

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

Current Topics in Special Education
15:293:630:01

Spring 2015

Time: Wednesdays, 4: 50 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Location: Scott Hall Room 120

3 credits

Instructor: Zulejka Baharev

Contact: e-mail: zbaharev@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to address five current topics in special education:

- Changing conceptualizations of Learning Disabilities (LD) and Response to Intervention (RTI)
- Progress monitoring & data-based decision making
- Evidence based standards and interventions in special education and allied disciplines
- Dyslexia in the schools: Assessment and interventions
- The Common Core Standards: Implications and recommendations for students with disabilities
- Special education teacher evaluation

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students can expect to:

- 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 and demonstrate knowledge of screening/benchmarking and progress monitoring with the use of Curriculum Base Measurement (CBM)
- Understand and demonstrate knowledge of conducting CBM in different academic domains
- Understand how to chart and graph data to help make decisions
- 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
- Develop skills in dyslexia assessment and intervention
- Understand the implications of the Common Core Standards for students with disabilities
- Understand special education teacher evaluation: perspectives from research and practice

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, in-class short-answer quizzes on the readings, an RTI case study, and research-based intervention/program presentation.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Reading:

Books:

Hosp, M. K., Hosp, J. L., & Howell, K.W. (2007). *The ABCs of CBM: A practical guide to curriculum-based measurement*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Mather, N. & Wendling, B.J. (2012). *Essential of dyslexia assessment and intervention*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Articles:

Benedict, A. E., Thomas, R. A., Kimerling, J., & Leko, C. (2013). Trends in teacher evaluation: What every special education teacher should know. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 45(5), 60-68.

Bulgren, J. A., Graner, S. P., & Deshler, D. D. (2013). Literacy challenges and opportunities for students with learning disabilities in social studies and history. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice* (28)1, 17-27.

Fuchs, D. Mock, D., Morgan, P.L., & Young, C.L. (2003). Responsiveness-to-intervention: Definitions, evidence, and implications for the learning disability construct. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 18(3), 157-171.

Graham, S., & Harris, K. (2013). Common core state standards, writing, and students with LD: Recommendations. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, (28)1, 28-37.

Haager, D., & Vaughn, S. (2013). The common core state standards and reading: Interpretations and implications for elementary students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, (28)1, 5-16.

- Kavale, K. A. (2005). Identifying specific learning disability: Is responsiveness to intervention the answer? *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 38(6), 553-562.
- Kavale, K. A., & Spaulding, L. S. (2008). Is response to intervention good policy for specific learning disability? *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 23(4), 169-179.
- Kretlow, A.G., & Blatz. (2011). The ABCs of evidence-based practices for teachers. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 43(5), 8-19.
- Powell, S. R., Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (2013). Reaching the mountaintop: addressing the common core standards in mathematics for students with mathematics difficulties. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice* (28)1, 38-48.
- Reynolds, C.R., & Shaywitz, S.E. (2009). Response to intervention: Prevention and remediation, perhaps. *Diagnosis*, no. *Child Development Perspectives*, 3(1), 44-47.
- Scruggs, T. E., Brigham, F. J., & Mastropieri, M. A. (2013). Common core science standards: Implications for students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice* (28)1, 49-57.
- Stanovich, P. J. & Stanovich, K. E. (2003). Using research and reason in education: How teachers can use scientifically based research to make curricular and instructional decisions.
- Steinbrecher, T. D., Selig, James. P., Cosby, J., & Thorstensen, B. I. (2014) Evaluating special educator effectiveness: Addressing issues inherent to value-added modeling. *Exceptional Children*, 80(3), 323-336.
- Torres, C., Farley, C.A., & Cook, B.G. (2012). A special educator's guide to successfully implementing evidence-based practices. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 45 (1), 64-73.

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.

COURSE GRADING PLAN

1. Participation (15 points)
2. Quizzes (10 points)
3. Student-Led Presentation/Discussion (15 points)
4. Research-Based Intervention Review Paper & Presentation (Review 20 points, Presentation 10 Points)
5. RTI Case Study (30points)

Course Grades: (out of 100 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.
- 2. Quizzes:** The course includes 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. 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.

3. Student-led presentation/discussion. 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 20 minutes, to be followed by 10 minutes of facilitated (by the presenter) discussion (or, discussion can be embedded throughout the presentation), and a 1-minute summary/closure. Students will sign up for topics during session. The presentation should cover the main concepts and informational points from the selected reading. The student must prepare one of the things to accompany the presentation and discussion questions for the class:

- a. A brief PowerPoint slide show for the presentation.
- b. Copies of a 2- to 3-page detailed handout (with more detail than in the PPT show) for class members containing summary information.

4. Tier 2, or 3 Intervention Review & Presentation

Students select and review a Tier 2 or 3 program, or intensive intervention. The review includes: a) description, b) evidence-based evaluation, by examining relevant research literature, and c) student assessment of benefits and limitations for use. Students will submit a review. The presentation will be a demonstration of the intervention.

5. RTI Case Study

Students will conduct a case study of a student who is experiencing difficulty in a general education/inclusive class. Students will select the student and a subject-area teacher or co-teachers to consult with throughout the case study – students will not be required to teach, but will need to observe the student in class, meet with the teachers at least twice, and make copies of student work examples. Assignment components are due throughout the semester.

- A. **Tier 1 Analysis:** Draw from the readings and class discussions to describe the student and targeted class. Make sure to evaluate instruction by applying the principles and critical elements of effective instruction. Be sure to refer to data from classroom observations and student work. Analyze the findings to propose an explanation for the student’s struggle. Be sure to focus on the individual and the environment.
- B. **Recommendations Discussion:** Develop a list and rationale for recommendations to implement in the teacher’s Tier 1 instruction. Meet with the teacher(s) to share and discuss recommendations and rationale.
- C. **Progress Monitoring Plan:** Based on the readings and class discussion develop a progress monitoring plan and collect data on student’s performance, if feasible.

COURSE CALENDAR

Course Calendar: Subject to change, with notice. Please check for updates.

Class Session/ Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments
#1 1/21	Welcome: Introductions, Gathering Prior	No assigned reading

	<p>Knowledge & Experience Course Overview History and Overview of RTI</p>	
#2 1/28	<p>RTI – Tiered Intervention Systems</p> <p>Different Approaches, Components, & Variations of RTI Models</p>	<p>Fuchs & Fuchs RTI Blueprint</p> <p>RTI NJCLD June 2005 Report</p> <p>Kavale, K. A., & Spaulding, L. S. (2008).</p> <p>Prewett, S., Mellard, D.F., Deshler, D., Allen, J., Alexander, R., & Stern, A. (2012).</p>
#3 2/4	<p>RTI – What We Have Learned & Should Have Learned from the Past 10 Years</p> <p>RTI – As an Approach to SLD Identification (benefits & drawbacks)</p> <p>History of the Definition of LD</p> <p>*Ability-Achievement Discrepancy *RTI with or without standardized assessments *Other Alternative Research-Based Procedures (CHC Theory & Patterns of Strengths and Weaknesses PSW)</p>	<p>Fuchs, D. Mock, D., Morgan, P.L., & Young, C.L. (2003).</p> <p>Reynolds, C.R., & Shaywitz, S.E. (2009).</p> <p>Mather, N., & Kaufman, N. (2006).</p> <p>Kavale, K. A. (2005).</p>
#4 2/11	<p>Research & Evidence Based Standards in Education</p>	<p>Kretlow, A.G. & Blatz. (2011).</p> <p>Torres, C., Farley, C.A., & Cook, B.G. (2012).</p>
#5 2/18	<p>Identifying, Evaluating, & Implementing Evidence Based Practices</p> <p>Science, Pseudoscience, & Nonsense</p>	<p>CEC DR Quality Indicators Report (2004).</p> <p>What Works Clearinghouse</p> <p>Florida Center for Reading Research</p> <p>Best Evidence Encyclopedia</p> <p>Promising Practice Network on Children, Families and Communities</p> <p>Current Practice Alerts Teaching LD: Information & Resources for Teaching Students with LD</p> <p>Activity: Evaluate research articles and interventions</p>
#6 2/25	<p>Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) for Assessment & Problem Solving</p> <p>Charting and Graphing Data to Help Make Decisions</p>	<p>Hosp, Hosp & Howell (2007) Ch. 1., 2., & 8.</p>

#7 3/4	Conducting CBMs in Different Academic Areas	Hosp, Hosp & Howell (2007) Students sign-up to choose academic area of interest
#8 3/11	Evidenced Based Program/Intervention Presentations	Evidence Based Program Presentation Due
3/18	Spring Recess	No assigned Reading
#9 3/25	The NJ Dyslexia Bill Dyslexia in the Schools	Mather & Wendling (2012) Ch. 1., 6., & 12
#10 4/1	Dyslexia Assessment	Mather & Wendling (2012) Ch. 7
#11 4/8	Dyslexia Interventions How Do We Solve the Reading Crisis?	Mather & Wendling (2012). Ch. 8. & 9.
#12 4/15	Common Core State Standards: Implications and Recommendations for Students with Disabilities	Students sign-up to present on one subject area: Bulgren, J. A., Graner, S. P., & Deshler, D. D. (2013). Graham, S. & Harris, K. (2013). Haager, D. & Vaughn, S. (2013). Powell, S. R., Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (2013). Scruggs, T. E., Brigham, F. J., & Mastropieri, M. A. (2013).
#13 4/22	Trends in Teacher Evaluation: Addressing Issues in Special Education Teacher Effectiveness	Benedict, A. E., Thomas, R. A., Kimerling, J., & Leko, C. (2013). Steinbrecher, T. D., Selig, James, P., Cosbey, J., & Thorstensen, B. I. (2014).
#14 4/29	Intervention Plan Presentations	Intervention Plan Paper & Presentation Due
#15 5/6	Selected Special Education Topics Based on Student Need/Interest Wrap-Up: Reflective Discussion on the Course Complete Course Evaluations	No assigned reading