

Educ 593 Psychology of Exceptionality and Multiculturalism

3 semester credit hours, graduate credit

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce students to the psychology of exceptional children. Instruction will emphasize the following: legislation and litigation and exceptional students, multicultural issues, mental disabilities, behavior disorders, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory perceptual disabilities, gifted and talented students, and current issues influencing the lives of exceptional learners.

Goals and Objectives: This course is designed to improve understanding of the nature and needs of individuals that vary from the norm. The goal of this course is demonstrated awareness, knowledge and empathy for exceptional and culturally diverse children. It will continue to develop the roles of teaching, leading, and learning for teachers as they prepare to meet the needs of persons with special learning needs.

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

1. Identify the historical and legal antecedents of education for exceptional and multicultural children.
2. Explain the basic requirements of federal and state laws regarding the education of exceptional students.
3. Describe educational characteristics, needs, and placement alternatives for each category of exceptionality.
4. Identify and assess the educational needs of exceptional students who are likely to be placed in the regular classroom.
5. Modify curriculum and teaching methods to help exceptional students be successful in the regular classroom.
6. Develop and implement strategies to help other students exhibit positive attitudes toward their exceptional classmates.
7. Participate in the placement committee and in the development of Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) for exceptional students.
8. Communicate with exceptional and multicultural persons.
9. Communicate with parents of exceptional and multicultural children.
10. Communicate with professional colleagues and other school personnel.
11. Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of disabilities on the education and lives of individuals with disabilities.

Recommended Text: Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., and Pullen, P. C. (2011). *EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS: INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION* (12th edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Also: VERIFICATION GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DOCUMENT at:

<http://www.education.ne.gov/sped/technicalassist/verificationguidelines.pdf>

Course Content:

- a. Exceptionality and special education
- b. Current practices
- c. Multicultural and bilingual aspects
- d. Parents and families
- e. Defining and measuring intelligence
- f. Intellectual disabilities
- g. Learning disabilities
- h. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- i. Emotional/behavioral disorders
- j. Communication disorders
- k. Autism spectrum disorders
- l. Deaf/hard of hearing
- m. Blindness/low vision
- n. Low-incidence, multiple, severe disabilities
- o. Orthopedic impairment and other health impairment
- p. Gifted and talented

Course Requirements:

- Examinations: Two exams will cover lecture material and information from the course readings, lecture, audiovisuals, and text.
- Weekly quizzes on readings. Students will complete an online quiz over the text and assigned readings. The quiz must be completed by class times of the week it is scheduled.
- IRIS module: Students will be required to complete one online module from the IRIS Center, THE PRE-REFERRAL PROCESS: PROCEDURES FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS. The IRIS Center is a national center that provides high quality resources for college and university faculty and students about student with disabilities. The self-instructional, interactive online module provides students with opportunities to learn key concepts and examine ideas related to special education.
- Exceptionality in the media project: Collect 15 articles over the topics listed in the course content. Write a summary which includes:
 - a. Write an introduction to the collection. (Ex. Why you chose the topic(s) you did, where you found materials, general overview of what the collection will contain). Then discuss the following:
 - b. In what manner have individuals with disabilities been portrayed across articles? Is it accurate or stereotypical?
 - c. What evidence is there of "labeling" in the articles? Has it been done in an appropriate manner?
 - d. How could society's attitude be affected as the result of this portrayal?
 - e. Has a moral or ethical issue been raised in some or all of the articles?
 - f. What technological advances are demonstrated/described?
 - g. How might individuals with disabilities react to the overall media portrayal?

- h. Compare the media's presentation to what you have learned to this point in class.
 - i. Has the issue of "quality of life" been raised in any of the articles?
 - j. Write a conclusion, describing how the project will affect you as a person/professional.
- Assistive technology project. Identify 1-2 disabilities and locate web sites which provide information about the condition. Individual summaries and critiques will be submitted in a paper. Students are to locate 10 application/adaptations that provide information about assistive technology available on smart phones and tablet computer (ex. iPad). Ten items should be located and reviewed as follows:
 - a. Write an introduction to the collection.
 - b. Name of assistive technology/application and web address or location on device.
 - c. Purpose for/of the assistive technology/accommodation and what device(s) it runs on.
 - d. Brief description of the application.
 - e. Disability adaptations provided.
 - f. Cost.
 - g. Write a summary about what you learned about smart phone assistive technology based on this activity.
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