

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

15.293.630

Current Topics in Special Education
(Spring 2013)

Instructor
Wednesdays
4:50 – 7:30 pm
Location: Scott Hall 207
3 credits

Dake Zhang, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: WED 2:00-4:00 (or by appt.)

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

Course Description

This course is a hybrid seminar-traditional course, addressing three current topics in special education:

- Inclusion and Co-teaching
- Disproportionality
- Changing conceptualizations of LD and Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Evidence based standards in special education and allied disciplines

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students can expect to:

- Understand the history of the inclusive education.
- Understand the argument for and against inclusion.
- Have knowledge of current resources that provide effective co-teaching strategies.
- Understand historical, systemic, cultural, and ecological factors related to the disproportionality in special education, particularly in areas of identification, placement, service provision, disciplinary practices, resource allocation, and staffing.
- Understand current national level data on disproportionality in special education
- Identify and discuss major theories and research findings explaining causes of disproportionality
- Understand historical practices in LD assessment and identification, and precursors to RTI
- Understand the major tenets of the response to intervention approach, and primary models
- Understand current research findings on implementation of RTI
- Understand key concerns and issues in the current debate over RTI
- Understand key critical issues being debated in the area of LD assessment and identification
- Understand the history of the evidence based movement in education
- Understand the breadth and depth of the landscape of the evidence-based standards movement across education and allied disciplines over the past decade
- Understand emerging theory and practice in special education for evidence based standards

- Understand basic approaches to research and how they mesh with the current evidence-based movement
- Have knowledge of current resources that provide evidence-based reviews of educational practices

OVERVIEW OF COURSE ACTIVITIES

The course includes substantial weekly readings, structured interactive review and group discussion of readings and additional content, in-class activities, student-led presentation/discussions, SIX **unannounced** in-class essay quizzes on the readings, and a major research paper.

COURSE MATERIALS

- *Racial Inequity in Special Education*. Losen & Orfield (2002/2005). Harvard Education Press. Paperback.
- *Why Are So Many Minority Students in Special Education?* Harry & Klinger (2006). Teachers College Press. Paperback.
- *Disproportionality in education and special education: A guide to creating more equitable learning environments*. Noltemeyer, A., & Mcloughlin, C. S. (2012). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas
- Required readings available online at **SAKAI**: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are required to attend every class. More than one 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 absence beyond one (except for documented emergencies/illness). Bona fide emergencies should be discussed with the instructor to explore the possibility of special accommodations and/or arrangements.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

All assignments are expected on time. Late assignments will receive a reduced grade, generally, the equivalent of 10% of the total possible project grade per day late. Students with bona fide emergencies should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss special arrangements in order to avoid grade penalties.

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 to the instructor in coordination with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services to ensure that they receive appropriate supports commensurate with their needs.

OTHER UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

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 and plagiarism, please go to this Web Page:

<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~craigw/judaff/docs/05academicintegrity.pdf#search=%22plagiarism%20new%20brunswick%22> Related regulations may also be found in the Rutgers Graduate School of Education Catalog.

For any and all assignments and class activities, **no copying of any kind is allowed**, unless copied text is placed within quotations and author/source appropriately cited.

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

COURSE GRADING PLAN

1. Participation (@ 4 points per class x 14 sessions = 56 points).
2. Quizzes (6 quizzes at 10 points each = 60 points)
3. Student-Led Presentation/Discussion (20 points)
4. Research Paper (60 points)

Course Grades: (out of 196 possible points)

GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A	92.00 – 100.0 %	Point totals will be converted to percentages. N.B. A grade of 85.99 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+	86.00 – 91.99 %	
B	80.00 – 85.99 %	
C+	76.00 – 79.99 %	
C	70.00 – 75.99 %	
F	Under 70 %	

ASSIGNMENT/GRADING REQUIREMENTS: ADDITIONAL DETAILS

1. **Participation:** Students are expected to come to class having completed all assigned readings for that week 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, 1 point for reading preparation. No points earned when absent, except in cases of serious, documented emergencies/illness—then 3 points are awarded.
2. **Quizzes:** The course includes SIX **unannounced** quizzes based on the required readings. Students will be required to demonstrate a complete knowledge of key points and issues in the readings and also to apply this knowledge with critical thought. Quizzes will be *open notes, open book*. **Students are encouraged to highlight, underline, and take notes on readings—available for use on quizzes.** There will be make-ups for quizzes **ONLY** in circumstances with documentation on the

reason for absence, or in obvious emergency or other very serious situations.

Students are strongly encouraged to form study groups and email Dr. Zhang with questions about parts of the readings on which they have questions.

3. Student-led presentation/discussion. Beginning at session #3, one student will present during class on a selected reading. Following a brief introduction (2 minute), the main part of the presentation will last about 25 minutes, to be followed by 15 minutes of facilitated (by the presenter) discussion (or, discussion can be embedded throughout the presentation), and a 1-minute summary/closure. **Under no circumstances can the total time exceed 45 minutes per presenter** (due to other content coverage and activities during class). Students will sign up for topics during session #1. The presentation should cover the main concepts and informational points from the selected reading. The student must prepare three things to accompany the presentation:

- a. A brief PowerPoint slide show for the presentation.
- b. Copies of a 4- to 5-page detailed handout (with more detail than in the PPT show) for class members containing summary information
- c. A list of 5-6 challenging discussion questions (higher order thinking) for the class, with several additional follow-up questions prepared, in anticipation of different directions the discussion may take

4. Research Paper

Each student will write a research paper following APA formatting requirements, approximately 15-20 pages in length, not counting title page or reference section (double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point type). Students will use a combination of course readings and additional appropriate research sources (for example, peer-reviewed research journals, text chapters, reports from governmental and private research organizations, **BUT NOT** general web page materials, newspapers, magazines, editorials, newsletters, etc.) they will locate to support their research paper. The research paper is due at the last class session (#14). Photocopies of ALL research sources must be submitted with the paper (not class readings).

Each student will select a focus topic from one of the three current topic modules. **Before starting the research paper**, the student must write a 1-page (single spaced) proposal (**DUE by class session #4**) for the research paper to Dr. Zhang, explaining:

- The main topical area and a more well focused research question/topic
- Why it's important and worthy of further research
- A description of approximate breadth and depth of the research paper
- Types of research sources to be used
- What methods they will use to write the paper from their research sources
- General timetable for the project (broken into at least 4 tasks)

Students are required to schedule a meeting with Dr. Zhang in her office to review and fine-tune their research paper proposal as necessary, before being given permission to proceed.

GRADING RUBRIC FOR RESEARCH PAPER (60 points possible):

- (8 pts.) Overall organization
- (8 pts.) Overall quality of writing
- (8 pts.) Overall completeness of content
- (8 pts.) Overall accuracy of content
- (8 pts.) Overall cohesiveness of content (sections well-linked to one another)
- (6 pts.) Overall compliance with APA format (in main text and reference section)
- (6 pts.) Use of sufficient number of references (with at least 12 peer-reviewed journal articles & at least 2 chapters that are **not part of the assigned course readings**)
- (6 pts.) Appropriate use of appropriate references
- (2 pts.) Appropriate reference section

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY READINGS AND CONTENT COVERAGE

N.B. Assigned reading to be completed BEFORE the session.

SESSION # DATE	CONTENT COVERAGE	READINGS (by informal, shortened name)
1 1/23/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction • Introduction to critical issues 	<p style="text-align: center;">(no assigned readings)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select presentations • Research paper overview <p>Activity: How to find research articles?</p>
2 1/30/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion and Co-teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zigmond, N., Kloo, A., & Volonino, V. (2009). What, where, and how? Special education in the climate of full inclusion. <i>Exceptionality</i>, 17, 189-204. • Estell, D. B., Jones, M. H., Pearl, R., Van Acker, R., et al. (2008). Peer groups, popularity, and social preferences: Trajectories of social functioning among students with and without disabilities. <i>Journal of Learning Disabilities</i>, 41(1), 5-14. • Norwich, B. (2008). Dilemmas of difference, inclusion, and disability: International perspectives on placement. <i>European Journal of Special Needs Education</i>, 23(4), 287-304. • Select 2 articles to read and share regarding inclusion (inclusive education). At least 1 should be a research article (bring the articles and share in class) <p>Activity: APA... love it, hate it...</p>
3 2/6/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion and Co-teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co -teaching models • Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie (2007). Co-Teaching in Inclusive Classrooms: A Meta-synthesis of Qualitative Research. <i>Exceptional Children</i>, 73(4), 392-416.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NICHGY: Co-Teaching: General and Special Educators Working Together.</i> http://nichcy.org/schoolage/effective-practices/coteaching • Co-teaching at secondary level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dieker & Murawski (2003). Tips and strategies for co-Teaching at the secondary level. <i>TEACHING Exceptional Children</i>, 36 (5), pp. 52-58. • Magiera, K., & Zigmond, N. (2005). Co-Teaching in middle school classrooms under routine conditions: Does the instructional experience differ for students with disabilities in Co-Taught and Solo-Taught Classes? <i>Learning Disabilities Research & Practice</i>, 20(2), 79–85. <p>Select 2 articles to read and share regarding co-teaching. At least 1 should be a research article. Bring the articles and share in class.</p> <p>Activity: How to valuate on-line resources</p>
4 2/13/13	• Inclusion and Co-teaching	<p>Special education personnel shortage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boe, E.E., Cook, L.H., Bobbitt, S.A. & Terbanian, G. (1998). The shortage of fully certified teachers in special and general education. <i>Teacher Education and Special Education</i>, 21(1), 1-21. • McLeskey, J., & Billingsley, B. S. (2008). How does the quality and stability of the teaching force influence the research-to-practice gap? A perspective on the teacher shortage in special education. <i>Remedial and Special Education</i>, 29, 293-205. <p>Inadequate preparation of general ed teachers to serve children with special needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boe, E. E., Shin, S., & Cook, L. H. (2007). Does teacher preparation matter for beginning teachers in either special or general education? <i>The Journal of Special Education</i>, 41, 158-170. <p>Select 2 articles to read and share regarding special education teacher shortage. At least 1 should be a research article. Bring the articles and share in class.</p> <p>Activity: Professional ethics.</p> <p>Research paper proposal due.</p>
5 2/20/13	• Disproportionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losen & Orfield, Introduction, Chapters 1-4 <p>Activity: Your career plan. Bring your CV.</p>
6 2/27/13	• Disproportionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losen & Orfield, Chapters 5-8 • <i>Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and the Special Education</i>

		<p><i>Workforce</i></p> <p>Activity: Case studies.</p>
<p>7 3/6/13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disproportionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losen & Orfield, Chapters 9 -11 • Civil Rights Project: <i>Racial Inequity in Special Education</i> • <i>The Color of Discipline Suspension, Race, and Disability</i> <p>Activities: Search info @ NJ department of education</p>
<p>8 3/13/13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing conceptualizations of LD and Response to Intervention (RTI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbook of LD-Chapter 2 (History of LD) • Handbook of Neurodevelopmental and Genetic Disorders in Children-Chapter 6 (Overview) • <i>Rethinking LD</i>-Chapter 12 • <i>LD as operationally defined by schools</i> • <i>Redefining LD as Inadequate RTI</i> • <i>RTI: Definitions, Evidence, and Implications</i> • Fuchs & Fuchs RTI Blueprint • RTI NJCLD June 2005 Report • <i>Alternative Approaches to Definition and Identification of LD</i> <p>Activities: Exploring journals...</p>
<p>9 3/20/13</p>	<p>Spring Break</p>	
<p>10 3/27/13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing conceptualizations of LD and Response to Intervention (RTI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gresham Essay on RTI • Understanding Responsiveness to Intervention in Learning Disabilities Determination • New Roles in RTI (November, 2006) • Myths About RTI • On Babies and Bathwater: Addressing the Problems with Identification of LD <p>Activity: Common core standards /Web review- CEC</p>
<p>11 4/3/13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC Library Day (Instructor at conference) 	<p>(Short Essays from Special Spring, 2005 Issue of Learning Disabilities Quarterly: <i>The Future of Learning Disabilities</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keogh: <i>Revisiting LD Classification and Identification</i> • Stanovitch: <i>Future of Discrepancy Measurement</i> • Healey: <i>LD in Pursuit of Axioms</i> • Deshler: <i>Adolescents with LD- Unique Challenges</i> • Ysseldyke: <i>Assessments and Decision Making for Students with LD</i> • Lloyd & Hallahan: <i>Going Forward with Field of LD</i> • Danielson, Doolittle, & Bradley: <i>Past Accomplishments and</i>

		<p><i>Future Challenges</i> Lipsky: <i>Are We There Yet?</i></p>
<p>12 4/10/13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence based standards in special education and allied disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gersten, R., Fuchs, L. S., Compton, D., Coyne, M., Greenwood, C., & Innocenti, M. S. (2005). Quality indicators for group experimental and quasi-experimental research in special education. <i>Exceptional Children, 71(2)</i>, 149-164. Horner, R. H., Carr, E. G., Halle, J., McGee, G., Odom, S., & Wolery, M. (2005). The use of single-subject research to identify evidence-based practice in special education. <i>Exceptional Children, 71(2)</i>, 165-179. Thompson, B., Diamond, K., McWilliam, R., Snyder, P., & Snyder, S. W. (2005). Evaluating the quality of evidence from correlational research for evidence-based practice. <i>Exceptional Children, 71(2)</i>, 181-194. Brantlinger, E., Jimenez, R., Klingner, J., Pugach, M., Richardson, V. (2005). Qualitative studies in special education. <i>Exceptional Children, 71(2)</i>, 195-207. National Research Council. (2002). <i>Scientific Research in Education</i>. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. <p>Submit Real World Questions About Evidence-Based Practice</p> <p>Activity: APA.. let's review</p>
<p>13 4/17/13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence based standards in special education and allied disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Evidence based intervention (mathematics)</i> IES (2009) Educator's practice guide. Assisting Students Struggling with Mathematics: Response to Intervention (RtI) for Elementary and Middle Schools. <i>Evidence based intervention (reading)</i> IES (2009). Educator's practice guide. Assisting Students Struggling with Reading: Response to Intervention (RtI) and Multi-Tier Intervention in the Primary Grades <i>Evidence based intervention (writing)</i> IES (2009). Educator's practice guide. Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers. <i>Evidence based intervention (behavior)</i> IES (2009). Educator's practice guide. Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom Activity: 1. Web Review of Evidence-Based Clearinghouses http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ <p>2. In-class knowledge quest activity: Getting Answers To Real World Questions About Evidence-Based</p>

		Practice
14 4/24/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your final projects 	Activity: Introduction to AERA and review AERA website
15 May/1/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AERA - Library Day 	Work on your paper.
16 May/9/13		Final Paper due