

**Introduction to Special Education**  
**05:300:383:02**

**Instructor:** Dr. Dake Zhang  
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**Class Meeting:** Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
Location: Scott Hall Rm. 116  
Time: 1:10 – 2:30  
Office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays: by appointment

**Text:** Smith, D.D. & Tyler, N.C. (2010) *Introduction to special education: Making a difference*, Pearson - Prentice Hall (ISBN-13: 978-0-205-60056-4; ISBN-10: 0-205-60056-5)

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

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on the foundations of special education. The purpose of the course is to: 1) examine historical background information related to the field of special education (legislation and litigation); 2) review components necessary for effective collaboration and consultation with parents, school personnel and other professionals, and related multicultural issues/perspectives; 3) examine the nature and characteristics of various disabilities; and 4) discuss services and programs to help meet the educational, social, and/or personal goals for students with disabilities. These goals are achieved via the use of case studies, large and small group class discussions, chapter readings, class assessments, and related activities.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Examine the historical trends in special education, as well as related litigation and legislation;
2. Review current terminology and issues in the field of special education, including inclusion practices, as well as family and multicultural issues;
3. Examine the diagnosis, identification, and characteristics of various disabilities;
4. Review service delivery options for students with disabilities and their families; and
5. Discuss general methods and strategies for meeting the social and educational needs of students with various disabilities.

## **Policies**

### **How You Earn Your Grade:**

Evaluation of your performance in this course is based on the percentage of total points that you earn in the course. Course assignments have been assigned a point value and the total number of points will be used to calculate the final grade. Late assignments will only be accepted with the permission of the instructor and will lose points for each day they are late. Included in the class participation component is the score received on group assignments completed in class. Group work is based on assigned readings; as a result, it is important that students keep up-to-date on their reading in order to be good group members. Because of the hands-on-approach, attendance is imperative. Therefore, 2 points will be deducted from the class work score for each absence. Students should notify the instructor by e-mail or in writing when they are absent.

### **Course Requirements:**

Number grades will be converted to letter grades as follows:

90 – 100%	= A
87-89%	= B+
80-86%	= B
77-79%	= C+
70-76%	= C
60-69%	= D
59% and below	= F

- If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and are eligible for academic accommodations or modifications, please notify me immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs. For additional assistance, please contact the New Brunswick Campus Coordinator at (732) 932-1711.

### **Assignment Submission Policy:**

- Additional assignments will be given out at the beginning of class. If late to class, students will be responsible for checking with other students.
- Late assignments are accepted only at the discretion of the instructor. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, you must email the assignment to the instructor or the assignment will be counted as late and points will be deducted.
- Students should review and be familiar with the Policy on Academic Integrity. Violations of academic integrity will be handled according to the procedures and guidelines outlined in the catalog and could result in course failure and/or expulsion. Plagiarism, handing in someone else's work, work obtained on the internet without documenting the source, or work written for another professor's course are all reasons for failure of this course and dismissal from this university.

- All assignments should be typed, double spaced, and neat. *Edit your work before handing it in*, as attention to grammar, spelling, and organization count. Please use 12-point font in a traditional/professional font (e.g., Times New Roman). All assignments must be completed using APA Format (5<sup>th</sup> Edition). In particular, references should be noted in the body of your work, as well as on a separate reference page. Better than satisfactory writing skills are expected.
- Papers will be graded within 14 days of their due date.

## Professional Demeanor

As future teaching and allied field professionals, students are expected to present themselves and act in class as they would in a professional meeting in the school district where they work. This applies to several dimensions of professional conduct:

- Students are expected to focus totally on class activities and not engage in alternate activities (social conversations, text messaging, etc.).
- Students are expected to be respectful of divergent beliefs and opinions that may be voiced in class discussions, offering constructive questioning and feedback as appropriate.
- Except where otherwise customary (e.g., deaf community terminology), students are expected to use *person-first* language when speaking of students with disabilities (e.g., *student with a learning disability*, **NOT**, *LD student*), and never use demeaning terms such as *retard*. Students should avoid terminology that objectifies human beings as “things” of pity, such as, *wheelchair-bound*, *confined to a wheelchair*, or *suffers from a disability*. Because *normal* has multiple meanings and may inappropriately imply abnormal where it is not applied, this word should not be used. Instead, more operationally descriptive terms such as “intellectually average students”, “typically developing students”, or “students without learning disabilities” should be used. See the APA Manual for more information on person-first terminology.

## Assignments:

### I. Exams – 40 points each

There will be two exams involving multiple choice, short-answer questions, and/or essay questions. Exam items will include information from class lectures, activities, and reading assignments/handouts. For example, exam items may come directly from the chapter readings or guest presentations which may or may not be addressed in class lectures. **Thus, it will be essential to attend class, complete homework, and to read the assigned chapters and related handouts.**

## II. Papers – 40 points each

### Paper I:

Read and respond, in no more than seven total pages, to three journal articles that focus on instructional strategies for students with disabilities. Some journals to explore are:

- *Teaching Exceptional Children*
- *Intervention in School and Clinic*
- *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*
- *Reading Teacher*

### Or Movie Project

Select and watch a movie from a list provided in Saikai, reflect on the figure(s) with special needs in the movie story. Answer four reflection questions in the rubric we provided.

- Present your Paper I in class. Each student will briefly introduce his/her findings to the class with a short presentation (5 mins) starting from March 12<sup>th</sup>. Students who choose the same movie/topic can present as a panel (3 students per panel).

### Paper II:

Students will complete a research paper on a chosen topic in the field of special education. The paper should adhere to the following guidelines:

- At least 10 pages in length
- Follow APA format, including reference list
- Use at least five sources

Possible topics include:

- Inclusion
- Co-teaching
- Working with paraprofessionals
- Working with parents
- Specific instructional strategies for students with disabilities (such as learning disabilities, autism, emotional and behavioral disabilities, etc.)
- Reauthorization of IDEA
- NCLB and its impact on special education
- Discipline policies for students with disabilities
- Classroom management strategies
- Behavior modification
- Task analysis

### Technology Assignment - 20 points

### \*Small group project

The purpose of this assignment is to explore and increase awareness of current technological enhancements for students with various disabilities. For example, it can be about the benefits of using an iPad with students with autism or it can be a classroom adaptation that you want to demonstrate, such as using specific internet sites or software to supplement a lesson. This assignment will be completed in small groups (about 3 people per group) and will include a brief presentation/demonstration (no more than 10 minutes) with a one page handout for each class member. You will sign up for a topic the first week of class and presentations will start the third week of class.

### **Class Attendance/Participation – 50 points (25 class meetings)**

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. Class work will be a composite of class participation, work on in-class assignments, small and large group activities, and attendance.

**Breakdown:** 0.5 point for attendance, 0.5 point for active attention throughout class session, 1 points for active discussion/participation (no points earned when absent, except in cases of serious, documented emergencies/illness—then 1.5 points are awarded)

### **Class Cancellation**

You will receive an e-mail from me if class is cancelled. If class is cancelled due to inclement weather, students should check SAKAI for replacement assignments.

### **Grading Scale**

1. Participation (50 points).
2. Technology Assignment (20 points)
3. Paper I (40 points)
4. Paper II (40 points)
5. Exam I (40 points)
6. Exam II (40 points)

**Total possible points: 230 points**

## Class Schedule\*\*

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Assignment(s)</u>
Week 1 (Jan 22, 24)	What is special education and inclusion, the history & laws of special education, the structure of support services in New Jersey		Chapter 1
Week 2 (Jan 29, 31)	How are students identified for special education, the IEP process, characteristics and interventions used with specific disabilities		Chapter 2
Week 3 (Feb 5, Feb7)	Inclusion of students with disabilities <b>Technology presentations begin</b>		Additional rdg (TBD)
Week 4 (Feb 12, Feb 14)	Cultural & Linguistic Diversity		Chapter 3
Week 5 (Feb 19, Feb 21)	Speech & Language Impairments		Chapter 4
Week 6 (Feb 26, Feb 28)	Learning Disabilities		Chapter 5
Week 7 (Mar 5, Mar 7)	ADHD <b>Paper I due (Mar 7)</b>		Chapter 6
Week 8 (Mar 12, March14)	Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities; <b>Exam I – Chapters 1-7 (March 14)</b> <b>(Paper 1 presentations begin)</b>		Chapter 7
Week 9 (Mar 19, Mar 21)	Spring Break		
Week 10 (Mar 26, Mar 28)	Intellectual Disabilities Physical or Health Disabilities		Chapter 8-9
Week 11 (April 2, 4)	Deafness & Hard of Hearing  April 4 CEC		Chapter 10

