This course is online.

I. Course Description
This course provides basic information and skills for working with exceptional individuals in a variety of settings. It also includes 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. Student Learning Outcomes
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.)
V. 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.

VI. Course Objectives

Course Objectives
This course is designed to enable students to:

• Recognizes the historical foundations of special education, major contributors to the literature, major legislation relevant to knowledge and practice in the education of individuals with disabilities, and current issues and trends in special education (IV 010 i)
• Recognizes various perspectives regarding definitions and etiologies of disabilities (IV 010 iv)
• Applies knowledge of ethical concerns related to assessment and evaluation, including legal provisions, regulations, and guidelines regarding unbiased evaluation and the use of psychometric instruments and instructional assessment measures with individuals with disabilities (I 002 i)
• Applies current educational terminology and definitions regarding individuals with disabilities, including professionally accepted classification systems and current incidence and prevalence figures (IV 010 iii)
• Analyzes issues relating to definition and identification procedures for individuals with disabilities, including individuals from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (IV 010 iv)
• Applies knowledge of the continuum of placement and services for individuals with disabilities (IV 010 viii)
• Recognizes the effects of cultural and environmental influences on the child and family (I 001 v)
- Analyzes cultural factors and perspectives that affect relationships among students, parents/guardians, schools, and communities with regard to providing instruction for individuals with disabilities (II 005 i)
- Identifies factors that influence the overrepresentation of culturally and/or linguistically diverse students in programs for individuals with disabilities (IV 010 v)
- Recognizes the collaborative roles of students, parents/guardians, teachers and other school and community personnel in planning and implementing an individualized program, and applies effective strategies for working collaboratively in various contexts (IV 012 i)
- Applies knowledge of factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with students, parents/guardians, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school and community personnel (IV 012 ii)
- Identifies ways to foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals in the school and community (IV 012 iii)
- Identifies typical concerns of families of individuals with disabilities and appropriate strategies to support families in dealing with these concerns (IV 012 iv)
- Applies knowledge of strategies for encouraging and assisting parents/guardians in their role as active participants in their children's education, and identifies procedures for planning and conducting collaborative conferences with parents/guardians (IV 012 v)
- Recognizes characteristics of individuals with different types of disabilities, including individuals with different levels of severity and multiple disabilities across eligibility categories, and analyzes the impact of various disabilities on learning and experience (I 001 i)
- Identifies the different ways that students with and without disabilities learn (I 001 iv)
- Identifies ways in which technology can assist in managing the teaching and learning environment to meet the needs of individual students (II 004 v)
- Recognizes normal, delayed, and disordered communication patterns, including nonsymbolic communication, and the impact of language development on the academic and social skills of individuals with disabilities (I 001 vii)
- Identifies ways in which technology can assist in managing the teaching and learning environment to meet the needs of individual students (II 004 v)
- Identifies ways in which physical and health impairments relate to development and behavior, and knows the etiologies and effects of sensory disabilities and other conditions affecting individuals with disabilities (I 001 ix)
- Recognizes the etiologies and effects of sensory disabilities affecting individuals with disabilities (I 001 ix, partial)

**VII. 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
VIII. Instructional Methods and Activities

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

IX. Evaluation and Grade Assignment

A total of 170 points can be earned in this course.

153 – 170 90 – 100%  A
135 – 152 80 – 89%   B
117 – 134 70 – 79%   C
  99– 116 60 – 69%   D

59% or lower constitutes an F.

The major requirements of this course include the following assignments:

1. Student Learning Activities - 6
2. Quizzes - 4
3. Research Summaries - 2
4. Final Exam - 1

Student Learning Activities (50 pts.)

Students will participate in a series of learning activities using the assignment link, wikis, blogs, and discussion board tools. The Introduction Activity and Conclusion (Unit 5) are worth 5 points each. Unit Activities (1-4) are worth 10 points. Students will also participate in simulations, discussions, and self-reflections.

In order to receive full credit, each response must be thorough and well-written. All course members are expected to communicate in a respectful and professional manner. In all written correspondence to the instructor, text speak is not appropriate. Using text speak in an assignment, will affect your assignment grade.

During our course, 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 assignment grade. Please review the Person-First Language information provided on your Bb Welcome Page.

You will be allowed to submit your work only one time. You may want to create your work in a word document and then copy and paste it into the online venue (discussion board, blog),
**Quizzes (60 pts.)**
There will be 4 quizzes within the course. Each quiz is worth 15 points. The quizzes are cumulative and based on the reading study questions provided at the beginning of each chapter. The quizzes are timed.

You will be allowed to log onto each quiz only once so plan your time accordingly. There are no “make up” quizzes allowed. You will take the quizzes within the time allotted so plan well.

**Research summaries (20 pts.)**
Students will research two areas of disability (i.e., Down syndrome). Following the guideline provided, students will write a 3-5 page paper summarizing the disability (IDEA definition, etiology, characteristics, etc.), research-based effective instructional approaches/supports at each school level (elementary, middle, high), and assistive technology solutions (low to high – as appropriate). All topics should receive instructor approval. Papers must abide by the most current version of the APA. Research summaries will be posted as blogs and students will provide comments on one another’s work. Each summary is worth 10 points.

**Final Exam (40 pts.)**
The final exam is cumulative and is based on the study questions from each chapter. The final exam is timed.

**X. Course Schedule and Policies**

**Tentative Course Schedule**
See attached.

**Attendance Policy**
In this online course, your presence is critical. We have several interactive engagement activities in which your participation is expected. NO late assignments will be accepted – only under the most extraordinary circumstances as determined by the instructor. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE to complete and submit your work. Expect the unexpected and prepare ahead of time.

**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.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of e-mail and/or Blackboard. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (e.g., e-mails, Blackboard, websites) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. Students need to make certain that the course instructor has both a primary and secondary means of contacting each student.
**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 Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in CCH 117.

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 CCH 117.

**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:**

**Suggested:**

It’s a New IDEA: The Manual for Parents and Students About Special Education Services in Texas 2012 available at: [www.thearcoftexas.org](http://www.thearcoftexas.org) or [www.advocacyinc.org](http://www.advocacyinc.org)

**XII. 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

**TASH**

- 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
This course meets online.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

All assignments must be submitted by the specified Monday, 5pm. After that time, submission access will no longer be available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Activities may be turned in earlier than the assigned deadline, but not later.</th>
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| **Introduction**  
Due September 9, 5pm |
| **Unit 1 (chapters 1-4)**  
Special Education Foundations, Accessing the General Education Curriculum, Diversity, Families, and Collaboration  
All Unit 1 Assignments due NO later than Sept. 30, 5pm |
| **Unit 2 (chapters 5-8)**  
Learning Disabilities, Communication Disorders, Emotional Behavioral Disorders, ADHD  
All Unit 2 Assignments due NO later than Oct. 21, 5pm |
| **Unit 3 (chapters 9-12)**  
Intellectual Disabilities, Multiple Disabilities, Autism, Other Health Impairments  
All Unit 3 Assignments due NO later than Nov. 11, 5pm |
| **Unit 4 (chapters 13-15)**  
Traumatic Brain Injury, Hearing Loss, Visual Impairments  
All Unit 4 Assignments due NO later than Dec. 2, 5pm |
| **Unit 5**  
Due NO Later than MONDAY Dec. 16, 5pm |