This online course uses Blackboard 9.1 as its teaching and learning environment. You will have to have your NET ID to log into the course on Blackboard.

There is a student tutorial available on the Island Online website (http://iol.tamucc.edu). If you have any problems logging in, the Blackboard helpdesk phone number is 825-2692.

You are required to check your Blackboard account every day for announcements, Blackboard mail messages, assignment due dates, and/or assignment directions. This course utilizes PDF files. In order to access these files, please click the Adobe Reader link located in the Course Content tab of your Blackboard account.

Begin this course by reading the syllabus very carefully. You can access the assignments, discussions, and assessments in this course by using the Course Content Tab, Assignment Tab, Discussion Forum Tab, or Assessment Tab on the tool bar on the left side of the course homepage.

If you have difficulty accessing any of the Course Content, please let your instructor know as quickly as possible. The quickest way to contact your instructor is through TAMUCC email or the Blackboard mail message system. If you choose to make contact via telephone, please identify yourself and the course number clearly.

You will receive a response to email and Blackboard messages within 48 hours, with the exception of weekends and/or holidays.

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 = EDUC 4321, 4-8 = EDUC 4323 and EDUC 4322 = 8-12; EDUC 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 EDUC 4321, EDUC 4322, EDUC 4323 or EDUC 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 “general education” classroom and others are considering careers working specifically in special education or bilingual education, these two career paths are, in fact, rapidly conjoining.

III. **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.

IV. **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.

V. **Course Objectives and 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. (Including training on Detection of Students with Mental or Emotional Disorders) (TEEs 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. (TEEs 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). (TEEs 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. (TEEs 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 students of special needs. (TEEs 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. (TEEs Competencies: 001, 002) (State Proficiencies: 1, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

8. Gain experience in modifying instruction to meet students’ special educational needs. (TEEs 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. (TEEs Competencies: 002, 012, 013) (State Proficiencies: 1, 3) (Curricular Topic: Special Populations)

VI. Course Topics:
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
VII. Instructional Methods and Activities

EDUC 4321/2/3/4 utilizes a variety of traditional instructional methods and activities, as well as field-based experiences.
A. Traditional Experiences (group discussion, demonstrations, 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. Evaluation and Grade Assignment

Overview of Course Requirements:
1. Initial Response to Assigned Readings (10 points each);
2. Response to Peers’ Responses to Assigned Readings (5 points each);
3. IRIS Modules initial response (10 points each);
4. Response to Peers’ IRIS modules (5 points each);
5. Instructional Accommodations/Modifications Interview (100 points)
6. Case Study Journal and Report (400 points);
7. Syllabus Quiz (50 points)
8. Introduction to class PowerPoint

Detailed Description of Course Requirements:

1. Class Attendance and Participation

   The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct 2014-2014 includes the following policy regarding class attendance:

   Students are held accountable for class attendance and are advised that excessive absences may adversely affect their grades (see course requirement for attendance above). Every instructor should clearly explain the policy on class attendance at the beginning of each course. If students are absent from class on approved university business (e.g., intercollegiate athletics competition/travel, field trips, student research conferences, Board of Regents meetings), faculty members should count the absence as an excused absence and should not penalize the student for it. Students absent from a scheduled class meeting because of approved university business should be allowed to make up any required course work in advance or after return to campus. Students are responsible for informing instructors about the approved university absence in advance, so instructors can plan accordingly. If students have any doubt as to whether the activity in question is considered official university business, students should contact the Provost’s Office for clarification.

2. Initial Responses to Assigned Readings (200 total points)

   This activity requires you to read the assigned material and post an initial reflection/response to the reading which adds value to the reading. Students are required to post at minimum a one page (125 or more words per chapter), single spaced, 12 point font, written reflection for each reading assignment, selecting a key idea or topic from each chapter. Please title each chapter. Also, use chapter and page numbers in your initial response, so your peers can refer to the text when reading your response.
Just click on “create thread” in the Initial Response and Peer Responses section of the assignment or on the left side of the page in Blackboard in the Discussion Board. I strongly recommend that you write your Initial Response in a word document and copy and paste it into Blackboard. This will keep you from losing your work in the event of a computer disconnect or issue.

**Please refer to the example** of an appropriate Initial Response and Responses to Peers provided to you at our first class meeting. Be sure to post your reflection before reading your peers.

All postings, Initial Responses to the Reading and Responses to Peers (see below), should add value and substance to the online conversation. Rather than just writing "I agree," write "I agree because..." It is the explanation of the "because" that adds value and substance to the online discussion. Participants in this class will not always agree with the instructor, their classmates, or any of the authors cited in the materials presented—but any university student should be able to explain the reason for their agreement or disagreement.

Explain how the knowledge or concept might have unintended consequences in the future. Remember that the written reflections you share with us are open ended conversations not summaries of the readings or formal essays about the reading. The thinking you share with the class does not have to have a clear beginning, middle, and end. It does not have to read like a coherent essay (though it may, if you so choose). But it ought to represent your serious thinking.

Responses that demonstrate serious thinking about the reading, include a page number for each chapter, are professionally written, and use person-first language (see handout provided) will receive full credit. Responses that seem superficial and do not seem to demonstrate serious thinking will receive no credit.

**You may work ahead, but you cannot work backward in this course. Pay close attention to due dates and times. No late work will be accepted.**

3. **Response to Peers (200 total points)**

You are required to post a written response to at least two (2) of your peer’s “Initial Responses to Assigned Readings” for each assigned reading by the due date/time posted in the course schedule. All you have to do is select "Reply" on your peer’s response and begin responding. Be sure to select "Submit" when you are finished with your reply.

All postings, **Initial Responses to the Reading and Responses to Peers**, should **add value and substance** to the online conversation. Rather than just writing "I agree," write "I agree because..." It is the explanation of the "because" that **adds value and substance** to the online discussion. Participants in this class will not always agree with the instructor, their classmates, or any of the authors cited in the materials presented—but any university student should be able to explain the reason for their agreement or disagreement.

Remember that the written reflections you share with us and your responses to peers are open-ended conversations **not summaries** of the readings or summaries of your peers’ postings. It should represent your serious thinking about the important consequences of particular beliefs (yours and others), and it must demonstrate that you have **reflected** on what you have read, and it ought to add value to the conversation about the reading.

*Suggested Approach*
Read a selection of your colleagues’ postings. As you read their responses, note those to which you would like to respond with advice, questions, comments, and/or encouragement.

Respond to two of your colleagues’ postings by suggesting ways to provide additional support or suggestions. You can also respond in any of the following ways:
• Build on something your colleague said.
• Explain why and how you see things differently.
• Ask a probing or clarifying question.
• Share an insight from having read your colleagues' postings.
• Offer and support an opinion.
• Validate an idea with your own experience.
• Ask for evidence that supports the posting.

Return to this Discussion in a few days to read the responses to your initial posting. Consider what you have learned and/or any insights you have gained as a result of the comments your colleagues made.

This is essentially a reflection of your reaction to the initial post and your peers’ posts. The key words are reflection/reaction – ABSOLUTELY no summary as all your peers will have already read what you are writing about.

Responses that demonstrate serious thinking about the reading will receive full credit. Responses that seem superficial and do not seem to demonstrate serious thinking will receive no credit.

You may work ahead, but you cannot work backward in this course. Pay close attention to due dates and times. No late work will be accepted.

Grading Scale
90%-100% = A
80%-89% = B
70%-79% = C
60%-69% = D
Below 69% = F

XI. Course Schedule
A. See attached Schedule (See Course Schedule Overview on Blackboard for specific due dates)
B. Last Day to Drop (See Academic Calendar)

Class Policies
• Written Work in EDUC 4321 - 4324
  All written work in EDUC 4321 - 4324 must be submitted in 12-point font with absolute minimum surface errors (spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.) and must follow accepted styles and rules of standard written English. Use template, when provided. If you want/need help with your academic writing, please contact the TAMUCC Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA) http://casa.tamucc.edu.

• Do Not Email Assignments
No assignments will be accepted through regular TAMUCC email. Rather, assignments MUST be posted through Blackboard.

- **Submission of Late Work**
  Late work is **NOT** accepted! There will be no exceptions to this policy.

- **Extra Credit and End of Semester Negotiations**
  No end of semester negotiations about grades will be entertained. However, your instructor will support you in every way possible during the semester to ensure that you perform well in the class. Please communicate any difficulties or concerns with the material or course directly with your instructor. Your grade in the course is a direct reflection of your engagement in your own learning process. Please complete all assignments as instructed and submit them by the due date. **There will be NO extra credit assignments under any circumstances.**

- **Technical Difficulties**
  Since this class is a web-based, you must have the ability to connect to the Internet, download required material, and post assignments as needed. **Extensions will not be granted due to last minute computer troubles, crashes, etc.**; plan ahead and have back up plans in place should something go wrong.

- **Class Attendance and Participation**
  The degree to which you participate in all of the learning activities in EDUC 4321 - 4324 is a direct indicator of your commitment to the teaching profession and as such is noted by the instructor. Points will be deducted for each absence. The Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi **Student Handbook and Code of Conduct 2012-2013** includes the following policy regarding class attendance:

  *Students are held accountable for class attendance and are advised that excessive absences may adversely affect their grades. Every instructor should clearly explain the policy on class attendance at the beginning of each course. If students are absent from class on approved university business (e.g., intercollegiate athletics competition/travel, field trips, student research conferences, Board of Regents meetings), faculty members should count [the absence] as an excused absence and should not penalize the student for it. Students [absent from a scheduled class meeting because of approved university business] should be allowed to make up any required course work in advance or after return to campus. Students are responsible for informing instructors about the [approved university absence] in advance, so instructors can plan accordingly. If [students] have any doubt as to whether the activity in question is considered official university business, [students] should contact the Provost’s Office [for clarification].*

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation **WILL NOT** automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Check the university academic calendar website for dates related to dropping a class with an automatic grade of "W" this term. See website [http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/academic_cal.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/academic_cal.html).
• **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, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in failure. See website [http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/](http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/)

• **Classroom Conduct**
  All students are expected to act in a responsible manner with consideration of fellow students and toward TAMU-CC faculty members. 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. Specific rules and information is available in the TAMU-CC Student Handbook and available through the website [http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html](http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html)

  *All cell phones will be turned off or set to vibrate during class.* Please 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 provide the instructor notice prior to class.

• **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 CCH 116” [http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu](http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu)

  Your instructor not be able to make accommodations without a letter from Disability Services.

  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.

  If you are a returning veteran and experience 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 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://advising.tamucc.edu/grade_appeals.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Preferred methods of scholarly citations
See Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition is the preferred method for citations within papers.

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 Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

XII. Textbook

No textbook will be used in this course. However, students must access all materials via the web.