

SPED 346
Introduction to Exceptional Children
 Fall 2015
Web-based Sections 01W & 02W

Instructor: Dr. Ginny Currin

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Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10:00 AM and 12:00PM. No appointment needed during these hours, just call. *(Please remember I do not have an office on campus and I live in Arlington. These hours are phone hours not physical hours.)*

Other than the office hours, I will be happy to visit with you provided you have emailed or texted and made an appointment for us to talk. **Never call me after 9:00 PM.**

It is my desire that each of you profit from this course. Please contact me via e-mail or text to schedule an appointment to visit. Appointments are NOT required, but are appreciated, preferred, and given priority.

Course Description:

This course will provide a survey of populations with exceptionalities. Attention will be given to the cause of these deviations and their effect upon the individual's development. Professional roles of the special education team members as well as the policies and regulations applicable to special education programs in general will be covered.

Text:

Hallahan, D.P., Kauffman, J. M., & Pullen. P.C. (2015). *Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education (13th Ed.)*. Boston: Pearson. (ISBN # 13:978-0-13-357104-2 / 10:0-13-357104-1)
 If you purchase your book new from the bookstore, you will be provided an access to the publishers Enhanced eText, which is a copy of your book online. If you purchase a used copy, you might look for the access code but do not expect it to be available. Access codes are NOT required for the course.

TExES Competencies Addressed:

The following are the standard course objectives: The student is expected to be able to

001	Understand and apply knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities
004	Understand and apply knowledge of procedures for managing the teaching and learning environment, including procedures related to the use of assistive technology
010	Understand the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education, and
012	Know how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.

Course Objectives: Course objectives for SPED 346 are at the end of this syllabus. Course objectives are based on the *descriptive statements* of the knowledge and skills related to the above *competencies* for Texas Special Educator Certification. As SPED 346 is an *introduction* to exceptional children, it is not expected that students will be proficient in all objectives. It is expected, however, that at the conclusion of this course, each student will be able to demonstrate a limited understanding of each course objective.

Course Evaluation & Grading:

"Getting to Know You" Post	10
Sample Quiz	15
Misunderstood Minds Discussion	40
Discussion Forum 10 @ 20 points	205 (<i>Week 3 is 25 pts QEP Assignment</i>)
Diversity/Inclusion Assignment	50
Chapter Quizzes 15 @ 30 points	450
Disability in Society	
- Film Examination	50
- Analysis of Family Interview	100
Examinations 3 @ 100	<u>300</u>

Total possible points ***1220***

Optional Extra Credit 455

Point Distribution:

A = 90%	1220-1098 Points
B = 80%	1097-976 Points
C = 70%	975-854 Points
D = 60%	853-732 Points
F = < 60%	731 Points and below

Communication & Support:

If you have a question that others in the class may also be having, please post those questions to my Virtual Office in eCollege. Please consult Virtual Office to see if a question has already been answered before sending me an e-mail. If you need to talk to me, email first and we will set up a time to visit on the phone. I will not answer questions that can be found on your course schedule, syllabus or is posted on the website. It is your responsibility to read all posted materials. If you have any questions or need clarifications on any aspect of the course, you can post it in Virtual Office and one of your class mates might be able to answer. If you need to talk to me, please email me first.

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, e-mail me first, then we will talk.

CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY:

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.

Technology Requirements:

This is a totally on-line 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 (not dial-up). This means you should use a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet 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 supports the 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 to eCollege, click on the “myCourses” tab, and then select the “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 password, contact Technology Services at 903-468-6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu.

Contacting eCollege for Technical Support:

The following support options are available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week

- Help: Click on the “help” button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e., “How do I submit to dropbox?”, “How do I post to discussion board?”, etc.
- Chat Support: Click on the “Live Support” on the toolbar within your course to chat with an eCollege representative.
- Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (toll free) to speak with an eCollege Technical Support Representative
- Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative

Other Important Notes:

- 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
- 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.
- All assignments must be turned in on the assigned due date. *Unexcused assignments turned in after the due date will be returned ungraded.*
 - **Please note:** Late postings to the discussion board will not be graded, regardless of the circumstance. The purpose of discussion items is to stimulate dialog and debate, which is compromised if postings are not timely. Be sure to submit your initial response by Wednesday night and 2 thoughtful replies to your peers by Sunday night. There is a rubric for discussions so you will know the grading process.
 - **A note about timeliness:** The timelines for this course are not negotiable. I realize that on occasion "life happens" – children get sick, cars break down, and thunderstorms occur. For these reasons and many more, it is highly advised that you DO NOT wait until the deadline for turning in an assignment. If you wait until 11:00 pm to turn in an assignment due at midnight and the electricity goes out, you have missed the deadline and will NOT get credit for the assignment.
 - Ensure that the assignment guidelines presented in the syllabus and assignment handouts 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 a low grade.*
 - Make/Up exam. There will be NO make-up 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. Proof read all assignments as only materials with minimal

or no errors will receive high scores. Assume everything you write will be reviewed by someone you want to work with or for.

- **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.).
- *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 course evaluation at the end of the term when it is too late to implement your suggestions.*
- **Backing up your work:** Please use an outside source to back up your work. Save everything in 2 places. You can use a flash drive or an external hard drive to save important work. Dropbox or any Cloud system is also a free service available for saving information and is a web-based outside support.

Course Objectives

Course objectives are based on the *descriptive statements* of the knowledge and skills related to the above *competencies* for Texas Special Educator Certification. As SPED 346 is an introduction to exceptional children, it is not expected that students will be proficient in all objectives. It is expected, however, that at the conclusion of this course, each student will be able to demonstrate a limited understanding of the following objectives. Course objectives include, but are not limited to, the following.

Competency 001

1. Characteristics of individuals with different types of disabilities, including individuals with different levels of severity and multiple disabilities across eligibility categories, and analyzes the impact of various disabilities on learning and experiences.
2. How the developmental, academic, social, career and functional characteristics of individuals with disabilities relate to levels of support needed and applies knowledge of human development and disabilities to plan and implement appropriate curriculum
3. Theoretical explanations for behavioral disorders and analyzes the varied characteristics of behavioral disorders and their effect on learning
4. The different ways that students with and without disabilities learn
5. Knowledge of human development and the effects of various types of disabilities on developmental processes in order to identify the needs of individuals with and without disabilities
6. The effects of cultural and environmental influences (e.g., linguistic characteristics, socioeconomic issues, abuse/neglect, substance abuse) on the child and family.
7. Normal, delayed and disordered communication patterns, including nonsymbolic communication, and the impact of language development on the academic and social skills of individuals with disabilities.

8. Aspects of medical conditions affecting individuals with disabilities, including the effects of various medications on behavior and functioning and the implications of medical complications for student support needs (e.g., seizure management, tube feeding, catheterization, cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR]).
9. Ways in which physical disabilities and health impairments relate to development and behavior, and knows the etiologies and effects of sensory disabilities and other conditions affecting individuals with disabilities.

Competency 004

10. Procedures for ensuring a safe, positive and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued and how to address common environmental and personal barriers that hinder accessibility for and acceptance of individuals with disabilities.
11. How to use instructional time efficiently and effectively for individuals with disabilities.
12. How to design, structure and manage daily routines, including transition time, for students in a variety of educational settings and procedures for monitoring behavior changes across activities and settings.
13. Knowledge of basic classroom management theories, methods, and techniques for individuals with disabilities, research-based best practices for effective management of teaching and learning and management procedures that are appropriate to individual needs.
14. Ways in which technology can assist in managing the teaching and learning environment to meet the needs of individual students.
15. Various types of assistive technologies, devices, services and resources and their role in facilitating student's educational achievement, communication, positioning, mobility and active participation in educational activities and routines.
16. How to make informed decisions about types and levels of assistive technologies, devices and services for students with various needs, collect and analyze information about a student's environment and curriculum to identify and monitor assistive technology needs and support the use of assistive technologies, devices and services.
17. Procedures for participating in the selection and implementation of assistive technologies, devices and services for students with various needs.
18. Procedures for coordinating activities of related services personnel and directing the activities of paraprofessionals, aids, volunteers and peer tutors.
19. Knowledge of appropriate body mechanics to ensure student and teacher safety in transfer, lifting, positioning, and seating.

Competency 010

20. The historical foundations of special education, major contributors to the literature, major legislation relevant to knowledge and practice in the education of individuals with disabilities and current issues and trends in special education.
21. Knowledge of models, theories and philosophies that provide the basis for special education practice.
22. Current educational terminology and definitions regarding individuals with disabilities, including professionally accepted classification systems and current incidence and prevalence figures.
23. Issues relating to definition and identification procedures for individuals with disabilities, including individuals from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

24. Factors that influence the overrepresentation of culturally and/or linguistically diverse students in programs for students with disabilities.
25. Various perspectives (e.g., medical, psychological, behavioral, educational) regarding definitions and etiologies of disabilities.
26. Cultural variations in beliefs, traditions and values and their effects on the relationships among child, family and school.
27. Knowledge of the continuum of placement and services for individuals with disabilities.

Competency 012

28. The collaborative roles of students, parents/guardians, teachers and other school and community personnel in planning and implementing an individualized program and effective strategies for working collaboratively in various contexts.
29. Knowledge of factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with students, parents/guardians, teachers, paraprofessionals and other school and community personnel.
30. How to foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals in the school and community.
31. Typical concerns of families of individuals with disabilities and appropriate strategies to support families in dealing with these concerns.
32. Knowledge of strategies for encouraging and assisting parents / guardians in their role as active participants in their children's education and procedures for planning and conducting collaborative conferences with parents / guardians.
33. Knowledge of effective communication in various professional contexts and ethical practices for confidential communication regarding individuals with disabilities.
34. The types of information generally available from parents/guardians, school officials, the legal system and community service agencies.
35. Knowledge of the collaborative and consultative roles of special education teachers, paraprofessionals and other school personnel in integrating individuals into general education settings.
36. How to collaborate with teachers in the general educational setting and other school and community personnel to integrate individuals with disabilities into various learning environments.
37. How to serve as a resource person for families, general education teachers, administrators and other school personnel regarding the characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities.