

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Department of Teaching and Learning
College of Human Resources and Education

EDCI / HD 3144 Educating Exceptional Learners
Fall 2000

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00-3:00 PM or by appointment

Course Time: Wednesday, 9:00 - 11:50 AM

Course Place: 219 War Memorial Hall

Course Website: <http://www.learn.vt.edu:8080/courses/EDCI3144/>

Course Overview and Objectives

This course addresses a wide range of topics related to students with disabilities. You will become familiar with the history of special education and the treatment of individuals in society, the laws protecting individuals with disabilities, definitions and characteristics of each disability, and procedures and safeguards for identifying students with disabilities. We will address multicultural issues throughout the course as we discuss identification and testing practices, over and under representation of specific groups, alternative methods of teaching, and linguistic diversity and bilingualism. We will study models for serving students with disabilities in schools today and the roles of educators, paraprofessionals, and parents in assessing, planning, and providing educational programs. Throughout the course we will learn about how educators, service-providers, and families collaborate together to design programs for each student. You will have an opportunity to understand and develop collaboration skills throughout the course.

Specifically, students will:

1. Explore models, theories, and philosophies that provide the basis for special education practice.
2. Explore the historical treatment and education of individuals with disabilities.
3. Explore the ways in which assumptions and "take-for-granted" beliefs can contribute to learning problems for students with disabilities.
4. Explore current categorical frameworks for disabilities and how these frameworks are developed.
5. Explore issues in definition, identification, and placement of individuals with exceptional learning needs including due process rights.

6. Explain definitions, key terms, characteristics, prevalence, educational strategies, and adapted environments related to different exceptionality groups.
7. Define basic laws and regulations governing delivery and funding of services to people with disabilities and how these laws and regulations impact schools, institutions, students, parents, teachers, policy-makers, and employers.
8. Discuss educational programming alternatives for students with exceptionalities, including policy controversies, promoting collaborative relationships, and current trends related to the education of students with disabilities.
9. Discuss educational and societal issues revolving around culturally diverse students with disabilities.
10. Describe and explore family issues related to disability.
11. Discuss concepts of transition, employment, and life-span issues facing people with disabilities.
12. Explore the uses of technology in Special Education (www sites, adaptive technology).

Course Requirements

Participation

Participation in this course includes class attendance, preparation for class, timely completion of course requirements, and engaging in class discussions and collaboration with your groups. At the end of the course you will be asked to assess your participation in the course (see participation form on the CourseInfo site. If you must miss class, please e-mail me about your absence, prior to the course if possible, and record in your journal efforts to acquire the knowledge and skills you missed.

Readings

Required text: Exceptional Learners, Daniel Hallahan and James Kauffman, 8th Edition, 2000 (Allyn & Bacon)

Please see the course schedule for the assigned chapters. Additional readings are required and a number of these are part of the Exercise and Journal requirements (see below). All supplementary readings are provided under the "Course Assignments" button on the CourseInfo website unless I indicate otherwise.

Exercises

Ten written exercises are incorporated into this course to help you do the following: 1) prepare for class, 2) apply the information you have learned through case studies, 3) understand perspectives on important issues and challenges facing people with disabilities and their families, and 4) explore resources that you will likely find helpful as a teacher. Please note that you may complete *some* of these activities with others (see specific requirements).

Journal

The journal activity is designed to: 1) provide opportunities to explore your interests related to, but perhaps not explicitly addressed in this course; 2) encourage reflection related to your observations of people with disabilities and the treatment of people with disabilities in school, society, in the media; and 3) provide a means for recording your questions and reactions to readings, classes, and other material. You need to spend a *minimum* of one hour *per week* on your journal activities. I will on occasion suggest journal activities and I have outlined a range of options (see attachment to syllabus). Please bring your journals to class each week so we can discuss as time allows. I will evaluate your journals using the evaluation matrix (attached to this syllabus) once during the course and at the end of the course. I will collect 5-10 journals to review each week beginning week 5. Journals that are *exemplary* will earn additional points toward your final grade (no more than 5 additional points added to your average).

Exams and Practice Quizzes

There are four exams, including the final. The final exam is cumulative. Exams will include primarily multiple-choice and true-false items. Short answer and essay questions may also be included. Practice quizzes are available on-line at the Allyn and Bacon site. I highly recommend you take these practice quizzes after you read each chapter. This will provide practice on the content as well as help prepare you for the exams.

Major Course Components and Evaluation

Participation	(20%)
Exercises	(20%)
Journal	(20%)
Exams	(40%)

Educating Exceptional Learners
Tentative Schedule Fall 2000

<i>Week/Date</i>	<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Topics/Activities</i>
1 8/23		Overview of Special Education and Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete course form ➤ Course overview ➤ Course website ➤ Definitions/prevalence of disability ➤ Special education service delivery models ➤ Is special education discriminatory? ➤ Film "Regular Lives" ➤ Introduction to collaboration (exercise) ➤ Review syllabus/course requirements ➤ Review exercise #1: assign cases
2 8/30	Exercise #1: Read "Invisible Lives" and thought questions (bring written responses to class) Text: Chapter 1, 2 Journal: Visit History website	History and Images of Disability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Brief review of history through present time ➤ Media images ➤ Quality of life issues ➤ Brief film: "Credo of Support" Discussion of current issues in special education (Chapter 2)
3 9/6	Exercise #2: Case law jigsaw activity assigned in first class (bring written responses to class) Text: Chapter 3 Reading: "Reporting and Writing about People with Disabilities" Journal: #1: Subscribe to listserves #2: Visit Wrightslaw.com	Legal Regulation of Special Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Major principles of IDEA ➤ ADA, Section 504 ➤ Exercise #1 (review cases) ➤ Journal discussion Multicultural Issues (discussion questions from Chapter 3)
4 9/13	Text: Chapter 4 Journal	Understanding Mental Retardation/Issues in Intelligence Testing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mental retardation ➤ Standardized intelligence tests and diversity ➤ Diversity issues in identifying students with MR <p>Journal discussion</p>
5 9/20	<p>Text: Chapter 5</p> <p>Journal: Visit LD On-line</p>	<p>Identifying Students with Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ From screening to placement: the steps ➤ Assurances and due process ➤ Fair assessment processes: Special considerations for children from diverse backgrounds ➤ Under- and over-representation, testing issues <p>Understanding Learning Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review of definitions, characteristics, concepts ➤ Film: "F.A.T' City <p>Journal discussion</p> <p>Exam 1 (Classes 1-4; Chapters 1-4)</p>
6 9/27	<p>Exercise #3: Juanita Pope case (bring written responses to class—may do with a partner)</p> <p>Text: Chapter 7</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Understanding Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Emotional disorders ➤ Case Study: "Juanita Pope" ➤ Issues in identification ➤ Panel of VT students with disabilities <p>Journal discussion</p>
7 10/4	<p>Exercise #4: Principles for working with parents (bring written responses to class—may do with one or two partners)</p> <p>Text: Chapter 13</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Working with families: Cultural and multicultural perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Guest: Dr. Kate McCoy (parent of a child with a disability) ➤ Review of parent readings and principles ➤ Journal discussion of parent listserv issues

<p>8 10/11</p>	<p>Exercise #5: Perspectives on inclusion (bring written responses to class)</p> <p>Text: Chapter 8</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Terminology, concepts, and definitions ➤ Varied perspectives ➤ "Educating Peter" ➤ Good inclusion practices <p>Communication Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Terminology, concepts, definitions ➤ Language differences versus disorders, bilingualism
<p>9 10/18</p>	<p>Exercise #6: Educational assessment and planning: Case study (Kayla)</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Educational Planning and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessing students' needs ➤ IEPs, MAPS, and positive student profiles ➤ Functional assessment ➤ Curriculum-based assessment ➤ Journal discussion <p>Exam 2 (Classes 5-8; Chapters 5, 7, 8, 18)</p>
<p>10 10/25</p>	<p>Exercise #7: Using WWW resources to learn about ADHD</p> <p>Text: Chapter 6</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Understanding Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ADHD ➤ Asperger's syndrome ➤ Autism <p>Use of medications in school</p> <p>Journal discussion</p>
<p>11 11/1</p>	<p>Exercise #8:</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Positive Behavioral Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Guest Speaker, Ms. Cyndi Pitonyak, Montgomery County Schools
<p>12 11/8</p>	<p>Exercise #9: WWW sites and accommodating students with disabilities</p> <p>Text chapter 11</p>	<p>Understanding Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Physical disabilities and special health care needs ➤ Multiple disabilities ➤ Traumatic brain injury

	Journal	<p>Accommodations and adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working out the puzzle ➤ The role of collaboration ➤ Case study <p>Journal discussion</p>
13 11/15	<p>Exercise #10: "Add a principle for accommodations"</p> <p>Text Chapters: 9,10</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Understanding Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding the characteristics of students with low vision and hearing impairments ➤ Diversity and deafness, deaf culture, the deaf as another minority group ➤ Programming for students with sensory disabilities ➤ Journal discussion <p>Exam 3 (Classes 9-12; Chapters 6, 11)</p>
14 11/29	<p>Text: Chapter 12</p> <p>Journal</p>	<p>Extraordinary Abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Concepts and identification ➤ Identifying Native Americans, diverse gifted students, avoiding underachievement ➤ Programming for gifted students, Guest lecture: Ms. Tamra Oliver, Gifted specialist, Montgomery County Schools
15 12/6	Final journal entry	<p>Course Wrap-up and Evaluations</p> <p>Review for Exam 4 (Cumulative Final--TBA)</p>