ED 560: Special Education and the School

Credits 2 credits
Textbooks Exceptional Children & Youth Updtd 4Th, Hunt. You can purchase this book online through the bookstore by going to: http://www.nmubookstore.com/
You can also purchase the textbook through Amazon or other sites.

ED 560: COURSE DESCRIPTION
This two credit course graduate course is a broadfield survey of the causes and characteristics of disabilities which affect children and adults. Its main purpose is to raise awareness of, and sensitivity to, exceptional individuals. You will learn to work effectively with individuals who have disabilities and their families, to plan academic and psychosocial interventions.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DIMENSIONS
Students in ED 560 will be assessed for their mastery of the skills and attitudes outlined in the NMU Conceptual Framework:
• Dimension 1: Developing habits of mind and character appropriate to the teaching profession
• Dimension 2: Using subject matter as a medium with our students to construct meaning.
• Dimension 3: Understanding teaching as both a skill and an art
• Dimension 4: Understanding the ethical, social, political, and cultural contexts within which teaching and learning take place.
• Dimension 5: Knowing one’s students as unique individuals and as members of varied groups is critical to professional educators.

CEC STANDARDS ADDRESSED
(Council for Exceptional Children & Adults)
The observation forms and course portfolio are designed to measure students’ mastery of the following CEC-Standards for Learning Disabilities:

• Special Education Standard #1: Foundations
Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis for special education practice. Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management planning and implementation.
Relationship of special education to the organization and function of educational agencies. Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
Issues in definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Issues, assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services.
Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
Historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups.
Impact of the dominant culture on shaping schools and the individuals who study and work in them.
Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school.
Articulate personal philosophy of special education.
Historical foundations, classical studies, and major contributors in the field of learning disabilities.
Philosophies, theories, models and issues related to individuals with learning disabilities. Impact of legislation on the education of individuals with learning disabilities. Laws and policies regarding pre-referral, referral, and placement procedures for individuals who may have learning disabilities.
Current definitions and issues related to the identification of individuals with learning disabilities.

• Special Education Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners
Typical and atypical human growth and development. Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities. Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with
exceptional learning needs and the family.
Family systems and the role of families in supporting development.
Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Effects of various medications on individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Etiologies of learning disabilities Neurobiological and medical factors that may impact the learning of individuals with learning disabilities.
Psychological, social, and emotional characteristics of individuals with learning disabilities.
• Special Education Standard #3: Individual Learning Differences
Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual’s life.
Impact of learners’ academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
Variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures and their effects on relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs. Family, and schooling.
Cultural perspectives influencing the relationships among families, schools and communities as related to instruction.
Differing ways of learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and strategies for addressing these differences.
Impact of co-existing conditions and exceptionalities on individuals with learning disabilities.
Effects of phonological awareness on the reading abilities of individuals with learning disabilities.
Impact learning disabilities may have on auditory and information processing skills.
• Special Education Standard #5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions
Demands of learning environments.
Teacher attitudes and behaviors that influence behavior of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Social skills needed for educational and other environments.
Strategies for preparing individuals to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world.
Ways specific cultures are negatively stereotyped.
Strategies used by diverse populations to cope with a legacy of former and continuing racism
Create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
Identify realistic expectations for personal and social behavior in various settings.
Identify supports needed for integration into various program placements.
Use performance data and information from all stakeholders to make or suggest modifications in learning environments.
Establish and maintain rapport with individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
• Special Education Standard #9: Professional and Ethical Practice
Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one’s teaching.
Importance of the teacher serving as a model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Continuum of lifelong professional development.
Methods to remain current regarding research-validated practice.
Practice within the CEC Code of Ethics and other standards of the profession.
Uphold high standards of competence and integrity and exercise sound judgment in the practice of the professional.
Act ethically in advocating for appropriate services.
Conduct professional activities in compliance with applicable laws and policies.
Demonstrate commitment to developing the highest education and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
Demonstrate sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation of individuals.
Practice within one’s skill limit and obtain assistance as needed.
Use verbal, nonverbal, and written language effectively.
Conduct self-evaluation of instruction.
Access information on exceptionalities.
Reflect on one’s practice to improve instruction and guide professional growth.
Engage in professional activities that benefit individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, and one’s colleagues.
Ethical responsibility to advocate for appropriate services for individuals with learning disabilities.
Professional organizations and sources of information relevant to the field of learning disabilities. Participate in activities of professional organizations relevant to the field of learning disabilities. Use research findings and theories to guide practice.

- Special Education Standard #10: Collaboration
  Models and strategies of consultation and collaboration.
  Roles of individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, and school and community personnel in planning of an individualized program.
  Concerns of families of individuals with exceptional learning needs and strategies to help address these concerns.
  Culturally responsive factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with individuals with exceptional learning needs, families, school personnel, and community members.
  Maintain confidential communication about individuals with exceptional learning needs.
  Collaborate with families and others in assessment of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
  Foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals.
  Assist individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families in becoming active participants in the educational team.
  Plan and conduct collaborative conferences with individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families.
  Collaborate with school personnel and community members in integrating individuals with exceptional learning needs into various settings.
  Use group problem solving skills to develop, implement and evaluate collaborative activities.
  Model techniques and coach others in the use of instructional methods and accommodations.
  Communicate with school personnel about the characteristics and needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
  Communicate effectively with families of individuals with exceptional learning needs from diverse backgrounds.
  Observe, evaluate and provide feedback to paraeducators.

COURSE GOALS
The content and activities for this course are drawn from a list of competencies prepared by the Council for Exceptional Children. It is their belief, and ours, that all human service professionals must be prepared to work with exceptional students and their parents. Specifically, this class will help you to:
- Identify the social, learning, physical, and behavioral characteristics of exceptional individuals.
- Identify, describe, and assess the continuum of services to exceptional individuals in our schools and in society.
- Describe and critically evaluate the legal and philosophical bases for delivery of services to exceptional students and their families.
- Describe and develop effective accommodations for individuals with disabling conditions.

COURSE FORMAT
You will have an opportunity to master the course material through a combination of electronic presentations, small groupwork, case studies, and guided discussions with members of your class, using technology. The course is organized around three units of study, which are outlined on the Web CT class homepage. Each unit lists a Thinking Activity (which culminates in an entry posted to the Message Board), Reading Activity (Powerpoint and websites are provided), Issue Reaction (resulting in discussion on the Message Board or in Live Chat), and Case Study completion (by a self-selected small group). Successful completion of the assignments will require collaboration with your peers.