



Course Syllabus: Legal & Ethical Practice  
College of Education  
SPED 6913 X10  
Fall 2025 and Aug 25-Dec 13

Contact Information

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Instructor Response Policy

Please allow 24 hours response time during the semester. I prefer you email me through my MSU email account [emmanuel.sefah@my.msutexas.edu](mailto:emmanuel.sefah@my.msutexas.edu)) but I also check the email associated with this course each morning.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Yell, M. (2019). The law and special education (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson.

Howe, K. R., Boelé, A. L., & Miramontes, O. B. (2018). The ethics of special education. Teachers College Press

Course Description

Analysis of legal and ethical practices in special education and its relationship to assessment and leadership. Provides a foundation for candidates who are going to assume leadership positions in the field of special education, with an emphasis on organization and structure of special education programs, policy analysis, and the role of the special education administrator.

Historical foundations of special education law, federal and state regulations, and case law related to special education; includes assessment-related law.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

Specific learning objectives for the course derive from the TExES Examination Framework/Standards and Texas Ed Diag Standards. This course provides teacher candidates with a knowledge base of the environment in which they may

serve as a diagnostician. Satisfactory completion of the course will document that students have demonstrated the ability to:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Apply knowledge of legal and regulatory timelines, schedules, and reporting requirements; methods for maintaining eligibility folders; and strategies for organizing, maintaining, accessing, and storing records.
5. Apply knowledge of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to the roles and activities of the educational diagnostician, including the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs and compliance with local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements.
6. Apply knowledge of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to the roles and activities of the educational diagnostician, including the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs and compliance with local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements.
7. Apply knowledge of issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services (e.g., least restrictive environment) and of effective communication with parents/guardians on these issues.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/Individualized Education Program (IEP) processes, rules, and procedures as determined by state and federal regulations.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, teachers, and other professionals in relation to students' individual learning needs.
10. Apply knowledge of professional ethical practices (e.g., in relation to confidentiality, informed consent, placement, and state accountability measures).
11. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice - engage in ongoing professional learning and use evidence to continually evaluate his or her practice, particularly the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community) and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

The candidate will meet the following Special Education Standards all beginning Special Education Teachers of Candidates in Individualized General Curriculums in Texas.

The candidate will meet the following Texas Educator Standards for special educators. These are aligned with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) knowledge and skills standards as they apply to students with disabilities.

<b>Objectives/Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Standards:</b>	<b>Competency</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
Students will review ethical standards of practice, roles, and responsibilities regarding assessment including state and federal regulations relevant to the role of the educational diagnosticians, FERPA, and procedural safeguards.	Standard II. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities.	Competency 7: Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.	Weekly Assignment, Quizzes, and Ethics Project
Students will address ethical issues in regard to student with behavioral and social interaction skills.	Standard IX. The educational diagnostician addresses students' behavioral and	Competency 7: Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities	Weekly Assignments and Reading
	social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.	and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.	

Students will use a case-based approach to address ethical dilemmas and decision-making scenarios.	Standard II. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities.	Competency 7: Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.	Weekly Assignment, Ethics Project
Student will be able to articulate the purpose and philosophy behind educational evaluation and special education, as well as demonstrate an understanding of relevant legal foundations, enabling them to apply this knowledge effectively in practice using case studies of due process hearing.	Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education	006	Reading, Case Study, Research Project
students will be able to explain the key principles and legal frameworks governing evaluation and special education, and apply these concepts to assess diverse learners, ensuring their educational needs are met effectively	Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education	006	Reading, Case Study, Research Project

Students will be able to effectively demonstrate skills in scheduling, time management, and organization by developing and implementing a personal study plan that optimally allocates time for coursework, projects, and extracurricular activities, resulting in improved academic performance and reduced stress levels.	<p>Standard VIII. The educational diagnostician knows and demonstrates skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.</p> <p>Standard VIII. The educational diagnostician knows and demonstrates skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.</p>	006	Reading, Case Analysis, Research Project
Apply knowledge of issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services (e.g., least restrictive environment) and of effective communication with parents/guardians on these issues.	<p>Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education</p> <p>Standard IV. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.</p>	Competency 7: Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.	Reading, Case Analysis, Research Project

Demonstrate knowledge of Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/Individualized Education Program (IEP) processes, rules, and procedures as determined by state and federal regulations.	<p>Standard IV. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.</p> <p>Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education</p>	Competency 7: Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.	Reading, Case Analysis, Research Project
Demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, teachers, and other professionals in relation to students' individual learning needs.	Standard I, II 007	Competency 7: Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.	Reading, Case Study, Research Project

### Dispositions

Students will demonstrate the dispositions of dependability, sensitivity, and a commitment to becoming practitioners and leaders in the profession of education who practice within the CEC Code of Ethics.

### CEC Code of Ethics

- Maintaining a high level of professional competence and integrity and exercising professional judgment to benefit individuals with exceptionalities and their families.
- Promoting meaningful and inclusive participation of individuals with exceptionalities in their schools and communities.
- Practicing collegially with others who are providing services to individuals with exceptionalities.
- Developing relationships with families based on mutual respect and actively involving families and individuals with exceptionalities in educational decision making.
- Using evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice.
- Protecting and supporting the physical and psychological safety of individuals with exceptionalities.
- Neither engaging in nor tolerating any practice that harms individuals with exceptionalities.
- Practicing within the professional ethics, standards, and policies of CEC; upholding laws, regulations, and policies that influence professional practice; and advocating improvements in laws, regulations, and policies.
- Advocating for professional conditions and resources that will improve learning outcomes of individuals with exceptionalities.
- Engaging in the improvement of the profession through active participation in professional organizations.

Participating in the growth and dissemination of professional knowledge and skills. *Adopted by the CEC Board of Directors, January 2010*

### Methods of Instruction

This course will be presented in a manner that will allow you to learn independently, from each other, through the discussion board, email, and postings. While you may work somewhat at your own pace, I have found that most students appreciate the structure of due dates. Please adhere to the due dates and adjust your study schedule accordingly. Internet courses are a convenient and effective method of learning; however, they require as much work and attention as traditional instruction. The following will ensure success this semester:

1. Do not think you can do this course in your spare time. Plan, plan, and plan some more. Schedule at least 12-15 hours a week to dedicate to this course.
2. Please adhere to all deadlines and due dates-this will help you plan-you may complete assignments early but do not turn them in late.

3. Please read and re-read assignments. Get clarification as soon as you can (do not wait until the night before it's due).

See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies (if applicable) and Appendix B for assignment/standards alignment matrix

#### AI / Chat GPT

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

You may type a question into ChatGPT, you may not exactly copy and paste its response and turn it in as your own. If you use ChatGPT, you must disclose this somewhere in your assignment. If you use ChatGPT or any AI, please use it in ways that are ethical, accurate, and useful.

#### 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](#)

#### Grading/Assessment

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>
Self-Introduction	40
Discussions (4-50 points each)	200
Quiz (7-20 points each)	140
Due Process Hearing (3@ 50 points each)	150
Ethics Interview	100
SPED Legislation Research Project	170
Final Exam	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>



Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

### **Self-Introduction**

Use the Discussion Board in course under the communication-discussion) menu to complete this assignment. After you click communication, click on Discussion and to go the "Self-Introduction" to introduce yourself by clicking Reply. **This post won't be graded. "Reply to other students" is not required.**

### **Due Process Hearing**

Post what you have learned from the law and special education and due process hearing. To receive credit for this assignment, you must also read and comment on at least 2 other post from your peers.

### **Quizzes**

Students will take 7 quizzes quiz (7-20 points each). There are ONLY 5 questions under each quiz. You will have two attempt.

### **Final Exams**

Students will take a final exam on the assigned reading and course content. Final exam is worth 200 points and will be multiple choice and T/F.

### **Projects Required**

#### SPED Legislation Research Project

**\*\*This is a key Assessment;** students must turn this in and score at least an 80% in order to receive credit for the course. This Research Project is due 10/11 at 10:00 pm. Students will submit the assignment to TK 20 and D2L.

#### Professional Development Project

**\*\*This is a key Assessment.** The Professional Development Project assessment measures the ability of the candidate to design professional development suitable for training educators to improve instructional programs for students with Exceptional Learning Needs (ELN). **\*This is a major grade for the class.**

This assignment will be submitted in TK 20 and D2L. You are required to select a topic relevant to your area of study, such as Learning Disability, Emotional Disturbance, Dyslexia, Low-Incidence Disability, Autism, or Parent Advocacy, etc.

Your task is to create a 1-1.5-hour training session complete with a PowerPoint presentation (maximum 20 slides), training notes (approximately 1/2-3/4 page per slide), and clear references to the research literature used in creating the training, citing all sources appropriately. Students will submit the assignment to TK 20 and D2L.

### Ethics Interview

Students will interview someone who is working (or retired) in a supervisory or practitioner capacity in the school system (ex. Special Education Director, Coordinator, Educational Diagnostician, etc.) about ethics and leadership in their positions. They will summarize their findings in a one to two-page paper.

### Extra Credit

Extra credit assignments will not be given in this course.

### Late Work

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

### Make Up Work/Tests

State whether or not you will allow students to make up missed assignments and tests, and any conditions you stipulate.

### Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 28 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: September 22. Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 24. 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 that 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](#).

#### Inclement Weather

Online classes will continue as scheduled during inclement weather, unless the university announces a campus closure, in which case instructions regarding any adjustments will be communicated via email.

#### 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 Clark Student Center, Room 168, (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 MSU TEXAS. 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 as 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 [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). 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."](#)

### *Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law*

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick  
Title IX Coordinator  
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse  
940-397-4213  
[laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu](mailto:laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu)

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

### **Grade Appeal Process**

Update as needed. 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:

<b>Week or Module</b>	<b>Activities/Assignments/Exams</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Week 1 8/25-8/30	Read Chapters 1-2 (Law)  Self-Introduction	Self-Introduction  Due 8/30 at 10:00 pm
Week 2 9/31-9/06	Read Chapters 3-4(Law)  Complete Due Process Hearing #1    Complete Chapter 3 Quiz	Due Process Hearing #1 Due 9/06 at 10:00 pm.       Quiz due 9/7 at 10:00 pm.
Week 3 9/7-9/13	Read Chapter 5-6 (Law)    Complete Discussion #1   Complete Chapter 5-6 quiz	Discussion #1 Due 09/13 at 10:00 pm       Chapter 5-6 quiz Due 9/14 at 10:00 pm
Week 4 9/14-9/20	Read Chapter 11 (Law)  Complete Due Process Hearing # 2	Due Process Hearing #2 Due 9/20 at 10:00 pm
Week 5 9/21-9/27	Read Chapter 2 (The Nature of Ethical Deliberation)  Complete Discussion #2(Case 4)   Complete Chapter 2 Quiz 2	Discussion #2 Due 9/27 at 10:00 pm       Quiz #2 Due 9/28 at 10:00 pm

<b>Week or Module</b>	<b>Activities/Assignments/Exams</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Week 6 9/28-10/4	<b>Work on SPED LEGISLATION RESEARCH PROJECT</b>  Read Chapter 7-8 (Law)  Complete Chapter 7 & 8 Quiz	<b>Due 10/11</b>   Quiz Due 10/5 at 10:00pm
Week 7 10/5-10/11	<b>SPED LEGISLATION RESEARCH PROJECT</b>	<b>Sped Legislative Project</b>  <b>Due 10/11</b>
Week 8 10/12-10/18	Read Chapter 9 and 10 (Law)  Complete Due Process Hearing #3  Chapter 9-10 quiz	<u>Due Process Hearing #3</u> Due 10/18 at 10:00 pm   Quiz Due 10/19 at 10:00pm
Week 9 10/19-10/25	Read Chapters 5 Read Chapter 1(Ethics) Complete Chapter 5 quiz  Complete Discussion #3: Ethical Dilemma	Quiz Due 10/26 at 10:00 pm.   Discussion #3  Due 10/25 at 10:00 pm
Week 10 & 11 10/26-11/8	Read Chapter 13 & 14 (Law) Legal Framework Discussion  <b>Work on Ethics Interview</b>	Discussion #4 Due 11/1 at 10:00 pm.  <b>Ethics Due 11/22</b>
Week 12 11/9-11/15	Read Chapter 12 and 13  <b>Work on Ethics Interview</b>	<b>Ethics Due 11/22</b>

<b>Week or Module</b>	<b>Activities/Assignments/Exams</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Week 13 11/16-11/22	Read Chapter 12(Law Book) Read Chapter 6 (Ethics Book)  Take Chapter 6 Quiz  <b>Work on Ethics Interview</b>	Quiz Due 11/23 at 10:00 pm.  <b>Ethics Interview Due 11/22 at 10:00 pm</b>
Week 14 11/23-11/29	<b>Professional Development Project</b>	Due 12/6
Week 15 11/30-12/6	<b>Professional Development Project</b>	Professional Develop Due 12/6 at 10:00 pm
Week 16 12/7-12/13	Final Exam over Chapters 7-13(Law book)	**Note that this is a short week. Final Exam is due <b><u>12/13 at 10:00 pm.</u></b>



References/Scientific-ly-Based Research/Additional Readings:

- Ballard, J., Ramirez, B, Winetraub. F., (Eds.) (1982). *Special education in America: Its legal and governmental foundations*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children
- Bonfield, L. (2006). *American law and the American legal system in a nutshell*. Eagan, MN: Thomson West.
- Davis, J. (2007). *Legislative law and process in a nutshell*. Eagan, MN: Thomson West.
- Hilyerd, W. A. (2004). Using the law library: A guide for educators-Part 1: Untangling the legal system. *Journal of Law and Education*, 33 (2), 213-224.
- Levine, E.L. & Wexler, E.M. (1981). P.L. 94-142: An act of Congress. New York: Macmillan.
- Martin, E. (2013). Breakthrough: Federal special education legislation 1965-1981. Sarasota, FL: Bardolf & Company.
- Reynolds, W.L. (2003). *Judicial process in a nutshell (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. Eagan, MN: Thomson West.
- Tatgenhorst, A., Norlin, J, & Gorn, S. (2014). *What do I do when...The answer book on special education law (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Beach Garden, FL: LRP Publications.
- Valverde, J.R (2017). An indefensible idea: Eliminating individualization from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. *Journal of Law and Education*, 46 (2), 235-243.
- Winzer, M.A. (1993). History of special education: From isolation to integration. Washington, DC: Gallaudet Press.
- Yell, M.L., Katsiyannis, A., & Bradley, M.R. (2017). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The continuing evolution of special education law. *Handbook of Special Education*. In J. M. Kauffman, D. P. Hallahan, and P. Pullen, *Handbook of Special Education (2nd ed.)*, (pp. 55-71). Philadelphia, PA: Taylor & Francis/Routledge.
- Yell, M.L., Shriner, J.G., Thomas, S.S., & Katsiyannis, A. (2019). Special education law for leaders and administrators of special education in J. Crockett, M.L. Boscardin, & Billingsley, B. (Eds.). *Special education leadership handbook (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. pp. 77-99)* Philadelphia, PA: Routledge.

## Appendix A: Standards/Competencies

<b>Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Standard or Competency</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills (e.g., knowledge of family systems, parents/guardians supporting student development and educational progress).	Standard I, III, VII 006	Reading, Case Study, Research Project
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.	Standard I , III 006	Reading, Case Study, Research Project
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.	Standard I, III 006	Reading, Case Study, Research Project
Apply knowledge of legal and regulatory timelines, schedules, and reporting requirements; methods for maintaining eligibility folders; and strategies for organizing, maintaining, accessing, and storing records.	Standard I , IV, VIII 006	Reading, Case Analysis, Research Project
Apply knowledge of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to the roles and activities of the educational diagnostician, including the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs and compliance with local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements.	Standard I 007	Reading, Case Study, Case Analysis, Research Project
Apply knowledge of issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services (e.g., least restrictive environment) and of effective communication with parents/guardians on these issues.	Standard I, IV 007	Reading, Case Analysis, Research Project
Demonstrate knowledge of Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/Individualized Education Program (IEP) processes, rules, and procedures as determined by state and federal regulations.	Standard I , IV 007	Reading, Case Analysis, Research Project

<b>Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Standard or Competency</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, teachers, and other professionals in relation to students' individual learning needs.	Standard I, II 007	Reading, Case Study, Research Project
Apply knowledge of professional ethical practices (e.g., in relation to confidentiality, informed consent, placement, and state accountability measures).	Standard I, II 007	Reading, Case Study, Case analysis, Research Project

## Appendix B:

### [Educational Diagnostician Standards](#)

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard I

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy and legal foundations of evaluation and special education.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard II

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles and responsibilities.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard III

The educational diagnostician develops collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies and related service personnel.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard IV

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning and instructional decision making

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard V

The educational diagnostician knows eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard VI

The educational diagnostician selects, administers and interprets appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard VII

The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethnic, linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning and instruction.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard VIII

The educational diagnostician knows and demonstrates skills necessary for scheduling, time management and organization.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard IX

The educational diagnostician addresses students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning and instructional strategies.

#### Educational Diagnostician Standard X

The educational diagnostician knows and understands appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.

### [Framework with Competencies](#)

## **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.

For example:

- A. 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.
- B. Apply knowledge of the educational diagnostician's role in assisting local educational agencies (LEAs) in complying with Child Find.
- C. 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.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of issues related to the identification of and the overrepresentation and underrepresentation in special education of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of important student information needed (e.g., cognitive, academic, communicative, social, physical, functional, adaptive, and emotional characteristics) from a variety of sources, including information regarding students' educational, developmental, medical, and family histories.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships between assessment and evaluation, goals and objectives, and services for students with disabilities.

Competency 002 (Evaluation, Planning, Selection, and Administration): Apply knowledge of the functions and principles of assessment, assessments used to make educational and instructional decisions about students, and procedures and considerations in selecting and administering appropriate formal and informal assessments for individual students.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of terminology and statistical concepts used in assessment and evaluation (e.g., data distributions, measures of central tendency).
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of standards for test norming, reliability, and validity; procedures used in administering and scoring assessment instruments; and sources of measurement error and potential bias.
- C. Apply knowledge of the uses and limitations of various types of assessment instruments (e.g., norm-referenced, criterion-referenced) and observation techniques (e.g., anecdotal, frequency, temporal) to identify students with disabilities and determine the presence of an educational need.
- D. Demonstrate the ability to choose relevant and appropriate assessments based on the technical quality of the instruments, referral concerns, data needed to make decisions, and individual student characteristics (e.g., ethnic, cultural, linguistic, age, or socioeconomic factors), and demonstrate knowledge of how to ensure fairness and equity in assessment results.
- E. Apply knowledge of targeted individualized assessment strategies to inform instruction (e.g., authentic assessment, contextual assessment, curriculum-based assessment, progress monitoring, teacher observations, student feedback).
- F. Apply knowledge of methods used for academic and nonacademic assessments (e.g., vocational, developmental, behavioral, assistive technology, motor skills).
- G. Demonstrate understanding of procedures for student screening; prereferral, including Response to Intervention (RtI) and multi-tiered support; referral; and eligibility.
- H. Apply knowledge of administration and scoring procedures for various standardized assessments (e.g., basal, ceilings, testing the limits) and nonstandardized assessments.
- I. Apply knowledge of procedures and strategies for effectively collaborating with families and with other professionals in assessing and evaluating students with disabilities.

Competency 003 (Interpretation and Reporting of Evaluation Results): Apply skills for interpreting, reporting, and communicating the results of the Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE).

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the uses and limitations of various types of formal and informal assessment and evaluation data.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate application and interpretation of derived scores (e.g., standard scores, percentile ranks, age and grade equivalents, stanines, T-scores, z-scores).
- C. Apply knowledge of cultural and linguistic diversity in making appropriate evaluation and interpretation decisions.
- D. Apply performance data (including prereferral data) and information from teachers, other professionals, student, and parents/guardians to make appropriate educational recommendations within learning environments and to determine the effectiveness of instruction, modifications, and/or accommodations.
- E. Apply knowledge of strategies for effectively communicating to parents/guardians, classroom teachers, and other professionals about assessment purposes, assessment methods, and the implications and uses of assessment results.
- F. Analyze the need for further student assessment, adjustment of services, and/or evaluation as appropriate, including assessments conducted by other professionals, in specific areas (e.g., language skills, social skills, physical skills, emotional skills, assistive technology needs).
- G. Apply knowledge of components required to create Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) reports according to federal and state guidelines.

## **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.

For example:

- A. Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
- B. 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).
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities within the continuum of services.
- D. Apply knowledge of making individualized recommendations to assist the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee in developing appropriate and ambitious Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that target students' individual academic needs and goals.

- E. Demonstrate general knowledge of how to create, monitor the progress of, and collect data from appropriate, nonbiased, and culturally responsive interventions to assist in the ongoing appraisal of students' academic growth.
- F. Analyze individual results of assessments, evidence-based practices, interventions, and previous recommendations to assist with making decisions about individualized instruction for students.

Competency 005 (Functional Skill Instruction and Strategies): Understand the use of appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies for developing students' social, behavioral, communication, and adaptive skills.

For example:

- A. Apply knowledge of functional skills (e.g., social, behavioral, communication, adaptive) that students need in order to participate in and contribute effectively to their school, home, community, and work environments.
- B. Demonstrate general knowledge of appropriate, nonbiased, and culturally responsive evidence-based interventions, curricula, and instructional strategies for the development of functional skills based on knowledge of individual students with disabilities.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of antecedents and consequences (e.g., environment, teacher attitudes and behaviors) on the behavior of students with disabilities.
- D. Analyze assessment and evaluation results in collaboration with members of the multidisciplinary team (e.g., licensed specialists in school psychology [LSSPs], special education teachers, related service providers) in addressing educationally relevant behavior (e.g., vocational, functional, academic, social) for students in various settings.
- E. Apply knowledge of requirements and procedures for functional behavioral assessments (FBAs), manifestation determination reviews, and behavioral intervention plans (BIPs) that incorporate positive behavioral supports and interventions.
- F. Apply knowledge of functional skills instruction for transitioning across environments (e.g., preschool to elementary school, school to work) and the supports needed for transition and integration into various program placements.
- G. Apply knowledge of key concepts in behavior intervention (e.g., least intrusive intervention within the learning environment, social skills curricula, cognitive behavioral strategies) and ways of applying these concepts in collaboration with staff across educational settings (e.g., LSSPs, special education teachers).

### **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.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills (e.g., knowledge of family systems, parents/guardians supporting student development and educational progress).
- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. Apply knowledge of strategies for encouraging students' and families' active participation in the educational team, addressing families' concerns, and fostering respectful and beneficial relationships between families and education professionals.
- E. Apply principles for maintaining accurate and detailed records of assessments, evaluations, and related proceedings (e.g., Full and Individual Evaluation [FIE], Admission, Review, and Dismissal [ARD]/Individualized Education Program [IEP] meetings, parent/guardian communications and notifications).
- F. Apply knowledge of legal and regulatory timelines, schedules, and reporting requirements; methods for maintaining eligibility folders; and strategies for organizing, maintaining, accessing, and storing records.

Competency 007 (Legal and Ethical Practice): Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of models and theories that provide the basis for special education evaluations and recognize the purpose of evaluation procedures and their relationship to educational programming.
- B. Apply knowledge of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to the roles and activities of the educational diagnostician, including the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs and compliance with local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements.
- C. Apply knowledge of issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services (e.g., least restrictive environment) and of effective communication with parents/guardians on these issues.



- D. Demonstrate knowledge of Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD)/Individualized Education Program (IEP) processes, rules, and procedures as determined by state and federal regulations.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, teachers, and other professionals in relation to students' individual learning needs.
- F. Apply knowledge of professional ethical practices (e.g., in relation to confidentiality, informed consent, placement, and state accountability measures).
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of qualifications necessary to administer and interpret various assessment instruments and procedures for consistent use of these instruments across instructional settings.
- H. Demonstrate knowledge of organizations and publications relevant to the field of educational diagnosis and recognize the importance of engaging in activities that foster professional competence and benefit individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, and/or colleagues.

#### **DOMAIN IV—ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE**

Competency 008 (Analysis and Response): In a written response, analyze qualitative and quantitative data to identify a given student's strengths and needs, provide a thorough evaluation, and determine evidence- and research based recommendations for meeting the student's educational needs.

For example:

- A. Analyze and interpret assessment information on a given student, including qualitative and quantitative assessment data (e.g., anecdotal notes, student work samples, parent/guardian checklists) from a variety of formal and informal assessments (e.g., cognitive, academic, communicative, social, physical, functional, adaptive, emotional) to identify the student's strengths and needs, including the presence or absence of a disability according to state and federal eligibility criteria.
- B. Synthesize data and information on the individual student to generate one recommendation for evidence-based instruction and/or intervention.
- C. Describe how a teacher would implement and monitor the progress of the recommendation.