



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

Spring 2020

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

CRN: 10179, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Carmen Rioux-Bailey	Meeting Dates: 1/21/2020 – 5/13/2020
Phone: 202-302-3223	Meeting Day(s): Tuesday
E-Mail: criouxba@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): 4:30 pm – 7:10 pm
Office Hours: T/R 3-4pm and by appt	Meeting Location: Fairfax; KH 17
Office Location: Finley 100D	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 in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

Advising Tip

Have you met with an advisor? All students should make an appointment to meet with an advisor to outline a plan for completing coursework and non-course requirements such as testing. To make an appointment by phone or in person, go to <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
7. Guest Speakers

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

(Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: 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.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. ISBN-13: 9780134493121

[The second required text for the course is](#)

Archer, A., & Hughes, C. (2011). *Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching* (1st Ed.). Guilford Press. ISBN 9781609180416. (Chapters 1-3 ONLY)

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Required Resources

Laptop for each class session if possible.

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)

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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.

College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required)

None

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required)

None

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.

Other Assignments

Assignment 1: Observation Student Profile (50 points).

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.

Assignment 2: Academic Intervention Presentation (15 points)

Each student will summarize one journal article that is relevant to the needs of the student/disability area chosen for their case study. I am happy to help guide your search. The

articles must be from peer reviewed published journals, preferably a useful teaching strategy or intervention for the student you have chosen to complete the student and include the following:

1. HLP targeted (refer to HLPs for Instruction: <https://highleveragepractices.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Instructionsshort1.pdf>)
2. Article Title
3. Rationale of article (also linked to HLP)
4. Description of intervention
5. Description of student populations for which this useful
8. Materials used
9. Results
10. Personal Reflection (you will summarize and present this in class)

Assignment 3: IRIS Modules (4 modules @ 5 points each = 20 points)

IRIS Center Learning Expansion Modules- You are to submit the answers to the assessment questions as evidence of completing the module. These will be completed as online content and as part of class discussions and activities. These modules will help expand your understanding and provide practical information on topics related to class. You will need a computer to access this content. (See course calendar for due dates)

Modules

1. Universal Design for Learning
<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/udl/>
2. Differentiated Instruction: Maximizing the Learning for All Students
<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/di/>
3. Providing Instructional Supports: Facilitating Mastery of New Skills
<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/sca/>
4. Assistive Technology an Overview
<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/at/>

Participation (15 points)

Participation includes (a) participation in all class and group activities, (b) displaying evidence of having read material, and (c) arriving on time and attending each class session. You will earn one point for each class session. Note: It is impossible to participate fully in this class while texting, tweeting, working on documents, etc. Please be *fully* present in class.

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, and (d) complete all assignments. Attendance, timeliness, and professionally relevant/active participation are

expected. Attendance and professional participation at all sessions is very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Be aware that any points earned for participation in class activities during a time of absence will not be earned and cannot be made up. Please notify me in advance by email if you will not be able to attend class. You may have no more than **2** absences in this class (which includes repeated tardiness/leaving early). ****Because this class is not just lecture, but a combination of lecture, discussion and group work, students will be heavily penalized for absences beyond 2 class sessions for the semester. Each additional absence will result in a 10-point penalty from your final grade. After 4 absences, a student will not be able to pass the course.***

Late Work

All assignments are due on the dates indicated, and in an effort to be fair to all students, you will be expected to meet all due dates indicated on the syllabus. Consult with me ***in advance*** if there is an emergency. You may have up to a one-week extension on ONE assignment only (if we have discussed this as an option first) otherwise there will be no late work accepted.

Other Requirements

Use your GMU email **ONLY** for this course and check it frequently!

Grading Scale

95-100% = A

90-94% = A-

84-89% = B

83-79% = C

< 79% = F

Summary of Points for Final Grade

Participation/Attendance: 15

Case Study: 50

Academic Intervention/HLP: 15

4 Iris Modules: 20

TOTAL= 100

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced (see <https://oai.gmu.edu/> and <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). 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 new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>. 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 for graduate students and within initial courses (EDSE 241, EDSE 361, and EDSE 311) for undergraduate students. 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	Reading to be done <i>before</i> this class session	Assignments due
1: 1/21	Introduction; Course overview; Beginning the discussion of disabilities	N/A	N/A
2: 1/28	History of Disability Foundations of Explicit Instruction	Raymond 1, A&H 1	Complete Field Experience Paperwork
3: 2/4	HLPs	https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CEC-HLP-Web.pdf	Identify student profile
4: 2/11	Cognitive and Perceptual Characteristics Designing Lessons: Skills and Strategies	Raymond 9, A & H 2	IRIS Module 1
5: 2/18	Language Characteristics Designing Lessons Vocabulary and Concepts	Raymond 10, A& H 3	
6: 2/25	Academic Learning Characteristics	Raymond 11	IRIS Module 2

Date	Topic	Reading to be done <i>before</i> this class session	Assignments due
7: 3/3	Issues in Assessment and Identification	Raymond 2	Case study checkpoint* Academic Intervention and Explicit Instruction presentations
3/10	Spring Break	No Class	
8: 3/17	Issues in Instruction and Placement and Learners with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Raymond 3, 4	
9: 3/24	Learners with Learning Disabilities	Raymond 5	IRIS Module 3
10: 3/31	Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Raymond 6	Case study checkpoint*
11: 4/7	Learners with Difficulties in Attention, Communication, and Physical and Sensory Functioning	Raymond 7	IRIS Module 4
12: 4/14	No Class: Work on Case Study		
13: 4/21	Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Raymond 8	Case study checkpoint*
14: 4/28	Course Reflection	none	2 Student Presentations
15: 5/5	Presentations		5 Student Presentations Submit Student Profile to TK20

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 <https://ds.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 <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

- As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at [703-380-1434](tel:703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at [703-993-2380](tel:703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling [703-993-8730](tel:703-993-8730), or emailing titleix@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 <http://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

Appendix

Assessment Rubric

Part I: Demographic and Background Data

- A. 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.

- B. Create a pseudonym to use throughout your project. (It is of the utmost importance that the identity of the student remains 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.)
- C. Provide a thorough description of your student, including
 - 1. Demographic information,
 - 2. Disability diagnosis and etiology,
 - 3. Any medical conditions that exist,
 - 4. Psychological and social-emotional characteristics, and
 - 5. 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 will be included in Part II.
- D. 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).
- E. Identify the educational implications of the characteristics in C and D.

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

- A. Describe your student's educational history, including
 - 1. Schools attended,
 - 2. Reason for initial referral,
 - 3. Pre-referral interventions (if available),
 - 4. Results of multidisciplinary evaluation,
 - 5. Special education classification,
 - 6. Description and location of educational service provision, and
 - 7. Related services provided.
- B. From the student's IEP, summarize or state the educational goals and objectives and identify the classroom accommodations.

C. 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.

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

Part III: School and Classroom Information

A. Give a description of your student's school, including

1. Demographics of students,
2. Staffing
3. Continuum of services for students with exceptional learning needs.

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

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

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

1. Number of students
2. Content area
3. Curriculum standards used

Part IV: Student Observation

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

A. Summarize your observations, including

1. Content area,
2. Teachers and service providers involved,
3. Length of observation,
4. Placement of student in classroom,
5. Interactions of student with teacher(s) and other students,
6. Learning activities, and
7. Level of engagement of student with activities.

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

C. Describe the effects your student's exceptional condition(s) appears to have on his or

her life in school.

D. 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.

A. 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.

B. 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?

C. 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:

- a. Ways in which you can foster a respectful and beneficial relationship with the family within the bounds of ethical practice.
- b. Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.
- c. The potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs between your student's home and school lives.
- d. 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

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. Recommendations

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

1. Do you think your student is receiving the services and supports he or she needs?

Provide a rationale for your response.

2. 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.

D. Final reflection

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

2. 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.