

**Rutgers University**  
**Graduate School of Education**  
**Department of Educational Psychology**  
**05:300:383 Introduction to Special Education (Section 03)**  
**Fall 2014**

**Instructor: Jigisha Vyas, Ed.M.**  
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**Semester: Fall 2014**  
**Wednesdays 4:50 – 7:30 pm**  
**Location: Scott Hall – Room 120**

### **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 large and small group class discussions, chapter readings, presentations, and class assessments, and related activities.

### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, students can expect to:

- Examine the historical trends in special education, as well as related litigation and legislation (Content: Standard #4, Content Knowledge)
- Review current terminology and issues in the field of special education, including inclusion practices, as well as family and multicultural issues (The Learner and Learning: Standard #1, Learner Development; The Learner and Learning: Standard #2, Learning Differences; Professional Responsibility: Standard #10, Collaboration)
- Examine the diagnosis, identification, and characteristics of various disabilities (The Learner and Learning: Standard #1, Learner Development; The Learner and Learning: Standard #2, Learning Differences)
- Review service delivery options for students with disabilities and their families (The Learner and Learning: Standard #3, Learning Environments; Content: Standard #4, Content Knowledge; Instructional Practice: Standard #7, Planning for Instruction)
- Discuss general methods and strategies for meeting the social and educational needs of students with various disabilities (The Learner and Learning: Standard #1, Learner Development; The Learner and Learning: Standard #2, Learning Differences; Instructional Practice: Standard #8, Instructional Strategies)

### **OVERVIEW OF COURSE ACTIVITIES**

The course includes substantial weekly readings, structured interactive review of readings and additional content, two in-class exams on the readings, student-led presentation/discussions, in-class activities, technology-based project, two paper submissions, and participation/attendance.

PowerPoint slides that highlight select content from each session's assigned readings, reinforcing key concepts and providing a partial review will be posted on the SAKAI site by the instructor. **Students are strongly encouraged to keep up with the reading in order to be prepared for upcoming sessions.**

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

▪ Introduction to Special Education: Making a Difference, Smith, D.D. & Tyler, N.C. (2009), Pearson - Prentice Hall (ISBN-13: 978-0-205-60056-4; ISBN-10: 0-205-60056-5)

## **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.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR**

As current and 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, email/Web multitasking, 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 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.

## **APPROPRIATE & INAPPROPRIATE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students are expected to put all electronic devices away during class, including telephones/text messaging devices. Students with bona fide reason for accessing text messaging during class (e.g., family member in hospital) will be permitted to do so, but are requested to privately contact the instructor in advance as to the need. Laptop/notebook computers are **not** to be used in class unless by special advance arrangement with the instructor (students are provided class PPT notes for every session that can be printed/viewed in advance).

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

**All assignments are expected on time.** Late assignments will receive a reduced grade, generally, a flat reduction in grade equivalent to 10% of the total possible assignment grade per day late (or part thereof). Students with bona fide emergencies should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss special arrangements in order to avoid grade penalties. The instructor will work constructively and collaboratively with students who **communicate early** regarding special problems completing assignments on time, with no grade penalties in special situations where advance communication takes place and the circumstances are deemed reasonable, but **will not be supportive of last minute requests for extensions on assignment due dates.**

## STUDENT CONDUCT and ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct can be accessed at:

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/university-code-of-student-conduct>

For information on the Rutgers University academic integrity policy, please go to:

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity>

Related policies and procedures may also be found in the Rutgers Graduate School of Education

Catalog: [http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/gse\\_current/pg32.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/gse_current/pg32.html)

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 is appropriately cited. Excessive use of quoted material in essay assignments, quizzes, and tests is strongly discouraged and this will tend to result in lower grades (students need to express themselves using their own language). **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 (<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>) to ensure that they receive appropriate supports commensurate with their needs.

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

## COURSE GRADING PLAN

1. Participation (@ 3 points per class x 14 sessions = 42 points)
  2. Exams (2 @ 40 points each = 80 points)
  3. Technology Assignment (40 points)
  4. Student-Led Presentation/Discussion (80 points)
  5. Study Guide Assignment (20 points)
- Course Grades: (out of 262 possible points)**

GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A	90.00 – 100.0 %	<b>Point totals will be converted to percentages.</b>  <b>N.B. A grade of 86.99 earns a B, not a B+</b>  <b>Any mid-course modification of course assignments will be reflected accurately as percentage of total possible points earned.</b>
B+	87.00 – 89.99 %	
B	80.00 – 86.99 %	
C+	77.00 – 79.99 %	
C	70.00 – 76.99 %	
D	60.00 – 69.99 %	
F	59.99% and below	

### ASSIGNMENT/GRADING REQUIREMENTS: 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; and 1 point for active discussion/participation (no points earned when absent, except in excused absence cases of serious, documented emergencies/religious observance/illness/etc.—then 1 point is awarded).

**2. Exams:** There will be two exams involving multiple choice, short-answer questions, and/or essay questions. Exam items will include information from class lectures, presentations, activities, and reading assignments/handouts. For example, exam items may come directly from the chapter readings, 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.

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

**3. Technology Assignment: (Partnership 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 partnerships (2 people per group) and will include a brief, 30-minute presentation/demonstration with a one-page handout for each class member. You will sign up for a presentation date at session #2 and presentations will start at session #4.

**4. Student-led presentation/discussion.** Beginning at session #2, one or more students will present on a research-based article/journal during each class. Following a brief introduction in which the presenter states the topic and previews the main presentation content (1-2 minutes, with accompanying presentation overview slide), the main content part of the presentation will last 13-14 minutes, to be followed by 13-14 minutes of facilitated (by the presenter) discussion (or, discussion can be embedded throughout the presentation), and a 1-2-minute summary/closure with accompanying slide.

Under no circumstances can the total time fall short of/exceed 30 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 presentation-dates during session #1. The oral presentation should cover just the main concepts and major 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 Professor Vyas 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 3-4 page (single spaced) detailed handout (with more detail than in the PPT show) for class members containing summary information (see exemplar on SAKAI)
- c. A list of 4-5 challenging discussion questions (higher order thinking) for the class with prepared follow-up probes in case of limited audience response on certain questions.

**4. Study Guide Assignment:** Beginning at session #2, a pair of students per session will each post a 5-6 page, single spaced, outline form, bulleted study guide for a particular reading from that session. The study guide will highlight the most relevant information from the assigned reading, and will follow the organizational structure of that reading. Each student will sign up for a different reading beginning at session #1. The student-produced study guide will be posted on the class Sakai site via “Drop-Box”, available to all students enrolled in the course. The study guide must be submitted to the instructor by 10 AM (ET) on the day assigned for the session’s reading.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CONTENT COVERAGE

**Assigned reading to be completed BEFORE the session (except Week #1, with optional extra credit). Additional readings will be available on SAKAI: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>**

SESSION #	CONTENT COVERAGE	READINGS
1 (9/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Introduction</li> <li>• What is special education and inclusion, the history and laws of special education, the structure of support services in New Jersey (extra credit for advance reading with bulleted outline notes submitted at class session #1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1</li> </ul>

2 (9/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are students identified for special education, the IEP process, characteristics and interventions used with specific disabilities (Student-led presentations begins)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2</li> </ul>
3 (9/17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of students with disabilities; Cultural &amp; Linguistic Diversity</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>***ONLINE SESSION***</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3</li> </ul>
4 (9/24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech &amp; Language Impairments (Technology presentations begins)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 4</li> </ul>
5 (10/1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5</li> </ul>
6 (10/8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADHD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 6</li> </ul>
7 (10/15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 7</li> </ul>
8 (10/22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EXAM 1</li> </ul>	
9 (10/29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual Disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 8</li> </ul>
10 (11/5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical or Health Disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 9</li> </ul>
11 (11/12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deafness and Hard of Hearing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 10</li> </ul>
12 (11/19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Vision &amp; Blindness; Low Incidence Disabilities</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Reminder: Thanksgiving Break - 11/26)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 11, 13</li> </ul>
13 (12/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism Spectrum Disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 12</li> </ul>
14 (12/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class wrap-up</li> <li>• EXAM II</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional reading (TBD)</li> </ul>