Education and Psychology of the Exceptional Child

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Education and Psychology of the Exceptional Child is a survey course designed to provide the student with a working knowledge of the learning, psychological, cognitive and social characteristics of exceptional youth and children from the gifted to those with disabilities. Influences of legislation, criteria used to identify children, and awareness of services will be explored through application of concepts in a case study format. Current practices of educational interventions, strategies, and modifications for use within the general education classroom will be emphasized.

Future teachers are expected to understand that teaching exceptional children necessitates nothing more than an extension of good teaching skills which requires insight into how learning occurs, knowledge of a variety of techniques to increase student success, as well as the various ways to assess whether or not learning has occurred. Critical thinking skills, based on research and common sense, must be developed and utilized to collect and evaluate data so as to problem-solve various adaptations and strategies of working with children to meet both individual and class needs within the classroom and school settings.

**Missouri Standards for Teacher Preparation**

2.1 The preservice teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) within the context of a global society and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

1.1 knows the discipline applicable to the certification areas as defined by Subject Competencies for Beginning Teachers in Missouri
1.2 presents the subject matter in multiple ways
1.3 uses students' prior knowledge when identifying learning objectives and choosing instructional strategies
1.4 engages students in the methods of inquiry used in the discipline
1.5 creates interdisciplinary learning

2.2 The preservice teacher understands how students learn and develop, and provides learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.
   2.1 knows and identifies child/adolescent development
   2.2 strengthens prior knowledge with new ideas
   2.3 encourages student responsibility
   2.4 knows theories of learning

2.3 The preservice teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners
   3.1 identifies prior experience, learning styles, strengths, and needs
   3.2 designs and implements individualized instruction based on prior experience, learning styles, strengths, and needs
   3.3 knows when and how to access specialized services to meet students’ needs
   3.4 connect instruction to students' prior experiences with family, culture, and community

2.4 The preservice teacher recognizes the importance of long-range planning and curriculum development and develops, implements, and evaluates curriculum based upon student, district, and state performance standards.
   4.1 selects and creates learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals, relevant to learners, and based upon principles of effective instruction (e.g., encourages exploration and problem solving, building new skills from those previously acquired);
   4.2 creates lessons and activities that recognize individual needs of diverse learners and variations in learning styles and performance
   4.3 evaluates plans relative to long and short-term goals and adjusts them to meet student needs and to enhance learning

2.5 The preservice teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
   5.1 selects alternative teaching strategies, materials, and technology to achieve multiple instructional purposes and to meet student needs
   5.2 engages students in active learning that promotes the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance capabilities

2.6 The preservice teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
   6.1 knows motivation theories and behavior management strategies and techniques
   6.2 manages time, space, transitions, and activities effectively
   6.3 engages students in decision-making

2.7 The preservice teacher models effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
   7.1 models effective verbal/non-verbal communication skills
7.2 demonstrates sensitivity to cultural, gender, intellectual, and physical ability differences in classroom communication and in responses to students' communication

7.3 supports and expands learner expression in speaking, writing, listening, and other media

7.4 uses a variety of media communication tools

2.8 The preservice teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

8.1 employs a variety of formal and informal assessment techniques to enhance and monitor knowledge of learning, to evaluate student progress and performances, and to modify instructional approaches and learning strategies

8.2 uses assessment strategies to involve learners in self-assessment activities, to help them become aware of their learning behaviors, strengths, needs and progress, and to encourage them to set personal goals for learning

8.3 evaluates the effect of class activities on both individual and the class as a whole, collecting information through observation of classroom interactions, questioning, and analysis of student work;

8.4 maintains useful records of student work and performances and can communicate student progress knowledgeably and responsibly, based on appropriate indicators, to student, parents, and other colleagues

2.9 The preservice teacher is a reflective practitioner who applies the ethical practices of the profession and continually assesses the effects of his/her choices and actions on others. This reflective practitioner actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally and utilizes the assessment and professional growth to generate more learning for more students.

9.1 applies a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies for reflecting on practice, their influences on students' growth and learning, and the complex interactions between them

9.2 uses resources available for professional development

9.3 practices professional ethics

2.10 The preservice teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and educational partners in the larger community to support student learning and well-being.

10.1 participates in collegial activities designed to make the entire school a productive learning environment

10.2 talks with and listens to students, is sensitive and responsive to signs of distress, and seeks appropriate help as needed to solve students' problems

10.3 seeks opportunities to develop relationships with the parents and guardians of students, and seeks to develop cooperative partnerships in support of student learning and well-being

10.4 identifies and uses the appropriate school personnel and community resources to help students reach their full potential

2.11 The preservice teacher understands theories and applications of technology in educational settings and has adequate technological skills to create meaningful learning opportunities for all students.
11.1 demonstrates an understanding of instructional technology concepts and operation

11.2 plans and designs effective learning environments and experiences supported by informational and instructional technology

11.3 implements curriculum plans that include methods and strategies for applying informational and instructional technology to maximize student learning

11.4 uses technological applications to facilitate a variety of effective assessment and evaluation strategies

11.5 uses technology to enhance personal productivity and professional practice

11.6 demonstrates an understanding of the social, ethical, legal, and human issues surrounding the use of technology in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve (PK-12) schools and applies that understanding in practice

The following objectives address many of the MoSTEP Teacher Education Quality and Performance Indicators as indicated in parentheses. At the end of the semester, the student should be able to:

1. **Verbalize a working definition and fundamental knowledge of the characteristics of exceptional children, including recognition of learning/social/developmental/psychological/familial problems of students with the following disabilities:** autism, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, language impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, specific learning disability, speech impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, young child with developmental delay (2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.4, 2.7.2).

2. **Develop an awareness of how changing federal and state legislation and court decisions impact the perception and education of exceptional children** (2.1.5, 2.3.4).

3. **Define special education and terms commonly used in the field of special education and apply those terms in a debate style format addressing current issues in the field** (2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.7.1, 2.7.3).

4. **Analyze a variety of assessment techniques to evaluate student performance and progress, including the use of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced testing, curriculum-based assessment and curriculum-based measurement as well as portfolio and authentic assessment** (2.8.1, 2.8.2).

5. **Recognize behavior management techniques for classroom instruction, including effective classroom arrangements, grouping options, and effective strategies within an actual educational environment** (2.2.3, 2.3.4, 2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.8.3).

6. **Describe the various types of supportive services needed throughout life by persons with exceptionalities and their families** (2.1.1, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 2.7.2, 2.10.3, 2.10.4).

7. **Explore what it means to teach and learn with exceptional children via general education initiatives, the development of collaborative teaching methods, and the possibilities/limitations of new technology while identifying best practices to increase student, parent, sibling, paraprofessional and school personnel, and**
community involvement in collaboration (2.1.2, 2.1.5, 2.2.2, 2.4.1, 2.5.1, 2.7.3, 2.7.4, 2.10.4, 2.11.1, 2.11.2, 2.11.3, 2.11.6)

8. Determine ongoing educational considerations, effective learning environments, and teaching strategies for exceptional children in the general education classroom (2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.2.4, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.7.3, 2.7.4, 2.10.4).

9. Become familiar with major issues and trends in special education regarding identification, normalization, cultural diversity, students at risk, and learning styles and research issues to identify evidence-based practices supporting them to present to class (2.1.4, 2.2.3, 2.3.4, 2.7.1, 2.9.2).

10. Become familiar with national organizations, current journals and literature related to exceptional children (2.9.2).

**Required Texts:**


**Supplemental Readings** will be assigned as necessary to enhance course content. The following list is a sample of such readings, but is not all-inclusive.


Federal Department of Education and the State of Maine Department of Education. Understanding test results. (Week 2)


Policy Guidance on Educating Blind and Visually Impaired Students. *Re:View, 33*, 77-93. (Week 14)


Willard-Holt, C. Academic and personality characteristics of gifted students with cerebral palsy: A multiple case study. *Exceptional Children, 65*, 37-51. (Week 12)


**General Class Expectations**

Your grade is not based on simple attendance and assignment completion; it is based on active participation each week. There will be discussions, both small group and full class, that focus on course material, texts, articles, and presentations. The expectation is that participants will be thoroughly prepared for class, (i.e. read all material, thoughtfully participate in class, and assume periodic responsibility for leadership of discussions). Discussions will be concerned with **1) recovery of meaning** (arguments authors make), **2) reconstruction of meaning** (interpretations based on personal/professional experiences), and **3) relationship to the broader field of special education** (how the readings link to developing understanding of special education and to participants’ professional interests). Participants will primarily discuss readings in small groups, but will also form a large group to discuss issues raised in small groups.

Group assignments must be completed in a comprehensive manner reflective of the number of points earned as a group (e.g., a group presentation with 3 participants is
worth 750 points total for the group and one with 4 participants would be worth 1000; therefore the expectation would be for 3 or 4 times the quality of an individual presentation.)

All written work for this course must be completed in APA Style with careful attention given to writing conventions, including spelling, grammar, and sentence/paragraph construction.

**Group A Assignments**  
**Class Participation**  
250 points

Choose a combination of the following to reach a total of 250 points for the semester. All Group A Assignments are due by May 11\(^{th}\), our scheduled final exam date.

I. **Class Attendance and Participation**  
10 points/class

For each class in which you participate, you will receive 10 points. To obtain the full 10 points, you must arrive on time, participate fully, and remain until the end of the class discussion.

II. **Class Reflections**  
10 points/reflection

Prepare a two-page written reflection addressing one of the reflection topics listed at the end of one of the chapters for the week. See **Class Reflection Rubric** for specific criteria.

III. **Journal Article Summaries**  
25 points/summary

This assignment requires that the student select a journal article pertinent to a “special education issue of the week” from recent (2005 to present) professional publications to analyze with respect to purpose, audience, sources, thesis, evidence, limitations, and point of view. The student will orally present the analysis to the class with a brief (3-5 minute) introduction, a 5-minute class discussion, and a 2-3 minute closing. The presenter will prepare a written review to be submitted to the instructor in APA style (see **Article Review Guide** and **Journal Article Summary Guide** for specific criteria and format).

**Group B Assignments**  
**Research and Study**  
250 points

Choose 1 for 250 points: Book Review, Site Visit, or Exam #1

I. **Book Review**

Select a book (either fiction or nonfiction) about a person with a disability. Write a book review, identifying characteristics of the disability, how they were portrayed, and how these characteristics impacted the individual’s daily life. Your review should include a complete reference for the book, a concise summary of the content, your reaction to the book and its portrayal of the individual(s) with disabilities as well as how the book relates to what you’ve learned in class as in the **Book Review Guide**. Some suggestions are listed below, but you may choose any book on a special education disability of interest to you:

**Autism**
II. Site Visit
Schedule a site visit to a local agency that serves students accessing special education and related services. Interview a general or special educator regarding opportunities for collaboration with professionals and families, service delivery options available to students, and identification methods used for students with disabilities. Observe in the classroom and report on the classroom environment, modifications, accommodations, and assistive technologies provided, pedagogical techniques, instructional methods, and classroom management tools as well as general information about the agency (See “Site Visit Scoring Guide”). Write an 8-10 page paper summarizing your findings and comparing what you’ve learned about practice with what you’ve read about theory in your textbooks.

III. Exam #1
A take-home examination covering chapters 1-4 and 13 in the text, class lectures and assigned readings comprised of case studies and discussion questions to be completed outside of class, with open book and open notes (but not each other).

Group C Assignments Application 250 points
Choose 1 for 250 points: Case Study Analysis, Intervention Plan, or Exam #2
Case study presentations should be scheduled with the instructor by Week #4 on February 8, 2011. While the due date for all group C written assignments is March 29th, the oral presentation will occur during the class period for the selected case study as scheduled in the syllabus, so the presentation date will vary based on the case study selected.

I. Case Study Analysis
This project will consist of the following components:

- A 20-minute oral presentation of a case study of your choice, in which you recognize and reframe the problem presented, search for alternatives, and develop a plan of action as well as methods for evaluating its success. (See Case Study Analysis Format)
Research (with at least 5 sources other than your textbooks) high-quality evidence-based interventions specific to this population of students that might be implemented by the general education teacher.

A group activity related to a scientific evidence-based strategy for use with the population of students at-risk for that particular disability.

II. Intervention/Individual Learning Plan
This option includes the development of an intervention plan involving research of evidence-based strategies that can be utilized within the general education setting to address the needs of a student at risk for special education. Choose one of the case studies from the Anderson text and design an intervention plan for the student based on the details provided.

- Individual learning plan (125 points): The student will design an individual learning plan (ILP) for one of the case studies in the course syllabus. The ILP should include information regarding social and academic integration into general education, instructional and behavioral needs, specific evidence-based strategies to address needs while meeting content and process standards, potential resources, and development of a systematic communication plan to keep parents informed.

- Oral presentation (125 points): This assignment requires that the student prepare a specific reference list (2-4 articles from professional journals). The student will briefly (3-5 minutes) introduce the case study and intervention plan, initiate a 10-minute class discussion, and summarize the session with a 2-3 minute closing. For scoring guidelines, see “Presentation Rubric”.

III. Exam #2
A take-home examination covering chapters 5-7 and 11-12 in the text, class lectures and assigned readings comprised of case studies and discussion questions to be completed outside of class, with open book and open notes (but not each other).

Group D Assignments Assessment/Evaluation 250 points
Choose 1 for 250 points: Group Presentation, Research Paper or Exam #3

I. Group Presentation
Due date will vary, but will occur no later than April 26th. In groups of 3 or 4, select one of the following questions to research and prepare a presentation to the class. The project should, at minimum, include an outline, an activity, appropriate handouts, and the incorporation of multimedia elements (power point, video, audio). If your group has another question or area of interest you’d like to address, please obtain prior permission from the instructor before proceeding.

- Will RtI Reduce the Number of Children Identified with Specific Learning Disability? (Due February 15th)
- Can Scientifically Based Research Guide Instructional Practice? (Due February 15th)
- Is Response to Intervention (RtI) Ready for Implementation? (Due February 15th)
- Can Whole School Reform Reduce Discipline Problems? (Due February 22nd)

10
II. Research Paper (Addressing the Needs of At-Risk Students: Problem Solving Prior to Referral for Special Education)

The regular education initiative is an important link in the evolution of the full inclusion movement, which was initiated by Madeline Will, former Assistant Secretary of Education, in 1986. The legitimacy of special education as a separate system of education is being called into question and, as a result, a restructuring of the relationship between general and special education is occurring. Most recently, IDEA 2004 advocates the use of a “Response to Intervention” model for identifying children with learning disabilities as opposed to the traditional discrepancy model. In order to address the need for documented high-quality research-based interventions at the general education classroom level, teachers must assume problem-solving responsibilities, including the initiation of research-based strategies for meeting student needs. Ultimately, the needs of many at-risk students (who might have been referred for special education evaluation in the past) will be addressed and resolved within their general education classrooms.

Each student choosing this option will be responsible for preparing a written research paper summarizing evidence-based practices focusing on one (or more) of the following perspectives of development experienced by learners, using at least 10 sources other than your textbooks.

- Biophysical: a point of view that emphasizes neurological and other organic factors as the cause of the individual’s behavior
- Behavioral: a point of view from which the individual’s behavior is seen as being maintained by stimuli in the immediate environment in which the individual functions
- Psychoeducational: a point of view that emphasizes the primary cause of the individual’s behavior as being dynamic intrapsychic phenomena
• Ecological: a point of view from which the individual is seen as developing in a dynamic relationship with and as an inseparable part of the settings in which the individual functions over the life span

Be sure to include a list of references and resources at the end of your written report.

III. Exam #3
A take-home examination covering chapters 8-10 and 14-15 in the text, class lectures and assigned readings comprised of case studies and discussion questions to be completed outside of class, with open book and open notes (but not each other).

Be sure to track your timelines for assignments.
Late assignment grades will be decreased by 10 points for each day submitted beyond the due date.

Disability Rights Statement
Washington University is committed to providing accommodations and/or services to students with documented disabilities. Students who are seeking support for a disability or a suspected disability should contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 5-4062 on the lower level of the Women's Building (drc@dosa.wustl.edu). The DRC is responsible for approving and arranging all accommodations for University students.

Grading Criteria

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**WEEK 1**  
**Introduction to the Course: Overview**  
*Introductions*  
Class Roster/Requirements/Expectations/Grading Criteria  
Video: Ennis’s Gift  
Taylor Chapter 1: An Overview of Special Education

**WEEK 2**  
**Identification, Assessment, and Placement**  
*Taylor Chapter 2: The Special Education Process*  
Anderson Case Studies: Sammy (36-39); Jody (64-67), Arleatha (170-173)  
Role Play: Marta (Anderson pages 16-20)

**WEEK 3**  
**Disproportionality in Special Education**  
*Taylor Chapter 3: School, Family, and Community Collaboration*  
Anderson Case Studies: Kevin (13-16), Hwa-Fang (30-33)  
Role Play: LeShawn (Anderson pages 59-62)

**WEEK 4**  
**Early Intervention**  
*Students who are At-Risk: Early Identification and Intervention*  
Taylor Chapter 13: Students who are At-Risk: Early Identification and Intervention  
Anderson Case Studies: Joseph (54-56), Levonda (70-73)  
Individual Learning Plan: Susanne (Anderson pages 20-22)

**WEEK 5**  
**Response to Intervention – Assignment Group B Due**  
*Students with Learning Disabilities*  
Taylor Chapter 4: Students with Learning Disabilities  
Anderson Case Studies: Aaron (2-5), Antonio (5-7); Jessie (7-10); Juan (10-13)  
Video: F.A.T. City

**WEEK 6**  
**Classroom Behavior Management**  
*Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders*  
Taylor Chapter 6: Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders  
Anderson Case Studies: Joel (67-70); Miguel (73-76); Rinna (80-85)  
Role Play: Mitchell (Anderson pages 76-79)

**WEEK 7**  
**Diversity in Special Education**  
*Students with Communication Disorders*  
Taylor Chapter 7: Students with Communication Disorders  
Anderson Chapter 6: (Kayla; Mark; Richard; Yuri)

**WEEK 8**  
**Inclusion in the Context of Least Restrictive Environment**  
*Students with Intellectual, Severe and Multiple Disabilities*  
Taylor Chapter 5: Students with Mental Retardation/Intellectual Disabilities  
Taylor Chapter 12: Students with Severe Disabilities
Mar 15  SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

WEEK 9  Legal Aspects of Special Education: Due Process
Mar 22  Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
Taylor Chapter 11: Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
Anderson Chapter 7 Case Studies: Brenna, Greg, Paul, Veru

WEEK 10  Accommodations and the ADA Group C – Assignments
Due
Mar 29  Students with Physical or Health Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury
Taylor Chapter 10: Students with Physical or Health Disabilities
Anderson Case Studies: Chad (86-89), Janell (89-92), Nicole (95-98)
Role Play: Robert (Anderson pages 98-102)

WEEK 11  Medical Management of Disabilities
Apr 5  Students with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders
Taylor Chapter 14: Students with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders
Anderson Case Studies: Casey (44-47); Maria (56-59)
Case Study on Medical Management: Travis (103-106)
Individual Learning Plan: Jason (51-54)

WEEK 12  Twice Exceptional Students
Apr 12  Students with Gifts and Talents
Taylor Chapter 15: Students with Gifts and Talents
Anderson Chapter 9: Lily (167-170); Jeffrey (160-163); Margo (173-176)
Role Play: Leo (Anderson 163-166)

WEEK 13  Assistive Technology
Apr 19  Students with Hearing Impairments
Taylor Chapter 8: Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
Anderson Case Studies: Emilio (138-141), Jake (141-144), Lauren (147-151)
Individual Learning Plan: David (Anderson pp. 47-50)
Video: Freedom Machines

WEEK 14  Transition – Group D Assignments Due
Apr 26  Students with Visual Impairments
Taylor Chapter 9: Students with Blindness or Low Vision
Anderson Case Studies: Karen (144-147), Ted (151-154)

Anderson Case Studies: Eli (24-27), Elizabeth (27-30); Lemar (33-36) Vincent (39-43)
Video: High School Inclusion
Role Play: Valerie (Anderson pages 154-157)
Transition Case Study: Melissa (92-95)

WEEK 15  READING WEEK: NO CLASS  
May 3

WEEK 16  NO FINAL EXAM: All Group A Assignments Due  
May 11