



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

Spring 2014

EDSE 501 6S2: Introduction to Special Education

CRN: 21585, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Liber Riccio	Meeting Dates: 01/13/14 - 05/12/14
Phone: 202 744 9775	Meeting Day(s): Asynchronous
E-Mail: lriccio@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): Asynchronous
Office Hours:	Meeting Location: NET NET

***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

Survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. Includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, assessment, and support services for individuals with disabilities ranging from mild and moderate to severe. Includes the impact of disabilities on academic, social, and emotional performances.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-requisites: 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) 993-3670 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

Field Experience Requirement

A Field Experience MAY BE a part of this course. Field Experiences may include observations of a school setting or case studies of individual students. Below are procedures that students need to follow based on their specific situation:

REQUIRED PROCEDURE FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS COURSE: Complete the online field experiences form [<http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>] at the beginning of the semester (if not before) and complete the information requested **REGARDLESS** if you need assistance in 'finding' an individual for the project/case study or not. This information is required by the state.

OPTION 1: Request a placement online through the Clinical Practice Office

- Complete the online request form and indicate that you need a field placement. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO THIS WITHIN THE FIRST TWO CLASSES SO THAT THE FIELD PLACEMENT OFFICE HAS SUFFICIENT TIME TO FIND A PLACEMENT FOR YOU .**

OPTION 2: Arrange for your own placement **AND** complete the online field placement form indicating that you do not need assistance finding a placement.

a. I work in a school setting and would like to complete my course assignment in my school or with one of my own students.

→Although you are already a school employee, you should request permission from your principal **BEFORE** you begin your assignment.

b. I don't work in a school setting, but I have a friend or classmate who does and I would like to complete my course assignment in their school or with one of their own students.

→You need to ask the **SCHOOL EMPLOYEE** to request permission from the principal **BEFORE** you begin your assignment. (The guest GMU student should **NOT** contact the principal directly). The school employee needs to send an email that indicates principal consent to the course instructor so it can be forwarded to the CEHD field experience office at fieldexp@gmu.edu.

c. I know a student outside of a school setting that I would like to work with for the assignment (Note: It is not recommended that you work with your own child.)

→You need to obtain consent from the parent of the child and forward written consent to the CEHD field experience office at fieldexp@gmu.edu.

d. I am a consortium student that does not attend GMU

→You need to complete the GMU online field placement form regardless of whether or not you need assistance finding a placement.

You need to make sure that you follow the procedures for field placement at your university to identify a placement or report that you have a placement. Contact your faculty liaison for more information.

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “normal” and “atypical” behaviors.
- Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education.
- Describe various theoretical models and perspectives in the field of special education.
- Describe research in etiological factors associated with all disability areas.
- Describe social, cognitive, behavioral and academic characteristics associated with all disability areas.
- Describe historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education.
- Describe the role of families in the educational process.
- Describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including use of innovative technology.
- Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, and use of innovative technology.
- Examine ethical considerations for the treatment of all children.

Required Textbooks

Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen, P. C., (2012). *Exceptional Learners: An introduction to special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson

Digital Library Option

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course **may be** available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. Please note that not all textbooks are available through this option. Visit the links below before purchasing the digital library to ensure that your course(s) text(s) are available in this format. 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. To register your access code or purchase the Digital Library, visit:

<http://www.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

- 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.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

Recommended Textbooks

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Ed. (2009). Washington DC: American Psychological Association. (See course welcome section of the site of an online APA Style resource from APA).

Required Resources

On Blackboard

Additional Readings

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 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 that will be addressed in this class include Standard 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners, and Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences.

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.

N/A – Online, Open January 13 – 12 May 2014

Late Work.

All work for the course is due no later than 5 pm, Monday, May 12, 2014. No work will be accepted after that date.

Grading/Feedback

Grading – As you can imagine, grading and feedback are among the most powerful tools in which a professor and teacher can communicate with course members and students. They are interconnected tools that allow the professor to express what he thinks about a student's learning,

and a way to help a student make progress toward identified goals. In many ways it is a collaborative/constructivist way of learning.

In order to make use of grades and feedback, it is important that you submit your assignments in a timely manner. Please do not wait until the last minute to submit.

If you and other course members wait till the last minute to submit assignments it will impact on my ability to respond fully to your submission - I will only be able to give you a grade. I will not be able to give you feedback since the clock will be running toward the end date for the course. Please keep this in mind when you start the course and especially when you start your assignments.

TaskStream Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit these assessments, *Abuse/Neglect Certificate and Final Paper* 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

This course is set up in module form. Each module is focused on a certain topic in special education and contains a similar structure. Each module contains individual lessons and a module assignment. Each lesson includes a reading, lecture, video or media component, and a reading check. The course point breakdown is:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Points each</i>	<i>Total</i>
Reading checks	25	400
Module 1 Assignment	150	
Module 2 Assignment	150	
Module 3 Assignment	150	
Module 4 Assignment	150	
	Modules total	600
Child Abuse training	REQUIRED	
TOTAL POINTS FOR		1000

Grading Scale

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

Assignments

Performance-based Assessment (TaskStream submission required).

1. Child Abuse Training Module**

All students must complete the online child abuse recognition training module available http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cws5691/index.html. **This is a mandatory requirement and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment.**

The certificate of completion will need to be posted to your TaskStream account in order to receive your final grade in the course. It is recommended that you post this at the start of your course. Please consult with instructor as soon as possible if you have any questions about this assignment.

2. Module 4 Assignment**

The final Module Assignment (or Final Paper) is an opportunity to show growth in your knowledge about learners with disabilities. You will **select one disability area** and demonstrate your knowledge of (a) the characteristics of the disability, (b) learning needs of individuals with the disability, (c) lifespan issues related to the disability (including impact of a disability on the individual and the family), and (d) how the disability is similar and different to other types of disabilities (e.g., mild, severe, sensory). See Appendix for more information on the Module 4 Assignment.

**Must be uploaded to Taskstream (see above)

Performance-based Common Assignments (No TaskStream submission required).

3. Reading Checks

At the end of *each lesson*, there is a reading check assignment. In most lessons, these checks are 5-10 multiple choice questions. These reading checks assess your understanding and recall of the chapter in the textbook you were assigned. You may use any materials such as books or notes to help you complete these checks but you may take each one multiple times.

4. Module Assignments

Module assignments are a combination of independent and group work. *Modules 1 and 4* require students to write two to four page papers individually. The paper in Module 1 is a personal

philosophy statement – *and you submit this assignment via **the Journal tab** on Blackboard.* It also requires you to choose two activities from a list of school- and community-based options. You will include a summary of the activities in your paper. In Module 4, students must choose a topic related to special education, research the topic, and write about it.

Assignments for *Modules 2 and 3* are slightly different. At the beginning of the course, you will be randomly assigned to a disability group. Within your group, you will communicate using the Discussion Board so that each person completes his Module assignment worksheets with unique information. Once you have completed your worksheets, you will post them to your disability area Wiki. After completing the Module assignment, each person will choose a DIFFERENT disability area Wiki, read over the postings, and comment on the group information provided.

Each comment should be posted to the group comment Wiki and include how the information related to at least one aspect of the Module.

Other Assignments.

NA

Schedule

Below is a suggested schedule for your work

Timeframe	Topic:	Material:
February	Blackboard overview <i>Module 1: History of special education and disability, legislation, and issues and services</i> Lesson 1: History of special education and disability Lesson 2: Legislation Lesson 3: Issues and services	Child Abuse Training Certificate posted to TaskStream All reading checks and Module 1 assignment completed—GRADING POINT 1
February – March	<i>Module 2: Higher incidence disabilities</i> Lesson 1: Students with Intellectual Disabilities Lesson 2: Students with Learning Disabilities Lesson 3: Students with speech/language impairments Lesson 4: Students with emotional/behavioral disorders Lesson 5: Students with autism spectrum disorders	All reading checks complete. Module 2 worksheets posted for comment in disability Wiki. Comments for Module 2 complete—GRADING POINT 2

March – April	<p><i>Module 3: Lower incidence disabilities</i></p> <p>Lesson 1: Students with Other health impairments</p> <p>Lesson 2: Students with visual impairments, including blindness</p> <p>Lesson 3: Students with hearing impairments or who are deaf</p> <p>Lesson 4: Students with severe/multiple disabilities, including deaf/blindness or TBI</p> <p>Lesson 5: Students with orthopedic impairments</p>	All reading checks complete. Module 3 worksheets posted for comment in disability Wiki.
April – May	<p><i>Module 4: Issues and Collaborations</i></p> <p>Lesson 1: Students with special gifts and talents</p> <p>Lesson 2: Parents and families</p> <p>Lesson 3: The future of special education</p>	<p>Comments for Module 3 complete—GRADING POINT 3</p> <p>FINAL DUE DATE</p> <p>All Course Material should be completed</p> <p>Module 4 Assignment (Final Paper) Due</p> <p>Course evaluation completed—GRADING POINT 4</p>

Appendix

Module 4 Assignment

The final Module Assignment is an opportunity to show growth in your knowledge about learners with disabilities. You will **select one disability area** and demonstrate your knowledge of (a) the characteristics of the disability, (b) learning needs of individuals with the disability, (c) lifespan issues related to the disability (including impact of a disability on the individual and the family), and (d) how the disability is similar and different to other types of disabilities (e.g., mild, severe, sensory).

To show this growth you will combine:

1. what you have learned from coursework (e.g., lectures, videos, articles, and textbook readings),
2. independent learning activities you have completed (e.g., IRIS modules, field experiences), and
3. the exploratory activity you completed in this Module.

Paper Guidelines

Your paper should be 5 to 10 pages. The format for the paper is fairly flexible. You may choose to describe the characteristics and the impact of the selected disability and make connections to how you experienced or observed this in your field experience and exploratory activity. You may choose to describe meaningful experiences from your field experience and exploratory activity and explain how that connects with the content you have learned in the course. You can also come up with an alternative format of your choice. However, please be sure to refer to the

grading and Taskstream assignment rubrics to make sure that you have addressed all required topics.

Your goal is to clearly show how your own perceptions of disability have changed and evolved this semester AND demonstrate that you clearly understand the important content you have learned. Regardless of how you choose to approach this assignment, your paper should address the following areas:

A. Disability Characteristics

What are some characteristics of the disability, for example:

- _What is its prevalence? Is it a high- or low- incidence disability?
- _How is it diagnosed?
- _Are physical/medical issues associated with this disability?
- _Are there social or behavioral implications associated with this disability?

B. Learning Needs

How does the disability affect learning? For example:

- _What areas of learning might be impacted by this disability?
- _What teaching strategies might benefit learners with this disability?
- _What IEP considerations might be needed?
- _What accommodations might students with this disability need?
- _Where might a student with this disability receive services? (Think LRE.)
- _What skills will teachers need to work with students who have this disability?

C. Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Individual and Family)

How does having this disability impact an individual? For example:

- _What are the early childhood issues that need to be considered?
 - _What are community issues that need to be considered?
 - _What are post-secondary (after high school – job, college, independent living factors that need to be considered?
-
- _What impact does having this disability have on social relationships? What is the impact of the disability on family? For example:
 - _What daily living skills might be impacted by this disability?
 - _How does this disability impact family dynamics?
 - _What information do families need to advocate for their children who have disabilities?

D. Similarities and Differences to Other Disabilities

How is this disability similar and different to other disabilities (or other disability areas)? For example:

- _Is there a difference in the prevalence of the chosen disabilities?
- _What are differences in possible school placements for students with the selected disabilities?
- _What types of instructional strategies or accommodations/modifications may be different for students with the chosen disabilities?

Note: For this category, you should contrast your selected disability with **TWO** other disabilities

or disability areas. For example, if my paper were on students with ADHD (mild disability), I might contrast it to severe disabilities (or a specific disability such as Cerebral Palsy) AND sensory disabilities (or a specific disability such as blindness).