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

Fall 2013
EDSE 662 676: Consultation and Collaboration
CRN: 81298, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Margaret Weiss	**Meeting Dates:** 9/11/2013 - 11/13/2013
Phone: 703.993.5732	**Meeting Day(s):** Wednesdays
E-Mail: mweiss9@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** 4:30 pm-8:30 pm
Office Hours: By appointment	**Meeting Location:** Off-campus

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

Provides professionals in special education, regular education, and related fields with knowledge and communications skills necessary for collaborative consultation and technical assistance to other educators and service providers.

Prerequisite(s): Teaching licensure, or enrollment in graduate degree program in education

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. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

Evidence-Based Practices

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to communication, collaboration, and consultation. 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:
• Define collaboration, consultation, and teamwork and explain the essential characteristics of each;
• Identify variables that may facilitate or constrain participation in collaboration, consultation, or teamwork settings;
• Demonstrate communication skills of listening, avoiding communication roadblocks, dealing with resistance, being appropriately assertive, and resolving conflicts;
• Apply problem-solving techniques in collaborating with professional colleagues, parents, and related and ancillary personnel to provide for students' learning and behavioral needs;
• Develop self-assessment techniques for improving consultative and collaboration skills.
• Plan activities that implement effective consultation and collaboration techniques.
• Develop an Individualized Education Plan

Required Textbooks

Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2013). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals*.
       Boston: Pearson.

Bateman, B. D., & Linden, M. A. (2012). *Better IEPs: How to develop legally correct and
       educationally useful programs* (5th ed.). Verona, WI: Attainment.

Digital Library Option

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course is available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. The division and Pearson have partnered to bring you the Digital Library; a convenient, digital solution that can save you money on your course materials. The Digital Library offers you access to a complete digital library of **all Pearson textbooks** and MyEducationLabs used across the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research curriculum at a low 1-year or 3-year subscription price. Access codes are available in the school bookstore. Please visit http://gmu.bncollege.com and search the ISBN.

- 1 year subscription $200 ISBN-13: 9781269541411
- 3 years subscription $525 ISBN-13: 9781269541381
- Individual e-book(s) also available at the bookstore link above or at http://www.pearsonhighered.com/. Search by author, title, or ISBN.

Recommended Textbooks
None
Required Resources
Access to Blackboard

Additional Readings
Posted on Blackboard

Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Programs 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, Visual Impairments PK-12, and Adapted 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 that will be addressed in this class include Standard 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Characteristics of Learners, Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences, Standard 7: Instructional Planning, Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice and Standard 10: Collaboration.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURES FOR STUDENTS:

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/].

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].

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.
   Students are expected to (a) attend all classes during the course, (b) arrive on time, (c) stay for the duration of the class time, (d) show evidence of having read/studied material, and (e) complete all in-class assignments to earn points for class participation.

  Late Work.
   Assignments are due on the date indicated in the syllabus. If I change the due date for reasons related to student need in the course, the change will be discussed in class, posted on the Blackboard site, and confirmed in an email to all students.

I will not accept late work. If you are not in class on the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for submitting the assignment. You may submit an assignment by emailing the assignment to me with a time sent no later than the end of the class on the date due or by having someone bring the assignment to me in hard copy by the same time. Choose the person wisely--if I do not receive the assignment on the due date, it will not be accepted.

General Course Expectations

This is a graduate level course for professional educators. As such, please be advised of the following expectations for all participants.

Workload
Graduate-level courses require in-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements outside of class time. The general expectation is approximately three hours per week for each credit hour of a course. Students are expected to allot class study and preparation time weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments.

Written and Oral Language
APA Style is the standard format for any written work in the College of Education. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) You are required to use APA guidelines for all course assignments. Please use the following website for APA format guidelines: http://apastyle.apa.org.
We will use person-first language in our class discussions, written assignments, and ideally in our professional practice. We will also strive to replace the term "Mental Retardation" with "Intellectual Disabilities" in our oral and written communication in accordance with terminology choices in the disability community.

Academic Integrity
Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or general ideas. Generally, if you use four or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper APA citation. If you use facts, statistics, and/or ideas from any source, give the author credit. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. Evidence of plagiarism or any other form of cheating in the class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the Dean's Office.

Blackboard Site
We will use the Blackboard website for much of our course work. You will be responsible for all material posted on the website. Please check it regularly.

Communication with Dr. Weiss
The most efficient way to contact me is through email. I check email daily at least at 9am and 2pm Monday through Friday. If your email has reached me by either of those

times, I will respond immediately. Otherwise, I will respond within 24 hours during the week. Keep in mind that I teach from 4:30-9pm. On weekends, I check my Mason account on Sunday evenings around 9pm and will respond to all received then. Do not email me an hour before an assignment is due and expect a response. If you would prefer to meet with me either before or after class (or at another time during the day/after school), please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dr. Weiss's Ideas About This Course
       This is a professional course, directly related to the teaching required in schools. Therefore, my goal is to help students master the skills taught in the course, not to assign grades. As such, I am happy to review a draft of assignments, discuss ideas and progress, and generally provide feedback to students on all aspects of the course at any time before an assignment is due or before the end of the course. I provide grading rubrics for all course assignments and encourage students to follow these as they complete their work. If, at any time, you are confused about course material or assignments, or something is not going as you hoped in the course (e.g., our interactions, interactions with other students, difficulty of the work), please contact me FIRST so that we can problem solve together.

TaskStream Submission
Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, Individualized Education Program (Spec Ed General) OR Collaborative Team Improvement Project (Adapted/VI) to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete(IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

If you have never used TaskStream before, you MUST use the login and password information that has been created for you. This information is distributed to students through GMU email, so it is very important that you set up your GMU email. For more TaskStream information, go to http://cehd.gmu.edu/api/taskstream

Grading Scale

A+	99-100%
A	94-98%
A-	90-93%
B+	88-89%
B	83-87%
B-	80-82%
C	70-79%
F	69 or less

Student Evaluation

Evaluation	Points
Class attendance and participation	100
Interview assignment	50
PLC Assignment	150
IEP Assignment	150
Total possible points	**450**

Assignments

NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.

The required NCATE/TaskStream assignment for this course is an Individualized Education Plan. Specific directions are in Appendix A.

Common Assignments.

There is a Common Assignment requiring group work throughout the semester. Specific directions for the Professional Learning Community Assignment are in Appendix B.

Other Assignments.

There is an individual Interview Assignment for this course. Specific directions are in Appendix C.

Schedule

Class No.	Date	Topic	Reading Due	Assignment Due
1	9/11	Course Orientation Setting the stage	Chapter 1 F&C	
2	9/18	Communication skills	Chapters 2, 3 F&C	
3	9/25	Communication skills	Chapter 4 F&C	*Interview assignment due; PLC Groups formed*
4	10/2	Problem solving	Chapter 5, 9 F&C	
5	10/9	Teams (including families)	Chapter 6 F&C Chapter 2 B&L	*PLC Groups to meet Review case study*
6	10/16	IEPs	Chapter 3, 4 B&L	*IEP writing in class*
7	10/23	IEPs	Chapter 5 B&L	*IEP writing in class*
8	10/30	Coteaching	Chapter 7 F&C	*IEP Assignment due*
9	11/6	Coteaching/Other collaboration	Chapter 11 F&C Chapter 3 B&L	*PLC Groups to meet*
10	11/13	Summaries, PLC discussions	Chapter 6 B&L	*PLC Group discussion*

Appendix

Appendix A
IEP Assignment

The purpose of this assessment is to have candidates demonstrate knowledge of the individualized planning process required for the development of educational programs for students with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs. Candidates will demonstrate their ability to develop the critical components of an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) that are legally sufficient and educationally appropriate for the described case study student. Candidates also will also demonstrate an understanding of how these components come together to build a framework for the student's educational program by writing a narrative that includes:

1. justification for their decisions within the IEP,
2. explanation of the collaborative process required, and
3. description of how the assignment connects with CEC Standards 1, 2, 3, 7, and 10.

Throughout the assignment it is critical to incorporate collaborative aspects of developing an IEP with stakeholders, including the student (as appropriate), family members, general educators, related service providers, school administrators, and other relevant parties. In continuously considering the collaborative aspects of the IEP process, candidates will participate in in-class cooperative learning opportunities, such as role-play exercises, and activities designed to prepare for the IEP product and writing of the narratives.

Step One: Choose a Student

For this assignment, the instructor will either (a) assign a case study, (b) allow a candidate to use a student with whom he/she is already working, or (c) allow a candidate to use case study information developed in EDSE 540.

*If the instructor chooses to provide the option of focusing this assignment on a student with whom a candidate is working, the candidate must:

1. Verify with the student's school that the candidate has permission to access the necessary student information files,
2. Provide evidence that the student is a student with a mild/moderate disability,
3. Submit in writing to the instructor a request to use the identified student for the assignment and receive approval in writing from the instructor to do so,
4. Assign a pseudonym for the student, and
5. Register the experience with the GMU GSE field placement office.
   http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf

<p align="center">**Step Two: Prepare and Write Your Case**</p>

Using the information available to you about your student, create a narrative with the components identified below. Head each section of the document with the corresponding component. Within each indicated section or heading, include the component and a separate subheading for your rationale.

Component A: Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLOP) *CEC/IGC Standards 2 & 3*

1. Using all documentation available, identify information about the student that is relevant to the following areas:
    a. <u>Student Perspective:</u> The strengths and concerns relevant to enhancing the education of the student as expressed by the student, when appropriate.
    b. <u>Parent/Guardian/Family Member Perspective:</u> The strengths and concerns relevant to enhancing the education of the student as expressed by the parent(s)/guardian(s)/family member(s).
    c. <u>Evaluations:</u> The results of the most recent evaluations of the student (educational, speech/language, psychological, OT/PT, social, etc.).
    d. <u>Assessments:</u> The results of the student's performance on any general state or district-wide assessments, as appropriate.
    e. <u>Needs:</u> The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student.
    f. <u>Behavior:</u> In the case of a child whose behavior impedes the student's learning or learning by others, consider interventions, support, and strategies to address that behavior (e.g., Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports [PBIS]; Functional Behavioral Analysis [FBA]).
    g. <u>Limited English Proficiency:</u> In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the student as those needs relate to the student's IEP.
    h. <u>Blind or Visually Impaired:</u> In the case of a student who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP Team determines, after an evaluation of the student's reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the student's future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the student.
    i. <u>Communication (Including Deaf or Hard of Hearing):</u> Consider the communication needs of the student and, in the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direction instruction in the student's language and communication mode.
    j. <u>Assistive Technology:</u> Consider whether or not the student needs assistive technology devices and services.

2. Develop a statement of the student's present levels of performance. Include:

- Description of the student's strengths with evidence from evaluations, assessments, and student/family member's perspectives,
- Description of areas in need of improvement (needs/behavior) with evidence from evaluations, assessments, and student/family member's perspectives AND how performance differs from peers,
- Educational implications of the student's:
  o Mild to moderate exceptionalities,
  o Sensory impairments (when applicable),
  o Variations in cultural beliefs, traditions, and values.

Component B: Measurable Annual Goals *CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 7*

1. Create 3 annual goals for the student. The goals must be:

- Based on the present level of performance statements and the student's needs.
- Observable and measurable.
- Age and ability appropriate.
- Prioritized and based on the scope and sequence of the VA SOL.
- Focused on increasing skills and/or positive behaviors.
- Responsive to variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across cultures.

2. Rationale: Respond to the following questions:

   a. How are these goals prioritized and age appropriate?
   b. In what ways do these goals reflect the PLOPs?
   c. In what ways do these goals show increasing skills and/or positive behavior for the student?
   d. In what way are these goals responsive to any variations in beliefs, traditions, and values of the student or his/her family?

Component C: Short Term Objectives/Benchmarks CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 7

1. Write at least ***2 short-term objectives or benchmarks*** for each annual goal. The objectives/benchmarks relate to the goal and are derived by breaking the annual goal down into smaller, achievable tasks. The criteria must be appropriate for the student and for performance of the task.
2. Each objective/benchmark should include:
   - Task,
   - Condition, and
   - Criterion.
3. Rationale: Respond to the following questions:
   a. How are these short-term objectives based on sequential age and ability appropriate for individualized learning objectives?
   b. How do these objectives relate to the annual goals?
   c. How do these objectives include learner criteria that are appropriate to task performance? Justify your criteria.

    d.   Do the objectives include statements of generalization and maintenance?

Component D: Services, Least Restrictive Environment, Placement CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 7

1.   Identify and describe the student's placement on the continuum of services.
2.   List and describe all appropriate program, primary, and related services* that the student needs to appropriately participate in the students' least restrictive environment. Include a statement of:
   - What the service is (e.g., individual/small group instruction in 7th grade social studies; individual occupational therapy)
   - How often the services will occur (e.g., every day for 50 mins; once a month for 30 mins)
   - Duration of services, with start and end date (e.g., duration: 6 months; start date: 9/3/2013; end date: 2/3/2014)
   - Location of the service (e.g., XYZ school; Fairfax Hospital)
   - Setting of the service (e.g., self-contained classroom with special educator and assistant; occupational therapy room at local hospital)
   - Who will deliver the service (e.g., special educator; occupational therapist)
3.   Indicate if there are any activities in which the student is unable to participate, even with support.
4.   Rationale: Respond to the following questions:
   a.   Why did you choose the program and services you describe?
   b.   How do the primary, program, and related services consistently align with the areas of need based on the students PLOP?

*For the purposes of this assignment:
   - *Related services* include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, social work, and other services.
   - *Assistive Technology* may be one of the services considered for this assignment.

Component E: Participation in State Assessments CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 3

1. Describe the student's participation in state assessments. The assessment(s) noted and participation levels described must reflect:

   - The impact that exceptionalities (including auditory and information processing skills) can have on an individual's testing abilities.
   - Consideration of due process rights, assurances, and issues related to assessment.
   - Accommodations, as suitable, and described, if they are needed.

2. Rationale: Respond to the following questions,

   a. What did you consider in selecting the appropriate levels of student participation in state assessments?

b. How are the student's participation levels specifically related to the PLOP, including any issues related to auditory and information process skills (as appropriate)?

*A quality written rationale includes consideration of the above and discusses how the levels of student participation in the selected state and district-wide assessments relate to present levels of performance. You may use Virginia state assessments as your model.

Component F: Accommodations and Modifications CEC/IGC Standards 3 & 7

1. Describe the accommodations and/or modifications necessary to individualize instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning for the student that:

- are based on the present levels of performance and assessment data and (2) consider the student's exceptionalities
- allow the student to access the general education curriculum.
- assist in providing meaningful and challenging learning experiences for the student.
- provide access to educationally related settings, including non-academic and extra-curricular activities.

2. Rationale: Respond to the following questions:

a. How did the student's PLOP relate to the choice of accommodations?
b. How do the above provide access to nonacademic and extracurricular activities and are they appropriate to the needs of the student?
c. Explain how the selected accommodations and/or modifications are based on assessment data.
d. In what ways did you consider the student's exceptionality?
e.

Step Four: Narrative on IEP Collaboration

CEC/IGC Standard 10

Under a separate heading in the document, describe the collaborative nature of the IEP development process, as well as the roles of individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, and school and community personnel in planning of an individualized program. This includes a discussion of:

- The collaborative activities that should occur prior to development of the IEP.
- Methods of involving students, families, related service providers, and other professionals in the IEP development process.
- Methods for fostering respectful and beneficial relationships between students and their families and professionals throughout the IEP development process.
- Collaborative activities that should occur after the IEP is developed, including next steps for working with general education teachers, the student, and other stakeholders.

In addition, include a short description of how this assignment aligns with CEC standards 1, 2, 3, and 7. You may do this orally with your instructor or in writing.

Component	Criteria	Points

Present Levels of Performance
 	
CEC/IGC Standards 2 & 3
	• Candidate writes appropriate, relevant present levels of performance statement with:
	  o clear links to evaluations and assessments (such as interviews, observations, standardized tests),
	  o description of educational implications of the characteristics of various mild to moderate exceptionalities, sensory impairments (as applicable), and
	  o description of variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures (as applicable).
	• Candidate uses unbiased and objective language.
	• Candidate includes description of the similarities and differences between the student's development and typical human development.
		• _____/45

Measurable Annual Goals
 	
CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 7
	• Candidate demonstrates an understanding of the models and theories related to instructional planning by writing age and ability appropriate annual goals that:
	  o are measurable,
	  o reflect present levels of performance and
	  o show direction for student growth.
	• Candidate writes goals that focus on both decreasing and/or increasing learner behaviors.
	• Candidate demonstrates consideration of variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures.
		• _____/30

Short Term Objectives or Benchmarks
 	
CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 7
	• Candidate demonstrates an understanding of the models and theories related to instructional planning by writing individualized learning objectives/benchmarks that
	  o relate to an annual goal AND
	  o are sequential age and ability appropriate AND
	  o include the condition, measurable and observable learner behavior, and verifiable criteria.
	• Candidate demonstrates consideration of variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures (as appropriate).
		• _____/30

Services, Least Restrictive Environment, Placement
 	
CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 7
	• Candidate lists appropriate program and primary services and related services (as appropriate) that:
	  o demonstrate an understanding of the continuum of placement and services available for individuals with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs, and the concept of the least restrictive environment and
	  o consistently align with areas of need based on present levels of performance.
	• Candidate includes a description of the following:
	  o Location
	  o Frequency
	  o Setting
	  o Duration
	  o Start and end dates
		• _____/5

Participation in State	• Candidate selects appropriate levels of student participation in state assessments based on present levels of performance and student's exceptional condition(s), indicating consideration of	• _____/5

Component	Criteria	Points
Assessments CEC/IGC Standards 1 & 3	issues, assurance, and due process rights related to assessment. • Candidate lists and justifies all accommodations for state assessments suggested.	
Accommodations and Modifications CEC/IGC Standards 3 & 7	• Candidate describes the accommodations and/or modifications to individualize instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning for individuals with mild to moderate learning needs including appropriate technologies (as needed). • Candidate identifies and prioritizes appropriate accommodations and/or modifications based on present levels of performance, to provide access to nonacademic and extracurricular activities in educationally related settings.	• _____/20
Legal Compliance of IEP CEC/IGC Standard 1	• Candidate writes a complete IEP that complies with all relevant laws and policies, reflects an understanding of requirements such as FAPE and LRE (and the history of these points of view) and other human issues that have historically influenced and continue to influence the field of special education. • Candidate writes the IEP using neutral, objective, non-inflammatory language, with clarity, minimal use of acronyms, legibility, and accuracy (including spelling).	• _____/5
Narrative on IEP Collaboration CEC/IGC Standard 10	• Candidate writes a narrative which reflects an understanding of the collaborative nature of the IEP development process, as well as the roles of individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, and school and community personnel in planning of an individualized program. • Candidate discusses, orally or in writing, the connection between the content of this assignment and CEC Standards 1, 2, 3, 7 and 10. • Candidate writes using APA style, correct grammar, correct punctuation	• _____/10
TOTAL	•	• _____/150

Appendix B
Professional Learning Community Assignment

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) assignment allows students to form groups around issues related to collaboration that are relevant to their school experience and to explore those issues. This project will provide the opportunity for students to work in and reflect upon group dynamics and teamwork as they address areas of concern or need in their school or experience.

PLC Group Development
First, students will complete their interviews of professionals who have engaged in collaboration in education in some form. Each student will post their synthesis of the interview, including an identification of at least <u>two</u> issues about collaboration that the interviewees discussed, on a class wiki in Blackboard. Before the designated day in class, each student will review the syntheses and determine two issues that are areas of interest to research. On the designated class day, class members will form in-class groups around <u>ONE</u> specific issue **OR** class members can identify individuals from their school with whom they would form a group around a specific issue. (For those forming school-based groups, requirements for the assignment will remain the same. We can discuss recertification points for school-based colleagues.)

PLC Activities
The PLC group will complete the following over the course of the semester: (All activities must be documented in a PLC log/journal.)
1. Compile a group of at least 5 readings of scholarly articles on the topic (must be at least 2 peer-reviewed research studies, others can be non-research).
2. After individually reading each article, each PLC group member should generate at least 3 questions about each article.
3. PLC Groups will meet a minimum of 3 times during the semester to discuss the articles and the related questions of each group member. (at least one of these meetings can take place in class—there will be time for other meetings in class also).
4. The PLC group will keep a journal of questions, responses, discussion, etc. (essentially minutes of the PLC meeting) and submit this at the end of the semester with Item 5. This journal will be kept in Blackboard.
5. The PLC group will develop a 3-5 page position paper geared toward peers that defines the issue, provides the list of readings, and gives guidance addressing the issue, as determined in the PLC group discussions. The position paper can be focused on the specific group characteristics (e.g., teachers in 5th grade, special educators in a middle school, etc.) or can be broad.
6. Each PLC group member will evaluate the group collaborative process.
7. On the last night of class, the PLC group (or its representative) will provide a summary of the position paper to the class and answer any related questions.

PLC Group Rubric

Readings	___/25	• Includes 5 scholarly readings (e.g., in peer-reviewed journals) • At least 2 readings are studies directly related to issue • References are clear (APA format) for retrieval by others
PLC Log	___/50	• Includes individual questions of each group member

		• Includes notes of discussion of each question • Provides summary of conclusions of PLC group • Includes note on group dynamics of each meeting • At least 3 meetings held • Each meeting lasts at least 30 minutes
Position paper	___/45	• At least 3-5 pages in APA format, correct grammar, correct punctuation • Issue is clearly defined, including relevance to the group • References of all readings used in group; readings are directly relevant to issue; at least 2 studies included (all are from peer-reviewed journals) • Paper includes recommendations and ideas directly related to discussions and questions included in PLC group log • Paper includes recommendations and ideas directly related to scholarly readings and any relevant in-class readings • Paper clearly addresses audience of peers (other special educators) or others (as identified in the paper)
Group cohesion evaluation	___/20	• Note of group dynamics included in each PLC log entry • Final evaluation of group dynamics completed by each individual in PLC group and turned in with log and position paper
Q&A session	___/10	• Issue of concern identified • Summary of position paper explained (not every detail or reading of paper) • Questions encouraged; responded to directly
TOTAL	___/150	

Appendix C
Interview Assignment

This assignment is to be completed individually, though groups of students may work together to create interview questions.

Interview two (2) school professionals, such as a general education teacher, a special education teacher, related services professional (i.e. speech/language, occupational therapy, vision, etc.), or instructional assistant. The focus of the interview should be to find out each individual's definition of collaboration, his/her views about and experiences with collaboration, and questions he/she has about collaboration. Use no names of school personnel, schools, or towns. Attach your list of interview questions to the assignment.

Your summary of the interview should include the following sections and be written in APA style:
1. Introduction with *general description* of the focus of your interview, *overview* of questions (attach list of questions to the end), and description of personnel interviewed.
2. Summary of interview responses from two individuals. You may use a question and answer format, if you would prefer but you do not need to include every word from every response.
3. Synthesis of responses with integration of your ideas about collaboration (explicitly stated as such) and identification of specific issues about collaboration brought up in the interviews.
4. Interview questions attached.

You will submit the Interview Summary in its entirety to the Blackboard assignments section on the Blackboard site for the course. You will also post the synthesis of your interview to the designated Wiki on the site for review by classmates.

Introduction	___/15	Variety of professionals interviewed Interview questions relevant and complete Rationale for interviews developed
Summary	___/10	Responses from each professional included Summary is organized in coherent manner Summary is thorough enough to identify and provide evidence for major ideas (but not word for word from interviews)
Synthesis	___/25	Major ideas from interviews integrated with one's own ideas (specifically stated) Specific issues about collaboration identified and explained (directly related to interview responses, not just in personal experience)