

Rutgers University
Graduate School of Education
Department of Educational Psychology, Special Education

15.293.605

Seminar in Special Education

(4/16/11 draft syllabus- subject to later minor revision)

Fall, 2011

Mondays

4:50 – 7:30 pm (with exceptions noted below)

Location: GSE Room 347

3 credits

Matthew J. Mayer, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: MON 2:00 – 4:00 pm (or by appt.)

Note: To reach me, you will be most successful using email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a seminar course that prepares doctoral students for their Ed.D. program of studies, builds knowledge, strategies, and skills in understanding research, research-to-practice connections, and systemic issues in education, and particularly, special education, and examines critical topics in special education.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

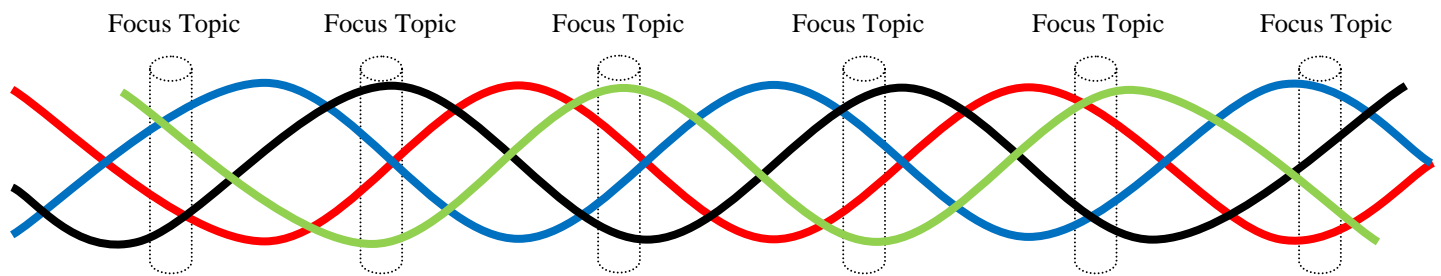
Upon completion of this course, students can expect to:

- Identify major types of research questions in special education and allied fields and the related research methodologies most commonly used;
- Understand fundamentals of current evidence-based standards in special education research and allied fields of study;
- Understand key challenges in translating research to practice;
- Understand basics of critical systemic factors (Funding Streams, Law, and Regulation; Program & Curriculum; Professional Development; Outcomes Accountability; Organizational Behavior & Interagency Dynamics) that affect how the special education system functions and the experiences of students receiving special education services;
- Develop significant knowledge of research-based knowledge, intersection with systemic issues, research-to-practices issues, and future challenges in multiple areas affecting the education of students with disabilities, including, but not limited to (1) Inclusion/Access to the General Education Curriculum, (2) RTI/Early Reading, (3) Writing, (4) Disproportionality, (5) Bullying/Aggressive/Antisocial Behaviors, and (6) Mental health in Schools;
- Develop skills critiquing research articles;
- Develop skills synthesizing research in a focus area of interest;
- Build skills developing intervention or training grants, including establishing partnerships, conducting a needs assessment, defining the training or intervention framework, targeting appropriate funding sources, writing the grant, including budgetary components, and submitting a final grant proposal for funding; and
- Further develop professional collaboration and presentation skills

COURSE OVERVIEW

Major Strands and Learning Activities in Course

- **Types of Research Questions and Related Methodologies**
- **Evidence-Based Standards in Education and Allied Disciplines**
- **Systemic Factors** (Funding Streams, Law, and Regulation; Program & Curriculum; Professional Development; Outcomes Accountability; Organizational Behavior & Interagency Dynamics)
- **Translation of Research to Practice**



Focus Topics: Research to Practice Issues & Points of Contention

- Inclusion/Access to the General Education Curriculum
- RTI/Early Reading
- Writing
- Disproportionality
- Bullying/Aggressive/Antisocial Behaviors
- Mental health in Schools

Course Learning Activities:

- Review and Discussion of Select Readings
- Videoconference with Leading Researchers in Focus Topics—Visiting SKYPE Scholars
- *Taking Sides* Debates
- *Rival Hypotheses* Activities
- Critiquing Research Mini-Labs; Also, two 3-4 page Critiques of Research Articles Provided by Professor (1- Individual/1-Team)
- Synthesizing Research Mini-Labs; Also, 1 Independent Research Synthesis Paper-15 pp. (Individual)
- Intervention/Training Grant Writing Mini-Labs; Also, Access Foundation Center Database and Write and Submit REAL Small-Scale Intervention or Training Grant Targeted to Foundation or Agency (Individual or 2-Person Team), on behalf of a school or other youth organization in the community.
- Presenting to Groups (Individual 20-minute PowerPoint Presentation/Discussion)

COURSE MATERIALS

(1) Scientific Research in Education. (2003) (Paperback) Lisa Towne and Richard Shavelson. ISBN-10: 0309082919 ISBN-13: 978-0309082914

(2) Racial Inequity in Special Education. (2002) (Paperback) Daniel Losen and Gary Orfield. ISBN-10: 1891792040 ISBN-13: 978-1891792045

(3) Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.) (Paperback) (2009) American Psychological Association ISBN-10: 1433805618

All other required readings available online at **SAKAI: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are required to attend every class. More than one unexcused absence will result in lowering the student's final grade by the equivalent of one full letter grade (e.g., from B+ to C+) for each additional unexcused absence beyond one (except for documented emergencies, illness, religious observance, or other serious needs). More than three absences total (regardless of absences being excused) will likely necessitate repeating the course to earn credit. Bona fide emergencies and highly unusual situations should be discussed in private with the instructor to explore the possibility of special accommodations and/or arrangements. Class starts at 4:50 sharp (subject to time modifications noted for specific class sessions). Students are expected to arrive at class a few minutes before class begins.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University Code of Student Conduct can be accessed at:

<http://rci.rutgers.edu/%7Epolcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml> For information on the academic integrity policy, please go to: <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/integrity/policy.shtml>

A multimedia presentation on plagiarism can be found at:

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/integrity/realifeexamples.html>

Related regulations may also be found in the Rutgers Graduate School of Education Catalog.

For any and all assignments and class activities, papers, field projects, PowerPoints, and any other class related work, **no copying of any kind is allowed**, unless copied text is placed within quotations and author/source is appropriately cited.

Clear evidence of extensive plagiarism will likely result in a grade of F for the assignment AND course.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES

Students requiring accommodations related to disabilities will be provided all necessary supports and accommodations. In such circumstances, students should make sure that they communicate their needs in advance to the instructor in coordination with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services to ensure that they receive appropriate supports commensurate with their needs.

COURSE GRADING PLAN

1. Participation (@ 3 points per class x 14 sessions = 42 points).
2. Student-Led Presentation/Discussion (30 points)
3. Critiques of Research Articles (25 points each x 2 = 50 points)
4. Independent Research Synthesis Paper (75 points)
5. Small-Scale Intervention or Training Grant (100 points)

Course Grades: (out of 297 possible points)

GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A	93.00 – 100.0 %	Point totals will be converted to percentages. N.B. A grade of 86.99 earns a B, not a B+ Any mid-course modification of course assignments that result in changes to possible point totals will be reflected accurately as percentage of total possible points earned.
B+	87.00 – 92.99 %	
B	81.00 – 86.99 %	
C+	77.00 – 80.99 %	
C	70.00 – 76.99 %	
F	Under 70 %	

ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING: ADDITIONAL DETAILS

1. **Participation:** Students are expected to come to class having completed all assigned readings for that week **in advance** and to participate in class discussions, offering **informed** ideas and opinions.

Breakdown: 1 point for attendance, 1 point for active attention throughout class session, 1 point for active discussion/participation (no points earned when absent, except in excused absence cases of serious, documented emergencies/religious observance/illness—then 2 points are awarded)

2. **Student-led presentation/discussion.** Beginning at session #2, one student will present on a selected reading during class. Following a brief introduction in which they state the topic and preview the main presentation content (1 minute, with accompanying presentation overview slide), the main content part of the presentation will last 9-10 minutes, to be followed by 8-9 minutes of facilitated (by the presenter) discussion (or, discussion can be embedded throughout the presentation), and a 1-minute summary/closure with accompanying slide. **Under no circumstances can the total time exceed 20 minutes per presenter** (due to other content coverage and activities during class). Students should rehearse to make sure their presentation timing is appropriate and they are responsible to bring a small clock or other timing device to help them manage their presentation time. Students will sign up for topics during session #1. The oral presentation should **cover just the main concepts and main informational points** from the selected reading—not all of the content. A rubric will be distributed at class session #1. The student must prepare three things to accompany the presentation:
 - a. A brief PowerPoint slide show for the presentation. Email the PPT to Dr. Mayer no later than 5pm the day before the presentation. **See the exemplar PPT with content, design, and presentation TIPS for student presenters on SAKAI**
 - b. Copies of a 4- to 5-page (single spaced) detailed handout (with more detail than in the PPT show) for class members containing summary information
 - c. A list of 4 - 5 challenging discussion questions (higher order thinking) for the class

- 3. (2) 3-4 page Critiques of Research Articles Provided by Professor (1- Individual/1-Team).** Students will receive a list of research articles with PDF files available on SAKAI, from which they can choose the articles that they wish to critique. One critique will be done individually, and one collaboratively, with another member of the class. Work on the critiques will begin after the first of the Critiquing Research Mini-Lab (session #3), with continuing work on the critiques, taking advantage of Critiquing Research Mini-Labs during session #6 & #8. A rubric on the research critiques will be distributed and discussed during session #2 or #3. **The critiques are due at class session #10.**

- 4. Independent Research Synthesis Paper-15 pp. (Individual assignment).** Each student will select a topic with focus question(s) from a list provided by Dr. Mayer, or may select another focus area developed in consultation with Dr. Mayer. Each student will research the focus question(s) for their topic, synthesizing the research literature. The students will need to work with a minimum of 15 journal articles/chapters/reports, developing a 15-page paper in APA (6th Ed.) format. Student topics must be unique (no dual coverage of the same topic). Students can take advantage of the Synthesizing Research mini-labs to help refine their work through a peer collaboration process. Students are encouraged to share their final synthesis papers with fellow class members. A project rubric will be discussed during class session #3. **The paper is due at class session #12.**

- 5. Write and Submit Small-Scale Intervention or Training Grant Targeted to Foundation or Agency (Individual or 2-Person Team), on behalf of a school or other youth organization in the community.** Students may work individually or as 2-person teams, developing a real grant proposal that will be submitted to a public/private funding agency/foundation on behalf of a local school or community organization (e.g., Boys & Girls Club). Students will be provided access to the Foundation Center Foundation Database to target potential foundation funders. Students will consult with Dr. Mayer on the proposed partnership before proceeding. Students will meet with prospective school or local community organization partners early in the semester to establish a working partnership with a specific grant goal and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in writing. A project rubric will be discussed during session #2. **The grant project is due at class session #14.**

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY READINGS AND CONTENT COVERAGE

Students are strongly encouraged to form study groups and email Dr. Mayer about parts of the readings for which they have questions (at least one full day prior to class).

Assigned reading to be completed BEFORE the session (including session #1).

Other than assigned course texts, all other readings are on SAKAI: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>

Note: Visiting SKYPE scholar schedule is tentative.

Session	Content/Activity	Assigned Readings
Week 1 (9/12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course • Challenges for educational practitioners • Leveraging research into practice • Ways of knowing • Working with diverse research and practitioner frameworks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophies of Educational Research (in Complementary Methods in Educational Research, Chapter 1) • The Scientist Practitioner (Chapter 1) • Examining the Practical Implications of Special Education Paradigms of Social thought
Week 2 (9/19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Types of Questions in Special Education Research and Related Methodologies • <i>Rival Hypotheses</i> Activity-1 • Evidence-based standards in education and allied disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Research in Education; Chapters 1-3 (pp. 11-79) • Research in Special Education: Scientific Methods/Evidenced Based Practice • Evidence-Based Standards and Methodological Issues in School Violence and Related Prevention Research in Education and the Allied Disciplines
Week 3 (9/26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and Critiquing Information: Inclusion/Access to General Education Curriculum • Research To Practice: Inclusion/Access—Visiting SKYPE Scholar—Naomi Zigmund • Points of Contention and Translation to Practice Issues • Critiquing Research Mini-Lab 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History, Rhetoric, and Reality: Analysis of the Inclusion Debate • Twenty-five years after Dunn’s article: A legacy of policy analysis research in special education • Urban Elementary Teachers’ Perspectives Regarding Collaborative Teaching Practices • Access of Adolescents with Disabilities to General Education Curriculum: Myth or Reality? • What, Where, and How? Special Education in the Climate of full Inclusion
Week 4 (10/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Types of Questions in Special Education Research and Related Methodologies • <i>Rival Hypotheses</i> Activity-2 • Evidence-based standards in special education and allied disciplines • Intervention/Training Grant Writing-Mini Lab-1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Research in Education; Chapters 4-5 (pp. 80-126) • CEC DR Quality Indicators Report (2004) • Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence
Week 5 (10/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and Critiquing Information: RTI/Early Reading • Research To Practice: RTI—Visiting SKYPE Scholar—Doug Fuchs • Points of Contention/Translation to Practice • Synthesizing Research Mini-Lab-1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefining LD as Inadequate RTI (2003) • RTI:Definitions, Evidence, Implications (2003) • Fuchs & Fuchs RTI Blueprint (2005) • RTI NJCLD June 2005 Report • Fuchs & Deschler: What We Need to Know About RTI (2007) • RTI: A Reality Check (2009) • Fuchs et al: Blurring of Special Education (2010)

<p>Week 6 (10/17)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Factors-I: Funding Streams, Law & Regulation • Professional Standards in Special Education: Resource Overview • Critiquing Research Mini-Lab 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Are We Spending on Special Education Services in the U.S.? • Special Education (Harr, Parrish, & Chambers) • Access to the General Education Curriculum for Students with Disabilities: A Discussion of the Interrelationship between IDEA and NCLB • Financing Education for Children with Special Needs (2011) • [PDF for reference only] What every special educator must know: The international standards for the preparation and certification of special education teachers (6th ed., 2009)
<p>Week 7 (10/24)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Factors-II: Program and Curriculum • Synthesizing Research Mini-Lab-2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Educational Results for All Students: The Promise of Standards-Based Reform • Differentiating Standards-Based Education for Students with Diverse Needs • 2007 Survey of States: Activities, Changes, and Challenges for Special Education • Delphi Study of Instructional Strategies for English Language Learners with Disabilities: Recommendations from Educators Nationwide
<p>Week 8 (10/31)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and Critiquing Information: Writing • Research To Practice: Writing—Visiting SKYPE Scholar—Steve Graham • Points of Contention and Translation to Practice Issues • Critiquing Research Mini-Lab-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing and Cognition: Implications of the Cognitive Architecture for Learning to Write and Writing to Learn • Best practices for teaching writing to students with special needs • Almost 30 Years of Writing Research: Making Sense of It All with The Wrath of Khan • The Effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development on the Writing Performance of Second-Grade Students With Behavioral and Writing Difficulties
<p>Week 9 (11/7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and Critiquing Information: Disproportionality • Research To Practice: Disproportionality—Visiting SKYPE Scholar—Anne Gregory • Points of Contention and Translation to Practice Issues • Synthesizing Research Mini-Lab-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losen & Orfield, Introduction; Chapters 1-4 • How do school safety efforts affect students from different racial and ethnic groups? • Taking Sides: Is Eliminating Minority Overrepresentation Beyond the Scope of Public Schools?

<p>Week 10 (11/14)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Factors-III: Professional Development • Intervention/Training Grant Writing-Mini Lab-2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chronic and increasing shortage of fully-certified teachers in special and general education • The Supply of and Demand for Special Education Teachers: A Review of Research Regarding the Nature of the Chronic Shortage of Special Education (Executive Summary) • An Evaluation of Teachers Trained Through Different Routes to Certification (Executive Summary) • Review of Mathematica Study by Corcoran & Jennings • Review of Mathematica Study-Darling-Hammond • Taking Sides: Will NCLB requirements Produce Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers?
<p>Week11 (11/21)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and Critiquing Information: Bullying/Aggressive/Antisocial Behaviors • Research To Practice: Bullying/Aggressive/Antisocial Behaviors—Visiting SKYPE Scholar—Rick Van Acker • Points of Contention/Translation to Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Psychopathology: A Developmental-Systems Perspective • A Biopsychosocial Model of the Development of Chronic Conduct Problems in Adolescence • Translation of Research Into Interventions
<p>Week12 (11/28)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Factors IV: Outcomes Accountability • Intervention/Training Grant Writing Mini-Lab-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Accountability and Students with Disabilities: Issues and Challenges • Modified Achievement Standards-Non Regulatory Guidance (7/20/2007) • States' Participation Guidelines for Alternate Assessments Based on Modified Academic Achievement Standards (AA-MAS) in 2008 (pp. 2-11) • Increasing Rates of School Completion: Moving From Policy and Research to Practice (pp. 1-20; 32-36) • Taking Sides: Should Students with Disabilities Be Exempt From Standards-Based Curriculum?
<p>Week13 (12/5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing and Critiquing Information: Mental Health in Schools • Research To Practice: Mental Health in Schools—Visiting SKYPE Scholar—Mark Weist • Points of Contention and Translation to Practice Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-Based Mental Health: An Empirical guide for Decision-Makers • Enhancing NCLB-School Mental Health Connections • Non-Public Special Education Programs: Evaluating the Costs of Within School Alternatives for Students with Emotional Disturbance • Mental Health Screening in Schools
<p>Week 14 (12/12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systemic Factors V: Organizational Behavior and Interagency Dynamics • Connecting it all—Synthesis discussion of semester seminar learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpacking Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Expanded School Mental Health: A Conceptual Model for Developing the Evidence Base • Interagency Services:A New Era for an Old Idea • Interagency Collaboration: Driving and Restraining Forces