I. Course Description (3 Hours of Credit)
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 Standards 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. Council for Exceptional Children: Initial Level Content Standards
TAMUCC Special Education Program is aligned with the National CEC 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. Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes:

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 (I 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 non-symbolic 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)

Student Outcomes:
Students in this graduate program will:
• Demonstrate knowledge of the field of special education, including: knowledge of individuals with disabilities, evaluation of individual learning needs, strategies for fostering learning and development, and professional roles and responsibilities (SPED 5315, SPED 5320, SPED 5340, SPED 5385, SPED 5386, SPED 5387, and SPED 5399 are linked to this student learning outcome).
• Plan and develop effective instructional interventions responsive to the unique needs of individual learners. (SPED 5320, SPED 5386 and SPED 5387 are linked to this student learning outcome).
• Plan and implement a behavior intervention plan to provide behavioral supports aligned with individual needs (SPED 5380 is linked to this student learning outcome).

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:
The methods and activities for instruction include the following:
  • Readings and discussion
  • Professional Writing
  • Cooperative learning
  • Case studies
  • Field experiences
VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment
A total of 170 points can be earned in this course.

180 – 200  90 – 100%     A
160 – 179  80 – 89%     B
140 – 159  70 – 79%     C
120– 139   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. BlackBoard Discussion Board - 6
3. Research Summaries – 2 (Benchmarks)
4. Quizzes- 4
5. Final Exam- 1

In order to receive full credit, each response must be thorough and well-written. Papers must abide by the most current version of the APA. 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 (such as: “i” instead of “I”).

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).

**Student Learning Activities (60 pts.)**
Students will participate in a series of learning activities. Descriptions of these activities are found under “course content” in BlackBoard.

**Quizzes (40 pts.)**
There will be 4 quizzes within the course. Each quiz is worth 10 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 (30 pts.) – Course Benchmark**
Students will research two areas of disability (one high incidence and one low incidence). Following the guideline provided, students will write a 5-7-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 15 points. Students must score 80% or higher on project rubrics.

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

**Discussion Board (30 points)**
Discussion questions will be posted by the instruction on assigned week according to the course schedule (see BlackBoard). Discussion Board questions will be posted by Monday morning. For each question, you will post an initial detailed and thoughtful response by Thursday at midnight. Then, you will respond to at least 3 postings from your classmates by Sunday at midnight. Students are expected to participate in the on-going on-line discussions with each other. In order to participate in these discussions, it is imperative that you read the text and any other resources you can find. This requires a high level of participation and on-going, active engagement. The criteria for this level of participation involve critical thinking rich in content, insight, and thought. Postings provide clear connections to reading and real-life situations and bring in new ideas. Be sure to cite your sources using APA format.

**IX: Required Text:**

**X. Bibliography**


**Helpful Websites:**

It’s a New IDEA: The Manual for Parents and Students About Special Education Services in Texas 2016 available at: [https://www.thearcoftexas.org/idea-manual/](https://www.thearcoftexas.org/idea-manual/)

Notice of Procedural Safeguards (July 2018) [https://fw.esc18.net/Documents/Pro_Safeguards_ENG.pdf](https://fw.esc18.net/Documents/Pro_Safeguards_ENG.pdf)

**XI. Tentative Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WK</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities/Topics</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 26</td>
<td>Syllabus, Course Requirements, Introduction</td>
<td>BlackBoard Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 2</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Activity 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 9</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Blackboard Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 16</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>BlackBoard Discussion; Quiz 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sept 23</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
<td>Activity 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sept 30</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td>Activity 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td>BlackBoard Discussion; Research Summary 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
<td>Activity 4; Quiz 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
<td>BlackBoard Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oct 28</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td>Activity 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>Quiz 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Chapter 11, 12</td>
<td>Activity 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 18</td>
<td>Chapter 13, 14</td>
<td>BlackBoard Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Nov 25</td>
<td>Chapter 15, 16, 17</td>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>last class day for TAMU-CC is 12/4</td>
<td>Research Summary 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam- TBA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
XII. **Course Policies:**

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**
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/).

**Submission of Work**
All written work turned in must be typewritten. With the exception of field journals, hand-written work will not be accepted. Late work will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made *in advance* with the instructor or documentation is provided of a medical or family emergency.

**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).

**Preferred methods of scholarly citations**
Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Sixth Edition is the required method for citations within papers.

**Classroom/professional behavior**
All students are expected to act in a responsible manner with consideration of fellow students and toward TAMU-CC faculty and staff members. 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).

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

**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.

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. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

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 disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in CCH 116. See website http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu.

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.

*Required by SACS