



College of Education and Human Development

Division of Special Education and disAbility Research

Fall 2019

EDSE 540 001: Characteristics of Students with Disabilities Who Access the General Curriculum.

CRN: 71056 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Kevin Wallace	Meeting Dates: 08/26/2019 – 12/18/2019
Phone: 703.955.1544	Meeting Day(s): Thursday
E-Mail: kwallac4@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 7:20 pm – 10 pm
Office Hours: By appointment	Meeting Location: Fairfax, KH 17
Office Location: Fairfax, KH 17	Other Phone: 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

Examines the characteristics of students with mild disabilities. Focuses on etiology, contributing factors, conditions that affect learning, the challenges of identifying students with disabilities, and the need for academic, social, and emotional accommodations and support. Note: School-based field experience required.

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 you may be able to take graduate Special Education courses now that you can later apply to your graduate degree program? For more information on taking special education coursework for Reserve Graduate Credit, talk with an advisor: <http://gse.gmu.edu/special-education/advising/>.

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 the field of learning disabilities from its origins to policies and practices of today.
2. Compare the history of education for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, students with learning disabilities students with mild intellectual disabilities.
3. Define learning disability, emotional disturbance, and mild intellectual disabilities.
4. Describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between normal and atypical behaviors.
5. Describe characteristics of K-12 students with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
6. Compare conceptual models of behavioral deficits with three conceptual models that explain learning disabilities and/or mild intellectual disabilities.
7. Discuss the various etiologies in relation to biological, family, cultural, and school perspectives.
8. Identify various procedures and practices that motivate reluctant learners to complete class work and develop skills that build self- understanding and confidence as learners.
9. Describe and discuss a range of learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mild intellectual disabilities for a parent and suggest possible interventions for home and school.
10. Describe how children develop language.
11. Describe informal assessment procedures for determining knowledge and skills of children with various learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral problems.
12. Based on informal assessment procedures, design appropriate clinical teaching strategies for children with various learning disabilities and/or behavior problems.
13. Describe what an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is and how it is developed.

Professional Standards

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 2: Learning environments (InTASC 3); CEC Standard 3: Curricular content knowledge (InTASC 4,5); CEC Standard 4: Assessment (InTASC 6); CEC Standard 5: Instructional planning and strategies (InTASC 7,8); CEC Standard 7: Collaboration (InTASC 10).

Evidence-Based Practices

This course will incorporate the evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to characteristics of students with mild disabilities, etiology of mild disabilities, inclusionary practices. 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 teacher candidates/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.

Required Textbooks

Raymond, E. B. (2017). *Learners with mild disabilities: A characteristics approach* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2010). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. New York: Guilford Press.

Recommended Textbooks

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

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 540, the required PBA is Observation Student Profile. 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)

The required assignment for this course is the development of an *Observational Student Profile* about a student with disabilities who accesses the general curriculum. See Appendix A for specific details.

College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required)

None

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required)

None

Assignment 1: Observational Student Profile (100pts) Field Experience Requirement

A field experience is a part of this course. A field experience includes a variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, and/or tutor. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings, such as schools (CAEP, 2016). Below are REQUIRED PROCEDURES FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS COURSE.

1. Complete the online EDSE Field Experience form. This online form will be sent to your GMU email from EDSEfld@gmu.edu on the first day of the semester. Click on the link and complete the form as soon as possible. ALL students should complete the form, regardless of whether you need assistance in locating a field experience placement or not. This information is required by the state. Please direct any questions about the form to Dr. Kristen O'Brien at EDSEfld@gmu.edu.

If you are arranging your own field experience because you are a full-time contracted school system employee and will complete the field experience at your worksite, you will be asked to specify the school at which you will be completing the field experience.

If you request a field experience placement to be arranged, you will receive information via your GMU email account about your assigned internship placement from the Clinical Practice Specialist in the College's Educator Preparation Office (EPO). Check your GMU email regularly for important information regarding your field experience. Follow all instructions for the necessary Human Resource (HR) paperwork required to access the assigned field experience placement.

2. View the EDSE Field Experience Introduction presentation. On the first week of classes and prior to representing George Mason in off-campus settings, your instructor will show a video presentation or provide a link to the presentation, which includes important information about the

registration process for EDSE field experiences and tips for a successful field experience. After the presentation, sign the document provided by your instructor to indicate that you have watched the presentation and are aware of the EDSE field experience professionalism expectations.

3. Document your field experience hours. Your instructor will provide you with access to field experience documentation forms to use. There are two different field experience documentation forms – one for those completing field experience at their worksite and one for those completing field experiences in other classroom settings (e.g., GMU arranged a placement for you). Use the form that is most appropriate for your field experience placement. Your instructor will provide more directions on how to use and submit the documentation form.

4. Complete the field experience end-of-semester survey. Towards the end of the semester, you will receive an email from EDSEfld@gmu.edu with a link to an online survey. This brief survey asks you to report about important features of your field experience placement.

5. Students must be able to perform the essential functions of the practicum site assigned with or without an accommodation. Contact Disability Services (ods@gmu.edu) for questions related to accommodations.

Assignment 2: Participation (130pts; 10pts/session)

Participation includes (but is not limited to) (a) participation in all class and group activities, (b) displaying evidence of having read material, and (c) giving project presentation updates throughout the semester. I plan each session with the expectation that all students will be present and will participate. If you are not in class, 10 points will be deducted from your participation grade but you will be eligible to complete the in-class assignments for classwork points. You must finish these assignments before the next class session. Please contact me if you will miss class.

Assignment 3: Characteristics Grid (20 pts)

Completion of the characteristics grid will provide learners with a specific understanding of identifying and supporting both the student and the student's support team.

Assignment 4: Explicit Instruction Lesson Plan (60 pts; 30 pts/session)

Learners will be provided two separate class rosters, with differing student needs and create an explicit instructional lesson plan. Lesson plans will address the six principles of effective instruction.

Assignment 5: Article Analysis (30pts)

Learners will select a peer-reviewed article regarding students with emotional disorders and analyze. Analysis will include characteristics of disorder and best ways to support social, emotional, and academic needs.

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

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 accept late work ONLY in cases approved by me after discussion with the student at least one week before the assignment is due OR in cases of emergency (e.g., you or a loved one/significant other is incapacitated in some way). If you are not in class on the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for submitting the assignment on or before the due date and time.

Other Requirements

Students are expected to bring required texts and a laptop to class. If student does not have a laptop, please contact Dr. Wallace.

Workload

Graduate-level courses require in-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements outside of class time. Students are expected to allot class study and preparation time in addition to time spent on 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>.

Grading Scale

<i>Grade</i>	<i>%</i>
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B	83-89
B-	80-82
C	70-79
F	<70

Evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points</i>
Observation Student Profile	100 pts
Participation	130 pts (10 pts/session;)
Characteristics Grid	
Article Analysis	30 pts
Explicit Instruction Lesson Plan	60 pts (30 pts/plan)
	Total 320 points

*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. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in at least two points in each student’s program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, and a university supervisor’s evaluation during internship. In special education licensure programs, the self-evaluation is an online survey distributed via email upon program entry, and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 783, EDSE 784, and EDSE 785. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is ‘occasionally evident’ or ‘rarely evident,’ the student takes steps to grow as an educator. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/epo/candidate-dispositions>.

Class Schedule

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

Date	Topic	Readings to be completed	Assignments due
8/29	Introduction; Foundations of Explicit Instruction	A&H 1	
9/5	Perspectives of Disabilities; Assessment and Identification	Raymond 1 , 2	Observation Student Profile student identified
9/12	Designing Lessons; Instruction and Placement	A&H 2 Raymond 3	Completed Field Experience Paperwork
9/19	Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Raymond 4	Characteristics Grid – row 3 Observation Student Profile observation set
10/3	Learners with Learning Disabilities	Raymond 5	Characteristics Grid – row 4 Observation Student Profile interview set
10/10	Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Raymond 6	Characteristics Grid – row 5
10/17	Learners with Difficulties in attentions, Communication, and Sensory Functioning	Raymond 7	Characteristics Grid – row 6 Article Analysis
10/24	Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Raymond 8	Characteristics Grid – row 7 Observation Student Profile Check Point

10/31	Digital Class	Refer to Blackboard	
11/7	Cognitive and Perceptual Characteristics	Raymond 9	
11/14	Language Characteristics	Raymond 10	Finalized Characteristics Grid
11/21	Academic Learning Characteristics	Raymond 11	
11/28	Holiday / No class	N/A	
12/5	Social-Emotional Characteristics	Raymond 12	Observation Student Profile/ Uploaded to Tk20
12/12	Reflection; Moving Forward		

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 silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.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/>.

GUIDELINES FOR THE OBSERVATION STUDENT PROFILE

The observation student profile provides you with the opportunity to get an in-depth understanding of a student with exceptionalities who accesses the general curriculum. You will examine his or her educational history and goals, observe in classroom settings, conduct parent or guardian interviews, and synthesize the information gathered, relating it to the content of the course. The purpose of the student profile is to help you understand the complexity of each individual case of a student with exceptional learning needs. This student profile assignment has six major sections. Each section should be labeled with the heading given below. The paper should be formatted using APA style with related documents and samples in the Appendix.

Part I: Demographic and Background Data

Select a student with exceptional learning needs who accesses the general curriculum that you would like to study. Verify with school officials that you have permission to access confidential records for that student and that you may contact the student's parents or guardians. If you do not have access to a student with exceptional learning needs, his/her records, or to parents, please talk with your instructor.

Create a pseudonym to use throughout your project. (It is of the utmost importance that the identity of the student remain confidential. If school officials or parents ask, your student profile will be evaluated by your instructor and will be posted to Tk20, Mason's accreditation database. This database is password protected and is only used as a repository for student artifacts. Information from the database is never available for public view.)

Provide a thorough description of your student, including

- demographic information,
- disability diagnosis and etiology,
- any medical conditions that exist,
- psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and
- any other information relevant to the student's academic achievement (e.g., has moved repeatedly, has significant family changes). Do not include the student's educational history. That is included in Part II.

Identify and provide examples of the skills and characteristics of your student that are (a) similar to the his/her peers (typical growth and development) and (b) those skills and characteristics that are dissimilar (atypical).

Identify the educational implications of the characteristics in C and D.

Part II: Educational History, Goals, Objectives, and Accommodations

Describe your student's educational history, including

- schools attended,

- reason for initial referral,
- pre-referral interventions (if available),
- results of multidisciplinary evaluation,
- special education classification,
- description and location of educational service provision, and
- related services provided.

From the student's IEP, summarize or state the educational goals and objectives and identify the classroom accommodations.

Describe the impact of your student's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development. Does your student's disability have an impact on auditory and information processing skills? If so, describe.

Evaluate how the levels of support correspond to the needs of the individual.

Part III: School and Classroom Information

Give a description of your student's school, including

- Demographics of students,
- Staffing
- Continuum of services for students with exceptional learning needs.

Describe your student's educational placement. What special education and general education services are provided? In what locations or ways are the services provided?

Evaluate how this placement is the Least Restrictive Environment to address the student's specific skills and characteristics, as described in Part I.

Describe the classroom(s) in which the student participates, including

- Number of students
- Content area
- Curriculum standards used

Part IV: Student Observation

Observe at least two class periods of instruction for your student.

Summarize your observations, including

- Content area,
- Teachers and service providers involved,
- Length of observation,
- Placement of student in classroom,
- Interactions of student with teacher(s) and other students,
- Learning activities, and
- Level of engagement of student with activities.

Describe how what you observed corresponded to your student's IEP goals, objectives, and accommodations.

Describe the effects your student's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life in school.

Identify any biases that you may have that may affect how you perceive the classrooms during observations.

Part V: Related Personnel or Family Member Interview

Interview at least one of your student's parents, guardians, family members, or professionals (i.e., teacher, counselor, service provider) who is knowledgeable of the student's goals and needs.

Begin your interview with questions about the family, focusing on developing a collaborative relationship. Ask questions that gather information about the family system and the role of family in the student's development and education, respecting differences across families.

Ask the parents about their child's educational goals, objectives, and accommodations. What was the process used in developing these? Did they feel they had a role in their development? Do they feel these goals, objectives, and accommodations are appropriate and will provide benefit for their child?

Effective special educators communicate effectively with families of students with exceptional learning needs from diverse backgrounds. Please be sure that you consider the following as you speak with the parents:

Ways in which you can foster a respectful and beneficial relationship with the family within the bounds of ethical practice.

Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.

The potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between your student's home and school lives.

Ways in which you can demonstrate your respect for variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures. Also consider the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school personnel.

Include a statement about how you addressed these items with specific examples.

Part VI: Summary, Synthesis and Recommendations

Summary

Write a brief, one paragraph summary (referring to relevant pages in your case study as necessary) of your student including all pertinent information obtained throughout the observations, interviews and background information review. Provide enough detail that a stranger could walk into the classroom and identify your student from your summary alone.

Synthesis

Compare your student's characteristics with those described in the textbook or other course readings for a student with that specific exceptional learning need. How are they similar and different? Are the described implications similar or different? How do your student's characteristics compare to typical development? Provide specific examples.

Recommendations

Given the information you have compiled about your student and your learning from the course,

Do you think your student is receiving the services and supports he or she needs? Provide a rationale for your response.

If you could provide recommendations to the IEP team about effective instruction to match the characteristics of your student, what would they be? Provide a rationale for your response.

Final reflection

How did your personal cultural biases and differences affect your interactions with this student and his or her family during this student profile process?

How did this assignment help you better understand the needs and complexities of a student with exceptional learning needs?

Appendix (required)

Include student work samples relevant to your case study specifics, parent interview questions and answers. Other relevant materials may be included but are optional.

Observation Student Profile Rubric

	Requirements	Points
Part I: Demographic and Background Data	<p>Candidate discusses the demographic and background information related to the target student inclusive of all of the below:</p> <p>etiology and diagnosis,</p> <p>any medical conditions that exist, psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and</p> <p>the effect these conditions can have on the student’s life.</p> <p>Candidate discusses skills and typical and atypical human growth characteristics of the learner.</p> <p>Candidate uses nonbiased language that is sensitive to the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation of the learner to describe his/her background information.</p> <p>Candidate describes the educational implications of the characteristics of the learner’s exceptionality and the impact of the learner’s exceptional learning needs on the learner, their family, and society.</p>	____/20
Part II: Educational History, Educational Goals, Objectives, and Accommodations	<p>Candidate provides a summary of the learner’s educational goals, objectives and classroom accommodations and the impact of the learner’s social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development (if applicable).</p> <p>Candidate discusses the educational history related to the target student inclusive of:</p> <p>the educational implications of the characteristics of the learner’s exceptionality and</p> <p>the effect a learner’s exceptionality can have on his or her life.</p> <p>Candidate writes a description of the student’s educational history that includes how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds may interact with the student’s exceptional condition to impact academic and life options.</p> <p>Candidate describes the impact the learner’s disability has on auditory and/or information processing skills and relates levels of support to the needs of the individual.</p>	____/15

	Requirements	Points
Part III: School and Classroom Information	<p>Candidate describes the school and classroom setting in the greater context of organizations in collaboration with special education and the continuum of placement and services available for individuals with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs.</p> <p>Candidate evaluates the environmental context in terms of how well the teacher has integrated the principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment.</p> <p>Candidate clearly describes how the environment's adaptations impact the quality of learning opportunities for learners with mild to moderate exceptionalities and determines whether or not optimal learning opportunities are being provided.</p>	___/15
Part IV: Student Observation	<p>Candidate describes the relationship between their observations and the learner's goals, objectives, and accommodations and describes the effects the learner's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or her life.</p> <p>Candidate summarizes their classroom observation experiences inclusive of an analysis of how their personal cultural biases and differences might affect their observation or teaching.</p>	___/15
Part V: Parent Interview	<p>Candidate collaborates with and interviews family who has knowledge of the learner in a culturally responsive way that demonstrates their understanding of legal matters and ethical considerations.</p> <p>The candidate shows evidence of collecting data on the family system and the role of family in the student's development and education.</p> <p>Candidate shows evidence of collecting data on the perceived impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between the learner's home and school lives and the effect of these variations on the relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs, their family, and school personnel. Family input and concerns are documented.</p>	___/10

	Requirements	Points
Part VI: Summary, Synthesis and Reflection & Additional Recommendations	<p>Candidate provides recommendations, educational accommodations, and/or modifications for the learner with mild to moderate exceptional learning needs.</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates, through their recommendations, their ability to serve as an advocate for appropriate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs and a high level of commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs.</p> <p>Candidate summarizes all pertinent information inclusive of observations, interviews and background information and offers a comprehensive synthesis of</p> <p>their learner’s characteristics as compared with typical and atypical learners,</p> <p>the social and educational implications of these characteristics and</p> <p>the effect the exceptionality has on the learner’s life.</p>	____/15
Writing Mechanics and Format		____/10
	TOTAL	____/100