MS ED 427 EDUCATING EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN  
Spring 2003

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Required Text

Description
The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with different exceptionalities (physiological, intellectual, and social-emotional characteristics, as well as etiological factors) within the context of present-day laws, regulations, and educational practices. Particular emphasis is placed on identification of student’s learning needs and the ways in which regular and special educators can attempt to meet these needs.

Course Objectives Cross Referenced with Northwestern Conceptual Framework and INTASC/IPTS Standards where applicable.

1. To provide students with an overview of the historical trends (including social and political factors) in the education and social support for exceptional children.

2. To familiarize students with the definitions, characteristics, and etiological factors of different types of exceptionalities (INTASC #2/IPTS #2).

3. To provide a forum for discussing current views about appropriate education for different exceptionalities (including service-delivery approaches and program placements) (NU “c”, “d”, & “e”/INTASC & IPTS #3).

4. To provide students with an opportunity to evaluate educational problems and educational plans for exceptional children (NU “e”).

N.U. Conceptual Framework
The candidate/graduate:
- a. encourages collaborative learning and plans for students to work together;
- b. designs class sessions and assignments that engage students’ interests and that have implications beyond the classroom;
- c. values diversity;
- d. understands that theories suggest questions and ideas about practice and practice suggests modification of theory;
- e. uses systematic inquiry/reflection about teaching and learning to improve practice and invites reflection in students.

INTERSTATE NEW TEACHER ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT CONSORTIUM (INTASC) STANDARDS – cross referenced with Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (ITPS)
The teacher:
1) Understands central concepts, methods of inquiry, and structures of the teaching discipline and creates learning experiences that make the content meaningful to all students. (Content Knowledge -IPTS #1).
2) Understands how individuals grow, develop, and learn and provides learning opportunities that support the intellectual, social and personal development of all students (Human Development & Learning - IPTS#2).
3) Understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates learning opportunities adapted for diverse learners - Diversity - IPTS#3).
4) Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students’ development critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills (Instructional Delivery – IPTS #6).
5) 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 (Learning Environment – IPTS #5).
6) Uses knowledge of effective written, verbal, nonverbal and visual communication techniques to foster active inquiry,
collaboration and supportive interaction in the classroom (Communication –IPTS #7).
7) Understands instructional planning and designs instruction based upon knowledge of the discipline, students, the community and curriculum goals (Planning for Instruction –IPTS #4).
8) Understands various formal and informal assessment strategies and uses them to support the continuous development of all students (Assessment – IPTS #8).
9) Is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates how choices and actions affect students, parents and other professionals in the learning community and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally (Reflection & Professional Growth – IPTS #10).
10) Understands the role of the community in education and develops and maintains collaborative relationships with colleagues, parents/guardians, and the community to support student learning and wellbeing (Collaborative Relationships –IPTS #9).
11) (IPTS ONLY) Understands education as a profession, maintains standards of professional conduct and provides leadership to improve student learning and well being (Professional Conduct).

Course Requirements and Grading
1. Mid-term and final examinations covering material covered in the class sessions. Each examination will constitute 30% of the final grade.

2. For one of the course topics, you are to write a paper that focuses on information and ideas from one of the readings. This paper must be a critical analysis of the issues raised in the reading. Papers should include a concise summary of the issue, followed by a thorough argument/discussion based on the readings for the day, including your own position/reflection on the issue. This paper will constitute 20% of your final grade.

Criteria
1) 3 - 5 pages double spaced.
2) Integration of readings.
3) Depth of the discussion.
4) Organization and clarity of the arguments.
5) Clarity and accuracy of writing.
Sample Topics
Learning disabilities, ADD, behavior disorders, mental retardation, hearing impairments, gifted education, collaboration, inclusion, assessment.

3. Each student is to spend approximately one half a day visiting a program that provides services to exceptional persons (children or adults) These sites can be arranged by the student. Such sites can be previously visited sites. Such sites can include schools, group homes, hospitals, or clinics. In addition, the instructor can make some suggestions for sites.

In most cases it is your responsibility to make your own arrangements to visit a particular location on a particular date. Please keep or cancel any appointment you make. Remember that you are an observer only— you should not be in any way influencing the normal flow of activities and interactions. Please dress and act in a professional manner.

The report of the observation should consist of four parts. Part I is a description of the program visited, the number of children and a description of their exceptionalities. Part II is an explanation of the activities observed (the materials, techniques, interactions, and so on). Present the rationale or purpose. You should not interpret or evaluate any part of what you observed in this section. Part III provides you an opportunity to interpret, evaluate, or make suggestions about any part or parts of the activities you reported in Part II. Minimally, you should comment on the effectiveness of the various activities. Part IV is a reflection/synthesis section. This section concerns your observations of the setting versus your expectations (based on previous experiences, labels, or class material).

The observation report should be about four to five pages long and must be typed (doubled-spacing with adequate margins). This constitutes 20% of your final grade.

This observation report may be used in your professional portfolio as relating to INTASC Standard # 9 above. While not a performance-based assessment your observation report involves reflection on professional practice as it relates to course content.

4. Topic papers and observation reports will be evaluated on content, and quality of writing. All assignments must be typed. Late work will be penalized.

5. Participants are expected to attend all sessions since certain material that will be presented will be from sources other than the text. More than two absences will result in the lowering of the final grade by one. Each absence after two will further result in lowering the final grade by one. In addition repeated tardiness may affect the final grade. Incomplete grades will only be given for reasons stated in the student handbook.

A = 95-100, A- = 90-94
B+ = 86-89, B = 83-85, B- = 80-82
C+ = 76-79, C = 73-75, C- = 70-72
D+ = 66-69, D = 63-65, D- = 60-62
F = below 60.
CLASS SCHEDULE & TOPICS

April 1
Course overview
Definition of exceptional children
Review child development models.

April 3 & 8
Legislation and the law.
Text: Chapter 1.

April 10
Assessment
Text: Chapters 1 & 2.

April 15 & 17
Service Delivery Models
Teacher Skills necessary for successful inclusion
Text: Chapter 2.
Additional reading:

April 22
Parents of exceptional children.
Text: Chapter 13.
Additional reading:

April 24
Normalization, integration, cultural diversity, bilingual special education, and trends in the field.
Text: Chapters 2 & 3.
Video: *Regular Lives*.
Additional Readings:

April 29 & May 1
Learning Disabilities.
FAT City video.
Text Chapter 5
Exam # 1 distributed, due May 6.

May 6
Attention Deficit Disorder
Text: Chapter 6.
Additional reading:
Video: *ADHD What Do We Know?*

Exam #1 due.

May 8
Mental Retardation.
Text: Chapter 4.
Additional reading:

May 13
Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
Text: Chapter 7.
Additional readings:

May 22
Physical Disabilities.
Text: Chapter 11.
Communication Disorders.
Text: Chapter 8.

May 27
Hearing Impairments.
Text: Chapter 9
Additional Readings:

Visual impairments.
Text: Chapters 9 & 10.

May 29
NO CLASS

June 3
Gifted Education
Text: Chapter
Additional Readings

Observation Reports Due
Exam #2 Distributed Due June 10.
April 1, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

The student bearing this letter is enrolled in a class that I am currently teaching at Northwestern University, Educating the Exceptional Child. One of the requirements is an observation of persons with disabilities in school, hospital, or clinical settings. Please allow the student to observe at your site.

If there are any questions I can be reached at Northeastern Illinois University (773) 442-5581.

Yours truly,

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Chair
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