



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

Spring 2018  
EDSE 501- Introduction to Special Education  
3 – Credits  
Section 001 – CRN: 10219  
Section P01 – CRN: 21077

<b>Instructor:</b> Nadine Bolkhovitinov, PhD	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/22/18 – 05/16/18
<b>Phone:</b> (703) 203-9333	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Wednesday
<b>E-Mail:</b> nbolkhov@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> by arrangement	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Fairfax, KH 17
<b>Office Location:</b> by arrangement	<b>Other Phone:</b> N/A

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

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisite(s):** None

**Course Description**

Provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the lifespan. Includes historical factors, legislation, etiology, characteristics, needs, educational strategies, assessment, and support services for individuals with disabilities ranging from mild and moderate to severe levels of varying disabilities. Includes the impact of disabilities on academic, social, and emotional performances. Note: School-based field experience required. Offered by Graduate School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.

Registration Restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students with a class of Advanced to Candidacy, Graduate, Non Degree or Senior Plus.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate, Non-Degree or Undergraduate level students.

Students in a Non-Degree Undergraduate degree may not enroll.

Schedule Type: Lecture

### **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 teacher candidates/students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other teacher candidates/students should refer to their faculty advisor.

### **Advising Tip**

Did you know that students in "quick admit" and non-degree status are restricted in the number of classes they can take? Students planning to complete a program should apply as soon as possible. Apply at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/admissions/steps>.

### **Course Delivery Method**

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

### **Learner Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, teacher candidates/students will be able to:

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

### **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, as well as those established by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support consortium (InTASC). The standards addressed in this class include CEC Standard 1: Learner development and individual

learning differences (InTASC 1,2) & CEC Standard 3: Curricular content knowledge (InTASC 4,5).

### **Required Textbooks**

Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2015). *Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education* (13th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. ISBN-13: 9780133570724

### **Recommended Textbooks**

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

### **Required Resources**

Blackboard website with class materials

### **Additional Readings**

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard under the class number. They must be printed or brought to the class via laptop as well as read ahead of each class in order for students to be able to actively participate in class discussions.

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

#### **Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement**

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to Tk20 (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to Tk20.

For EDSE 501, the required PBA is Final Paper. Failure to submit the assignment to Tk20 will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Teacher candidates/students have until five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline to upload the required PBA in order to change the course grade. When the PBA is uploaded, the teacher candidate/student is required to notify the instructor so that the "IN" can be changed to a grade. If the required PBA is not uploaded five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline and, therefore, the grade not changed, it will become an F. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to Tk20 before the PBA due date.

## Assignments and/or Examinations

### Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required)

#### Final Paper.

#### Final Paper (Blackboard/TK20 Assignment)

The 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). To show this growth you will combine what you have learned from coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings) with independent learning activities (IRIS modules, field experiences, and exploratory activities). Your independent learning activities will include the following:

1. **The IRIS module *Perceptions of Disability*** located at <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/da/chalcycle.htm>

Start the module at “CHALLENGE.” Answer the questions under the headings of “Challenge,” “Assessment,” and “Wrap Up.”

2. **At least one field experience** designed to further your understanding on the impact of a disability on a student’s learning, his/her family, and his/her school experience. These experiences might include:
  - a. Observation of a student with a disability. If you are already teaching, take this opportunity to explore a disability with which you are less familiar (in other words, do not observe your own classroom).
  - b. Interview of a parent, administrator, or teacher of a student with a disability.
  - c. Completion of additional IRIS modules (<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources.html>)
  - d. Other instructor approved activity.

**Note:** Most students in this class make arrangements on their own for the field based activity (e.g., observing in a school where they are working, interviewing someone they already know who is a teacher or parent of a child with a disability, making arrangements with a peer in class, or completing additional IRIS modules). Contact your instructor if you have questions.

3. **At least one exploratory activity** designed to better understand the experience of having a disability. These activities might include watching a full length movie or several

episodes of a television show, reading a book (e.g. fictional/memoir), or reviewing how disability is represented in the media that help you explore of the impact of a disability on a person's life. Your exploratory activity sources might include:

- a. Movies
- b. Television
- c. Books
- d. Media (e.g., newspapers, Internet)

Please see Blackboard for the list generated on the first night of class. You may also choose to visit the following websites for ideas:

[http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource\\_TOOL\\_film/film.html](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_film/film.html)

[http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource\\_TOOL\\_irismedia/irismedia.html](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_irismedia/irismedia.html)

<http://www.nlcdd.org/resources-books-movies-disability.html>

<http://lits.columbiasc.edu/edenslibrary/disabilities.htm>

### **Paper Guidelines**

Your paper should be 5 to 10 pages, not including the appendix. 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 Blackboard/TK20 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 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).

### E. Appendices

In addition, you should provide the following artifacts within an appendix:

- 1) Your response to the **required IRIS module**- Perceptions of Disability
- 2) Evidence of your chosen **field experience**.
  - This might include notes from an interview, drawings/notes from a classroom observation, responses to a relevant IRIS module (other than Perceptions of Disability), etc.
- 3) Evidence of completion of at least one **exploratory activity** related to how disability is portrayed in the media:
  - Movie(s):** Evidence would include the name of the movie, the date the movie was watched, a brief summary of the plot (including type(s) of disabilities portrayed), and a personal reflection that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.
  - Television:** Evidence would include the name of the television show(s), all dates shows were watched, a brief summary of the plot (including type(s) of disabilities

portrayed), and a personal reflection of all shows that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.

Book: Evidence would include the name of the book, an indication of the type of book (fiction, biography, junior fiction), a brief summary of the plot (including type(s) of disabilities portrayed), and a personal reflection that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.

- Media: Evidence would include a log of the title of each article, the date it was located, a brief description of the content of the article (including type(s) of disability portrayed), and a personal reflection of all articles that makes connections to the course lectures and readings.

**Note:** Appendices do not need to be typed.

### **Grading Rubric** *(recommended)*

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Points</b> <i>(Recommended)</i>
<b>Disability Characteristics</b> Salient characteristics of the disability are clearly described. Requirements related to identification for special education are included.	<u>    </u> /10
<b>Learning Needs</b> Learning needs associated with the chosen disability are clearly described including relevant IEP considerations.	<u>    </u> /10
<b>Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Family)</b> A clear description of the impact of the disability across the lifespan is provided.	<u>    </u> /10
<b>Similarities and Differences to Other Disabilities</b> The paper compares and contrasts the chosen disability with <u>2</u> other disabilities (or disability categories: mild, severe, or sensory).	<u>    </u> /10
<b>Information Synthesis</b> Student demonstrates personal growth in knowledge about learners with disabilities. Student demonstrates completion of independent learning activities (IRIS modules, field experiences, and exploratory activities) by integrating what was learned through these experiences with learning from other coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings).	<u>    </u> /5
<b>APA Style</b> Writing is clear and easy to understand. There are few to no grammar errors/typos. References are correctly cited in APA format.	<u>    </u> /5
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>/50</b>

**College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required) None.**

### **Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required.)**

- **Child and Abuse Reporting Module** (also required for licensure; Blackboard submission) – 10 points
- **Dyslexia Awareness Module:** All students must complete the online Dyslexia Awareness Module available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/index.shtml>. This is a mandatory requirement and you will not pass the class without completing this assignment. After completing the module, you will print/save a copy of the certificate of completion for verification. The certificate of completion will need to be posted to Blackboard to receive your final grade in the course. More information about this assignment will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class – 10 points

### **Other Assignments**

Presentation worth 15 points

Attendance worth 15 points

### **Course Policies and Expectations**

#### **Attendance/Participation**

Students must attend class, participate in class discussions, and complete in-class activities, in order to receive points for class, 1 points per class for a total of 15 points.

Point summary for class:

Attendance: 15 points possible

Child Abuse Awareness Certificate: 10 points possible

Dyslexia Awareness Module: 10 points possible

disability Specific Paper: 50 points possible

Presentation: 15 points possible

TOTAL: 100 points possible

#### **Late Work**

Minus 10 points for every day submitted late for each of the major assignments (Child Abuse recognition certificate uploaded on TK20, Field Experience assignment, Disability Specific topic paper and presentation). No credit for in-class if absent from class. Classes may only be made up by prior agreement, and by completing all on-line assignments and summary paper for the class. Emergencies will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Grading Scale**

95-100% = A

90 - 94% = A-

87 - 89% = B+



84 - 86% = B  
80 - 83% = B-  
77 - 79% = C+  
74 - 76% = C  
70 - 73% = C-  
<70 = F

\*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own or with proper citations (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

### **Class Schedule**

\*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>	<b>Readings to do for that class</b>
1	1/24	Introductions Course Overview Assignment/Blackboard/TK20 Explanation Introduction to the Field		
2	1/31	History of Special Education Legislation. Understanding the IEP process	Select Disability Paper topic	Chapters 1 & 2
3	2/7	Eligibility Families, Communities, Multicultural and Bilingual Aspects of Special Education	Plan for Field Exploration Activities to Blackboard (5 points)	Chapters 3 & 4
4	2/14	Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities		Chapter 5
5	2/21	Learners with Learning Disabilities		Chapters 6
6	2/28	Learners with ADHD Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Child Abuse Awareness Certificate uploaded to TK20 (20 points)	Chapter 7 & 8
7	3/7	Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Disability Specific Paper Blackboard SafeAssign(50 points)	Chapter 9
8	3/21	Learners with Communication Disorders	Dyslexia Awareness module due (10 points)	Chapter 10
9	3/28	Learners who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing ONLINE CLASS	Presentation Disability Specific Papers (3-5 students) (15 points)	Chapter 11
10	4/4	Learners with Blindness or Low vision	Presentation Disability Specific Papers (3-5 students)	Chapters 12
11	4/11	Learners with Low-Incidence, Multiple, or Severe disabilities	Presentation Disability Specific Papers (3-5 students)	Chapters 13
12	4/18	Learners with Physical Disabilities and Other Health Impairments	Presentation Disability Specific Papers (3-5 students)	Chapter 14
13	4/25	Learners with Special Gifts and Talents		Chapter 15
14	5/2	Review Discussion		

		Summary of learning Course Evaluations		
15	5/9	FINAL QUESTIONS	Disability Specific Paper, with Field Experience Reflection and presentation notes as part of the appendix DUE on TK20 (50 points)	

### Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

### GMU Policies and Resources for Students

#### Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

**Blackboard/TK20 Assignment Evaluation Rubric**

Your paper will be evaluated based on the following rubric for accreditation purposes. Your scores here will be used for program improvement purposes and will not impact your grade in the course. However, if you “do not meet competency” in any area, you should continue to focus on this area in future coursework as this is an important competency in special education.

	<b>1 Does Not Meet Competency</b>	<b>2 Meets Competency</b>	<b>3 Exceeds Competency</b>
<b>Disability Characteristics</b>	Information on salient characteristics of the chosen disability is missing or inaccurate. Information on requirements related to identification for special education services is missing or inaccurate.	Indicates clear understanding of the salient characteristics (physical, medical, learning, and/or social/emotional as appropriate) of the chosen disability that are required for eligibility for special education services. Demonstrates understanding of legal aspects and regulatory requirements in special education (e.g., laws and regulation; evaluation issues, etc.).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, indicates an understanding of historical and/or contemporary issues related to the chosen disability.
<b>Learning Needs</b>	Information on learning needs (academic, social, and/or behavioral as appropriate) associated with the chosen disability is missing or inaccurate.	Indicates clear understanding of learning needs (academic, social, and/or behavioral as appropriate) associated with the chosen disability. Demonstrates understanding of IEP considerations for learners with the disability (e.g., least restrictive environment; academic,	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, indicates a clear understanding of teaching practices that are effective for students with

		social, and/or behavioral services; related services; transition needs, etc.).	the chosen disability.
<b>Lifespan Issues (including Impact on Family)</b>	Information on impact of the disability across the lifespan is missing or inaccurate.	Indicates clear understanding of the impact of the disability across the lifespan (e.g., IFSP, transition, post-secondary concerns, etc.).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, indicates understanding of impact on the individual’s family (e.g., family dynamics, due process, advocacy, etc.).
<b>Relationship to other Disabilities</b>	Chosen disability is not compared and contrasted with <u>2</u> other disabilities (or category of disabilities) or information presented is inaccurate.	Demonstrates understanding of range of disability categories by comparing and contrasting the chosen disability with <u>2</u> different disabilities (or disability categories: mild, severe, or sensory).	Includes all criteria for “Meets Competency.” In addition, addresses similarities and differences in teaching practices across populations.

Child abuse recognition and reporting – required: 20 points

Per the VA Child Abuse Response Initiative, each education department at GMU is required to cover child abuse recognition and reporting procedures. To ensure that all students in the Special Education program receive this training, it has been decided that the training be included in the curriculum for EDSE 501 via completion of an on-line module by students and documented through an online receipt issued at the time of completion. ☐☐ Please note that this is a REQUIRED activity. Therefore, students in this class will be expected to submit this designated assignment to Blackboard. Please make a link in the Blackboard Assessments tab where students can upload their child abuse certificate. ☐☐ Students are expected to post their assignment to Blackboard electronically by the due date as noted on the course outline. The link for the training module is

**Disability Specific Paper Presentation Rubric: 15 points possible**

Name/Topic:

Criteria	Benchmarks				Points
	<b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>	<b>MINIMAL</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	<b>OUTSTANDING</b>	
<b>Organization</b> <b>Content</b> <b>Knowledge</b>	Listener cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information. Does not engage the audience.  Students do not have grasp of information; students cannot answer questions about subject.	Listener has difficulty following presentation because presenters jump around. Does not engage most of the audience.  Students are uncomfortable with information and are able to answer only rudimentary questions.	Students present information in engaging and logical sequence which audience can follow.  Students are at ease with content, but fail to elaborate.	Students present information in engaging, novel, and logical sequence which audience can follow.  Students demonstrate full knowledge with explanations and elaboration. Address the needs of culturally, linguistically and ability diverse young children and their families	5
<b>Visual, Media, Strategies</b> <b>Mechanics</b>	Student used no visuals/media/strategies.  Student presentation has four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors. Two or fewer sources in APA style.	Student occasionally used visuals/media/strategies that rarely support text and presentation.  Presentation has no more than three misspellings and/or grammatical errors. Three + sources in APA style.	Visuals/media/strategies related to text and presentation.  Presentation has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors. Four + sources in APA style.	Student used visuals/media/strategies to reinforce screen text and presentation.  Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.  Five + sources in APA style.	5
<b>Delivery</b>	Students' presentation is poorly organized, does not demonstrate a knowledge of the topic. No evidence of keeping presentation to time limit.	Student presentation lacks organization, there is little evidence of collection of information, limited demonstration of topic knowledge, presentation is either too long/short.	Students' presentation is organized, student demonstrates knowledge of topic, presentation is within time limit.	Student presentation is well organized, student demonstrates exceptional knowledge of topic and presentation is kept within time limit.	5