

Educ 596: Special Education Practicum

3 semester credit hours, graduate credit

Course Description: This is a ten week course designed to integrate field work with material covered in the Endorsement Program in Mild/Moderate Disabilities at Concordia University as well as provide opportunities for dialogue on the issues and practices related to the education of individuals with mild or moderate disabilities. This practicum is the culminating field experience that gives prospective special education teachers the opportunity to apply and synthesize educational theory and pedagogy as they demonstrate skills and abilities in the school setting.

Goals and Objectives: The purpose of this course shall be to facilitate the development of educators who are able to implement professional standards, advocate for children and youth with exceptionalities and their families and adhere to the following beliefs and values:

- Children and youth with exceptionalities are part of a larger community of diverse learners;
- Children and youth with exceptionalities can learn when provided with effective and/or differentiated instruction, the adaptation of the learning environment, and culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum;
- Children and youth with exceptionalities excel when they are held to high standards and expectations;
- The larger mission of education is best served when special educators collaborate with families, general educators, and related services professionals;
- Children and youth with exceptionalities develop lifelong attitudes and behaviors when responsibility, self-determination, and ownership of their education are expected.

The course objectives will enable the student to do the following:

1. Professionally and ethically perform the duties of a special education teacher.
 - a. Develop a comprehensive Individualized Education Program (IEP)
 - b. Apply knowledge learned to be able to select appropriate assessment, identification, and evaluation of learners with exceptional learning needs and select educational practices and teaching strategies in the learning environments consistent with the learners' IEP
 - c. Consult, collaborate, and communicate effectively with school personnel, professional agency representatives, families, and students
2. Apply best practices of instruction, behavior supports, and content delivery for students with exceptional learning needs across the continuum of services.
 - a. Select, adapt, and use instructional strategies, adaptations, assessments, and materials according to characteristics of the learner
 - b. Plan and manage the teaching and learning environment for students with exceptional learning needs using appropriate supports and materials

- c. Articulate the implications for practice in school settings of the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education
- d. Support students with exceptional learning needs to develop social interaction skills and provide behavioral support for their specific educational needs
- e. Apply knowledge about the characteristics of mild/moderate learners to the educational practices in the school setting

Recommended Text: No test is required for this course, but readings will be recommended on an individual and group basis.

Course Content:

- a. Assessment
- b. Planning and organization
- c. Classroom management
- d. Instructional strategies
- e. Individualized instruction based on the IEP, learner development and diversity
- f. Use of materials, resources, and technology
- g. Professionalism
- h. Instructional delivery in literacy, reading, and math
- i. Appropriate professional, interpersonal and personal characteristics

Course Requirements:

1. Group Seminar: The opportunity for students to meet for discussion online of issues and experiences is critical in the development of collegial support and exchange of ideas. Students will meet during the ten weeks for seminar as determined by the instructor and student needs. Seminar sessions will involve the sharing of experiences, problem solving and outside speakers if relevant.
2. Comprehensive Portfolio: The purpose of the comprehensive portfolio is to provide you with an individually designed document which demonstrate your knowledge and skill development in each of the following competency areas:
 - a. Assessment completion and analysis – both formal and informal. You will be required to complete some standardized assessments for the development of an IEP and then informal biweekly progress monitoring assessments as you develop and proceed with a reading or math program with an individual student.
 - b. IEP development . You will be expected to develop a comprehensive IEP for an individual student identified in your class or school system with goals, summaries of assessments, present levels of performance, etc.
 - c. Behavior management plan. You will be expected to develop a daily behavior management plan for a student with behavioral difficulties. The plan must include a daily reporting system for the student, the teacher and the family. This plan is to be evaluated each week to determine changes or modifications needed. You will need to keep a daily log with personal reflections on how the student is doing.
 - d. Design and implement a reading or math remediation plan with an individual student. State the student weaknesses and what curriculum and teaching strategies

will be used. Preassess, and then assess progress biweekly and postassess at the end of ten weeks to determine growth and to evaluate next steps.

- e. Locate a child that exhibits severe communication difficulties (child with autism or other moderate disabilities). Design and implement a communication book that will assist the child, teacher, and family . This can be a book of photos, magazine pictures, etc. Assess and add personal reflections pre-communication book, during and at the end of ten weeks of use.

- f. Keep a weekly log that addresses collaboration and leadership opportunities that assist you in professional development and community/family involvement.

- g. Keep a weekly log of any use of adaptive technology that you use or any new types of technology that you are learning to utilize. Add your reflections of the use and effectiveness

3. Videotaped lesson: Videotape two 15 minute lessons of a research based reading or math strategy that you developed in (d) above. Write an evaluation of your lesson which includes :

- a. What happened in your lesson? (Description)

- b. What did you do well? (Impact)

- c. What would you do differently to improve the lesson? (Intent)

Reviewed 07/12