

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Introduction to the Exceptional Child**

#### **Course Description**

ED 220. Introduction to the Exceptional Child. 3 hours credit. This course will enable the student to assess and determine diversity among learners with exceptionalities. The student will understand the need for teachers to collaborate with other professionals and families to develop appropriate individual education plans for special needs learners in the classroom. The student will explore public laws and mandates that pertain to special education, assuring appropriate education for special needs learners. The student will observe/participate for 10 hours in either a general education classroom that has special students included or in a special education classroom setting.

#### **Course Relevance**

Today's classrooms are increasing in the diversity of student population, and it is important that general education teachers recognize children with exceptionalities as well as the teacher's role when working with these diverse children. Through classroom observation/participation, the student will better understand children with exceptionalities as well as the need for effective teaching practices with special needs learners.

#### **Required Materials**

Hallahan, D.P., & Kauffman, J.M. *Exceptional learners: Introduction to special education*. Boston, MA: Prentice Hall Pearson Education Allyn and Bacon.

Accompanying booklet: *Cases for reflection and analysis for exceptional learners.*

\* - For complete textbook information, refer to <http://www.butlercc.bkstr.com>

#### **Learning Outcomes**

The intention is for the student to be able to:

1. Assess and determine diversity among learners, from persons with disabilities to those who are gifted.
2. Describe the importance of teacher collaboration with other professionals and families to develop appropriate individual education plans for special needs learners.
3. Apply the public laws and mandates that pertain to special education, assuring appropriate education for special needs learners.

#### **Learning PACT Skills that will be developed and documented in this course**

Through involvement in this course, the student will develop ability in the following PACT skill areas):

##### **Analytical Thinking Skills**

1. Critical thinking

Through classroom observation and reflection, development of a learning plan, and facilitation of a content lesson the student will develop critical thinking skills.

### **Major Summative Assessment Task(s)**

These learning outcome(s) and the Learning PACT skill(s) will be demonstrated by:

1. Reflection summary and signed letter verifying 10 hours of K-12 classroom participation/field experience in either a general classroom that has special students included or in a special education classroom setting.
2. An individualized learning plan for a special needs student with
  - A. Description of student and his/her special need(s)
  - B. Ways for building teacher-student and student-student connections for this student
  - C. Motivation strategies for learning and promoting positive behavior
  - D. Teaching methods and assessment techniques to promote academic success
  - E. Modifications to the above plan for creating a **classroom** learning plan that meets the varying needs of a diverse student population.
3. Classroom facilitation (or presentation) of a content lesson related to a specific exceptionality

### **Course Content**

- I. Skills or Competencies – Actions that are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
  - A. Relate the provisions of laws to the education of exceptional children and adults within the public school settings, community agencies, and institutional settings
  - B. Develop and modify a learning plan
  - C. Identify and practice effective teaching strategies for specific exceptionalities
  - D. Discuss transition into community, home, or further schooling for various exceptionalities
- II. Themes – Key recurring concepts that run throughout this course:
  - A. Laws/mandates that relate to the education of exceptional children
  - B. Contracting among the school, family, and outside agencies
  - C. Technology and its impact on the exceptional learner
  - D. The family's role in the life of the exceptional child
- III. Issues – Key areas of conflict that must be understood in order to achieve the intended outcome:
  - A. Current trends and terms in special education
  - B. Awareness of cultural differences present in some exceptionalities
  - C. Controversies surrounding areas of giftedness
- IV. Concepts – Key concepts that must be understood to address the issues:
  - A. General teaching strategies such as cooperative teaching, peer tutoring, peer collaboration and collaborative consultation
  - B. The family's role in the life of the exceptional child, possible teacher interaction and strategies, the individualized family service plan, and effects on the family

### **Learning Units**

- I. Overview of exceptional learners
  - A. Important terms

- B. History of special education
- C. Special education process
- D. Purpose of the IEP
- E. Teacher's roles

## II. Current trends and issues

- A. Important terms
- B. Service delivery and service alternatives
- C. Premise of full inclusion
- D. Arguments against full inclusion
- E. Early intervention
- F. Transition

## III. Multicultural and bilingual aspects of special education

- A. Important terms
- B. Issues in diversity
- C. Goals for equality and fairness

## IV. Analysis of particular exceptionalities

- A. Mental Retardation (MR)
- B. Learning Disabilities
- C. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- D. Emotional or behavioral disorders
- E. Gifted learners
- F. Communication Disorders
- G. Physical disabilities

## V. Parents and families

- A. Background
- B. Families and their emotions
- C. Teachers helping families
- D. Ways to communicate

### **Learning activities**

Independent and group learning activities such as discussion, K-12 classroom participation/field experience and reflection, projects, presentations, discussion, and other activities at the discretion of the instructor will be assigned to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

### **Grade Determination**

Grade determination will be based on learning activities and assessment tasks. Grade determinants may include development and facilitation of lesson plans, development of learning plans, K-12 classroom participation/field experience and reflection, and other methods of evaluation at the discretion of the instructor.