lauren Clark lclarkg@gmu.edu can assist in placing Mason students at school sites. Mason is required to track when and where Mason students complete any field experiences. Consequently, EACH PERSON ENROLLED in this course must access this link <http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf> at the beginning of the semester (if not before) and complete the information requested REGARDLESS if one needs assistance in 'finding' an individual for the project/case study or not.

Evidence-Based Practices

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

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Describe the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices of today.
- Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, students with learning disabilities students with mild intellectual disabilities.
- Define learning disability, emotional disturbance, and mild intellectual disabilities.
- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between normal and atypical behaviors.
- Describe characteristics of K-12 students with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
- Compare conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
- Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.

- Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self- understanding and confidence as learners.
- Describe and discuss a range of learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school.
- Describe how children develop language.
- Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.
- Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.
- Describe what an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.

Required Textbooks

Henley, M., Ramsey, R., & Algozzine, R. (2009). *Characteristics of and Strategies for Teaching Students with Mild Disabilities* (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education Inc.

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Additional Readings

Additional readings will include peer-reviewed articles, which will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC Standards are listed on the following website:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/>. The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners, Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences, Standard 6: Language, and Standard 8: Assessment, Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice, and Standard 10: Collaboration.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

- c. 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.
- d. 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/>].
- e. 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/>].
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. 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/>].

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education & 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/>].

Course Policies & Expectations

Attendance.

Class attendance and participation are an important part of this class because of the technical nature of the information learned through the course. Attendance points are earned for arriving to class on time, participating in class activities, and remaining for the duration of the class period. Attendance will be maintained through the artifacts students produce during class through group and individual work. Attendance points cannot be made up for absences. **Two or more unexcused absences will result in no credit for his course.**

Late Work.

All assignments should be submitted on or before the assigned due date and time of the class. Late assignments will be accepted in the following manner:

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| up to 1 week late: | 5% point deduction |
| 1-2 weeks late: | 10% point deduction |
| 2 weeks late up to last class before exam: | 25% point deduction |

TaskStream Submission

For student evaluation, program evaluation, and accreditation purposes, all students are required to submit an NCATE assignment from selected Special Education courses to TaskStream. The NCATE 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 NCATE 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/>. Students who do not submit the required NCATE assignment to TaskStream will receive a grade of Incomplete (IN) in the course. The Incomplete (IN) will change to a grade of (F) if the required signature assignment has not been posted to TaskStream by the incomplete work due date listed in the current semester's Schedule of Classes.

Grading Scale

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

Course Requirements Evaluation

| Assignment | Points |
|--|---------------|
| Case Study Observation and Report | 30 points |
| Research article summaries (3 summaries, 10 points each) | 30 points |
| Final Exam | 25 points |
| Attendance and Participation | 15 points |
| Total | 100 points |

Assignments

NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.

Case study Observation and Report

30 points

A comprehensive case study on a student with mild to moderate expectational learning needs (i.e., emotional disability, learning disability, intellectual disability, or high functioning autism) will be completed. Rubrics and guidelines will be provided in class.

The case study will include the following components:

Part 1:

- Student's demographic data
- Description of school and student's community
- Educational history (schools attended, reason for referral, prereferral interventions, results of multidisciplinary evaluation, special education classification, description and location of educational service provision, related services)
- Educational goals and objectives, classroom accommodations

Part 2:

- Observational information (at least two class periods of observations specifically related to student goals, objectives, and accommodations)

Part 3:

- Parent and student interviews (related to education goals, objectives, accommodations, and any other relevant issues.)
- Additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications

Part 4:

- Summary and synthesis (comparison of student's characteristics with those described in the textbook or other research, i.e., which characteristics were identified in your student? So What? What have you learned from this case study about teaching students with mild disabilities?)
- Appendices – to include student work samples, parent interview questions/answers.

Common Assignments.

Research article summaries

30 points

Each student will summarize three (3) journal articles that are relevant to the needs of the student chosen for the case study. Each summary is worth 10 points. The purpose of this assignment is twofold: first to identify research-based findings that are relevant to the needs of your case study student and second, to distill the major points of the article to a one-page summary. The abstract should be typed and include an introduction to the student's needs, followed by 3 summaries with an APA style citation at the top of the page. Each entry should consist of two parts labeled 1.-Summary and 2.-Critique. Finally,

a conclusion that ties together the 3 summaries' findings should be presented as an action plan for assisting the student to meet an identified need. A "so what" section is asked to state what you have learned about the student to enhance your teaching practice. See Appendix B for specific directions.

Final Exam

25 points

An exam that covers course content will be provided on the final night of the course. The exam will be based on case studies and other class related topics. More specifics will be provided before the date.

Other Assignments.

Class attendance and participation

15 points

Participation points are earned by the completion of weekly class activities and participation in class discussions.

| Date | Topics | Assignment Due |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1 1/22/13 | Syllabus and Course Expectations Introductions and background | |
| 2 1/29/13 | Context of Special Education Legislation Timeline activity | Read Chapter 1 |
| 3 2/5/13 | Overview of mild disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types • Characteristics • Possible causations | Chapter 2 Lloyd, Forness, & Kavale, 1998 |
| 4 2/12/13 | Students with Mild Intellectual Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Etiology • Screening, assessment, and classification • Educational and service delivery models • Dual language assessment | Read Chapter 3 |
| 5 2/19/13 | Students with Learning Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Etiology • Characteristics • approaches for teaching students with learning disabilities | Read Chapter 5 |
| 6 2/26/13 | Students with Emotional Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Etiology • Classroom management • Functional Behavior Assessments • Behavior Intervention Plans | Read Chapter 4 |
| 7 3/5/13 | Teaching and Learning Models <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Instruction for all students • Direct instruction/systematic and explicit* • Semantic Feature Analysis/Graphic Organizers* • Evidence-Based intervention learning strategies | Read Chapter 7 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metacognitive Strategies* • Peer-mediated Strategies* • Mnemonics* | |
| 8 3/12/13 | Spring Break | |
| 9 3/19/13 | The Inclusive Classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion* • Co-Teaching/Collaboration* | Read Chapter 6 Abstracts of Journal Articles Due |
| 10 3/26/13 | Social Skills Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Positive Environments* • Behavioral Modification* | Read Chapter 10 |
| 11 4/2/13 | Classroom Management/ Improving classroom behavior * <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-Based intervention learning strategies • Applied Behavior Analysis* (ABA – observation and data) • Direct instruction/systematic and explicit* • Behavioral Modification* • Rules, routines, and structure | Read Chapter 9 |
| 12 4/9/13 | Building Family Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration* • Self-Determination/Advocacy* | Read Chapter 11 Case Study Paper Due |
| 13 4/16/13 | Writing Effective IEPs* and Educational Reports, Response to Intervention | |
| 14 4/23/13 | Case study presentations | |
| 15 4/30/13 | Case study presentations | Case Study Presentations Course Evaluations |
| Final Exam | | |

Appendix A

Case Study Assignment Directions

The observation case study provides you with the opportunity to observe a student with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs, examine his or her educational history and goals, conduct parent interviews, and make comprehensive recommendations for the student. This case study should be written as a paper, including each of the nine sections as a heading and using APA format.

1. Demographic and Background Data: Describe your student's demographic and background data

- a. Select a student with exceptional learning needs that you have access to and would like to observe.
- b. In order to maintain confidential communication about your student with exceptional learning needs, create a pseudonym to use throughout this paper.
- c. Provide a thorough description of your student, including his or her etiology and diagnosis, any medical conditions that exist, psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and any other information required to paint a clear picture of your student.
- d. Describe skills and characteristics of your student that are similar to those of typical growth and development and those that are atypical.
- e. Access information on your student's specific exceptionalities in order to create a rich student description. This should include the educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities and the impact of sensory impairments, physical and health exceptional learning needs on individuals, families, and society.

2. School and Classroom Information: Describe your student's school, classroom placement, and student's community.

- a. Describe your student's educational placement in the greater context of the continuum of placement and services available for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- b. Describe the impact of the principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment on your student's classroom placement.
- c. Describe the school and the community in terms of demographics, incomes, geography, education levels, and jobs.

3. Educational History: Describe your student's educational history.

- a. Include schools attended, reason for initial referral, pre-referral interventions, results of multidisciplinary evaluation, special education classification, description and location of educational service provision, related services provided, and any other pertinent information.

4. Educational Goals, Objectives and Accommodations: Summarize your student's educational goals and objectives and classroom accommodations.

- a. Include a discussion of the impact of your student's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
- b. Include a discussion of the impact your student's disability may have on auditory and information processing skills.
- c. Relate levels of support to the needs of the individual.

5. Student Observation: Observe at least two class periods of instruction. Summarize the information from those observations.

- a. Describe the relationship between your observations and your student's goals, objectives, and accommodations.
- b. Describe the effects your student's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life.
- c. Describe the perceived impact of your student's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.

6. Parent Interview: Interview at least one of your student's parents or guardians.

- a. Begin your interview with questions about the family, in order to build up a collaborative relationship and gather information about the family system and the role of family in the student's development and education.
- b. Ask the parents about their child's education goals, objectives, and accommodations. Did they have a role in the development of these goals, etc? Do they feel they are appropriate for their child?
- c. Effective special educators communicate effectively with families of students with exceptional learning needs from diverse backgrounds. Please be sure that you consider the following as you speak with the parents:
 - a. Ways in which you can foster a respectful and beneficial relationship with the family.
 - b. Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.
 - c. The potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between your student's home and school lives.
 - d. Ways in which you can demonstrate your respect for variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures. Also consider the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school personnel.

7. Additional Recommendations: Describe any additional recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications that you would make for the student.

- a. Keep in mind that it is the special educator's ethical responsibility to advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs and demonstrate a high level of commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs. You must act ethically in advocating for appropriate services and demonstrate sensitivity for

the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of your student.

b. Consider the importance of the teacher serving as a model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.

c. Include any sources of unique services, networks, and organizations for individuals with exceptional learning needs. Use local community, and state and provincial resources to assist in programming recommendations for your student with exceptional learning needs.

8. Summary, Synthesis and Reflection:

a. Summary: Write a clear description of your student including all pertinent information obtained throughout the observations, interviews and background information review. Provide enough detail that a stranger could walk into the classroom and identify your student from your summary alone.

b. Synthesis: Compare your student’s characteristics with those described in the textbook or other research. Which characteristics were identified in your student? What are the social and educational implications of these characteristics?

c. Reflection

i. How do your personal cultural biases and differences affect your interactions with students and their families and therefore your teaching

ii. What have you learned from this case study about teaching students with disabilities?

9. Appendices:

a. Include student work samples, parent interview questions/answers and any other pertinent items. Annotate the work samples, giving purpose for inclusion and characteristics it illustrates.

Case Study Assignment Rubric

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|---|------------|
| Demographic and Background Data | / 2 |
| School and Classroom Information School, classroom placement, and student’s community | / 2 |
| Educational History | / 2 |
| Educational Goals, Objectives and Accommodations | / 2 |
| Student Observation | / 7 |
| Parent Interviews | / 7 |
| Additional Recommendations | / 3 |
| Summary, Synthesis and Reflection | / 3 |

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| | |
| APA format | / 2 |
| Total | /30 |

Appendix B

Article Abstracts Assignment Directions

You will complete four journal article/research study abstracts. Each abstract will focus on a research study that includes students with the disabilities discussed in this course. You know that you have found a research study when the article includes a “methods” section and a “results” section. This description will include specific journals for you to use in finding your articles.

The following description is adapted from How to Write an Abstract found at <http://research.berkeley.edu/ucday/abstract.html>.

An abstract is a short summary of completed research. If done well, it makes the reader want to learn more about the research.

These are the basic components of an abstract in any discipline:

- 1) Motivation/problem statement: What is the problem statement or research questions? Why do we care about the problem? What practical, scientific, theoretical or artistic gap is this research filling?
- 2) Methods/procedure/approach: What did the author actually do to get the results? (e.g. analyzed 3 novels, completed a series of 5 oil paintings, interviewed 17 students)
- 3) Results/findings/product: As a result of completing the above procedure, what did the author learn/invent/create?
- 4) Conclusion/implications: What are the larger implications of these findings, especially for the problem/gap identified in step 1? How would you improve this study?

You must use your own words to summarize but be sure to cite liberally! Your abstract should not exceed 1 to 1.5 pages. Please attach a copy of the article to your abstract.

You must use articles from the following journals. You may use articles published from 2001 to present.

Learning Disabilities

Learning Disabilities Research and Practice

Journal of Learning Disabilities

Exceptional Child

Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal
Learning Disability Quarterly

Intellectual Disabilities

Journal of Intellectual Disabilities
Journal of Special Education
American Journal on Intellectual and
Developmental Disabilities
Journal of Intellectual Disability Research

Emotional/behavioral Disorders Behavior Disorders

Journal of Emotional and Behavioral
Disorders
Preventing School Failure

Autism

Autism: International Journal of Research
and Practice
Journal of Autism and Developmental
Disorders

Article Abstract Scoring Rubric

| Journal Abstracts | Points Possible | Points Earned |
|--|-----------------|---------------|
| Writing Style/Quality Mechanics/APA | / 2 | |
| Motivation/Problem Statement | / 2 | |
| Methods | / 2 | |
| Results | / 2 | |
| Conclusions | / 2 | |
| Total | /10 | |

Schedule

