Students with Disabilities in the Regular Classroom  
(EDSP) 411/611  
University of Nevada, Reno  
College of Education  
Fall 2013  

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Office hours: Tuesday 11:00-12:30 Wednesday 11:00-12:30, or by appointment  

Catalog Description:  
Preparation of teachers to deal with assessment and program development for students with disabilities who are included in general education classrooms.  

Course Description:  
The course provides an overview of current issues and practices in the field of special education. Events that led to Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act in 1975, (referred to as IDEA 2004 or IDEIA) and the impact of the law on public education will be addressed. Students will learn about individuals with special needs: how they are identified in the schools and how they are served by the school system. This course reviews strategies for instructing students with exceptionalities in general education classrooms as well as the roles and responsibilities of school personnel for providing appropriate educational experiences for all students.  

This course relates to the four themes guiding the teacher preparation program in the College of Education in the following ways:  

Possesses a love of learning: This course provides opportunities for students to guide some of their own learning and to take personal responsibility for learning, thus demonstrating their own love of learning. Further, the course highlights the need for teachers to pass on a love of learning to their students, regardless of the intellectual or academic capacity of the learner.  

Develops a strong fund of knowledge: Students will develop knowledge related to the historical foundations of special education, including litigation and legislation, teacher roles and responsibilities, and instructional strategies used to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities.  

Engages in reflective practice: Reflective practice requires the ability to think critically about classroom issues as well as oneself. This course requires students to reflect on their own biases and experiences with persons with disabilities and then integrate those experiences into ideas for appropriate instruction for students in their classrooms.  

Values democracy and multiculturalism: This course is designed to demonstrate to students the complexity of today’s classrooms and to emphasize the point that when we say, “all students
have the right to appropriate quality instruction,” that in fact we mean ALL students, regardless of disability, ethnicity, or gender.

**Performance Assessment:**
The College of Education’s conceptual framework serves to frame the teacher education candidate performance assessment standards. Candidates must meet the five Domains of Professional Competence to progress through and complete their teacher education program. The five domains are: 1) knowledge of students and learning environments, 2) knowledge of subject matter and planning, 3) delivery and management of instruction, 4) knowledge and use of assessment, and 5) professionalism. The domains are explained in performance assessment documents. The schematic below depicts how the five Domains of Professional Competence are framed by the College of Education Conceptual Framework.

![Diagram of the five Domains of Professional Competence]

**Objectives:**
Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the educational implications of teaching students with exceptionalities in general education environments (*Domain 1*).

2. Demonstrate knowledge of the various roles and responsibilities of school personnel in the education of students with disabilities (*Domain 5*).

3. Demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics of students with exceptionalities as outlined in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 04) (*Domain 1, Domain 4*).

4. Demonstrate knowledge of federal mandates regarding the education of students with disabilities and implications for educational practice (*Domain 1, Domain 3*).

5. Demonstrate the ability to analyze instructional problems posed by instructing students with disabilities and design modifications or strategies (*Domain 2*).

6. Locate and synthesize information available in professional journals on issues related to teaching students with disabilities in general education classrooms (*Domain 5*).
7. Identify personal attitudes, beliefs and perceptions related to the instruction of students with disabilities (*Domain 1, Domain 3, Domain 5*).

**Text and Materials:**


Course materials are available on WebCampus. You will find notes, powerpoint slides, assignment descriptions, and scoring guides on this site. If you have any problems accessing WebCampus, please phone the UNR Computing Helpdesk 682-5000 (they are the experts).

**Course Outline:** This course emphasizes three major areas associated with educating students with disabilities in general education classrooms: 1) legal issues and special education regulations including teacher roles and responsibilities, (2) student characteristics and individual differences and (3) instructional strategies.

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Sept 2  **Labor Day**

Sept 9

| Introduction to exceptionalities | | |
| Origins of Inclusion | Chapter 1 | |
| Least Restrictive Environment | | |
| Learning Styles | | |

Sept 16

| History of Special Education | Chapter 2 | Personal Journal (PJ) |
| Legal and judicial decisions | | Group 1 |
| | | (2 entries due) |

Sept 23

| Eligibility - RTI | Article - |
| IEP Process | "IDEA and 504" |
| | ABC’s of RTI |

2. Student characteristics

Sept 30

| Students with Learning Disabilities | Chapter 4 |
How Difficult Can This Be? (Video)
Or Misunderstood Minds

Oct 7
  Students with Learning Disabilities
  Students with Intellectual Disabilities
  Chapter 5
  PJ Group 3
  (2 entries due)

Oct 14
  Students with Intellectual Disabilities
  Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities
  Chapter 7

Oct 21
  Students with Physical and Health Impairments
  Chapter 10
  PJ Group 4 due
  (field trip- wear sneakers)
  (3 entries due)

Oct 28
  Midterm
  PJ Group 5 due
  (3 entries due)

Nov 4
  Poster Presentations on Disabilities
  EDSP 411 Students

3. Effective Instructional Practices

Nov 11 Veteran’s Day

Nov 18
  Building an inclusive classroom
  Collaboration and Co-teaching
  Chapter 11
  Option assignment due (student choice)

Nov 25
  Differentiated Instruction
  Universal Design for Learning
  Final Personal Journal distributed
  Final examination distributed
  Chapter 12
  Option assignment due (student choice)

Dec 2
  Effective Instruction in Elementary Classrooms
  Teaching Students in Secondary Content Areas
  Chapter 13 (elementary majors)  All Personal Journals due

Dec 9
  Managing student behavior
  Promoting Social Acceptance
  EDSP 611 Presentations begin
  Chapter 15
Course Requirements:
Scoring rubrics and more complete assignment descriptions are located in the course materials available on WebCT.

1. Personal journal (PJ) (50 points)
   Students will be given ten topics related to philosophies, trends and practices associated with teaching students with disabilities in the public schools. Students are required to reflect on five of the ten topics and respond in their personal journals. There are two required entries highlighted on the assignment description by **. Students will self-select three additional entries from the remaining eight. This may be more formally constructed writing or very informal. Decide for yourself how you like to journal.

2. Option assignment - Field experience/Book review/Professional Journal/Movie (50 points)
   This is a student choice assignment. Each student will contract the option they choose to fulfill this assignment. See course materials available on WebCT for detailed descriptions.
   - Option a – Field experience. This option may be a choice for students who are already working in a school and would like to experience working with students with disabilities.
   - Option b – Book review. This option is for students who would like to read more about persons with disabilities. The exceptional literature is full of stories of courage, hope, and inspiration. Students will be asked to reflect on their reading.
   - Option c – Professional journal review. This option is for students who enjoy reading the professional literature and may be an excellent choice for EDSP 611 students.
   - Option d – Movie time. This option is for students who enjoy movies and aren’t afraid to critique them. The purpose of the assignment is to determine fact from fiction in popular films that depict people with disabilities.

3. Mid term examination. (100 points)
   Traditional paper-pencil exam.

4. Presentations. (50 points) Undergraduate and graduate students will collaborate with peers on this project. It is essential to visit the WebCampus site for additional information, scoring rubrics and resources.

EDSP 411: Undergraduate students will be grouped together to design and present poster sessions on exceptionalities not covered in class. These include: autism, gifted and talented, students at risk, communication disorders, traumatic brain injury, sensory impairments and assistive technology. Some in class time will be carved out for collaboration.
EDSP 611: Graduate students will be grouped together to make in class presentations. The focus of the presentations will be on a) evidence-based practices that promote successful inclusion and/or b) assistive technology. Each presentation will be approximately 30 minutes, include an in class activity, a handout for each class member and a technology component. Some in class time will be carved out for collaboration.

5. Final exam (100 points)
   This is a take home project. The exam will be posted on Nov 25. It will be an applied project and is open book, open computer and open friend.

5. Class activities and professionalism (50 points)
I believe you became a professional the moment you were accepted into a teacher education program. Professionalism includes, but is not limited to:
1. Please call or email if you will miss class. Others may be compromised by your absence, therefore, be courteous and call in.
2. If you have questions or need assistance, make an appointment or visit during office hours. Complaining to others usually does not help you get your work done correctly.
3. Participate in class professionally and respectfully. Cell phone use is frowned upon.
4. Be an intent listener when others are speaking (e.g. do not do other classwork while in this class, do not surf on your laptop).
5. Carry your own weight for group activities and assignments.
6. Keep up with the reading and be familiar with the course materials.
7. Attendance and participation are important.

Grading

1. Personal journal 50 points
2. Option activity 50 points
3. Midterm exam 100 points
4. Presentation – grad and undergrad 50 points
4. Final 100 points
7. Class activities and professionalism 50 points
    Total 400 points

Total points earned will be converted to a percentage score. The following guideline will be used for determining final course grades:

95%-100% = A
90%-94.99% = A-
83%-89.99% = B
80%-82.99% = B-
76%-79.99% = C
70%-75.99% = C-
66%-69.99% = D
60%-65.99% = D-
**Teaching Methods Used in this Class**

This course will be taught using a variety of methods, including: Class discussion, small group projects and discussion, guest presenters, lecture, modeling, case study, and audiovisual presentations.

**Misc.**

1. Students must complete all of the assignments to receive a passing grade.

2. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak me by the end the second week of class. In keeping with the Adults with Disabilities Act all conversations will remain confidential. Please contact the Disability Resource Center to obtain all of the necessary paperwork.

3. **Academic Dishonesty:** Cases of academic dishonesty are viewed as a serious violation of the student code of conduct. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:
   - Copying homework assignments.
   - Cheating on quizzes or exams including sharing answers with students in other sections of the course.
   - Including information in written assignments without proper citations.

   Any incidents of any type of academic dishonesty will result in a student receiving an F for the course. See the “Student Conduct Information” section of the UNR General Catalog for specific University policies and procedures regarding academic dishonesty.

4. **Cell phone** use during class is considered a disruption, this includes texting. There is always a break during class, so it is possible to catch up and send messages then. There are exceptions, so please do not hesitate to inform me of your situation.

5. **Academic Success Services:** Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (784-4433 or [www.unr.edu/mathcenter](http://www.unr.edu/mathcenter)), Tutoring Center (784-6801 or [www.unr.edu/tutoring](http://www.unr.edu/tutoring)), and University Writing Center (784-6030 or [http://www.unr.edu/writing_center](http://www.unr.edu/writing_center)). These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

6. **Statement on Audio and Video Recording:** “Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.”

7. As is true for all of the work you do for all of your classes, your instructor and others may review your work while evaluating the quality of courses and programs. However, your work cannot be used for any research projects without written approval from the UNR Office of Human Research Protection.
**Personal Journal Topics:**

**Topic 1.** "A teacher affects eternity: He can never tell where his influence stops." Henry Adams.

Describe a previous experience - you as a student- where the teacher wasn't accommodating of individual differences. What affect do you think this incident has had on the life of student whose needs were not met. Feel free to speculate, hypothesize, or role-play. Now describe the effect this type of experience has had on you and how experiences such as the one described may affect your own teaching.

**Topic 2.** "Nothing is a greater barrier to being on good terms with others than being ill at ease with yourself". Balzac.

Describe both a negative and positive encounter, relationship, ....you have had with a person with a disability. Briefly describe the situations. Elaborate on your behaviors, reactions and after thoughts. Think about how these incidences have shaped your attitude and therefore shaped your behavior. You will really need to stretch and tell me about some of those deep-rooted attitudes that may have attributed to your reactions. REACH for this one.

**Topic 3.** "Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world". Schopenhauer.

What does it take for you to re-evaluate your personal biases? Describe a situation where you took the same road as most of your peers, only to be persuaded later to choose the road less traveled. Describe your thought processes, and frustrations. Describe what you learned from the situation and how you handled the reactions of your peers when you accepted an alternative.

**Topic 4.** Locate on the internet www.ldresources.com Examine the website and its articles on intelligence. Use the search feature “intelligence” to locate these articles - The Presentation and Perception of Intelligence (articles were archived Nov. 2004). After reading the articles, define “intelligence” for yourself.

**Topic 5.** "Educators see students doing hard work, while students see themselves serving hard time." (Flantzer, H. 2003)

Who’s position is most accurate? Whose job is it to take a look at the school environment as students see it and then ask ourselves whether what we're doing is what we mean to do? What can be done to change the perceptions of students and the practices and policies of teachers?

**Topic 6.** “Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way.” George Evans

Describe a situation when you were the one who didn’t learn the same way or the same day. Now think of yourself as a teacher. This is the reality of a classroom. How can you teach your students that this is a reality of life and that you understand this situation? How will Common Core Standards help or hurt you?
Topic 7. Special of the day. Special education Special Olympics
Exceptional quality. Exceptional student
Golf handicap Handicapping condition Handicapped
Disabled perpetrator Learning disabled

Terms such as special, exceptional, handicapped, disabled, developmentally delayed, individual differences, cause a reaction in all of us. How did you react to these terms? In this age of politically correct terminology, is our language respectful of persons with disabilities? How do you think students with and without disabilities react to these words?

Topic 8. "It is not the answer that enlightens, but the question". Eugene Ionesco.

This is your opportunity to pose questions related to the education of students with disabilities. You may or may not have an answer or solution to question, but feel free to pose it any way. What disturbs you? What is left unanswered? What feels ambiguous? Choose any format. You may have only one question, in which case, you should elaborate as much as possible, or you may have a series of questions you want to simply list. This is your opportunity to do your own thing.

Topic 9. "Of all the social experiments attempted in history, one of the most challenging and perplexing has been the commitment to education for all citizens undertaken by this country." Zigmond, Semmel, & Lloyd.

I leave this up to you to decide how to comment.

**Topic 10. Journal summary assignment. (The instructions for this activity will be given out two weeks before the end of the semester.)**