SPED 5397: Special Education Field-Experience
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
College of Education & Human Development
Spring, 2020 Course Syllabus
Thursday, 5:00-8:00 pm

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I. Course Description
A field-based experience in which the student will demonstrate competencies in designing and delivering instruction to language majority and language minority exceptional students. Grade assigned will be “credit” (CR) or “no credit” (NC).

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

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

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

2. Equity in Excellence for All Learners: The teacher responds appropriate to diverse groups of learners. The administrator promotes equity in excellence for all by acknowledging, respecting, and responding to diversity among students and staff while building on shared values and other similarities that bond all people.

IV. TExES Examinations of Educator Standards (TEXES) and CEC National Standards TExES Competencies

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

DOMAIN I – UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND EVALUATING THEIR NEEDS

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

DOMAIN II: PROMOTING STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
Competency 003: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction for individuals with disabilities.
DOMAIN IV: FOUNDATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

CEC National Standards
TAMUCC Special Education Program is aligned with the National Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards.

Council for Exceptional Children: Initial Level Content Standards
Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of the following standards:

Initial Content Standard 1: Foundations
Special educators understand the field as an evolving and changing discipline based on:

- philosophies and evidence-based principles and theories
- relevant laws and policies
- diverse and historical points of view
- human issues that influence the field and professional practice
- issues of human diversity that can impact families, cultures, and schools
- relationships of organizations of special education to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies

Initial Content Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners
Special educators:

- know and demonstrate respect for their students first as unique human beings
- understand the similarities and differences in human development
- understand how exceptional conditions can interact with the domains of human development
- use this knowledge to respond to the varying abilities and behaviors of individuals with exceptional learning needs

Initial Content Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences
Special educators:

- know and understand the effects that an exceptional condition can have on an individual’s learning in school and throughout life
- utilize active and resourceful means in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the individual’s exceptional condition
- understand learning differences provide the foundation upon which special educators individualize instruction
Initial Content Standard 4: Instructional Strategies
Special educators:

- possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote positive learning results in general and special curricula
- modify learning environments appropriately for individuals with exceptional learning needs
- enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem-solving, and performance skills of individuals with exceptional learning needs
- promote increased student’ self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem
- emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the life span.

Initial Content Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions
Special educators actively:

- create learning environments for individuals with exceptional learning needs
- foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions, and active engagement
- foster environments in which diversity is valued
- shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy
- help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with exceptional learning needs in general education environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions
- use direct motivational and instructional interventions
- teach students to respond effectively to current expectations
- intervene with individuals with exceptional learning needs in crisis
- coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors.

Initial Content Standard 6: Language
Special educators:

- understand typical and atypical language development
- use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills
- are familiar with augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies to support and enhance communication
• match communication methods to an individual’s language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences

• provide effective language models and use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with exceptional learning needs whose primary language is not English.

**Initial Content Standard 7: Instructional Planning**

Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators:

• develop long-range individualized instructional plans anchored in both general and special education curricula

• systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected shorter-range goals and objectives taking into consideration an individual’s abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors

• emphasize explicit modeling and efficient guided practice to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization.

• modify instructional plans based on ongoing analysis of the individual’s learning progress

• facilitate instructional planning in a collaborative context

• develop a variety of individualized transition plans from preschool to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts

• use appropriate technologies to support instructional planning and individualized instruction

**Initial Content Standard 8: Assessment**

Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments:

• to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs

• to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress

Special educators understand:

• legal policies and ethical principles of measurement

• measurement theory and practices

• appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments

Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to:

• assure nonbiased, meaningful assessments and decision-making

• conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement and environments

• identify supports and adaptations required for individuals
• regularly monitor the progress of individuals
• use appropriate technologies to support their assessments.

Initial Content Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice
Special educators are guided by the profession’s ethical and professional practice standards to:

• to practice ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations

Special educators view themselves as lifelong learners and regularly reflect on and adjust their practice to reflect current evidence-based best practices.

Initial Content Standard 10: Collaboration
Special educators routinely and effectively collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways and promote and advocate the learning and well-being of individuals with exceptional learning needs across a wide range of settings and a range of different learning experiences.

V. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Course Objectives
The overarching objective in this course is to design appropriate IEPs and deliver research-based instruction to students with disabilities. After completing this course, students will:

1. Enhance their knowledge and skills related to three goals they establish in consultation with the instructor;
2. Assess, establish short-term objectives, and design instruction for students with disabilities;
3. Teach students with disabilities with feedback from a supervising teacher and the instructor;
4. Critically reflect on the results of their efforts.

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 5380, 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 5340, SPED 5385, SPED 5386, SPED 5387, and SPED 5397 are linked to this student learning outcome);
• demonstrate knowledge of foundations of special education and professional roles and responsibilities of the special education educator (SPED 5385, SPED 5386, SPED 5387, and SPED 5397 are linked to this student learning outcome); and
• develop a behavior intervention/change plan (SPED 5380 is linked to this student learning outcome).

VI. Course Topics
This is a field-based class in which the student interacts and teaches students, who have special needs, under the supervision of a certified special educator/classroom teacher. Specific topics will be aligned with three goals students establish in consultation with the instructor.

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities
The methods and activities for instruction include the following:
• Traditional Experiences (lecture, discussion, online collaborations)
• Field Based Experiences
VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment
This course is graded as “credit” or “no credit.” Students must successfully complete each course component to receive “credit.”

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

Each student will consult with the professor to determine their individual projects. ALL projects must be approved by the professor.

The major components of this course include the following assignments:

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

2. Reflective Online Journal (due weekly). You must submit at least 6 journal entries – one per week. Only one journal entry per week will be counted for credit. Do not submit all your entries at the end of your experience as they will not be accepted. Your journal entries are a 1:1 conversation with your instructor about your experience. These are private; only the instructor will review each entry.
   - First entry (#1) – provide an overview of your field placement. Include the name of your school, field supervisor, number of students, type of classroom, at least three goals related to your work with students this semester based upon the knowledge and skills you have acquired throughout your master’s program.
   - Final entry (#6) – read your journal, review each session, and provide an overall reflection. Include information regarding how well you met your goals, what you learned, what you will use, what you might do differently.

3. Reading Responses. Our class will stay connected through our online course environment via discussions regarding the readings you select to assist you in meeting your goals. You will identify a minimum of 4 books (or book chapters) or substantive journal articles relevant to your established project goals and deliverables and submit for approval by the instructor. Once approved, you will read and reflect on how the information you obtain will impact your practice. You will share a summary of the articles/books you read along with specific implications for your project. You will also respond to your peers’ postings.

4. Project Deliverables: Each student will develop a minimum of three project deliverables that demonstrate progress toward established goals. One deliverable must include a graph demonstrating student progress and recommendations for future instruction.

5. Observations. Your field supervisor must conduct a minimum of two observations. You will also make arrangements with Dr. Robertson to observe a minimum of two lessons. Observations must occur between February 1 and April 30 and be spaced at least two weeks apart. In each lesson, you should plan to demonstrate strategies/activities/classroom arrangements designed to facilitate your attainment of at least some of your established project goals. Following the observations, you should schedule a time to debrief with the observer and establish goals for future lessons.

IX. Textbook
Required:
No textbook required. Readings aligned with project goals will be selected by the student with approval of the instructor.

Recommended:

It’s A New IDEA: The Manual for Parents and Students About Special Education Services in Texas 2012. Free publication available for download at: www.thearcoftexas.org or www.advocacyinc.org

X. Bibliography

Course content is supported by the following:


Helpful Teacher Websites:

AIMSweb http://www.aimsweb.com/


Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence
http://manoa.hawaii.edu/coe/crede/?p=79

Colorín Colorado http://www.colorincolorado.org

Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners http://community.cec.sped.org/DDEL/homepage

Discovery Lesson Plans, Customized Puzzles, K-12 with Modifications http://discoverschool.com

Gateway to Educational Materials http://www.thegateway.org/

Intervention Central http://www.interventioncentral.org

Texas Project First http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/

The IRIS Center http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk http://www.meadowscenter.org/

PBS Teacher Source for Lesson Plans http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/


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
- 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 and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learner
- TASH

XII. Tentative Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday Weeks</th>
<th>Course Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>TAMUCC – Orientation</td>
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Meet as a Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td><strong>Paperwork Due</strong>&lt;br&gt;Submit Project Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Meet as a Class—Present Project Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Schedule Observation #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Online Reading Response 1 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 5</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Online Reading Response 2 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>Work in Setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 26</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Schedule Observation #2&lt;br&gt;Submit Deliverable #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Online Reading Response 3 Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 9</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Submit Deliverable #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 16</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;Online Reading Response 4 Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 23</td>
<td>Work in Setting&lt;br&gt;All 6 Journal Entries Must Be Completed&lt;br&gt;Submit Deliverable #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Meet as a Class</td>
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</tbody>
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XIII. Course Policies

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

**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.

All online assignments must be submitted no later than 11:59 pm on the due date.

**Attendance/Tardiness**
Attendance is expected at face-to-face session as is participation in our online community. Be prompt and attend face-face-classes. Absences accompanied by doctor's note or similar documentation will be excused. Late arrivals and early departures from class will be recorded, and if excessive, will result in an absence that will negatively impact attendance and participation grade. Participate in class discussion and activities and put forth honest effort in-group work with peers. The professor will evaluate your participation in throughout the semester. Excessive private discussion during lecture or any class activities disrupts the class and will negatively affect your grade. If you find that you are a person who talks excessively to during class lecture and other activities where this is inappropriate, please monitor yourself and move to a seat where this is not tempting. The discipline this requires is greatly appreciated.

**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.

**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](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/](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*