

Westfield State University
College of Graduate and Continuing Education
Education Department
Syllabus
EDUC221/540 Intro to Students with Exceptional Learning Needs
Summer Session 2021



At least one person is listening

Course Description

EDUC221/540 INTRODUCTION TO STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING NEEDS.
(WSU Catalog Description)

Content and experiences will focus on those students who meet the criteria for categories of disabilities that are identified by Federal and State laws. This study of individuals in the context of school will facilitate an understanding of laws, history, litigation, individualized education programs, and current special education teaching methods. Race, gender and economic status are examined as they apply to students with exceptional learning needs. Historical and current approaches to the education and inclusion of students will be examined including topics of identification, placement, referral, evaluation and assistive technology. **(15 hours field experience is required)**

Course Rationale

Nearly seven million public school students receive special education services. A typical public school classroom includes at least three students with exceptional learning needs.

This is a special education introductory course. It is a prerequisite for all education majors. Other professional who work with special education students in public or private schools would also benefit from this course. (e.g. social work majors, movement science, school adjustment counselor) The majority of students with exceptional learning needs (80%) are grouped in the three mild disabilities: learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities, and emotionally disturbance.

Students with such developmental disabilities as autism, moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, and cerebral palsy comprise the remaining students who receive special education services (20%). **Because educators deal most often with students with mild disabilities, characteristics and strategies for teaching those students are emphasized in this course.** In all there are 13 categories of special education students (see p. 29 in your text). This course combines characteristics of students with exceptional learning needs with such practical teaching strategies as classroom management, building family relationships, and organizing inclusion programs.

Gifted or talented students are not provided educational services through federal law, but although not disabled are sometimes considered special education students. *If you have an interest in this population I encourage you to make teaching gifted and talented the topic of your research paper.*

Instructor

Martin Henley, Ph.D.

Use "Ask the Professor" link to post course related questions or comments

Use Plato email to contact me privately.

In an emergency use my home email: mhenley21@comcast.net

Text

Characteristics and Strategies for Teaching Students with Mild Disabilities 6th Ed. (2009). Authors: Henley, Ramsey and Algozzine. Publisher: Pearson. **Be certain to get the 6th edition.**

Course Requirements

Your responsibilities are:

Complete all module reading and viewing assignments including powerpoint, readings from text, etc.

Participate in discussion board conversation

Research assignment

Field work

Specifics:

Class Discussions

I will regularly post a question on our "Class Discussion" link. **I want you to post a minimum of one comment and at least two replies to another student's comment.**

If you provide thoughtful comments and reply every other week you will receive full credit for this portion of the course. **I do not grade individual comments; I want your thoughts and ideas, not comments based on what you think I want to hear, or to meet a rubric criteria. I'm looking for the same energy that I would want in a face-to-face class discussion.**

Overall 30% of course grade is based on participation in the "Class Discussion".

Quizzes

Complete a 20 question **weekly** multiple choice quiz on two assigned chapters and module presentations. Each question is worth 5 points. The quiz is timed. You have 40 minutes from the time you begin to the end. Once you open the link you must complete the quiz. You cannot close the quiz link and go back to it later. Your grade will be the average score for the quizzes. ***If you are having difficulty contact me immediately so we can figure out how to raise your scores.*** Average 100- 96 =A; 95-90 = A-; 89 - 86 = B+; 85 - 80 = B and so on....

The quiz link will open at noon each Thursday and close the following Sunday at midnite

If you have a specific difficulty with this quiz format (e.g. learning disability) contact me immediately using our course email.

The average of your quiz scores is 50% of your course grade. Your scores will be posted on the course grade link, left hand column.

Research – Paper due June 27th

Undergrad credit -Research assignment is a 10 article annotated bibliography related to course – See “**Research Folder**” in “**Start Here**” for details and sample annotated bibliography. *Use APA format; Word software, 12pt Times new Roman font. See sample bibliography.* List of approved topics are in the research link; also you can select a topic that is not on the list, but it must be approved as well.

Graduate credit – Ten page research paper on an approved topic with a minimum of ten professional citations. List of approved topics are in the research link; also you can select a topic that is not on the list, but it must be approved as well. *Use APA format; Word software, 12pt Times new Roman font.*

See samples of annotated bibliography and grad review of the literature in “Start Here”

Field Experience

Fifteen hours observation in one or more special education programs is required for all students. Summer course students have **one year** to complete this requirement. Observation forms are on the “**Field Experience**” link. It is the student’s responsibility to return completed forms to student file in either DGCE office or undergraduate Education office, Parenzo 211. If not a WSU student email directly to me. **You cannot apply for a state teacher license without documentation of special education field experience.** If you are not an education major you must still complete the field experience portion of this course and forward the report to me.

BECAUSE THIS IS A SUMMER 6 WEEK COURSE YOU HAVE ONE YEAR FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER TO COMPLETE THE FIELDWORK - THIS WILL NOT EFFECT YOUR GRADE

Grades

- 30% - class discussions
- 50% - average of test grades
- 20% - research paper

Class Routine

- Check course "Announcements" for new information frequently
- Begin with the "Start Here" link for overall course organization.
- Each Sunday I will open a new module/[chapter link](#)
- Each Thursday at noon I will open the [quiz link](#) for that chapter and it will remain open until Sunday midnite.
- When I will post a new [discussion question](#) on the [Discussion Board](#) . You have one week from the time it is posted [to comment and reply](#).
Please don't wait until the last moment. I read everything and I like to provide comments, but when students wait until Saturday or Sunday night I am overwhelmed with material and cannot comment as frequently as I would like.

Course Competencies

Identify key provisions of legislation and judicial decisions that shape and promote special education services

Explain educational procedures for insuring due process, free and appropriate education, and inclusion of students in the least restrictive environment

Describe criteria for placement in special educations services

Explain at-risk factors the contribute to developmental and learning disabilities

Identify specific educational accommodations for students with special needs

Define and explain terminology used in the identification and placement of students in special education programs

Explain specific inclusive classroom management strategies

Explain strategies for enhancing family and community support for students with special needs

Identify specific resources that support teaching special education students including professional organizations, web sites, community services and professional colleagues

Academic Policies

The course adheres to all Westfield State University policies regarding academic honesty, diversity, disabilities and any other issues related to fairness and honesty in an academic environment.

Plagiarism earns an automatic F grade. This is my course policy, not the University policy.