Instructional Design for Special Populations

I. Course Description

This course provides an overview of the characteristics and needs of special student populations in a culturally diverse society. Emphasis will be placed on learning about special education, gifted and talented, culturally and linguistically diverse, and at-risk student populations. Instructional strategies, differentiated curriculum, and assessment will be examined in relation to these special populations.

The three variations of the Special Populations course (All Level = EDCI 4321, 4-8 = EDCI 4323 and EDCI 4322 = 8-12; 4324 = EC-6) are based upon the three distinctive levels of teacher certification in the State of Texas. Each of these three courses requires field experiences and assignments in their respective levels of teacher certification. Every section of the Special Populations courses offered at TAMU-CC may include a mix of preservice teachers seeking any level of teacher certification. However, the field-based experiences/assignments of any given Special Populations class will be required at the appropriate EDCI 4321, EDCI 4322, EDCI 4323 or EDCI 4324 course level which matches the preservice teacher’s level of All Level, 8-12, 4-8 or EC-6 teacher certification, respectively.

II. Rationale

The schools of today are becoming increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. In addition, most schools actively promote an “inclusive” academic environment. Special student populations served in inclusive general education classrooms include students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and students at-risk for school failure. Thus it is important for all teachers to understand how to adapt instruction to meet the needs of all students, especially those with special learning needs. While most are seeking teaching careers in the “regular” classroom and others are considering careers working specifically in special education or bilingual education, these two career paths are, in fact, rapidly conjoining.

III. Course Goal:

The student will become knowledgeable about the characteristics of students with special learning needs and the public schools; responsibilities in meeting their educational needs, plus increase their desire and ability to teach all students. In addition, the student will become knowledgeable of the Texas State Adopted Proficiencies for Educators and the thirteen competences of an effective teacher based on the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities TExES Exam as described below.
IV. State Adopted Proficiencies:
1. **Learner-Centered Knowledge:** The teacher possesses and draws on a rich knowledge base of content and technology to provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences for all students.
2. **Learner-Centered Instruction:** The teacher collaboratively identifies needs and implements appropriate pedagogical and assessment strategies using technology and other resources.
3. **Equity In Excellence For All Learners:** The teacher respects, addresses, and validates the needs of diverse learners.
4. **Learner-Centered Communication:** The teacher demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills and serves as an advocate for all students.
5. **Learner-Centered Professional Development:** The teacher is a reflective practitioner and demonstrates a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to maintain professional ethics and personal integrity.

V. **TExES Competencies**
The following TExES competencies will be developed in this class:

001. The teacher understands human development processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to their development characteristics and needs.
002. The teacher understands student diversity and knows how to plan learning experiences and design assessments that are responsive to differences among students and that promote all students’ learning.
004. The teacher understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessments.
005. The teacher knows how to establish a classroom climate that fosters learning, equity, and excellence and uses this knowledge to create a physical and emotional environment that is safe and productive.
006. The teacher understands strategies for creating an organized and productive learning environment and for managing student behavior.
011. The teacher understands the importance of family involvement in children’s education and knows how to interact and communicate effectively with families.
012. The teacher enhances professional knowledge and skills by effectively interacting with other members of the educational community and participating in various types of professional activities.
013. The teacher understands and adheres to legal and ethical requirements for educators and is knowledgeable of the structure of education in Texas.

VI. **TAC §228.30(b): 17 Subject Matter Curricular Topics**
- Reading Instruction
- Code of Ethics & Standard Practices
- Child Development
- Motivation
- Learning Theories
- TEKS Organization, Structure & Skills
- TEKS in the Content Areas
- State Assessment of Students
- Curriculum Development & Lesson Planning
- Classroom Assessment
- Classroom Management
- Special Populations
- Parent Conferences / Communication
- Instructional Technology
- Pedagogy / Instructional Strategies
- Differentiated Instruction
- Certification Test Preparation
**VII. Student Learning Outcomes:**
This course is designed to demonstrate the competencies and proficiencies presented above. The student will:

1. Observe and engage in school-based experiences with special populations and culturally and linguistically diverse students. (TExES Competencies: 002, 004, 005, 006, 012) (State Proficiencies: 1, 2, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

2. Observe and explore various types of intervention, modification and adaptive strategies utilized with special needs students and better understand when to use them, and when to seek outside assistance. (TExES Competencies: 002, 004, 005, 006, 012) (State Proficiencies: 1, 2, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations; Differentiated Instruction)

3. Recognize symptoms which differentiate severe or serious problems of learning or behavior. (TExES Competencies: 002, 004, 005, 006, 012) (State Proficiencies: 1, 2, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

4. Broaden knowledge base of teaching and working with special populations and culturally diverse students (i.e. characteristics, federal and state laws, placement and array of services, instructional planning and strategies, collaborative teaching efforts, assessment, and involvement of family and community). (TExES Competencies: 001, 002, 011, 012, 013) (State Proficiencies: 1, 3, 4, 5) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations; Parent Conferences/Communication)

5. Investigate and broaden knowledge of disabilities associated with special education students. (TExES Competencies: 001, 002,) (State Proficiencies: 1, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

6. Explore his/her awareness of personal beliefs about teaching special populations and culturally and linguistically diverse students through a case study and tutoring of special needs. (TExES Competencies: 001, 002, 004, 005, 012) (State Proficiencies: 1, 2, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations; Code of Ethics & Standard Practices)

7. Promote and strengthen his/her interest in working with ALL students, including special populations. (TExES Competencies: 001, 002,) (State Proficiencies: 1, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

8. Gain experience in modifying instruction to meet students’ special educational needs. (TExES Competencies: 002, 004, 005, 012) (State Proficiencies: 1, 2, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations; Differentiated Instruction)

9. Recognize the nature and significance of cultural diversity in historical and contemporary contexts and demonstrate an awareness and appreciation for cultural diversity. (TExES Competencies: 002, 012, 013) (State Proficiencies: 1, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

**VII. Instructional Methods and Activities**

EDCI 4321/2/3/4 utilizes a variety of traditional instructional methods and activities, as well as field-based experiences.

A. Traditional Experiences (lecture/discussion, demonstrations, drill, guest speakers, video, student discussions/presentations)

B. Field Experiences will involve observation, reflection, planning and teaching of individuals/small groups at the appropriate course level that matches the preservice teacher’s desired level of teacher certification.

**VIII. Assignments:**

1. **Class participation**

   A. **Attendance:**

      Class attendance is a reflection of a student teacher’s commitment to their preparation and professionalism for teaching. **5 points deducted for each full class missed; points will be deducted for late arrivals or early departures as well. 50 points possible.**
B. In-class Activities: Required Reading Assignments & Discussion Circles

Assignments and forms will be provided throughout the class for required readings from the text. In order to make the best of our time with the amount of material that must be covered, we will share the responsibility for the reading and share the information that is gained through reading. Reading Circles will be formed into groups of four or less. Your peers will complete an evaluation on your preparedness of and participation in the discussions. Your points earned will depend on your average peer evaluation score.  **Team Member #1 will provide me one copy of each team member’s responses to me after each discussion. 5 points will be deducted from your final peer score for each time your reading response was not prepared. There will be a total of 3 peer evaluations**

4.0=50 pts; 3.99-3.90=47 pts; 3.89-3.75=45 pts; 3.74-3.60=42 pts; 3.59-3.45=40 pts; 3.49-3.25=37 pts;
3.25-2.80=35 pts; < 2.80=30 points.

2. Field Experiences

A. Classroom observations:
Two observations in special education classrooms are required at the site of your field-based teaching assignment or in grade(s) that match your appropriate level of certification. Observation forms will be provided.  **50 points each. 100 points possible.**

B. Instructional Modification Interview:
Students with special learning needs will, to varying degrees, require modifications or adaptations of instruction within the regular classroom. Interview a regular general education teacher, in grade(s) that match your appropriate level of certification, who modifies instruction for (2) identified special education students. Using the forms provided complete this instructional modification assignment for these two different students based on your interview with the teacher.  **50 points each. 100 points possible.**

C. Case Study Journal:
Select a student with special learning needs in your class to observe closely over the course of the semester. **Guidelines for Case Study and Report** will be provided. The case study documentation (through blogging) will occur as discussed in class.  **100 points possible.**

3. Exams

A. Reading Circle Quizzes:
A quiz will follow each reading circle discussion and lecture. 5 of the 7 quizzes will be recorded (20 points each) for a grade.  **100 points possible.**

B. Mid-Course Exam
The exam will include a combination of objective and short essay items. The exam will include questions regarding information from required readings and class lecture/discussion as determined in class.  **100 points possible.**

C. Final Exam
The exam will include a combination of objective and short essay items. The exam will include questions regarding information from required readings and class lecture/discussions.  **100 points possible.**

4. Other Assignments

A. Disability Research:
You and a partner will research a specific disability in four major areas: Definition, Symptoms/Characteristics; Teaching Strategies that address the Disability; and (5) Informative Websites. A 10-minute presentation will be given by you and your partner informing the class of the disability along with creatively designed pamphlet discussing the disability in the four major areas.  **100 points possible (40 pts – brochure; 40 pts – presentation; 20 pts peer evaluation).**
B. Journal Article Reviews: 
Educational journals are important tools for the on-going professional development of teachers. Using the form provided, complete a review of one article found either in the Bell Library or online through a reputable online journal and/or association/organization. The article must:
#1: discuss your specifically assigned disability; and
#2: must be different from your assigned partner’s article.
Due with your presentation. 50 points possible.

C. Reading Response: The assigned reading will be provided in a class handout. 50 points possible.

D. Blogging Assignment - Staying “connected” with fellow teaching professionals is an essential part of your professional growth and learning, and never before has your potential to network with colleagues and peers been so limitless. New technologies are being developed every day that allow for borderless communication and collaboration. One such technology is the Weblog, or “blog.” For this assignment, you will participate in (or even start) a blog. You will choose from a set of blogs that will be provided to you later in class along with further details. This assignment will be completed on-line. 100 points possible.

Course Requirement / Assignment  | Points
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1. Class Participation | 100
   a. Attendance | 50
   b. Reading Assignments/Discussion Circles | 50

2. Field Experiences | 300
   a. Classroom Observations (2) | 100 2(50)
   b. Modifications Interview (2) | 100 2(50)
   c. Case Study Journal/Report | 100

3. Exams | 300
   a. Reading Circle Quizzes | 100
   b. Mid-Course Exam | 100
   c. Final Exam | 100

4. Other Assignments | 300
   a. Disability Research | 100
   b. Blogging Assignment | 100
   c. Journal Article Review | 50
   d. Reading Response | 50

Total 1000 points

A = 1000-900  
B = 899-800  
C = 799-750  
D = 749-700  
F = 699 or below
Course Policies

Last Day to Drop: Friday, November 1, 2011

Late Assignments. Late work will be accepted at the discretion of the site professor on a case-by-case basis. Assignments submitted within one week past the due date would be accepted for a maximum of 80% credit; one week or more past the due date for a maximum of 70% credit.

Assignments. Points will be deducted for misspelled words, errors in mechanics, grammar errors, etc. Type (word-process) and double-space all assignments (12 pt. Font) unless you are provided with a form or otherwise instructed.

Cell Phone Policy: To receive the full benefit from this course, the use of electronic devices for unrelated activities (i.e. text messaging, instant messaging, internet surfing, etc) is strongly discouraged. Be Respectful.

Academic Honesty University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to a penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one's own work.) http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/JAffairs/ja_hndbk_academic_info.htm

Classroom Conduct: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Faculty has the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational process. Disruption, as applied to the academic setting, means behavior that a reasonable faculty member would view as interfering with normal academic functions. Examples include, but are not limited to, persistently speaking without being recognized or interrupting other speakers, behavior which distracts the class from the subject matter or discussion, or in extreme cases, physical threats, harassing behavior or personal insults, or refusal to comply with faculty direction. Students are expected to refrain from disruptive behavior at all times. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action. http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/JAffairs/ja_hndbk_rules_n_regulations.htm

Disabilities: “The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statue that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in Driftwood 101.” http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu
The Texas A & M University – Corpus Christi’s College of Education does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations. The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications to avoid discrimination. http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/JAffairs/ja_hndbk_academic_info.htm

Statement of Civility: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of gender, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, age, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/JAffairs/ja_hndbk_academic_info.htm

Textbook (required)