

EDCI 5554
EDUCATING EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers a wide range of topics related to educating exceptional children and youth. The first part of the course examines laws governing education, categories and identification of students with disabilities. The remainder of the course explores new models of serving learners with disabilities with emphasis on inclusive environments, limitations of traditional disability categories and educational delivery models and ways teacher create positive learning environments for ALL students.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The learner will:

1. Explore the historical treatment and education of individuals with disabilities.
2. Examine beliefs and practices that contribute to learning problems and “handicapping” of students with disabilities.
3. Investigate current categorical frameworks for disability and how they are developed.
4. Engage in current debates about inclusion.
5. Examine laws and regulations governing identification, delivery & funding of special education services and how they impact curriculum and lives of students, teachers and families.
6. Explore family issues related to disability.
7. Identify strategies to promote and enhance collaboration between school, families, students and the community.
8. Investigate strategies for accommodating and modifying learning environments for students with special learning needs.
9. Explore current trends and issues related to the education of students with learning disabilities.

III. TEXTS

Required Text:

Hardman, Drew & Egan. (2002). *Human Exceptionality: Society, School and Family*. Allyn & Bacon Publishing Co.

Book Review:

Smith, J. (1995). *Pieces of Purgatory: Mental Retardation In and Out of Institutions*. Brookes/Cole Publishing Co.

IV. INSTRUCTOR

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V. OTHER INFORMATION

ACCOMMODATIONS: if you are in need of accommodations due to a disability, please contact me individually.

HONOR CODE: All students will subscribe and be governed by the Graduate Honor Code which establishes integrity, honesty and ethical behavior in all academic endeavors.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Weekly Class Assignments & Participation (20%)

Participation and attendance is expected. Assigned homework and readings must be prepared prior to class to fully participate in class discussions, learning activities and respond to quizzes. Students will be working in small groups and as individuals, participate in role plays, enjoy guest speakers and “teachable” moments which are hard to re-create outside of class time.

Currently there are 4 specific class assignments that must be completed prior to the class sessions. These include a) Reed Martin, b) ADHD Homework, c) Juanita Pope and d) Reluctant Collaborator. These assignments are designed to help prepare you for class and reflect on class material and are found on the website at **ASSIGNMENTS - Inclass/Homework**. Other homework may include a) questions to consider before class, b) analysis of case studies, or c) learning & organizing materials to share in small group activities.

For a participation grade (5%) you will need to submit at class participation self assessment on the last day of class with your final course evaluations. A copy of this is found on the website **ASSIGNMENTS - Evaluations - Course Participation**.

2. Reflections (15%)

Objective:

To provide opportunities to engage in thoughtful reflection about course materials and gives an understanding of what is important to you and what interests you.

Guidelines:

Through these reflections you will consider your own experiences and beliefs about disability and, make connections between course materials and your specific teaching are, share things of special interest, raise questions and concerns, and share what you are thinking about in relations to education of students with disabilities.

THREE reflection papers are due throughout the semester around topics and issues of interest. The reflection should be 1-2 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 pt type. You are encouraged to attach them as documents and send them to me. Always, always keep a copy of your work. One reflection is due every 5 weeks although you may turn them in earlier. I will comment and return the reflections as soon as possible.

3. Book Review (20%)

Objective:

Pieces of Purgatory is about John Lovelace, a man with a disability who grew up in Virginia. Many of the major changes that have happened are illustrated through John's life. This book will offer a deeper understanding of the challenges individuals with disabilities faced over the past century.

Guidelines:

Smith, J. (1995). *Pieces of Purgatory: Mental Retardation In and Out of Institutions*. Brooks/Cole.

Write a 4-5 page review of the Smith book . The first half of the review should summarize the book and the remaining half critique and comment on the book. Focus upon what you found was most interesting or surprising. Please attach a completed self assessment of you paper (ASSIGNMENTS - Evaluation - Pieces of Purgatory).

I ordered copies of the book for those who would like to purchase the book, however, it is also on 2 day reserve in the library if you would like to borrow it.

Evaluation Criteria:

The review will be evaluated using the following criteria: a) themes clearly summarized, b) development of reactions/critique, c) grammar, punctuation & spelling, and d) organization.

4. Images Paper (20%)

Objectives:

To critically analyze how individuals with disabilities are portrayed in the media - advertisements, children's literature, textbooks, newspaper articles, books, cartoons, or films.

Guidelines:

Develop a 4-6 page paper that examines and critiques 4-8 items (books, films, cartoons, advertisements, and films) and critically analyze how individuals with disabilities are portrayed. In your analysis, select at least one or two longer pieces to critique, such as films and books. There is a list of movies and books on the Web site (COURSE DOCUMENTS - Media Images).

Be very specific in your analysis. Use examples related to disability (quotations, pictures, and statements) and provide analyses of what is being portrayed. A framework and examples (Shapiro and Wolfensberger articles) are provided, however, you may develop your own framework for analysis. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Please attach a completed self-assessment of your paper using the form on the course website (ASSIGNMENTS - Evaluations - Images of Disability). The images paper will be evaluated based upon the following criteria: a) variety and appropriateness of sources, b) development of themes/categories for analysis, c) details and examples for themes/categories, d) well written, clarity of thought, e) grammar, spelling & punctuation, and f) length (4-6 pages).

5. Inclusion Assignment (25%)

Objective:

To explore strategies for including students with disabilities in general education classrooms by examining a framework for making accommodations and adaptations.

Guidelines:

This four-part assignment is a combined individual (50% of grade) and collaboration (50%) project. It will be completed both in and out of class over the last part of the course. Hopefully, you have been thinking about this topic throughout the course. The final product will be a concept map that portrays your individual ideas within a collaborative group project concerning a framework for accommodations & adaptations in inclusive settings. These may be done from a discipline specific perspective (e.g. math, science, English), or grade level (e.g. elementary, secondary). Examples of previous group concept maps are available on the course website. Also you may want to consult concept map websites starting with the Creativity Website as a springboard at: <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~caveman/Creative/Mindmap/index.html>

Part I - Initial Collaboration Project Meeting

Working with 3 or 4 students discuss the entire assignment. Clarify with one another individual project questions. Review the evaluation criteria for the assignment (ASSIGNMENTS - Assignment Evaluations - Inclusion Assignment on website). Each person in the group needs to locate between 4 and 6 articles on inclusion with no duplication in the group. You will need to turn in your own list with the responses to the individual project the following week.

Part II - Individual Project

Bring your written responses to the following questions to be discussed with your group during class and turned in to the instructor at the end of class. Format your responses by the following questions that need to proceed your response, put your name on your work and attach the list of articles you used, in APA style.

1. What do you already know/believe about addressing the varying needs of students in schools?
2. Record your ideas about how you would approach serving the needs of students with disabilities in general education settings based on what you have learned about inclusion through your readings, experiences, and discussions in class, materials, films, text and presentation provided many ideas and you may cite them.
 - a. What are some big picture ideas that you believe are important to serving students with disabilities in general education settings? Think broadly.
 - b. What are some categories of adaptations/accommodations you might consider for classroom learning environment? Develop these categories by listing specific examples for each identified category. Cite sources.
 - c. What actions would you take to plan and coordinate an effective program for a student with a disability. Cite sources. In other words, what will help you decide what particular accommodation is needed? Who would you talk to? What would you do?
3. After formulating your responses to the above questions, consider whether this seems like a complete picture. Are there other things you might include? Consider looking for additional ideas on the web, additional readings and thinking about challenges you might face as a teacher. You may add these additional resources when you complete the group project.
4. What have you learned from your readings?

Please study your readings. Make written notes of what you will share with your group and what ideas you think should be included in your groups' concept map. If you think certain materials should be excluded or is not relevant, please make note of this.

Part III Collaborative Project: Comprehensive Map Activity

Please use this activity as an opportunity to be creative and learn about other class members' perspectives on creating inclusive classrooms. The first part of this assignment is to share your readings and responses to the Individual Project and come up with a collaboratively designed concept map or visual representation that synthesizes your

collective work. Remember to review concept map sites from noted at the beginning of this assignment. You will have the entire class period to develop your concept map.

1. Share your individual responses to Part II with other group members listening for common themes.
2. Collaboratively create a concept map that incorporates these major themes:
 - a. Be sure to identify overall themes in your concept map and provide examples under each theme. It is important that this synthesis address the inclusion of student with disabilities in a comprehensive way.
 - b. Specific examples of accommodations must be included using resources from your reading list and others you found.
 - c. After you develop your concept map, evaluate it carefully. Is it a clear representation of the major ideas you think should be considered? Does your concept map incorporate the ideas of individual group members and the readings you summarized? Have you elaborated specifically on each theme?
 - d. Title your concept map.
 - e. You will make a 10 minute presentation to class the following week. For the instructor, develop a 1 - 2 page narrative description of the map detailing components of your map and cite new resources used AND.
 - f. Design a one-page handout of your concept map to distribute to class members.
 - g. Attach a completed evaluation form from ASSIGNMENTS - Evaluations - Inclusion Assignment

Part IV Collaborative Project: Class Presentation

1. Post your concept map in class before the presentations.
2. Distribute handout of map to class members.
3. Provide an oral description of your map to the class

VII. SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Assignments	Course Info Readings & Links
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I	Overview Disabilities	Hardman, Ch. 1 (View)	Readings: Definitions Identification of Students Reporting & Writing External Links: Disability Info
II	Legal Foundations	Reed Martin Cases	Notes: IDEA Framework Readings: Rehabilitation Act & ADA
III	Mental Retardation ADHD	Hardman, Ch 8 (MR) Hardman, Ch 6 (ADD only) ADHD Homework Due	Notes: Mental Retardation Notes: ADHD External Links: Disability Info
IV	Learning Disabilities	Hardman, Ch. 6 (LD) Video: How Difficult Can This Be	Notes: Learning Disabilities Readings: NJCLD Statement External Links: Disability Info
V	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	Hardman, Ch. 7 (ED) Juanita Pope Case Due	Notes: Emotional/Behavior Readings: Behavior External Links: Disability Info
VI	Physical Health/Sensory/Communication Disorders	Hardman, Ch. 9 (COM) & 15 (P&H) Ch. 13 (Hear), 14 (Vision) Reflection # 1 Due	Notes: Physical/Health Notes: Vision/Hearing External Links: Disability Info
VII	Autism Quality of Life/Images History	Hardman, Ch. 11 (Aut), Ch 5 157-68 Video: <i>Enviably Life</i> Pieces of Purgatory Review Due	Notes: History of Disability Notes: Autism Readings: Media Images No Pity: PWD for Civil Rights Concept of Deviancy Human External Links: Disability History; Disability Info
VIII	Families Diversity/Exceptionality	Hardman Ch. 3 (Fam) Guest Family Panel	Notes: Families/Exceptionality Diversity/Exceptionality Readings: Helping Parents Families of Children External Links: Family Parent
IX	Field Work	<i>Images of Disability DUE</i>	
X	Special Education Models	Hardman, Ch 2, 4 and 1 p. 33-40 Inclusion Debate Initial Inclusion Collaboration Meeting (Part I)	Notes: Special Education Models & Inclusion Readings: Inclusion

XI	Collaboration Gifted	<i>Reluctant Collaborator Due</i> Hardman, Ch. 16 (Gifted) Guest: Gifted Educator	External Links: Disability Information
XII	Individual Program Planning (IEP)	Hardman, Ch. 5 p. 143-149 Reflection # 2 Due	Readings: Individualized Family Service Plan Your Child's IEP
XIII	Accommodations/Adaptations in Inclusive Classrooms	Individual Project Inclusion Assignment (Part II) Due	Notes: Accommodations Adaptations External Link: Inclusion
XIV	Inclusion	Collaborative Map Activity Inclusion Assignment (Part III) Due	
XV	Inclusion Presentation Wrap Up	Presentation Inclusion Assignment (Part IV) Reflection # 3 Due	