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

Spring 2021
EDSE 501: Introduction to Special Education
Section: DL2; CRN: 11403
3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Jill Jakulski	**Meeting Dates: 1/25/21 – 5/10/21**
Phone: 703-624-3345	**Meeting Day(s): Asynchronous**
E-Mail: jjakulsk@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s): Asynchronous**
Office Hours: by appointment -phone or Zoom	**Meeting Location: Asynchronous; Online**
Office Location: off campus	**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
Provides a survey of current knowledge on individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the lifespan. Includes historical factors, legal aspects, etiology, characteristics, assessment, evidence-based practices, and support services for individuals having needs for intervention ranging from mild to severe. Includes the impact of disabilities on academic, social, and emotional performances framed within the teaching profession as a whole.

Course Overview
EDSE 501 is a foundational course exploring essential concepts regarding individuals with disabilities within the context of human growth and development across the life span. The course includes information about historical factors, legal aspects, etiology, characteristics, assessment, evidence-based practices, and support services for individuals with disabilities having needs for intervention ranging from mild to severe. Students will examine the impact of disabilities on academic, social, and emotional performances framed within the teaching profession as a whole.

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
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

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available at 4:00 pm on Monday, January 25, 2021.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements
To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:
- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: Browser support (https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)
To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: Tested devices and operating systems (https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - [Adobe Acrobat Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/) (https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
  - [Windows Media Player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player) (https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player)
  - [Apple Quick Time Player](www.apple.com/quicktime/download/) (www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

Expectations
- Course Week:
  Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on Monday, and finish on Sunday.
- Log-in Frequency:
  Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 2 times per week. Failure to do so may negatively impact your progress in this course.
- Participation:
  Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
  Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
  Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
  Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:
  Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:
  The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words*. Remember that you are not competing with

classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:
  Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Analyze how educators and other professionals address the variance between "typical" and "atypical" behaviors across the lifespan.

2. Distinguish characteristics of children and youth with disabilities across all IDEA categories relative to age, varying levels of severity, and developmental differences manifested in cognitive, linguistic, physical, psychomotor, social, or emotional functioning.

3. Interpret information on individual differences and formulate ways to create meaningful learning experiences and interaction opportunities for all students.

4. Discuss current regulations governing special education policies and practices including rights, responsibilities, and legal status of all parties within the context of schools and communities.

5. Analyze historical perspectives, models, theories, philosophies, and trends that provide the basis for special education practice within the context of organized public education in the United States.

6. Examine legal aspects of special education regarding litigation, legislation, and expectations associated with the identification, education, and evaluation of students with disabilities.

7. Explain the etiological factors and medical aspects associated with various disabilities.

8. Summarize and evaluate past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including use of innovative technology.

9. Illustrate how principles of learning influence the selection of relevant, appropriate, and culturally responsive materials for all learners (e.g., gifted, English learners, students with disabilities).

10. Identify individual needs such as dyslexia and related evidence-based practices for intervention.

11. Evaluate the dynamic influence of family systems relative to the education of students with disabilities.

12. Evaluate the dynamic influence of culture and environmental settings relative to the education of students with disabilities.

13. Consider ethical considerations for the treatment of all children within the context of professional standards of practice.

14. Recognize child abuse and implement research-based interventions to address abusive and traumatic situations.

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 3: Curricular content knowledge (InTASC 4,5).

Required Texts
Hallahan, D.P., Kauffman, J.M., & Pullen, P.C., (2018), *Exceptional Learners: An introduction
    to special education*, 14th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson

Recommended Texts
American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological
    Association* (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000

Required Resources
On Blackboard

Additional Readings
On Blackboard

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

VIA 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 VIA (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 VIA.

For EDSE 501, the required PBA is (NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE).
Please check to verify your ability to upload items to VIA before the PBA due date.

Assignments and/or Examinations

    Performance-based Assessment
    (VIA submission required) -N/A.

    College Wide Common Assessment
    (VIA submission required) -N/A

Performance-based Assessment
(_No_ VIA submission required)

Note: All assignments for this course must be formatted in APA style. It is required for the academic integrity that citations and references be used appropriately.

- **Modules**
  This course is set up in module form. Each module is topic-specific, and each module contains a similar structure. Accordingly, each contains individual lessons, a module assignment, and a self-reflection. Each lesson includes a reading, lecture, and video or media component. Each Module also includes a reading check and a reflection paper (see further bulleted information below).

  Modules 1 and 4 require students to write two- to four-page papers individually. The paper in Module 1 is a personal philosophy statement. It also requires you to choose two activities from a list of school- and community-based online options. You will include a summary of the activities in your paper. In most cases, your final paper will be at least eight pages in length.
    Note: Due to pandemic restrictions and the lack of school district and community resources, you may watch _Crip Camp_ (available on Netflix) as one of your activities. You may also choose to participate in a GMU- or district-sponsored Zoom meetings or symposiums specific to students with disabilities (these options are determined by GMU/districts). Advanced instructor approval is required.

  In Module 4, after gaining approval to move forward with a topic you have selected, you will then research the topic and write about it. You will likely use the information from other module assignments to inform your final paper, which will be a miniumu of 15-20 pages in length.

  Modules 2 and 3 are intended to help you collect information from multiple sources to dig deeper into one disability group for each. At the beginning of the module you will choose a disability group (Module 3 – high incidence; Module 4 -low incidence) that corresponds to the module's focus.

Beyond the Modules
Child Abuse Awareness Training
All students must complete the online child abuse recognition training module available at http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cps/mandated_reporters/cwse5691/story.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 scanned or saved as a pdf and then posted to your VIA (through Blackboard) 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 your instructor as soon as possible if you have any questions about this assignment.

Dyslexia Awareness Module
As of July 1, 2017, every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license in

VA is required to complete awareness training, provided by the VA Department of Education, on the indicators of dyslexia as well as the evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia. Therefore, all students taking this *Introduction to Special Education* course 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.**

Individuals completing the module should print/save a copy of the certificate of completion for verification. **The certificate of completion will need to be scanned or saved as a pdf and then posted to your VIA (through the Assessment tab in Blackboard) 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 your instructor as soon as possible if you have any questions about this assignment.

Other Assignments
- **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. They are designed to assess your understanding and recall of the textbook material you were assigned. You may use other materials such as books or notes to help you complete these checks, but **you may take each reading check no more than twice**.

- **Reflection Paper**
  Each module requires a personal reflection submission.

Course Policies and Expectations
- **Attendance/Participation**
  This course is an asynchronous online course. Though you are allowed to work on the course as time permits, it is expected that you budget your time responsibly so that assignments are completed/submitted by the deadline posted. It is also expected that you read all communications and check GMU email at least three times per week. All communication to me must be via GMU email. *Please use **EDSE 501-DL2: (Subject/Topic)***) in the subject line of email communication with me.

- **Late Work**
  Assignments can be turned in early, and you will do better in the course if you stick to a rhythm of completing assignments at a reasonable rate. All course assignments are **due by 11:59 p.m. on the date they are due**. Time-management, self-management, and organization are required for successful completion of an online course. You are therefore encouraged to develop a schedule for devoting time to this course. The class schedule of this syllabus outlines a reasonably-paced workload.

  There are no extensions for any assignments and a grade of INCOMPLETE is not an option for this course unless there are significant documented extenuating circumstances.

Grading Scale
    A   95-100%
    A-   90-94%
    B+   86-89%
    B   80-85%
    B-   77-79%
    C   73-76%
    F   <73%

*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See Academic Integrity Site (https://oai.gmu.edu/) and Honor Code and System (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.

Course Action Items	Earned Points	Possible Points
Beyond the Modules Activities • Professional Child Abuse training • Dyslexia Awareness Module		REQIRED for a passing grade in this course (50 points each) 100
Reading Checks		(25 points each) 400
Module Self-Reflections		(25 points each) 100
Module 1 Assignment		100
Module 2 Assignment		75
Module 3 Assignment		75
Module 4 Assignment		150 Assignment must be submitted for a final grade regardless of points earned prior. You may not opt out of this assignment and expect to pass the course.
TOTAL POINTS FOR COURSE		**1000**

Professional Dispositions
Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See Policies and Procedures (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.

Week	Topic:	Deliverable	Due Date
January 25- February 14	**Course Overview** 1. Write an introduction about yourself and post it on the Discussion Board. See Blackboard for more details/information. 2. Review syllabus and Blackboard site. 3. Complete the Child Abuse Training 4. Complete the Dyslexia Awareness Module	• Child Abuse Training Certificate • Dyslexia Awareness Module (posted to Tk20)	Sunday, 02/07
	Module 1: History of special education and disability, legislation, and issues and services • Lesson 1: History of special education and disability • Lesson 2: Legislation • Lesson 3: Issues and Services	• Lesson 1 Reading Check • Lesson 2 Reading Check • Lesson 3 Reading Check • Module 1 Assignment • Reflection 1	Sunday, 02/14
February 15- March 7	*Module 2: Higher Incidence Disabilities* • Lesson 1: Students with Intellectual Disabilities • Lesson 2: Students with Learning Disabilities	• Lesson 1 Reading Check • Lesson 2 Reading Check	Sunday, 02/21
	• Lesson 3: Students w/ Speech/Language Impairments • Lesson 4: Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	• Lesson 3 Reading Check • Lesson 4 Reading Check	Sunday, 02/28
	• Lesson 5: Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders	• Lesson 5 Reading Check • Module 2 Worksheets • Reflection 2	Sunday, 03/07
March 14th (firm)		**Sunday, 03/14 (*firm*)** ***All work for Modules 1 & 2 must be submitted. No late work considered or grades given for work submitted after this date.***	
March 15 – March 28	*Module 3: Lower Incidence Disabilities* Lesson 1: Students with Other health impairments Lesson 2: Students with visual impairments, including blindness	• Lesson 1 Reading Check • Lesson 2 Reading Check	Sunday, 03/21
	Lesson 3: Students with hearing impairments or who are deaf Lesson 4: Students with severe/multiple disabilities, including deaf/blindness or TBI Lesson 5: Students with orthopedic impairments	• Lesson 3 Reading Check • Lesson 4 Reading Check • Lesson 5 Reading Check • Module 3 Worksheets	Sunday, 03/28
April 4- April 11	*Module 4: Giftedness, Collaboration & Looking to the Future* Lesson 1: Students with special gifts and talents Lesson 2: Parents and families Lesson 3: Exploring life with a disability and the future of special education	• Lesson 1 Reading Check • Lesson 2 Reading Check • Lesson 3 Reading Check	Sunday, 04/04
	Start planning for Module 4 Final Paper		Sunday, 04/11
April 18 (firm)	All Module 3 & 4 work, except for the Module 4 final paper	**Sunday, 04/18 (*firm*)** **All Module 3 & 4 work, except for Module 4 final paper. *Submission after 11:59 pm will not be considered for grading.***	
May 2 (firm)	Module 4 Final Paper	**Sunday, 05/02 (*firm*)** **Module 4 Final Paper. *Submission after 11:59 pm will not be considered for grading.***	
May 9	Complete Course Evaluation	Course Evaluation Submission	

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: See Core Values (http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/).

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See Honor Code and System (https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See Responsible Use of Computing (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 Disability Services (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 either Tk20 or VIA should be directed to https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments/
- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students (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 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing the Title IX Coordinator (titleix@gmu.edu).
- **For information on student support resources on campus, see Student Support Resources on Campus (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 College of Education and Human Development (http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

The final Module Assignment (final paper) is an opportunity to show growth in your knowledge about learners with disabilities. You will **select one specific disability area** and demonstrate your knowledge of (a) the characteristics of the disability, (b) learning needs of individuals with the disability, (c) lifespan issue related to the disability (including the impact of the disability on the individual and family) and (d) how the disability is similar and different to other types of disabilities (e.g., mild, severe, sensory). To show your growth you will combine what you have learned from coursework, independent learning, and the exploratory activities you completed.

Paper Guidelines

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. Use these elements as section headings for your paper. You must correctly use APA style and cite all resources properly within the body of your paper and on your reference page. Your paper must address the following areas:

A. Disability Characteristics	What are some of the characteristics of the disability? • What is the prevalence of the disability? • Is it a high- or low- incidence disability? • How is it diagnosed? • What are the physical/medical issues associated with the disability (if any)? • What are the social or behavioral implications associated with the 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 the community issues that need to be considered?
	• What are the post-secondary (job, college, independent living) that need to be considered?
	• What impact does having this disability have on social relationships? What is the impact of the disability on the 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 compare/contrast your selected disability with at least TWO other disabilities. For example, if my paper were on students with an Other Health Impairment (based on ADHD), I might choose to compare/contrast it to learning disabilities and intellectual disabilities.**
E. Information Synthesis	**Integrate what was learned through independent learning activities (IRIS modules, field experiences, and exploratory activities) and from other coursework (lectures, discussions, articles, and textbook readings to demonstrate knowledge about learners with disabilities.** • What are the key takeaways for this paper? • How do you tie together all the ideas you presented throughout this paper?

Additional Final Paper Details:
- ✓ Be sure to include all required topics as outlined in the guidance above.
- ✓ There is no maximum page length, but to address all components your final paper will likely be a minimum of 15-20 pages (double-spaced, APA formatted).
- ✓ It is recommended you use the headings in the in the grading rubric below to organize your papers. Be sure to add depth and substance to your paper by providing information that would be available if one were to consider the questions in the guidelines above.
  - o *Note*: Detailed rubric will be posted on Blackboard.
- ✓ The synthesis portion is the most heavily weighted and should therefore receive the most attention.
- ✓ Be sure to include proper citations from all sources to support your ideas, credit research, and demonstrate your learning.

Final Paper Requirements	Possible Points	Points Earned
Disability Characteristics • salient characteristics of the disability clearly described • identification requirements are included	25	
Learning Needs • learning needs associated with chosen disability clearly described, including relevant IEP considerations	35	
Lifespan Issues (including the impact on the family) • clear description of the impact of the disability across the lifespan	35	
Similarities and Differences to Other Disabilities • compares and contrasts the chosen disability with minimum of two other disabilities	35	
Information Synthesis • demonstrates personal growth in knowledge about learners and disabilities • demonstrates completion of independent learning activities by integrating what was learned through these experiences with learning from other coursework	40	
APA Style • writing is clear and easy to understand • few or not grammar errors/typos • references correctly cited in APA format	10	
TOTAL POINTS	**150**	