



Course Syllabus: Introduction to Individuals with Disabilities

Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
and Professional Studies
SPED 3523 Section X10
Fall 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: April Crutcher
Office: Bridwell 312
Office hours: Tues/Thurs 10 am – 12 pm; Wed 1 pm – 3 pm; by appointment
Office phone: (940) 397-4816
E-mail: april.crutcher@msutexas.edu

Instructor Response Policy

The best way to contact me is via email. I will check my email daily between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm Monday – Friday. Every effort will be made to respond within 24 hours; however, this does not apply to weekends or holidays. I will be available during the office hours listed above or we can set up another time to meet either in person or virtually.

Course Description

A pre-service course and content experience that provides an overview of schooling and classrooms from the perspectives of P-12 special populations with an emphasis on factors that facilitate learning. Course may not be used for students seeking teacher certification.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

A pre-service course and content experience that provides an overview of schooling and classrooms from the perspectives of P-12 special populations with an emphasis on factors that facilitate learning. Course may not be used for students seeking teacher certification.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

I am available to meet by appointment. Email me with any questions you have or to set up a time to meet in person or virtually. Responses/answers will be provided via email, or a time can be set up for a phone call or appointment.

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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given).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

Course Grade - List all graded assignments with their point value and or percentage of total grade. Letter Grade Scale indicate the overall points or % to letter grade scale for example 1270 to 1137 = A.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignment	Points
Chapter Activities (11 at 25 pts each with lowest dropped)	250
Chapter Quizzes (12 at 20 pts each with lowest dropped)	220
Disability Category Presentation	100
Discussions (1 at 10 pts each)	10
Total	580

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	522-580
B	464-521
C	406-463
D	348-405

Grade	Points
F	347 and below

Chapter Activities

There will be a chapter/weekly activity each week. Most weeks the activity will be related to the chapter covered that week. The activities vary from papers (approximately 1- 1.5 pages in length), IRIS Modules with assessments at the end, and an assortment of other assignments to hopefully keep things interesting and to provide an opportunity to build on the information provided in each chapter. Some activities take longer than others, so be sure to look ahead and plan accordingly.

Quizzes

There will be a quiz over each chapters 1-12 in the text. The quizzes will be multiple choice and open book. The questions come from the book, so with a little effort you should be able to do well on the quizzes.

Disability Category Presentation

For this course project, you will choose one disability category that was covered during the semester and create a recorded presentation focused on that category. You will decide which disability you would like to cover in your presentation. More specific instructions can be found in D2L.

Discussions

There is 1 discussion in the course. It is an introduction of yourself to me and the rest of the class.

Mid-Term Exam

There will not be a mid-term exam for this course.

Final Exam

There will not be a final exam for this course.

Extra Credit

Extra credit assignments will not be provided in this course.

Late Work

All assignments are expected to be submitted by the day they are due. You will be penalized five points for every day an assignment is late. Please contact me if extenuating circumstances arise that result in your inability to submit an assignment on time.

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.

Instructor Use of Generative AI

I integrate generative AI into my teaching to enhance—not replace—human learning, creativity, and critical thinking. I use AI applications as collaborative partners for ideation, drafting, feedback, and the refinement of teaching materials, while maintaining full responsibility for content and accuracy. I do not use this technology to assess student work. I do not input other people's work or personally identifiable information into AI tools. My approach emphasizes ethical, transparent use aligned with academic integrity, equity, and the development of transferable skills. I also aim to model responsible engagement with emerging technologies, emphasizing thoughtful boundaries rather than rigid prohibitions. I strive for transparency around AI use by adding AI disclosure statements and/or citations to all work generated for this course in collaboration with AI tools.

Student Use of Generative AI

The use of artificial intelligence applications, including but not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, DALL·E, Grammarly, or similar applications, may be used for planning activities such as brainstorming, outlining, and idea development. However, all final submissions should show evidence that students have developed and refined these ideas on their own without additional generative AI use. Students are expected to apply what they are learning in this course to produce work for this class, drawing on their developing knowledge, understanding, and skills. When using generative AI in permitted contexts as outlined in the syllabus or explicitly permitted by the instructor, you are responsible for ensuring that AI-generated content is properly cited, accurate, ethical, and free of misinformation or intellectual property violations. AI-generated content must never be submitted as your own work. Doing so may constitute a violation of academic integrity and may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Please contact me if you have questions regarding this course policy.

Any generative AI use should be cited *AND* clearly disclosed according to the instructions in this syllabus. An example of an APA citation (7th ed. format) is seen here: OpenAI. (2025). ChatGPT (May 2024 version) [Large language model]. <https://chat.openai.com>

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Deadline to file for graduation: September 21st .
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:"November 23rd
- 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.

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.

Inclement Weather

In the case of campus closure due to inclement weather, this course will continue as scheduled. However, if assignment deadlines coincide with the closure dates, the deadline will be delayed until after the campus reopens.

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](#).

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."](#)

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

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:

Week	Topics for the Week	Weekly Activities - Due on Mondays at Midnight
Week 1 – Aug 24	Class Introduction and People First Language	Discussion and People First Language Activity – Due 9/1
Week 2 – Aug 31	Chapter 1 – The Purpose and Promise of Special Education	Chapter 1 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/8
Week 3 – Sept 7	Chapter 2 – Planning and Providing Special Education	Chapter 2 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/15
Week 4 – Sept 14	Chapter 3 – Collaborating with Families	Chapter 3 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/22
Week 5 – Sept 21	Chapter 4 – Intellectual Disabilities	Chapter 4 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/29
Week 6 – Sept 28	Chapter 5 – Learning Disabilities	Chapter 5 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/6

Week	Topics for the Week	Weekly Activities - Due on Mondays at Midnight
Week 7 – Oct 5	Chapter 6 – Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Chapter 6 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/13
Week 8 – Oct 12	Chapter 7 – Autism Spectrum Disorders	Chapter 7 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/20
Week 9 – Oct 19	Chapter 8 – Communication Disorders	Chapter 8 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/27
Week 10 – Oct 26	Chapter 9 – Deafness and Hearing Loss	Chapter 9 Quiz and Activity – Due 11/3
Week 12 – Nov 2	Chapter 10 – Blindness and Low Vision	Chapter 10 Quiz – Due 11/10
Week 13 – Nov 9	Chapter 11 – Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Health Impairments, and Physical Disabilities	Chapter 11 Quiz and Activity – Due 11/17
Week 14 – Nov 16	Chapter 12 – Low-Incidence Disabilities: Multiple Disabilities, Deaf-Blindness, and Traumatic Brain Injury	Chapter 12 Quiz– Due 11/24
Week 15 – Nov 23	Work on Disability Category Presentation	Disability Category Presentation -Due 12/1
Week 16- 11/30	Work on Disability Category Presentation	Disability Category Presentation -Due 12/1