Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi  
College of Education  
SPED 5397 – Special Education Field-Experience  
Spring 2012 Course Syllabus

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday & Tuesday, 1-4pm  
COURSE NUMBER: SPED 5397  
COURSE_NAME: Special Education Field Experience  
CREDIT: 3 Hours

This course is an online supported, field experience.

I. Course Description
A field-based experience in which the student will demonstrate competencies to design and/or implement IEP’s for language majority and language minority exceptional students. Grade assigned will be “credit” (CR) or “no credit” (NC).

II. Rationale
Provides graduate students with practical experience in designing and/or implementing components of an IEP.

III. State Adopted Proficiencies for Teachers
The state adopted proficiencies covered in this course include the following:

1. Learner-Centered Instruction: To create a learner-centered community, the teacher collaboratively identified needs; and plans, implements and assesses instruction using technology and other resources.

2. Equity in Excellence for All Learners: The teacher responds appropriate 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. 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.)

V. TEExES Competencies and CEC National Standards
TEExES Competencies

TEExES INFORMATION: www.sbec.state.tx.us/

DOMAIN I – UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND EVALUATING THEIR NEEDS

Competency 002: The special education teacher understands formal and informal assessment procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.

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.

DOMAIN IV: FOUNDATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Competency 012: The special education teacher knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.

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.

VI. Course Objectives and Outcomes
This course is designed to enable students to:
1. Gain practical information on setting up and organizing a classroom for students with special needs
2. Teach students both on an individual and group basis under a teacher’s supervision
3. Document, monitor, and evaluate instruction on a daily basis
4. Administer assessment devices to evaluate short term objectives
5. Conduct baseline/intervention studies

VII. Course Topics
This is a field-based class in which the student interacts and teaches students, who have special needs, under the supervision of the classroom teacher.

VIII. Instructional Methods and Activities
The methods and activities for instruction include the following:
- Traditional Experiences (lecture, discussion, online collaborations)
- Field Based Experiences

IX. Evaluation and Grade Assignment
This course is graded as “credit” or “no credit.” Students must successfully complete each course component to receive “credit.”

Each student is required to complete five components successfully in order to receive a grade of “credit” for the course.

Each student will consult with the professor to determine their individual projects. ALL projects must be approved by the professor.
The major components of this course include the following assignments:

1. **Field based component**
   The student will spend 4 – 5 hours per week for a period of 8-10 weeks in a school setting serving students receiving special education services (inclusive, pull-out, self-contained, etc.). A total of 40 hours must be completed. The student will work under the direct supervision of a special educator to gain experience which promotes the professional growth and development needed leading to certification of a special education teacher. Attendance and sign-in sheet is required.

2. **Reflective Online Journal**
   - Field placement overview - name of school, supervising teacher, number of students, type of classroom, etc.
   - Six journal entries (these are viewed only by you and the professor). These are reflections of your experience.
   - Final entry (#6) – read your journal, review each session, and provide an overall reflection – what you learned, what you will use, what you might do differently.

3. **Data Collection** will be reviewed in class.

4. **Reading Responses** are a way to apply our current learning theory to what we are experiencing the classroom. You must respond to all three discussion activities.

5. **Student Activity:** Choose one: Lesson Plan, Behavior Intervention Plan, Module Project or Professional Development Project. For the first three projects listed, you
may use the assigned format or, if applicable, you may use your field-based site’s forms. See instructor for permission.

For the Individual Development Project, each student will choose an individualized project that will support their professional growth. Students are encouraged to choose an area that is relatively new to them or in which they would like to learn more. The student must identify (specifically) their professional development goal(s) in that area, steps in which they will attain that goal, artifacts of their work, and a summary of what they learned. Examples of potential projects include, but are not limited to:

- Assistive Technology
- Communication
- Data Collection Systems
- Paraprofessional Training

X. Course Schedule and Policies

Tentative Course Schedule
See attached.
This is a wonderful opportunity to learn from others in a school setting – make the most of it!!

Field Experience Guidelines
It is critical that you represent yourself and TAMUCC in a professional manner. Placement information includes:
1. Attend your placement 4-5 hours per week for a total of 40 hours (as approved by the professor);
2. If late or absent, time must be made up” in order to receive a passing grade;
3. If you are going to be absent, leave a message in advance with the cooperating teacher and the university professor;
4. If you change days or times it must be approved in advance by the cooperating teacher and the university professor;
5. Request a teacher handbook or list of rules and dress code. Adhere to all school (and university) rules;
6. Use person-first language in all your professional discussions and written work;
7. Respect all rules of confidentiality and Code of Ethics;
8. All work must be typed, single or double spaced, well organized, fastened, and written at a graduate level (please edit all work prior to submission);
9. If you have any difficulty or concern, please contact me immediately!

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.
**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
The 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 the Disability Services at (361)825-5816 in CCH 116.

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 for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**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 Rule13.02.99.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.

**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 punishment.

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.

XI. TEXTBOOK

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process (March 2010) available on Texas Education Agency website. ([download free](#))

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

XII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Course content is supported by the following:


Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).


**Helpful Teacher Websites:**

- Discovery Lesson Plans, Customized Puzzles, K-12 with Modifications  
  - [http://discoveryschool.com](http://discoveryschool.com)

- Crayola Lesson Plans  

- PBS Teacher Source for Lesson Plans  
  - [http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/)

- Gateway to Educational Materials  
  - [http://www.thegateway.org/](http://www.thegateway.org/)

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  
- Teacher Education Division  
- Division for Early Childhood  
- Council for Educational Diagnostic Services  
- Technology and Media Division  
- Division on Career Development and Transition  
- Division for Research  
- Division for Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners  
- TASH
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COURSE: SPED 5397 Special Education Field Experience
CREDIT: 3 Hours

This course is an online supported, field experience.

Tentative Schedule

Attendance at your placement is critical.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday Weeks</th>
<th>Course Activities</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Week of:</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 11</td>
<td>TAMUCC - Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>Paperwork Due</td>
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<td>Jan. 25</td>
<td>Assignment Choice Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 1</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Online Reading Response 1 Due</td>
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<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<td>Feb. 15</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<td>Feb. 22</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<td>Online Reading Response 2 Due</td>
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<td>Feb. 29</td>
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<td>March 7</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<td>Student Profile &amp; Data Collection Sheet Due</td>
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<td>March 14</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>March 21</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student Activity Due</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td>Work in setting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Online Reading Response 3 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>All 6 Journal Entries Must Be Completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Attendance/Sign in Sheets Must Be Submitted</td>
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