SpEd 583.01W: Content Area Instruction for Students with Mild Disabilities
COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2016

Instructor: Dr. Ginny Currin  ginny.currin@tamuc.edu
Office Hours, as follows:

Cell Phone  817-264-2994
Home Phone  817-516-5515
Phone between 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM weekdays (Text first)
Saturday 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM
Sunday 1:30 PM and 7:00 PM
Additional times by appointment

Please never call me after 8:00 PM at night.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook—Required:

Recommended Text but NOT required: Zemelman, S. & Daniels, H. S. (2012). Best Practices: Bringing Standards to Life in America’s Classrooms. 4th ed. Portsmouth, NH. Heinemann. Please note this book is NOT required but you will find it helpful. Any edition is good. You do not need to buy the 4th edition unless you so desire. Amazon has 3rd editions for $.01 and up. A sample of the third edition can be found at

Course Description

SPED 583 - Content Area Instruction for Students with Mild Disabilities

SpEd 583 will provide students with an understanding of effective reading, writing, and math instruction, with emphasis on the challenges faced by children and adolescents with a wide array of disabilities. Major approaches to assessment and remediation in reading and math will be reviewed, enabling students to develop
diagnostic-prescriptive programs. In addition, this course will provide students with methods of remediation in oral language, handwriting, spelling, and conceptual writing. Students will be enabled to provide appropriate strategies to meet a wide range of individual differences across age levels. Prerequisites: SpEd 520 and SpEd 524.

3.000 Credit hours

**Educator Certification Standards Associated with SpEd 583**
For enrolled students who are completing courses in preparation for TExES, competencies associated with SpEd 583 are as follows:

**Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (EC-Grade 12)**

The teacher...

**002** understands student diversity and knows how to plan learning experiences and designs assessments that are responsive to differences among students and that promote all students’ learning.

**003** understands procedures for designing effective and coherent instruction and assessment based on appropriate learning goals and objectives.

**004** understands learning processes and factors that impact student learning and demonstrates this knowledge by planning effective, engaging instruction and appropriate assessment.

**005** knows how to establish a classroom climate that fosters learning, equity, and excellence and uses this knowledge to create a physical and emotional environment that is safe and productive.

**006** understands strategies for creating an organized and productive learning environment and for managing student behavior.

**007** understands and applies principles and strategies for communicating effectively in varied teaching and learning contexts.

**008** provides appropriate instruction that actively engages students in the learning process.

**010** monitors student performance and achievement; provides students with timely, high-quality feedback; and responds flexibly to promote learning for all students.

**Special Education (EC-Grade 12)**

The special education teacher
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.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. The student will analyze research-based characteristics of student-centered learning environments emphasizing social, emotional, physical, academic, and transition components, including the role of assessment.

2. The student will examine characteristics of students with exceptionalities and students who exhibit at-risk behaviors and effects of these characteristics on learning and development.

3. The student will assess effective academic learning strategies in reading/language arts, handwriting/written expression, mathematics, and other content areas, as applicable.

4. The student will be an active communicator, contributor, and collaborator in the graduate-level learning community.

5. The student will produce a research-based document addressing issues and trends in effective educational programming for students in 21st century schools.
6. The student will demonstrate a research-based practice for teaching academic skills, including Texas Essential & Knowledge Skills (TEKS) correlation and assessment for mastery.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods/Activities/Assessments
SpEd 583 includes a series of learning activities and assessments to assist enrolled students in achieving outcomes and objectives for this course. A variety of weekly readings from the textbook, as well as supplementary reading, research, discussion board postings, and exams will provide the student with a multidimensional learning experience.

Course Requirements and Grade Determination:

- **ONLINE DISCUSSIONS/CLASS PARTICIPATION:** In an online class the discussion board is very important. I expect you to put a great deal of thought into each post, but especially the Initial Posts. You will be required to respond to each discussion thread and respond to the posting of at least two of your classmates’ initial posts. **All Initial Posts are due at midnight on Wednesday. Your two replies are due on Sunday night at midnight.** Failure to complete the discussion forums can seriously affect your grade unless the points are made up with the extra credit activities.

  Participation/discussions will be worth 20 points each week; 10 points for the initial post and 5 points for each required reply. There will be 13 weeks of discussions which is **260 points.** Follow the Discussion Board Grading Rubric posted under Doc Sharing/Assignments.

- **EXAMS:** Three exams, worth **100 points each.** The examinations will cover text material, readings, and assignments. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions and will focus on the application of course material. **Exams are open book and open notes, but they will be timed.** Be prepared having read the book and completed all assignments.

- **Learning Process Analysis 150 Points**

  Each student will select from a list of learning process and conduct an analysis of the process and how it effects a student in the classroom. Ways teachers can assist students with these processing disorders will be included. Guidelines for this major project can be found in eCollege Doc Sharing/Assignments. All papers will be shared with other students through the discussion board. The project is due at the end of week 13. When reports are graded and returned, students will make corrections, if needed, and post a corrected copy to the
discussion board. All students will benefit from other’s reports. The Dropbox for this assignment is in Week 11 so you can turn it in early should you wish to do so.

- **Bibliographical Review of Teaching Strategy Research 160 Points**

Many of you are familiar with different forms of reading or teaching strategies. But how familiar are you with the research that supports the use of those strategies in their classrooms? Laws require teachers to use scientifically based strategies only. In this assignment you will be reviewing current research that supports often used strategies. Each student will select an aspect of reading or teaching to examine. You will briefly present the strategy, then most of your emphasis will be on the research supporting these commonly used strategies. However, if you are a math teacher, you can select an area such as, Teaching Reading Comprehension in the Math (or Science) class. Guidelines and grading rubric will be provided.

**Extra Credit Optional:** As a teacher and mother with many years in education, I understand that things happen in life that cannot be avoided. Therefore, I insert into my courses what might be considered a safety net. In the past semesters, some students used them wisely and submitted them often, and others did not. I do think answering these optional essays will help you have a better understanding of the materials. The questions can be found in Doc Sharing/Extra Credit. When completed, put the assignments in the appropriate Drop Box.

**All work must be submitted through the online course.** You may not email me the work to be graded. If you do, it will not be credited to your gradebook. If you are concerned about an assignment, and we have visited about it, I may ask you to email it to me for just a preview purpose.

**Grading**

**Total Points Possible:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Evaluation &amp; Grading:</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Student Introduction&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Forum 13 @ 20 points</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRIS Activities</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Process Analysis</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographical Review</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations 3 @ 100</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total possible points** 1000

*(Points and assignments are subject to change as the course progresses)*

**Items in RED are required assignments.**

**Optional Extra Credit** 280
Schedule of Instruction:
 Posted in Doc Sharing/Business and at the end of this syllabus.

Calendar: Please note that the calendar is tentative and may change at any time and as many times as necessary during the semester. In case of any changes, you will be informed in a timely manner. **It is your responsibility to regularly check your email and E-College for announcements regarding the course.**

Communication & Support:
If you have any questions or need clarifications on any aspect of the course, you can call or text me. Texting gets the quickest response. I am very happy to talk to you on the phone between the hours specified, but please text first and let me know you are going to call. I will respond to your text as to whether or not it is an okay time to call.

**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.

Starting in January 2016, Pearson, owner and developer of eCollege, has indicated eCollege will be compatible with the new Microsoft Edge. Edge is a new browser that comes with Windows 10. Certainly you can try Edge if you have Windows 10 but if not, please continue to use Firefox.

**Gee Library:** Throughout this course you will need to use the online library. A link to the library is provided in Course Home. If you are not set up to use the library, please do so soon. I find the Easy Search under Finding Information is very easy to use to
locate articles. If you need help, call the library and ask for assistance. I will be happy to discuss with you your library searches but as far as technical support, please contact the library. The emails and phone numbers are listed in the library link in our course. I always recommend limiting searches to Full Text documents. It can be frustrating to locate an article that you really need, and all you have access to is the abstract.

**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

I can help with items relating to the course material, but if something is not working correctly, please use the help desk first. If the error is on my end, then please notify me immediately.

**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.

All assignments must be turned in on or before 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.

Students will be provided guidelines and a grading rubric for all assignments. Be sure to follow all instructions in the handouts. All assignments should be 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 always follow APA writing style. If you are not familiar with APA, go to Purdue’s OWL (Online Writing Lab) for help. A few things to remember is to double spaced all work, include your name within the document, and have page numbers at the bottom of the page always using footers. If you do not know how to use headers and footers, I will be happy to talk you through it but please make an appointment so I am at my computer.
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 carefully many times, 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. Several assignments will be posted on and shared with your classmates.

**Person First Language:** Our language is a reflection of our attitudes. Always refer to persons with disabilities with respect. Degradation 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.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- All assignments are due on the stated due dates. Late submissions will affect the number of points awarded or, depending on the situation, may not be accepted. Students should plan to communicate any extenuating circumstances to the instructor prior to the due date of the respective assignment. The instructor will not reopen exams once the window of availability has expired.

- 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 E-College and E-mail for updates regularly.

**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 Drop**
A student may drop a course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking *Drop A Class.*

**Incomplete Grade**
Incomplete grade policy adheres to information in *Grades-Their Meaning and Value* included in *Graduate Catalog*, Texas A&M University-Commerce.

**Administrative Withdrawal**
Administrative withdrawal of a student as a result of excessive absences adheres to information in Class Attendance Rule included in Graduate Catalog, Texas A&M University-Commerce.

**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:

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Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamucc.edu  
Office of Student Disability Resources & Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Halladay Student Services Building, Room 303 A/D  
Phone 903-886-5150 or 903-886-5835  
Fax 903-468-8148  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu  
Student Disability Resources & Services

**Student Conduct**
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student Guidebook at [http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf](http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf)).

Procedure 34.05.99.R1 prohibits the use of vapor/electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, and chewing tobacco inside and adjacent to any building owned, leased, or operated by TAMU-C.

TAMU-C 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.

Plagiarism and/or cheating will **not** be tolerated. The first offense of either activity will result in a “o” on the assignment, and the second offense will result in a “o” for the entire course.
Plagiarism: “1. The action or practice of plagiarizing; the wrongful publication or purloining, and publication as one’s own of the ideas, or expression of the ideas (literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, etc.) of another.” Oxford English Dictionary.

Students should know that plagiarism occurs any time another’s ideas or words are used 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. Copying from other students is also plagiarism. Any offense wholly or partially touching the above definition constitutes plagiarism for the purposes of this class.

Faculty members take plagiarism very seriously for two main reasons. First, it represents a subversion of the learning process and cheapens the learning experience for other students as well as the offender. Secondly, college faculty themselves must strictly abide by rules governing their scholarly work, including prohibitions against plagiarism. It is a core value of scholarly professionalism to acknowledge the intellectual contributions of others. It is also an element of our civil and criminal law, as well as the ethical standards of the learned professions—i.e. accounting, architecture, engineering, law, medicine, etc.

Cheating On Examinations, Quizzes and Other Course Assignments: The Oxford English Dictionary defines the verb “to cheat” as: “2. to defraud; to deprive of by deceit; 3. a. to deceive, impose upon, trick; b. to lead into (an action) by deception; 4. a. to deal fraudulently, practice deceit.”

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. That 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, text messaging in class during an exam, or lying to an instructor about such activities all constitute forms of academic dishonesty that amount to cheating. Any offense wholly or partially touching the above definition constitutes cheating for the purposes of this class.