



Course Syllabus: Exceptional Individuals

College of Education
SPED 5013 Section X10
August 24, 2026-Dec 12

Contact Information

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Course Description

Etiology, characteristics of and concepts related to exceptional individuals.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

The Standard covered in this class are from the SBEC TExES Overview and Exam Framework for Educational Diagnosticians (253) (if applicable) and Appendix B for the assignment/standards alignment matrix.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Turnbull, R. et al. (2024). Exceptional Lives: Practice, Progress, and Dignity in Today's School, **10th Edition**. Pearson. ISBN: 9780137848898

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

If you need assistance, please email me to schedule a meeting. We can meet in person or via Zoom.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without

following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Professional Development	65
Midterm	50
Lecture Notes	50
Final Exam-Comprehensive	100
Reflective Essay 6@20	120
Research paper	80
Discussion Board Response 5 @ 20	100
Total	565

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	424-565
B	452-423
C	396-451
D	339-395
F	Below 339

Homework

All work will be submitted to Drop Box on D2L.

Discussions

Five discussions will occur with the first one being an introduction. The other ones will take place over topics that stimulate thought and discussion. You will get 15

points if you provide a thoughtful response, 1 point for providing references, and 4 points if you respond to two other posts. Professional online behavior is expected, all viewpoints are welcome, and please stay on topic.

Reflective Essay

Post six reflective essays. Reflective essays take place over topics that stimulate thought and discussion. You will get 15 points if you provide a thoughtful response, 1 point for providing references, and 4 points if you respond to two other posts. Professional online behavior is expected, all viewpoints are welcome, and please stay on topic.

Final Exam

Students will take a final exam on the assigned reading and course content. Exam will be worth 100 points (Multiple Choice, 120 minutes time limit). The final exam will cover material from Chapters 1–18 and will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions. Please review the course materials and ensure you have a reliable internet connection before beginning.

Projects Required

Students will select an exceptional condition or disability and develop a **15–20 minute professional development presentation** designed for educators, school personnel, families, or other professionals. The presentation should address the characteristics and impact of the exceptionality, identification/assessment, educational implications, evidence-based strategies, a practical case study, family collaboration, and relevant legal/ethical considerations. Students must include an **interactive component** and create a **one-page professional resource** for their intended audience. Sources should be credible and current, with appropriate APA citations.

Research Paper

Students will write one literature review paper. This assignment requires you to a) access peer-reviewed research from the MSU databases, b) critically analyze the contents, and c) apply what you have learned to your current or future role.

Mid-Term Exam

Students will take a midterm exam on the assigned reading and course content. The exam consists of 25 multiple-choice questions. Exam will be worth 100 points (120 minutes).

Extra Credit

No extra credit assignments for this course.

Late Work

Due dates are expected to be adhered to; late work will be accepted as all assignments must be completed to pass the course. **You will lose 25% per day of being late.** No "incompletes" will be considered unless there is a documented illness, emergency, or death.

Make Up Work/Tests

Make up work will only be accepted in extreme circumstances (death in the family, illness, etc). I must be contacted prior to the due date and appropriate documentation must be provided.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: January 23, 2026. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Deadline to file for graduation: September 21, 2026. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 23, 2026. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Students are expected to actively participate in all class discussions and group discussions. In addition to contributing their own responses, students must engage with their peers by providing thoughtful and meaningful replies during group discussions. Instructor's records will stand as evidence of absences. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor. Any individual faculty member or college has the authority to establish an attendance policy, providing the policy is in accordance with the General University Policies.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations; however, they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

Students are expected to actively participate in all class discussions and group discussions. In addition to contributing their own responses, students are expected to engage respectfully and constructively with their peers by providing thoughtful, meaningful, and substantive replies. Students should demonstrate professionalism, respect differing perspectives, and contribute to a positive and collaborative learning environment. Active participation includes being prepared for class, completing assigned activities, asking relevant questions, and engaging consistently in course discussions.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 Aug 24-29	1. Read syllabus! 2. Read Chapter 1: The Purpose, People, and Law of Special Education 3. Self-Introduction	08/29 at 11:59pm

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 2 Aug 30-Sept 5	1. Read Chapter 2: Disability and Cultural Justice. 2. Listen to recording on Disability right and justice. 3. Complete discussion 2 prompt on "Disability and Cultural Justice"	09/5 at 11:59pm
Week 3 Sept 6-12	1. Read Chapter 3: Today's Families and Their Partnerships with Professionals. 2. Watch recorded videos on communication with families. 3. Respond to Discussion Prompt 3.	09/12 at 11:59pm
Week 4 Sept 13-19	1. Read Chapter 4: "Ensuring Educational Progress." 2. Listen to Recorded live lecture on Other Health Impairment and submit your notes. 2. Work on Professional Development Project 3. Work on Research Review	09/19 at 11:59pm
Week 5 Sept 20-26	1. Read Chapter 5: School-wide Systems of Supports. 2. Listen/Watch PBIS 3. Complete Discussion 4: School Support prompts.	09/26 at 11:59pm
Week 6 Sept 27-Oct 3	1. Read Chapter 6: Cross-cutting Instructional Approaches. 2. Listen/Watch HLP 3. Complete Reflective Essay #1	10/3 at 11:59pm
Week 7 Oct 4-10	1. Read Chapter 7: Students with Learning Disabilities. 2. Listen/Watch Recorded Lecture. 3. Complete Reflective Essay 2.	10/10 at 11:59pm

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 8 October 11-17	1. Read Chapter 8: Students with Speech and Language Disorders. 2. Midterm Quiz. Midterm covers Chapters 1-8. You will have 25 Multiple Choice questions.	10/17 at 11:59pm
Week 9 Oct 18-24	1. Read Chapter 9: Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders. 2. Watch/Listen to Teaching on Emotional Disability. 3. Complete Discussion 5 prompt.	10/24 at 11:59pm
Week 10 Oct 25-31	1. Read Chapter 10: Students with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. 2. Complete Reflective Essay 3 Discussion.	10/31 at 11:59pm
Week 11 Nov 1-7	1. Read Chapter 11: Students with Intellectual Disability. Additional information can be in D2L under content. 2. Complete Reflective Essay 4 Discussion.	11/7 at 11:59pm
Week 12 Nov 8-14	1. Read Chapter 12: Students with Autism. You can find additional resources here Legal Framework and Target-Evaluation of Students with Autism 2. Complete Reflective Essay 5. 3. Continue working on your research paper.	11/14 at 11:59pm
Week 13 Nov 15-21	1. Read Chapter 13: Students with Multiple Disabilities and Traumatic Brain Injury. 2. Complete Reflective Essay 6. 3. Continue working on your research paper.	11/21 at 11:59pm

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 14 Nov 22-28	1. Read Chapters 14 and 15 (Students with Physical Disabilities/Other Health Impairments and Students with Hearing Impairments). 2. Lecture on Other Health Impairments 3. Submit your Sped Research paper.	11/28 at 11:59pm
Week 15 Nov 29-Dec 5	1. Read Chapters 16 and 17: Students with Visual Impairments and Students Who Are Gifted and Talented. 2. Submit your Professional Development project.	12/5 at 11:59pm
Week 16 Dec 6-9	Finals Exams. Finals come from Chapters 1-18 (Multiple Choice).	12/9 at 11:59pm

Note: All assignments must be completed. Missing even one assignment means you have not met the class requirements and will receive an "F."

References/Scientifically Based Research/Additional Readings:
 All of the information regarding high leverage practices
<https://highleveragepractices.org/>

Appendix A

The Standards covered in this class are from the SBEC TExES Overview and Exam Framework for Educational Diagnosticians (253).

Table Domain I—Identification and Assessment

Competency 001—(Identification for Special Education Evaluation and Services): Apply knowledge of requirements for identifying students who meet disability criteria and for determining the need for specially designed instruction and related services.

Standard	Assignment/Activity	Assessment
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Demonstrate knowledge of federal and state criteria and identification procedures for determining students' eligibility for special education services, including all components of Child Find mandate requirements.	Textbook/Lecture	Midterm/Final, professional development paper
Apply knowledge of risk factors, characteristics of disabilities, and other indications that a student may have a need for specially designed instruction and related services.	Textbook Research reviews Lecture	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper
Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships between assessment and evaluation, goals and objectives, and services for students with disabilities.	Textbook Research reviews Lecture	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper

Table Domain II—Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

Competency 004—(Academic Instruction and Strategies): Apply knowledge of educational implications of disabilities, appropriate curricula, and instructional strategies, including accommodations, modifications, and interventions, for students with disabilities.

Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.	Textbook Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper, textbook
Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based instruction and curricula for the development of individual students' academic skills within the continuum of services in the least restrictive environment (LRE).	Textbook Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper, textbook
Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities within the continuum of services.	Textbook Research reviews, Synthesis	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis, professional

	paper, professional development paper	development paper
Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.	Textbook	Midterm/Final, lectures, research paper, professional development paper, class discussion

Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.	Textbook Lectures	Midterm/Final, research paper, professional development paper, class discussion
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Table Domain III—Professional Responsibilities

Competency 006—(Consultation and Collaboration): Understand strategies and approaches for effective consultation and development of collaborative relationships with students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and other professionals and apply skills for scheduling and management of timelines and reporting requirements.

Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills (e.g., knowledge of family systems, parents/guardians supporting student development and educational progress).	Textbook	Midterm/Final
Apply understanding of the special education process to assist parents/guardians and school staff in navigating through initial referral, Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, reevaluations, transition planning, and dismissal and/or graduation.	Textbook	Midterm/Final

Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.	Textbook	Midterm/Final
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Appendix B

WCOE Standards (InTASC):

The outcomes for graduates of professional programs are based upon knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the following 10 elements:

The Learner and Learning

Standard #1: Learner Development

Standard #2: Learning Differences

Standard #3: Learning Environments

Content Knowledge

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

Standard #5: Application of Content

Instructional Practice

Standard #6: Assessment

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

Professional Responsibility

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration