I. Course Description
This course introduces students to the field of low-incidence disabilities. Students will explore foundational concepts including: definitions and etiology, family and professional partnerships, special education law, and standards based IEPs.

II. Rationale
This introductory course is designed to provide educational professionals with basic knowledge of the field of low-incidence disabilities.

III. State Adopted Proficiencies for Teachers
The state adopted proficiencies covered in this course include the following: Equity in Excellence for All Learners. The teacher responds appropriately to diverse groups of learners. The administrator promotes equity in excellence for all by acknowledging, respecting, and responding to diversity among students and staff while building on shared values and other similarities that bond all people.

IV. TExES Examination of Education Standards (TExES)
A. The Generic Special Education EC-12 Certification (Field 161) TExES program competencies covered in this course include the following:

DOMAIN I – UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND EVALUATING THEIR NEEDS

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

DOMAIN II – PROMOTING STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Competency 004: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for managing the teaching and learning environment, including procedures related to the use of assistive technology.
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 006: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of issues and procedures for teaching appropriate behavior and social skills.

DOMAIN IV – FOUNDATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

V. Course Objectives and Outcomes

Course Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Discuss different ways students learn (I, 001 iv)
- Discuss 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)
- Identify appropriate evaluation strategies for individual students with diverse characteristics and needs (I, 002, iii)
- Recognize the reciprocal nature of assessment and instruction; applies skills for developing individualized assessment strategies to evaluate the results of instruction; and knows how to use assessment and evaluation results to design, monitor, and modify instruction for individuals with disabilities. (I, 002, viii)
- Discuss the role of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in developing Individual Education Programs for students with disabilities, and applies skills for sequencing, implementing, and evaluation individual learning objectives. (II, 003, iii)
- Prepare, adapt, and organize materials to implement developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate lesson plans based on Individual Education Program objectives. (II, 003, v)
- Demonstrate knowledge of how to design, structure, and manage daily routines, including transition time, for students in a variety of educational settings, and applies procedures for monitoring behavior changes across activities and settings. (II, 004, iii)
- Identify ways in which technology can assist in managing the teaching and learning environment to meet the needs of individual students. (II, 004, vi)
- Discuss how to serve as a resource person for families, general education teachers, administrators, and other personnel in recognizing the characteristics of and meeting the needs of individuals with learning differences in the general education classroom (II, 005, ii)
- Demonstrate instructional, compensatory, enrichment, and remedial methods, techniques, and curriculum materials, and applies strategies for modifying instruction based on the differing learning styles and needs of students. (II, 005, iv)
- Apply knowledge of techniques for motivating students, including the effects of high teacher expectations on student motivation. (II, 005, v)
• Demonstrate knowledge of life-skills and self-help curricula and strategies for providing students with life-skills instruction relevant to independent or assisted living and employment. (II, 005, vi)
• Develop and/or select social skills and behavioral curricula and strategies that promote socially appropriate behavior, and prepare individuals to live cooperatively and productively in society. (II, 006, v)
• Incorporate social skills instruction across settings and curricula and know how to design, implement, and evaluation instructional programs that enhance an individual’s social participation in family, school, and community activities. (II, 006, vi)
• Implement strategies for modifying learning environments to promote appropriate behaviors. (II, 006, viii)
• Recognize the impact of language on an individual’s behavior and learning and know how the communication skills of nonspeaking/nonverbal individuals affect their behavior. (II, 006, ix)
• Apply knowledge of developmental processes associated with communication systems, including emergent and preliteracy skills, and know how to provide a variety of opportunities for students with disabilities to learn communication skills. (III, 008, i)

**Student Learning Outcomes**
Students in this graduate program will:

• demonstrate knowledge of individuals with disabilities; (SPED 5315, SPED 5320, SPED 5340, and SPED 5397 are linked to this student learning outcome.)
• evaluate the needs of individuals with disabilities; (SPED 5340, 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 5340, SPED 5385, SPED 5386, SPED 5387, 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.)

**VI. Course Topics**
• Historical Overview
• Definitions and Etiologies
• Special Education Law
• Family and Professional Partnerships
• Issues of Culture and Language
• Components of Standards-based IEPs
• Standards-based Instructional Activities
• Communication
• Health and Medical Needs
• Personal Care Needs
• Sensory and Motor systems
• Assistive Technology

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities

• Traditional Experiences (i.e., lecture, discussion, guest speakers, multimedia presentations, web enhanced activities)
• Clinical Experiences (i.e., cooperative groups, student presentations, student demonstrations, value clarification, role play)

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment

A total of 150 points can be earned in this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>203–225</td>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180–202</td>
<td>80 – 89%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158–179</td>
<td>70 – 79%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135–157</td>
<td>60 – 69%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

59% or lower constitutes an F.

The major requirements of this course include the following assignments:

1. Two Quizzes, One Exam
2. Two Article Reviews
3. Chapter Questions
4. Book Review
5. Group Project
6. Professional Growth Journal
7. LID Module Project
8. Introductory Blog
9. Service Learning Project
Exam & Quizzes (40 pts.): This class contains two quizzes (10 pts. each) and one exam (20pts).

Two Article Reviews (30 pts.): Students will review two journal articles (from a specific journal list) focused on evidence-based practices for students with severe disabilities. Each review must be written in the current APA style. Each article review is worth 15 pts.

Chapter Questions (12 pts.): The assigned text contains information that challenges traditional educational views of students with severe disabilities. To assist student interaction with the material, students are assigned a reflection question to coincide with chapters 1-4. Questions are due the same day the chapter reading is due. All work will be submitted on Bb. (4 questions – 3 pts each)

Book Review (10 pts.): Our class will read Carly’s Voice, a story of a girl growing up with autism. The book is written by Carly and her father. Students will read the book and write a review of the book for both families and practitioners. Remember, all work must be written in people-first language.

Group Project Plan (20 pts): Students will work together in small groups to develop and present a professional project plan to the class. The project must address a need for students with low-incidence disabilities. Project details will be developed and discussed in class.

Professional Growth Journal (15 pts.): Students will keep an online journal throughout the class. This journal is only read by the instructor and is a dialogue between student and instructor. Students will be asked to enter five journal entries – given prompts – throughout the semester. Please do NOT work ahead; the entries are designed to coincide with your previous units’ information. (5 entries – 3 pts each)

Introductory Blog Post (3 pts.): Students will complete an introductory blog during Unit 1.

LID Modules (10 pts.): Students will engage in the module certificate program sponsored by the Low Incidence Statewide Network of Texas. Specific information regarding this program will be discussed in class. Although it is not due until Unit 6, I suggest that you begin this program early. Each successful participant will receive a certificate (with CEUs). For credit, please submit an electronic copy of your certificate. You are encouraged to start early, you may upload your certificate at any time.

Community Service (5 pts.): Our class will work within the community to provide a service that positively impacts the lives of individuals with significant support needs. Details will be provided in class.

Course Participation (5 pts.)
Each student is expected to participate in course discussions and activities and to complete all assignments as directed. Attendance is expected. Our class meets ten times during this semester, each successful class participation is worth one point. Students are expected to be respectful and refrain from private conversations. Refer to Course Policies for additional information.
Each student is expected to come to class prepared. All readings/assignments are to be completed and cell phones are to be silenced and put away.

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. Late assignments, if accepted, must be received within one week of the assigned due date. Late assignments will incur an automatic point deduction of one letter grade.

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

IX. Textbooks
Required:

[We will be using this text in our other classes]


Additional online readings will be assigned.

X: Bibliography

The knowledge base that supports course content and procedures includes, 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
- 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

XI: Tentative Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of:</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weds. Aug. 28</td>
<td>Students with Severe Disabilities</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds. Sept. 4</td>
<td>Students with Severe Disabilities Library Session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds. Sept. 12</td>
<td>Philosophies and Practices</td>
<td>Unit 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds. Sept. 18</td>
<td>Collaboration among Professionals and Paraprofessionals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weds. Sept. 25</td>
<td>APA Session/CASA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weds. Oct. 2</td>
<td>Collaboration among Professionals and Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>Unit 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td>Collaborative Group Work Community Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weds. Oct. 9</td>
<td>Planning Instruction Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 16</td>
<td>Collaboration among Professionals and Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>Unit 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 23</td>
<td>Parent, Families, and Cultural Issues Guest Speaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 30</td>
<td>Collaboration among Professionals and Paraprofessionals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 6</td>
<td>Planning Instruction Programs Determining Instructional Goals</td>
<td>Unit 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Planning Instruction Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 27</td>
<td>Group Presentations</td>
<td>Unit 5</td>
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</table>
On Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dec. 4</th>
<th>Unit 6</th>
<th>Unit 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

All Unit work is due by 4pm on the due date.

XII. Course Schedule and 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**

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. Late assignments, if accepted, must be received within one week of the assigned due date. Late assignments will incur an automatic point deduction of one letter grade.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is expected. Due to the nature of this course, participation is critical. You will need to log onto Bb as we will using the site to share work, ideas, and resources. Please arrive to class on time and be prepared to stay until the class is dismissed. Arriving late or leaving early twice during our course (any combination), will count as an absence. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to check in with a classmate for notes, materials and other information you have missed. Please note: There are no extra credit opportunities in this class.

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

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

**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).

**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 gender, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, age, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. [http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/JAffairs/ja_hndbk_academic_info.htm](http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/JAffairs/ja_hndbk_academic_info.htm)

**Preferred methods of scholarly citations**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Sixth Edition is the preferred method for citations within papers.

**Course Participation**

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

For each guest speaker, students must prepare our speaker by developing three questions. Students are expected to be familiar with each organization **prior** to our guest speaker or class visit.

Each student is expected to come to class prepared. All readings/assignments are to be completed and **cell phones are to be silenced and put away**.

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

**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 notify me prior to class.

**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.

**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*