



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

Fall 2013

EDSE 794 001: Project ASCEND Research Seminar

CRN: 81314, 1 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Scruggs	Meeting Dates: 8/26/2013 - 12/18/2013
Phone:	Meeting Day(s): Tuesdays
E-Mail: tscruggs@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 1:00 pm-2:00 pm
Office Hours:	Meeting Location: Fairfax, Finley 119

***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

Advanced study of selected topics in education for students preparing for doctoral studies or who have been admitted to the PhD program in education.

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

This seminar will focus primarily on the peer review and publication process, including manuscript preparation and submission. It will include lecture and discussion, class activities, and review of manuscripts submitted for publication consideration to *Exceptional Children*, presently among the nation's leading special education journals. The class will also include off-

campus visits to relevant professional and governmental organizations, such as the headquarters of the Council for Exceptional Children, and the Library of Congress.

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. Visits to professional or governmental organizations.
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Describe and discuss the process for the completion of scholarly manuscripts and submission to appropriate, peer-refereed journals.
2. List and describe specific relevant information for the operation of the journal *Exceptional Children*.
3. Using reviewer guidelines, critically read, evaluate, and submit a review for a manuscript submitted for publication consideration in a refereed special education journal.
4. Describe the importance of the peer-review process in establishing a scientific knowledge base for the support of professional knowledge and practice.

Required Textbooks

Readings, including journal articles and manuscripts, will be assigned in class. Students will be expected to read, and be familiar with, information about *Exceptional Children* from the *EC* website, <http://journals.cec.sped.org/ec/>

This includes readings on the following topics:

- Journal Home
- About this Journal
- Aims & Scope
- Editorial Board
- Policies
- Reviewer Guidelines

Recommended Textbooks

APA Manual:

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

Required Resources

Access to Course Blackboard Site

Access Blackboard at “my mason portal site” Your login and password are the same as your George Mason e-mail login. Once you enter, select EDSE 794 to access copies of class materials, links to relevant sites, and other relevant information. Additional sources as needed from the library.

Additional Readings

These are not required but may be helpful to consult when doing reviews.

Exceptional Children, 2005, Volume 71, Issue 2

Odom, et al. (2005). Research in special education: Scientific methods and evidence-based practices.

Horner, R.H., et al. (2005). The use of single subject research to identify evidence-based practice in special education.

Gersten, R., et al. (2005). Quality indicators for group experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education.

Brantlinger, E., et al. (2005). Qualitative studies in special education.

Thompson, B., et al. (2005). Evaluating the quality of evidence from correlational research for evidence-based practice.

Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

This course is part of the George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), Graduate School of Education, Special Education, CEHD PhD in Education Program. This program complies with university and program standards.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES 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.

Class Participation and Attendance Policy (20 points): Because of the importance of lecture and class discussion and other activities to your total learning experience, I wish to encourage you to both attend and participate in class regularly. Attendance, punctuality, preparation, and active contribution to small and large group efforts are essential. These elements of your behavior will reflect the professional attitude implied in the course goals and will account for 20% of your course grade. Students who must miss a class must notify the instructor (preferably in advance) and are responsible for completing all assignments and readings for the next class.

Late Work.

Students must contact the instructor prior to missing a due date and arrange a new date that is within a week from the original due date. Points may be deducted (one per day) missing due dates with no prior approved excuses.

Grading Scale

Based upon 100 points: Attendance and participation: 20 points; 2 manuscript reviews @ 30 points each; course reflections paper: 20 points.

- A = 95-100%
- A- = 94-90%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- F = <60%

Assignments

NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.

No assessment is required for this course.

Common Assignments.

NA

Other Assignments.

1. Two *Exceptional Children* manuscript reviews. Reviews will be 2-3 pages in length, single spaced, and will provide evaluative feedback according to Reviewer Guidelines (0-30 points each):
 - a. Overall Importance Of The Work
 - b. Adequacy of the Rationale for the Study or Paper
 - c. Scope and Adequacy of the Literature Review
 - d. Soundness of the Methods
(for research studies this should focus on adequacy of design, participant description, measures, data analysis, and interpretation)
 - e. Educational Implications
(are these addressed adequately)
 - f. Quality Of Writing
(include as appropriate comments on the overall clarity and organization of the paper)
2. Course reflections paper. Students will submit a 3-4 page paper providing their reflections of the development of their professional growth and understandings throughout the semester, and describing content knowledge and insights gained (0-20 points)..

Schedule

Class#	Date	Activities/assignments
1*	August 27	Publishing in scholarly journals, lecture, discussion
2	September 3	<i>Exceptional Children</i> , lecture, discussion
3	September 10	Peer review, lecture, discussion activities
4	September 17	Visit, Council for Exceptional Children headquarters, date to be determined Peer review, individual presentations (first reviews due from presenters)
5	September 24	Visit, Library of Congress, date to be determined.

6	October 1	Peer review, individual review presentations and discussions (first reviews due from presenters)
7	October 8	Peer review, individual review presentations and discussions (first reviews due from presenters)
8	October 15	No class, Columbus Day break, Monday classes meet
9	October 22	Peer review, individual review presentations and discussion (first reviews due from presenters)
10	October 29	Writing and submitting manuscripts to professional journals
11	November 5	Writing and submitting manuscripts to professional journals
12	November 12	Peer review, individual review presentations and discussion (second reviews due from presenters)
13	November 19	Peer review, individual review presentations and discussion (second reviews due from presenters)
14	November 26	Peer review, individual review presentations and discussion (second reviews due from presenters)
15	December 3	Summary of class and class activities
16	Finals Week 12/10	Final reflections paper due

*Because of some unique features of this 1-credit class (e.g., off-campus travel), some class meeting times may be rearranged (e.g., with fewer, longer sessions) to suit class and student needs.

Appendix Assignments and Scoring Rubrics

Rubric for Participation and Attendance (0-20 points)

Exemplary (18-20 points): The student attends all classes, is on time, is prepared and follows outlined procedures in case of absence; the student actively participates and supports the members of the learning group and the members of the class. Student presentations are thorough and professional.

Adequate (16-18 points): The student attends all classes, is on time, is prepared and follows outlined procedures in case of absence; the student makes active contributions to the learning group and class. Presentations may lack some polish.

Marginal (13-15 points): The student is on time, prepared for class, and participates in group and class discussions. The student attends all classes and if an absence occurs, the procedure outlined in this section of the syllabus is followed. Presentations are not clear or thorough.

Inadequate (12 or fewer points): The student is late for class two or more times, presentations are poorly made. Absences are not documented by following the procedures outlined in this section of the syllabus. The student is not prepared for class and does not actively participate in discussions. May fail to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. Excessive absences can result in additional penalties and potential withdrawal from class.

Rubric for Manuscript Reviews (0 – 30 points for each of 2 reviews)

Two *Exceptional Children* manuscript reviews. Reviews will be 2-3 pages in length, single spaced, and will provide evaluative feedback according to Reviewer Guidelines (0-30 points each):

- a. Overall Importance Of The Work
- b. Adequacy Of The Rationale For The Study Or Paper
- c. Scope And Adequacy Of The Literature Review
- d. Soundness Of The Methods
(for research studies this should focus on adequacy of design, participant description, measures, data analysis, and interpretation)
- e. Educational Implications
(are these addressed adequately)
- f. Quality Of Writing
(include as appropriate comments on the overall clarity and organization of the paper)

Scoring rubric

Exemplary (28-30 points): Thoughtful, informed evaluation, that effectively and succinctly addresses all of the review criteria. Review is constructive and addresses strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript in a professional way. Review is free from mechanical or technical errors.

Adequate (24-27 points): Review is thoughtful and informed, but may be missing adequate coverage of one or more review criteria. Some small technical errors may be present.

Marginal (21-23 points): Review is submitted on time, and addresses all or most review criteria, but overall lacks thoroughness and thoughtfulness, or professional writing. May have several technical errors.

Inadequate (20 or fewer points): Review is casually or haphazardly prepared, or may not reflect clear knowledge of the content of the manuscript. Review criteria are not acceptably addressed, and may contain numerous technical errors.

Scoring Rubric for Reflections Paper

Exemplary (19-20 points). Paper reflects high degree of reflective thought and examines self-development during the course. Provides thoughtful information that informs the program regarding future course offerings.

Adequate (17-19 points). Paper overall effectively addresses the assignment, but may lack a deep level of thoughtful reflection.

Marginal (14-17). Paper contains some features of interest or importance, but may not reflect careful or truly reflective thought. Paper may appear to have been hurriedly or casually completed.

Inadequate (13 or fewer points). Paper is submitted, but contains little or no truly reflective evaluation of the student and his/her relation to course content and activities.