



**SPED 528: Special Education Law  
ONLINE  
Course Syllabus Summer 2015  
July 13, 2015 - August 13, 2015**

**Instructor:** Brittany L. Hott, PhD  
**Office Location:** Henderson 225  
**Office Hours:** Mondays 12:00 PM-5:00 PM; by appointment  
**Office Phone:** 903-886-5585  
**Office Fax:** 903-886-5780  
**University Email Address:** [Brittany.Hott@tamuc.edu](mailto:Brittany.Hott@tamuc.edu)

<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
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**Required Textbook**

Yell, M. L. (2016). *The law and special education* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, Prentice Hall.

**Course Description**

***University Catalog Description***

This course will provide students with a history of special education litigation and legislation. Specifically, students will gain a deep understanding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, the major legislation governing the provision of special education services. Students will become familiar with federal statutes and regulations concerning assessment and evaluation procedures, due process and mediation, discipline, individual education plans (IEP's), free appropriate education (FAPE), and least restrictive environment (LRE).

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- Articulate the major provisions of key legislation including IDEA, 504, ADA, and NCLB.
- Describe and evaluate the six major principles of IDEA.
- Describe and evaluate the role of the judiciary as an influential force affecting policy making and practice.
- Analyze judicial opinions and executive agency interpretations of special education and civil rights law and apply the opinions and interpretations to local situations.
- Critically discuss and evaluate legal trends in special education.
- Substantiate the need for adherence to procedural safeguards.
- Determine the scope of related services needed for students with disabilities.

- Understand the special issues regarding related services including the medical exclusion, in-school assistance with health –related needs, and children with substance abuse problems or psychiatric disorders.
- Develop educational opportunities within the scope and application of “least restrictive environment” in inclusive and non-inclusive settings.
- Understand the school’s responsibility to evaluate, understand protections in the evaluation process and practice those responsibilities.
- Understand and communicate the procedural safeguards and dispute resolution under IDEA and Section 504 to colleagues and parents.
- Supervise the IEP review and revision process.
- Understand the “stay-put” provision in IDEA and Section 504 and communicate those requirements to principals and teachers.
- Serve as a consultant or supervisor of the IEP team in conducting “Manifestation Determination” reviews.
- Understand the requirements of a behavioral intervention plan and assist the IEP team in the preparation of such plans.
- Prepare for and administrate due process hearings and reviews under IDEA and Section 504.
- Provide testimony in administrative hearings and court actions.
- Maintain confidentiality of medical and academic records.

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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### **Learning Activities**

- Student participation in small group activities, including analysis and synthesis of readings.
- Application of course concepts to case briefs and scenarios.
- Online discussions.
- Access and analyze materials and resources using a variety of mediums, including eCollege, web-based resources, and professional peer-reviewed journal articles.

### **Overview of Assignments**

- **Personal Introduction and Statement of Interests (5 points)**  
Students will craft an introduction and statement of interests. Students will post their statements to the student lounge located within our course shell. Each statement will include information about your program, current employment/career goals, and areas of interest. Additional details and examples will be provided. Completion of the assignment will result in a score of 5 points.
- **Web Quest (10 points)** Students will complete an Internet scavenger hunt to assist with learning to locate legal information. The Web Quest activity is located under the Week 1 eCollege DocShare file. It should take approximately an hour to complete.
- **Texas Education Laws (25 points)** Education is primarily a matter left to the states. To gain a thorough knowledge of special education law and education

law, students will investigate Texas laws, regulations, rules, and guidelines that implement the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, No Child Left Behind*, and other education-related matters. This information can be found on the Texas Education Agency and Texas regional technical assistance center websites. A template for summarizing applicable state laws and links to resources is provided in the Week 5 eCollege DocShare file.

- **Case Briefs (2 @ 10 points each)** Students will use the LexisNexis database, or other online source, to locate three unabridged court cases involving K – 12 education. This activity provides an opportunity to become familiar with how to read a legal opinion, legal case analysis, and enhance research skills. Case suggestions will be available from the instructor by request. A case brief template will be available in the Week 2 and Week 3 eCollege DocShare files. Each case brief should be approximately 2 to 3 double spaced pages. The following information can be presented in a bulleted format: (a) case (name, year, legal citation), (b) court, (c) plaintiff/appellant, (d) defendant/respondent, (e) facts, (f) remedy sought by plaintiff, (g) appeal process, (h) issue, (i) holding of the court, (j) reasoning of the court including relevant legal authorities, and (k) dissent (if any). You should then write an opinion about the court's ruling. Do you think it was correct or incorrect? You may rely on other cases to support your opinion, journal articles, knowledge of curriculum and instruction, child development, an/or the day-to-day operations of a school. This is not intended to be a detailed research paper, rather an opportunity to practice reasoning skills.
- **Case Studies (2 @ 15 points each)** The instructor will post case studies in the Week 2 and Week 4 eCollege DocShare folders. Students will read, analyze, and respond to questions based on each case.
- **Reflection (10 points)** Students will complete a one-page reflection summarizing their experiences this semester. Specifically, students will think about their perceptions regarding course content. Students should document their learning and growth as a result of participating in this course and completing assignments/readings. A rubric will be posted on the eCollege shell.

## **Grading**

Below are the basic weights of the various kinds of work required for the course.

Assignments should be submitted to eCollege DropBox. Assignments are due at 11:59 PM on the dates indicated in the course schedule section of this syllabus. All written assignments should be typed and adhere to the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition manual, whenever appropriate. **In addition, all written assignments must contain a header with the name of the person submitting the assignment in the actual document itself (not just the file name when it is uploaded).** Late assignments and examinations will not be accepted. All assignments should reflect university level spelling, syntax, and grammar.

In order to maximize your learning and success in this course, the instructor is available to review drafts of any assignments prior to the due date for submission. The goal in doing this is to provide guidance in terms of the content of the assignment, not to edit

writing mechanics. Drafts must be sent via email at least 3 days prior to the assignment due date to allow sufficient time to provide constructive feedback in a timely manner.

Assignment	Points
Introduction	5
Web Quest	10
Texas Education Laws	25
Case Briefs (2 @ 10 points each)	20
Case Studies (2 @ 15 points each)	30
Course Reflection	10
Total	100%

*It is recommended that students retain electronic and hard copies of ALL course products. Products from this class can become part of one's individual professional portfolio.*

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### **Grading Scale**

A = 90-100%      D = 60-69%  
 B = 80-89%      F = 59 and below  
 C = 70-79%

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Technology Requirements**

This is an online course that will be conducted within eCollege (the class will NOT meet face-to-face). eCollege works best within a Microsoft Windows environment, and requires a high speed internet connection (dial-up connections will be problematic). Students should use a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0). The course will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari (2.0 or better). eCollege also support Firefox/Mozilla (3.0 or better) on both Windows and Mac operating systems. It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege click on "myCourses" tab, and then select "Browser Test" link under Support Services. To get started with the course, go to <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>. You will need your CWID and password to login to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your login please contact Technology Services at (903) 468-6000.

### **Contacting eCollege**

The following options are available 24 hours/7 days per week:

1. Help: Click on the help button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (e.g., "How do I submit to dropbox?", "How do I post to the discussion board?")
2. Chat Support: Click on "Live Support" button on the toolbar within your course to

- chat with an eCollege representative
3. Phone: 1-800-656-5511 (toll free) to speak with an eCollege Technical Support Representative
  4. Email: [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to indicate a support request with an eCollege Technical Support Representative

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Special Education Law is an online course that is divided into segments. Our course schedule and eCollege shell are organized by topical areas. The instructor will add materials as we move through the course that align with student and class interests; however, all rubrics and core materials are available for immediate review. Please see the ***Instructor Introduction Module*** that provides an overview of the course and syllabus review posted to eCollege.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Communication

In addition to traditional face-to-face office hours, the instructor is available virtually by Skype, MeBeam, and email during posted office hours. If you would like to schedule an appointment, the best way is to email. We can then set up a time to chat when it is convenient for you. On Mondays between 12:00 PM and 5:00 PM, the instructor will return emails upon receipt. Outside of these times, please allow 24 hours to receive a response. If you have a question that you think others in the class might have, please post the question in the virtual office section of eCollege, so that everyone can benefit.

### Special Education Department Email Guidelines

In an attempt to provide a framework for professional communication, emails must contain the following:

- Subject Line: Course (e.g., SPED 524); additional information if desired (e.g., Case Study 1)
- Address the reader: Open with Dr. Hott
- Adhere to writing mechanics rules
- If asking for assistance with an issue, please list **at least 3 things** you have done to try and remediate the issue prior to contacting me (these should probably include looking at the syllabus/course rubrics/eCollege, contacting a colleague, and checking your text, etc.).
- Close with your name
- Please send emails from your University accounts. The instructor will not discuss grades over email. If you would like to discuss your grade, please make an appointment during office hours.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Course Participation

Students are expected to actively participate in the course, complete readings, and submit assignments no later than the due dates indicated on the course schedule.

## **Academic Integrity**

By accepting this syllabus, the student pledges to uphold the principles of Academic Integrity expressed by the Texas A&M University- Commerce community and the Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education Department. The student agrees to observe these principles and to defend them against abuse by others.

- Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper citation. The instructor reserves the right to submit your work to Turnitin®, SafeAssign®, or similar plagiarism detection services, for an integrity assessment as needed.
- Copyright rules also apply. Use of graphics or data must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to journal articles, books, popular press articles, e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, and information from websites. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to use any data, graphic, or material that you did not create.
- Any attempt to circumvent the integrity of the testing process or otherwise evade the fullest demands of class assignments in an unethical manner constitutes cheating. This can mean looking on another student's exam, consulting notes or books during an exam unless specifically permitted by the instructor, stealing an exam and circulating it among other students. Any offense wholly or partially touching the above definition constitutes cheating for the purposes of this class.
- Academic dishonesty will **not** be tolerated. Any act of academic dishonesty may result in earning a "0" in the course. All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to the applicable program coordinator and department chair.

## **APA Style and Formatting**

**All work should be submitted using APA style.** If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) or to access one of the internet sites that provides a summary of this information. All work produced outside of class must be typed unless otherwise noted. <http://www.psywww.com/resource/apacrib.htm> is offered as a companion to the APA style manual. However, it should not be considered a substitute for directly consulting the APA manual, 6<sup>th</sup> edition for standard of procedures for applying APA style.

## **University Procedures**

### ***ADA Requirements***

#### **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@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

### ***Student Conduct***

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.

### ***Nondiscrimination Statement***

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.

### ***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.

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>
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***IMPORTANT NOTE: Please note that this syllabus serves as a guideline for the course and is subject to change as necessary. It is the student's responsibility to check eCollege and email for updates regularly.***

### **PROPOSED COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
Week 1 07/13/15	*The Legal System: An Overview *Conducting Legal Research *History of Legislative and Judicial Actions Regarding Special Populations	*View Course Overview *Yell Chapters 1, 2, 3	*Introduction and Statement of Interests (07/15/15) *Web Quest (07/17/15)
Week 2 07/20/15	*IDEA *Section 504 *ADA *ESEA	*Yell Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 *Yell Appendix A *Materials posted to eCollege	*Case Study 1 (07/21/15) *Brief 1 (07/22/15)

Week 3 07/27/15	*FAPE *Identification, *Assessment, Evaluation	* Yell Chapters 8, 9	*Brief 2 (07/28/15)
Week 4 08/03/15	*IEP *LRE *Procedural Safeguards	*Yell Chapters 10, 11, 12 *Materials posted to eCollege	*Case Study 2 (08/07/15)
Week 5 08/10/15	*Disciplining Students with Disabilities *Additional Issues	* Yell Chapters 13, 14	* Texas Education Laws Summary (08/11/15) * Course Reflection (08/13/15)