Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi  
College of Education  
SPED 5315 – Individuals with Exceptionalities  
Fall 2011 Course Syllabus

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OFFICE HOURS: Mon. & Tues., 1:00-4:00pm or by appointment  
COURSE NUMBER: SPED 5315  
COURSE NAME: Individuals with Exceptionalities  
CREDIT: 3 Hours

This course meets: Tuesday, 7:00 – 9:20 pm in CI 107.

I. Course Description  
Basic information and skills for working with exceptional individuals in a variety of settings;  
current trends, issues, and research pertaining to exceptional persons.

II. Rationale  
This course is designed to provide students with background information on characteristics and  
needs of individuals with disabilities.

III. State Adopted Proficiencies for Teachers  
The state adopted proficiencies covered in this course include the following:  
1. Learner-Centered Knowledge. The teacher possesses and draws a rich knowledge base of  
content, pedagogy, and technology to provide relevant and meaningful learning  
experiences for all students.

2. Equity in Excellence for All Learners. The teacher responds appropriately to diverse  
groups of learners. The administrator promotes equity in excellence for all by  
acknowledging, respecting, and responding to diversity among students and staff while  
building on shared values and other similarities that bond all people.

IV. TExES Competencies and CEC National Standards  
TExES Competencies  
DOMAIN I – UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND  
evaluating their needs

Competency 001: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of  
the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.
DOMAIN II – PROMOTING STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Competency 003: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction for individuals with disabilities.

Competency 005: The special education teacher knows how to promote students’ educational performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.

Competency 007: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of transition issues and procedures across the life span.

DOMAIN III – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Competency 006: The educational diagnostician understands appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for students with disabilities.

DOMAIN IV – FOUNDATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Competency 010: The special education teacher understands the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.

Competency 011: The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

The Special Education Field 153 Educational Diagnostician TExES program competencies covered in this course:

**CEC National Standards**

TAMUCC Special Education Program is aligned with the National Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards.

Council for Exceptional Children: Initial Level Content Standards
Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of the following standards:

**Initial Content Standard 1: Foundations**

Special educators understand the field as an evolving and changing discipline based on:

- philosophies and evidence-based principles and theories
- relevant laws and policies
- diverse and historical points of view
- human issues that influence the field and professional practice
- issues of human diversity that can impact families, cultures, and schools
• relationships of organizations of special education to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies

Initial Content Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners
Special educators:
• know and demonstrate respect for their students first as unique human beings
• understand the similarities and differences in human development
• understand how exceptional conditions can interact with the domains of human development
• use this knowledge to respond to the varying abilities and behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs

Initial Content Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences
Special educators:
• know and understand the effects that an exceptional condition can have on an individual’s learning in school and throughout life
• utilize active and resourceful means in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the individual’s exceptional condition
• understand learning differences provide the foundation upon which special educators individualize instruction

Initial Content Standard 4: Instructional Strategies
Special educators:
• possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
• select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote positive learning results in general and special curricula
• modify learning environments appropriately for individuals with exceptional learning needs
• enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem-solving, and performance skills of individuals with exceptional learning needs
• promote increased student’ self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem
• emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the life span.

Initial Content Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions
Special educators actively:
• create learning environments for individuals with exceptional learning needs
• foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement
• foster environments in which diversity is valued
• shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy
• help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with exceptional learning needs in general education environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions
• use direct motivational and instructional interventions
• teach students to respond effectively to current expectations
• intervene with individuals with exceptional learning needs in crisis
• coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors.

Initial Content Standard 6: Language
Special educators:

• understand typical and atypical language development
• use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills
• are familiar with augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies to support and enhance communication
• match communication methods to an individual’s language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences
• provide effective language models and use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with exceptional learning needs whose primary language is not English.

Initial Content Standard 7: Instructional Planning
Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators:

• develop long-range individualized instructional plans anchored in both general and special education curricula
• systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected shorter-range goals and objectives taking into consideration an individual’s abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors
• emphasize explicit modeling and efficient guided practice to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization.
• modify instructional plans based on ongoing analysis of the individual’s learning progress
- facilitate instructional planning in a collaborative context
- develop a variety of individualized transition plans from preschool to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts
- use appropriate technologies to support instructional planning and individualized instruction

Initial Content Standard 8: Assessment
Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments:

- to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs
- to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress

Special educators understand:
- legal policies and ethical principles of measurement
- measurement theory and practices
- appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments

Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to:
- assure nonbiased, meaningful assessments and decision-making
- conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement and environments
- identify supports and adaptations required for individuals
- regularly monitor the progress of individuals
- use appropriate technologies to support their assessments.

Initial Content Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice
Special educators are guided by the profession’s ethical and professional practice standards to:

- to practice ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations

Special educators view themselves as lifelong learners and regularly reflect on and adjust their practice to reflect current evidence-based best practices.

Initial Content Standard 10: Collaboration
Special educators routinely and effectively collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways and promote and advocate the learning and well-being of individuals with exceptional learning needs across a wide range of settings and a range of different learning experiences.
V. **Student Learning Outcomes and Course Objectives**

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Students in this graduate program will:

- demonstrate knowledge of individuals with disabilities; (SPED 5315, SPED 5320, and SPED 5397 are linked to this student learning outcome.)
- evaluate the needs of individuals with disabilities; (SPED 5386 and SPED 5387 are linked to this student learning outcome.)
- demonstrate knowledge of fostering learning and development for individuals with disabilities; (SPED 5320, SPED 5385, SPED 5386, SPED 5387, and SPED 5397 are linked to this student learning outcome.)
- demonstrate knowledge of foundations of special education and professional roles and responsibilities of the special education educator; (SPED 5385, SPED 5386, SPED 5387, SPED 5388, and SPED 5397 are linked to this student learning outcome.)
- develop a behavior intervention/change plan. (SPED 5380 is linked to this student learning outcome.)

**Course Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Recognize a definition of special education (III 1; IV 014)
2. Recognize different categories of disabilities (III 1; IV 003, 014)
3. Recognize the issues associated with classification and labeling of children with disabilities (III 1, 2; IV 014)
4. Recognize major federal disabilities legislation (III 1, 2; IV 014)
5. Recognize special education placement decisions from a legal perspective (III 1, 2; IV 014)
6. Recognize general outcomes for individuals with disabilities (III, 1: IV 014)
7. Recognize an array of special education services available to students with disabilities (III 1; IV 014)
8. Recognize the major steps of an individualized education program (iii 1, 2; IV 003, 014)
9. Recognize and differentiate between IFSP, IEP, and ITP (III 1, 2; IV 003, 014)
10. Recognize the major steps of an individualized educational program (III 1, 2; IV 003, 014)
11. Recognize and differentiate between the concepts of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) (III 1; IV 014)
12. Recognize definitions and types of learning disabilities (III 1; IV 003, 014)
13. Recognize causes and prevention of learning disabilities (III 1; IV 002)
14. Recognize learning and social characteristics of individuals with learning disabilities (III 1; IV 001, 002)
15. Recognize educational interventions that are used with individuals with learning disabilities (III 1; IV 001, 002)
16. Recognize how parents and teachers can work together to assist a student with learning disabilities (III 1, 2; IV 012)
17. Recognize definitions and types of behavior disorders and emotional disturbance (III 1; IV 003, 014)
18. Recognize causes and preventions of behavior and emotional disturbance (III 1; IV 002)
19. Recognize social and academic characteristics of individuals with behavior disorders and emotional disturbance (III 1, IV 001, 002)
20. Recognize educational interventions that are used with individuals with behavior disorders and emotional disturbance (III 1; IV 001, 002)
21. Recognize how parents and teachers can work together to assist a student with behavior disorders and emotional disturbance (III 1, 2; IV 012)
22. Recognize definitions and types of mental retardation (III 1; IV 003, 014)
23. Recognize causes and preventions of mental retardation (III 1; IV 002)
24. Recognize cognition difficulties, adaptive behavior needs and support needs of individuals with mental retardation (III 1, IV 001, 002)
25. Recognize educational interventions that are used with individuals with mental retardation (III 1; IV 001, 002)
26. Recognize how parents and teachers can work together to assist a student with mental retardation (III 1, 2; IV 012)
27. Recognize definitions and types of physical impairments and special health care needs (III 1; IV 003, 014)
28. Recognize causes and preventions of physical impairment and special health care needs (III 1; IV 002)
29. Recognize characteristics affecting learning, the classroom and school of individuals with physical impairments and special health care needs (III 1, IV 001, 002)
30. Recognize educational interventions that are used with individuals with physical impairments and special health care needs (III 1; IV 001, 002)
31. Recognize how parents and teachers can work together to assist a student with physical impairments and special health care needs (III 1, 2; IV 012)
32. Recognize how technology is used in teaching individuals with physical impairments and special health care needs (III 1; IV 001, 002)

VI. Course Topics
- Overview of Special Education
- Inclusion and Accessing General Education
- Multicultural, Bilingual and Diverse Schools
- Partnerships with Families
- High Incidence Disabilities
- Low Incidence Disabilities
- Gifted/Talented Education
VII. Instructional Methods and Activities

- Traditional Experiences (i.e., lecture, discussion, multimedia presentations)
- Clinical Experiences (i.e., cooperative groups, student presentations, value clarification)

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment

A total of 180 points can be earned in this course.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>162 – 180</td>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143 – 161</td>
<td>80 – 89%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124 – 142</td>
<td>70 – 79%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 – 123</td>
<td>60 – 69%</td>
<td>D</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

59% or lower constitutes an F.

The major requirements of this course include the following assignments:

1. Group Presentation
2. Two Learning Activities
3. Two Exams
4. Course Participation

**Group Presentations (30 pts.)**

This is a group assignment. NO individual work will be accepted. Each group will give a 30-45 minute powerpoint presentation. Each presentation should be designed as a “teacher workshop.” Your presentation will be comprised of three components. First, the presentation will include 2-3 slides briefly discussing the disability. Second, your presentation will discuss how teachers (at elementary, middle, and high school) can support students with this disability in the class and in the school community. Third, your presentation will highlight a *known* individual with this disability (artist, scientist, inventor, etc.). Only highlight **one person**.

All presenters (as well as all materials) must use person-first language. The instructor must receive a hardcopy and an electronic copy of the presentation. The group MUST present a 1-2 pg. professional handout/brochure of the disability. This should be geared toward educational personnel (general education teachers, principals, etc.). Be sure to include at least three references (one local) where your audience can learn more information.

You must not only present the information, but you need to **TEACH** it. Each presentation must include an assessment component. **BE CREATIVE!!**
Learning Activities (30 pts.)
Students will be asked to complete two learning activities. Assignment information will be discussed in class.

Exams (100 pts.)
There are two scheduled exams (50 points each). The exams will be based on the information from the reading guides 1-4 (see Reading Guide information).

Course Participation (20 pts.)
Each student is expected to participate in course discussions and activities and to complete all assignments as directed. Students are expected to be respectful and refrain from private conversations. Refer to Course Policies for additional information.

Each student is expected to come to class prepared. All readings/assignments are to be completed and cell phones are to be silenced. No reading or composing texts. No laptops. If you need to use a laptop for notetaking, please see the instructor.

Late assignments, if accepted, will automatically incur a one letter grade deduction. All late assignments must be provided to the instructor within one week of the original due date.

During class sessions, students will be expected to use language consistent with IDEA (emphasizing “person-first” language). Person first language is also to be used in all assignments for this course. Not using the correct terminology will affect your participation/assignment grade.

Optional Assignment: Three Reading Guides
The text contains a great deal of critical information. To assist you in engaging in this information, you can elect to complete questions on each chapter. The text consists of 16 chapters. Fifteen (15) of those chapters (1-15) are divided into four Reading Guides (RG). I STRONGLY encourage you to complete these reading guides as you read each chapter – this will support your learning of the material and aid in learning retention. You may choose to work together to complete these guides. RGs will only be reviewed on the scheduled date. You MUST have your responses (in writing) in order to participate in the group review. On your reading guide, I strongly suggest you write down the page number of the correct answer for each item. These reading guides ARE your study guides for your two exams.

Our course is divided into four Reading Guides (RG):
- RG 1  Foundational Aspects of Special Education  Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4
- RG 2  High-Incidence Disabilities  Ch. 5, 6, 7, 8
- RG 3  Severe and Multiple Disabilities  Ch. 9, 10, 11, 12
- RG 4  Sensory Disabilities  Ch. 13, 14, 15
IX. Course Schedule and Policies

Tentative Course Schedule
See attached.

Attendance Policy
Attendance is expected. Due to the nature of this course, participation is critical. Please arrive to class on time and be prepared to stay until the class is dismissed. Arriving late or leaving early twice during our course (any combination), will count as an absence. Missing more than one class may affect your final grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to check in with a classmate for notes, materials and other information you have missed. Please note: There are no extra credit opportunities in this class.

Excused absences are limited to participation in a TAMUCC sanctioned event or participation in a religious holy day as outlined in the University catalog. Any assignment, quiz, or test missed due to a TAMUCC sanctioned event must be completed prior to the absence.

Student Conduct
Professional behavior is expected of all students. Inappropriate class conduct (cursing, disruption, sidebar conversations, etc.) may result in a reduced final grade or failure of the course. All cell phones will be turned off or to the inaudible mode during class. Do not answer a call during class. Do not read or compose texts during class. Do not leave the classroom to answer a call, unless you anticipate an emergency call and warn me prior to class.

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 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.)

Disciplinary action for academic misconduct is the responsibility of the faculty member assigned to the course. The faculty member is charged with assessing the gravity of any case of academic dishonesty, and with giving sanction to any student involved. Penalties that may be applied to individual cases of academic dishonesty include one or more of the following:

1. Written reprimand;
2. Requirement to re-do work in question;
3. Requirement to submit additional work;
4. Lowering of grade on work in question;
5. Assigning grade of “F” to work in question;
6. Assigning grade of “F” for course;
7. Recommendation for more severe consequences.

If the faculty member determines that assigning a grade of “F” to the course is the appropriate penalty and this disciplinary action occurs prior to the deadline for dropping courses, the student forfeits his/her right to drop the course in question.
The faculty member may file a record of cases of academic dishonesty, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean and the Office of Student Affairs. The office of the academic dean of the college in which the offense took place will maintain records of all cases of academic dishonesty reported for a period of not more than two years.

X. Textbook
Required:

Suggested:

It’s a New IDEA: The Manual for Parents and Students About Special Education Services in Texas 2007 available at: [www.thearcoftexas.org](http://www.thearcoftexas.org) or [www.advocacyinc.org](http://www.advocacyinc.org)

XI: Bibliography
The knowledge base that support course content and procedures include, but is not limited to, the following:


The following professional organizations and their respective publications are important resources for specialists in the disability field:

Council for Exceptional Children:
- Division for Physical and Health Disabilities
- Council of Administrators of Special Education
- Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders
- Division on Developmental Disabilities
- Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness
- Division for Learning Disabilities
- Division on Visual Impairments
- The Association for the Gifted

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XII. Grade Appeals
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

XIII. Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute 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 disability. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.
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### Tentative Course Schedule

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<th>Session</th>
<th>Class Activities</th>
<th>Assignment Due for Class</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
<td>Special Education Overview</td>
<td>C. 1&amp;2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Universal Design</td>
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<td>Sept. 13</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>C. 3&amp;4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>RG 1 Due</td>
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<td>Sept. 20</td>
<td>Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>C. 5</td>
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<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>Communication Disorders</td>
<td>C. 6</td>
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<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td><strong>Emotional Behavioral Disorders</strong></td>
<td>C. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>Activity 2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td><strong>ADHD</strong></td>
<td>C. 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td><strong>Mental Retardation (IDD)</strong></td>
<td>C. 9</td>
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<td><strong>Severe/Multiple Disabilities</strong></td>
<td>C. 10</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1</td>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>C. 11</td>
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<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td><strong>Other Health Impaired</strong></td>
<td>C. 12</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td><strong>Traumatic Brain Injury</strong></td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>Nov. 15</td>
<td><strong>Deaf/Hard of Hearing</strong></td>
<td>C. 14</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>Review C. 13&amp;14</td>
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<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>Exam Preparation</td>
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<td><strong>Blindness/Visual Impairments</strong></td>
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<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
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