SPED 420.001 Moderate & Severe Disabilities  
Spring 2015  
Tues 4:30 – 7:10 pm  
Location: Henderson 207

Instructor: Suzanne Thomas, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Special Education

Office: Henderson 227  
Telephone: (903) 886-5592  
Fax: (903) 886-5510  
Email: Suzanne.thomas@tamuc.edu  (preferred method of contact)  
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 am to 12:00; Thursday 2:00 to 4:00 pm or by appointment. Please feel free to contact me (preferably by e-mail) to schedule an appointment.

It is my desire that each of you profits from this course. Please contact me via e-mail or phone or schedule to meet with me if you need any assistance. Appointments are NOT required, but are appreciated, preferred, and given priority.

I. Course Description

This course will develop skills for planning and organizing instruction for students with moderate and severe disabilities. Emphasis will be given to standards-based instruction in the core content areas of communication development, functional academics and life adjustment skills. Prerequisites: SPED 346 or permission of instructor.

II. Course Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

This course will address the following TExES (Special Education EC-12 [161]) competencies (as they relate to students with moderate and severe disabilities):

001: Understands and applies knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.

002: Understands formal and informal assessment and evaluation procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.

003: Understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction for individuals with disabilities.
004: Understands and applies knowledge of procedures for managing the teaching and learning environment, including procedures related to the use of assistive technology.

005: Knows how to promote students’ educational performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.

006: Understands and applies knowledge of issues and procedures for teaching appropriate student behavior and social skills.

007: Understands and applies knowledge of transition issues and procedures across the life span.

008: Promotes students’ performance in English language arts and reading.

009: Promotes students’ performance in mathematics.

010: Understands the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.

011: Applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

012: Knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Evaluation &amp; Grading Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Show &amp; Tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 001: Understands and applies knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>002: Understands formal and informal assessment and evaluation procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.</td>
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<td>003: Understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction for individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>004: Understands and applies knowledge of procedures for managing the teaching and learning environment, including procedures related to the use of assistive technology.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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**Class Assignments/Activities/Expectations**

**III. Evaluation and Grading**
Students will be assessed according to the stated objectives in this syllabus including: written work, exams, discussions, projects and presentations.

**Summary of Course Assignments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; In-Class Activities</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show and Tell</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities, Modules or Exams</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Report</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Story</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project report, family support plan, participation, presentation, guest reviewer</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Points Available**

650 points

Grading is based on your cumulative score as a percent of the total score available (650 points)

Points Earned

\[
\text{Percentage Earned} = \frac{\text{Maximum Points} \times 100}{\text{Points Earned}}
\]

**Grading Rubric:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(less than 60%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV: Course Assignments**

1. **Attendance, Participation and In-Class Activities:** Students are expected to be present for all scheduled class meetings. Five points will be deducted for
   - all unexcused absences
   - each 3 tardies (e.g., tardy 3 times = -5; tardy 6 times = -10, etc.)
     - leaving early is considered the same as arriving late
   - During class, students are expected to participate in class discussions, demonstrating college-level preparation and participation. Points will be deducted from the final grade at the discretion of the instructor for failure to participate.
   - In-class assignments, quizzes or other type graded activities may be presented at various times during the semester. No “make-up” assignments will be made for these unannounced in-class assignments if a student is absent.

Attendance points will be deducted per above FROM YOUR FINAL GRADE. Therefore, two (2) unexcused absences will result in a 10 point deduction –
equivalent to one letter grade. If you know you will have an excused absences (see student guidebook), you should contact the instructor prior to the class meeting as possible.

**Participation and Possible In-Class Assignments:** 25 maximum points

**Attendance – 5 point deduction for each unexcused absence**

2. **Show and Tell**
Sometime during the semester, you will have an opportunity to share a personal experience (i.e. article, book, video clip, website, television show, movie, etc.) that relates to students with moderate or severe challenges (including autism), or medical needs.

Show and Tell presentations should be limited to **no more than 3 minutes**. In order to receive credit, a brief written description must be turned in at the time of your presentation (see format in in doc sharing).

**Grading:** 25 Maximum points
**Due Date:** Throughout the semester

3. **Activity Modules**
Throughout the semester, activities, modules, or quizzes will be assigned. Typically, activities or modules will consist of reading and watching the videos and answering assigned questions or participating in electronic discussions. Tentatively, topics will include: teaching social skills and appropriate student behavior, self-determination, generalization and maintenance, and life transitions including personal/ community/ domestic skills.

**GRADING:** 4 activities, modules or exams at 50 points each = 200 maximum points
**Dates Due:** per class schedule

4. **Field Report**
During the semester, each student will schedule a visit to a school, classroom or agency that provides educational or behavioral services to students with severe or multiple disabilities. Prior to this visit, you will be required to prepare 5 questions that you would like to have answered during this visit. Questions are to be turned into the instructor **and approved** prior to your visit. Following the visit, you will be required to prepare a field paper reflecting on this experience. An outline of required components for your report, along with a checklist of items that you should observe for during your visit are both posted in doc sharing. The answer to your five questions and information on how you obtained your answer should be included in your final paper.

**GRADING:** 125 maximum points (25 for advance questions; 100 for field report) Your field report should include (a) your reflection based on the instructor’s required questions, (b) your completed checklist (c) answer to your 5 questions.

**Due Date:** per class schedule. Your 5 questions must be approved in advance of the visit
5. Social Story:
You will create a social story to address a specific problem behavior. See handout in doc sharing for specific directions for creating a social story.

**GRADING:** 25 points maximum

**Due Date:** per class schedule

6. Group Project
Throughout the semester, you will be expected to participate with a group of your peers in a Project Based Learning assignment. Time will be allowed in class for your group to work on this project; however, additional out of class time will be needed.

This activity will require each student to use research and problem solving skills to find appropriate information and instructional strategies to meet a student’s academic and behavioral needs. Each group will be given a case study of a student with a moderate, severe, or medical disability. Each person in the group may have a specific assignment but the project will be presented “as a whole” upon completion. In addition, the group will be responsible for making a presentation of approximately 30 minutes on the results of this project.

There will be five (5) grading components from the project. These components include:

**Project Report:** (maximum points = 100) The Project Report will describe in detail the following six (6) elements of the assigned students’ educational plan.
1. An Introduction to the child
2. A description of the child’s condition
3. An assessment plan
4. An educational plan
5. An assistive technology plan
6. An evaluation / progress monitoring plan

**Project Family Support Plan:** (maximum points = 50) This report will describe how a teacher can support a family – teacher relationship with your child’s family and include a one page flyer / brochure prepared for this family to enhance their involvement in your child’s ARD / IFSP meeting.

**Presentation:** (maximum points = 50) Each group will make a presentation of approximately 30 minutes to the entire class that describes your project (report and family support plan).

**Participation:** (maximum points = 25) Each person will be awarded points for their participation and interaction within their group.
Guest Reviewer: (maximum points = 25). Each person will be required to serve as a guest reviewer for another group’s project (report, family support plan and presentation).

Each of the above five components are further described in the **Group Project Instructions** posted in doc sharing.

**GRADING:** 250 maximum points as follows
- Project Report: 100 points maximum
- Family Support Plan: 50 points maximum
- Presentation – 50 points maximum
- Participation - 25 points maximum
- Guest Reviewer - 25 points maximum

**Date Due:** as scheduled by each group per class schedule

**V. Teaching Strategies**

The following instructional strategies will be employed during this class:
- Lecture, multimedia, and simulations
- Demonstration and case studies
- Project Based Learning
- Cooperative learning
- Written assignments

**VI. Required Text and Related Readings**

**Required Texts**


**VII: Other Syllabus Considerations**

**Safe Zone (Anti-Discrimination)**

The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

**Communication & Support:**

If, between class meetings, you have a question that others in the class may also be having, please post those questions to my Virtual Office in Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege). Please consult Virtual Office to see if a question has
already been answered before sending me an e-mail. (see 3 before me rule below). Responses to Virtual Office questions & emails will be made Monday through Friday within 48 hours unless out-of-office notification has been provided. Please note that I will not guarantee response to Virtual Office posts or emails during weekends, holidays, or in the evenings.

**A Note About the Virtual Office:** The Virtual Office is a public forum. Everyone else in the class can read everything you write there. If you need to contact me about something of a personal nature, feel free to e-mail me.

**Three Before Me Rule:** The 3 before me rule simply means, before you e-mail me with a question, (when is an assignment due, how do I turn it in, how many points is it worth, etc.), you are to attempt 3 times to find the answer your question. What are some suggested ways you can do this? You could: read your syllabus, review Virtual Office to see if someone else has asked this question, post a question for your peers in the Virtual Office, or contact other members of your group, etc.

As a student enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce, you have access to an email account via MyLeo. ALL class emails from your instructor WILL GO TO YOUR MyLeo ACCOUNT. Please be sure to check this email account frequently and regularly.

**ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

**Pearson LearningStudio Access and Log in Information**

This course will meet face-to-face but will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, (eCollege) the learning management system used by Texas A&M University Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: [http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx](http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx).

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu. It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

**Pearson LearningStudio Student Technical Support**

Texas A&M University Commerce provides students technical support in the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.
If at any time you experience technical problems (e.g., you can't log in to the course, you can't see certain material, etc.) please contact the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with a Pearson LearningStudio Representative.

- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

- **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

**Accessing Help from within Your Course:** Click on the 'Tech Support' icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. You will then be able to get assistance via online chat, email or by phone by calling the Help Desk number noted below.

**Note:** Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

**Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio**

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed?

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at
   
   helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511

2. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number

3. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number

4. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you
PLEASE NOTE: Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the Pearson help desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser BEFORE the course begins and to take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform. ONLY Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate.

Internet Access
An Internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your professor. View the requirements as outlined in Technology Requirements above for more information.

myLeo Support
Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at https://leo.tamuc.edu.

Learner Support
Go to the following link One Stop Shop- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location.
Go to the following link Academic Success Center- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.

Communication & Support: If you have a question that others in the class may also be having, please post those questions to my Virtual Office on Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege). Please consult virtual office to see if a question has already been answered before sending me an e-mail. Responses to emails will be made Monday through Friday within 48 hours unless out-of-office notification has been provided. Please note that I will not guarantee response to emails during weekends, holidays, or in the evenings. If you have any questions or need clarifications on any aspect of the course, please email me early in the week.

As a student enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce, you have access to an email account via MyLeo. ALL class emails from your instructor will be sent from eCollege (and all other university emails) and WILL GO TO YOUR MyLeo ACCOUNT. Please be sure to check this email account frequently and regularly. Anti-discrimination: A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.
Cell Phone / Pager / PDA / Blackberry, IPad etc. usage: Cell phones, pagers, IPads, etc. are not to be used during class unless for class business (e.g., not for “surfing” or personal e-mail). Text messaging is not allowed. Turn such devices off or on vibrate and do NOT access them during class. The use of cell phone or any other electronic communication devise during exams is prohibited.

Students with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:
Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Behavior / Professional Dispositions: All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook)

- All students are expected to display professional behaviors (dispositions) expected of educators and to demonstrate these behaviors in their interactions with K-12 students, families, your colleagues, the professor, and communities at all times. These professional behaviors consist of such behaviors as professional responsibility, professional and personal integrity, collegiality, and commitment to learning. Failure to display professional behaviors can result in counseling by the professor and result in lowering of the course grade.

- Academic Dishonesty. To be successful in this class, you must invest time for study. Honesty is expected. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, collusion) will NOT be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. A second infraction will result in automatic failure of the class. Dishonesty is defined as (i) the use of unauthorized materials, (ii) any communication with peers during quizzes, (iii) representing another’s work as one’s own (i.e. plagiarism) or (iv) fabricating information. The professor reserves the right to determine occurrences of cheating.

- Plagiarism occurs at any time that another’s ideas or words are used as your own without attribution. Direct quotations must be cited and set off from other text by quotation marks (“ ...”). Paraphrasing of another’s ideas
must also be cited (although this does not require quotation marks). Copying from other students and two or more students who work together and turning in the exact same work (unless it’s an assigned group project) also constitute plagiarism.

- For many assignments, students are encouraged to work together. However, if individual submission of the assignment is required, the final product must be your own work.

**Late Assignments:** All assignments must be turned in on the assigned due date. Any late assignment will receive a 10% deduction PER DAY for the first 3 days it is late past the due date (e.g., a 10% deduction for 1 day late; 20% deduction for 2 days late, etc.). **Any assignment turned in three or more days after the due date will be returned ungraded (receive a grade of zero).**

  - **A note about timeliness:** If you are absent on the day an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to see that your assignment is turned in on the date scheduled. **The timelines for this course are not negotiable.**

**Syllabi Guidelines:** Ensure that the assignment guidelines presented in the syllabus are followed. It is important that all assignments are organized according to headings and subheadings delineated in the guidelines. **Failure to do so will result in an ungraded assignment or a lower evaluation.**

**Make/Up exam:** There will be NO make/up activities or exams for this course unless a true emergency exists. **Students are expected to submit relevant documentation (e.g. doctor’s note, funeral notice, etc.) when requesting a make/up examination.**

**Written Assignments.** Written assignments MUST be typed using double spaced lines, include your name, and have page numbers. In addition, work submitted should reflect a professional quality in terms of scope, depth, writing mechanics, and appearance that would be expected of students at a prestigious university. Proofread all assignments as only materials with minimal or no errors will receive high scores.

**Person First Language:** Our language is a reflection of our attitudes. Always refer to persons with disabilities with respect. **Degrading terminology will not be tolerated.** In this class we will strive to use “people first” language at all times. “People First” language always refers to the person first and not as a label or a category. For example, refer to “a student with autism” and not “an autistic” or “students with disabilities” and not “disabled students”. In addition, avoid such stigmatizing terminology as “confined to a wheelchair” (say “uses a wheelchair” instead.) or “suffers from ___” (say “has ___”).

**Tobacco Use:** Procedure 34.05.99.R1 now prohibits the use of vapor/electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff and chewing tobacco inside and adjacent to any building owned, leased, or operated by Texas A&M – Commerce.
If you have suggestions, comments, questions, or concerns about the class or the assignments, please call or see the instructor. Please do not save your suggestions for the evaluation at the end of the term when it is too late to implement your suggestions.