



Course Syllabus: Exceptional Individuals

College of Education
SPED 5013 Section X20
Spring 2026, Jan 20-May 8

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Emmanuel Sefah
Office: 319
Office hours: Wed 3:00pm-4pm, Thus 3pm-4pm, Friday 12pm-3pm
Office phone: (940) 397-4800
E-mail: emmanuel.sefah@my.msutexas.edu

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. (2020). Exceptional Lives: Practice, Progress, and Dignity in Today's School, 9th Edition. Pearson. ISBN: 9780134984339

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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without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	100
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 in 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.

Exams

Students will take a final exam on the assigned reading and course content. Exam will be worth 100 points.

Projects Required

Choose one chapter from the textbook for your presentation. Develop a PowerPoint presentation based on the content of the chosen chapter. Your presentation should thoroughly cover all relevant content and include references where appropriate. Make sure the information is well-organized and presented in a way that is easy for your peers or colleagues to understand. Present your PowerPoint to a peer or colleague as if you were delivering a professional development session. This should simulate a real training setting.

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.

Final Exam

Students will take a final exam on the assigned reading and course content. Each exam will be worth 100 points. The final exam will consist of short written response questions.

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: February 16, 2026. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 29, 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. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should so inform students of the specifics in writing at the beginning of the semester in a syllabus or separate attendance policy statement. An instructor who has an attendance policy must keep records on a daily basis. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. 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](#).

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) exist 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](#).

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 Jan 20-24	1. Read syllabus! 2. Read Chapter 1: The Purpose, People, and Law of Special Education 3. Self-Introduction	01/24 at 10pm
Week 2 Jan 25-31	1. Read Chapter 2: Disability and Cultural Justice. 2. Complete discussion 2 prompt on "Disability and Cultural Justice"	1/31 at 10pm
Week 3 Feb 1-7	1. Read Chapter 3: Today's Families and Their Partnerships with Professionals. 2. Respond to Discussion Prompt 3.	2/7 at 10:00pm
Week 4 Feb 8-14	1. Zoom Live Lecture 2/13 2. Read Chapter 4: "Ensuring Educational Progress." 2. Work on Professional Development Project 3. Work on Research Review	Zoom Live Lecture 5:30 pm-6:30 pm
Week 5 Feb 15-21	1. Read Chapter 5: School-wide Systems of Supports. 2. Listen/Watch to PBIS 3. Complete Discussion 4: School Support prompts.	02/21 at 10pm

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 6 Feb 22-28	1. Listen/Watch HLP 2. Read Chapter 6: Cross-cutting Instructional Approaches. 3. Complete Reflective Essay #1	2/28 at 10pm
Week 7 March 1-7	1. Read Chapter 7: Students with Learning Disabilities. 2. Listen/Watch Recorded Lecture. 3. Complete Reflective Essay 2.	3/7 at 10pm
Week 8 March 8-14	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.	3/14 at 10pm
Week 9 March 15-21	1. Read Chapter 9: Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders. 2. Listen to Teaching Emotional Disability. 3. Complete Discussion 5 prompt.	3/21 at 10pm
Week 10 03/22-3/28	1. Read Chapter 10: Students with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. 2. Complete Reflective Essay 3 Discussion.	3/28 at 10pm
Week 11 03/29-4/4	1. Read Chapter 11: Students with Intellectual Disability. Additional information can be found here Evaluating Student with Intellectual Disability and Intellectual Disability 2. Complete Reflective Essay 4 Discussion.	4/4 at 10pm

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 12 4/5-4/11	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.	4/11 at 10pm
Week 13 04/12-4/18	1. Read Chapter 13: Students with Multiple Disabilities and Traumatic Brain Injury. 2. Complete Reflective Essay 6. 3. Continue working on your research paper.	4/18 at 10 pm
Week 14 4/19-4/25	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.	4/25 at 10 pm
Week 15 4/26-5/2	1. Read Chapters 16 and 17: Students with Visual Impairments and Students Who Are Gifted and Talented. 2. Submit your Professional Development paper.	5/2 at 10:00pm
Week 16 5/3-5/6	Finals Exams. Finals come from Chapters 1-18.	5/6 @ 10pm

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
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.	Text Book Lecture	Midterm/Final
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.	Text book 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.	Text book 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.	Text book Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper
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).	Text book Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper
Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities within the continuum of services.	Text book Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis 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.	Text book	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.	Text book	Midterm/Final

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).	Text book	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.	Text book	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.	Text book	Midterm/Final

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