



Course Syllabus: Teaching Special Needs in an Inclusive Setting

Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education

and Professional Studies

SPED 3623 Section 101

Fall 2025

Bridwell Hall, Rm 209; Tuesday & Thursday 8 – 9:20 am

Contact Information

Instructor: April Crutcher

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Office hours: Tues / Thurs 9:30 am – 11 am; Wed 1 – 3 pm; by appointment

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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.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Heward, W. L., Alber-Morgan, S. R., & Konrad, M. (2022). *Exceptional children: An introduction to special education* (12th ed.). Pearson.

Course Description

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the Teacher Education Program. Description: A study of the etiology of and concepts relating to teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

This course addresses all the requirements of HB 159

(a-1) Any training requirements for a certificate specified under Subsection (a) must require that the person demonstrates:

(1) Basic knowledge of:

- (A) Each disability category under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq.) and how each category can affect student learning and development; and
 - (B) Conditions that may be considered a disability under Section 504, Rehabilitation of 1973 (29 U.S.C. section 794), and how a condition covered by that section can affect student learning and development;
- (2) competence in the use of proactive instructional planning techniques that:
- (A) provide flexibility in the ways:
 - (i) information is presented.
 - (ii) students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills; and
 - (iii) students are engaged.
 - (B) reduce barriers in instruction.
 - (C) provide appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges; and
 - (D) maintain high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students of limited English proficiency

This class addresses the relevant section of:

Section 21.044. EDUCATOR PREPARATION.

(b) The minimum academic qualifications for a certificate specified under Subsection (a) must require that the person receive, as part of the training required to obtain that certificate, instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia.

(c) The instruction under Subsection (b) must:

- (1) be developed by a panel of experts in the diagnosis and treatment of dyslexia who are:
 - (A) employed by institutions of higher education; and
 - (B) approved by the board; and
- (2) include information on:
 - (A) characteristics of dyslexia;
 - (B) identification of dyslexia; and
 - (C) effective, multisensory strategies for teaching students with dyslexia.

This course is an introduction course for all education majors. It is based on relevant standards from 19 TAC Chapter 235 for Texas Teachers.

§235.21. Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards, Early Childhood: Prekindergarten-Grade 6. Early Childhood-Grade 6. (October 2020 Update)

Standards Referenced:

https://www.tx.nesinc.com/Content/StudyGuide/TX_SG_obj_160.htm

Domain I - Designing Instruction and Assessment to Promote Student Learning

Competency 001- The teacher understands human developmental processes and applies this knowledge to plan instruction and ongoing assessment that motivate students and are responsive to the developmental characteristics and needs.

A. Knows the typical stages of cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development of students in early childhood through grade 12.

B. Recognizes the wide range of individual developmental differences that characterizes students in early childhood through grade 12 and the implications of this developmental variation for instructional planning.

C. Analyzes ways in which developmental characteristics of students in early childhood through grade 12 impact learning and performance and applies knowledge of students' developmental characteristics and needs to plan effective learning experiences and assessments.

D. Demonstrates an understanding of physical changes that occur in early childhood through adolescence, factors that affect students' physical growth and health (e.g., nutrition, sleep, prenatal exposure to drugs, abuse) and ways in which physical development impacts development in other domains (i.e., cognitive, social, emotional).

E. Recognizes factors affecting the social and emotional development of students in early childhood through adolescence (e.g., lack of affection and attention, parental divorce, homelessness) and knows that students' social and emotional development impacts their development in other domains (i.e., cognitive, physical).

G. Understands that development in any one domain (i.e., cognitive, social, physical, emotional) impacts development in other domains.

H. Recognizes signs of developmental delays or impairments in students in early childhood through grade 4.

I. Knows the stages of play development (i.e., from solitary to cooperative) and the important role of play in young children's learning and development.

Competency 007- The teacher understands and applies principles and strategies for communicating effectively in varied teaching and learning contexts.

A. Demonstrates clear, accurate communication in the teaching and learning process and uses language that is appropriate to students' ages, interests and backgrounds.

D. Practices effective communication techniques and interpersonal skills (including both verbal and nonverbal skills and electronic communication) for meeting specified goals in various contexts.

Competency 013- The teacher understands and adheres to legal and ethical requirements for educators and is knowledgeable of the structure of education in Texas.

A. Knows legal requirements for educators (e.g., those related to special education, students' and families' rights, student discipline, equity, child abuse) and adheres to legal guidelines in education-related situations.

B. Knows and adheres to legal and ethical requirements regarding the use of educational resources and technologies (e.g., copyright, Fair Use, data security, privacy, acceptable use policies).
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C. Applies knowledge of ethical guidelines for educators in Texas (e.g., those related to confidentiality, interactions with students and others in the school community), including policies and procedures described in the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.
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D. Follows procedures and requirements for maintaining accurate student records.
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E. Understands the importance of and adheres to required procedures for

administering state- and district-mandated assessments.

F. Uses knowledge of the structure of the state education system, including relationships among campus, local and state components, to seek information and assistance.

G. Advocates for students and for the profession in various situations.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

I am more than happy to meet with you during office hours. If those times do not work for you, do not hesitate to email me or speak to me before or after class to set up another time. I am available to help in any way that I can!

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

Assignment	Points
Weekly Assignments (12 at 25 points each – 1 dropped)	275
TEA Dyslexia Course	100
Accommodated Lesson Plan Checkpoints (3 at 25 pts each)	75
Accommodated Lesson Plan	100
Chapter Quizzes (12 at 20 pts each – lowest dropped)	200
Disability Presentation	100
Attendance (30 at 5 pts each)	150
Total	1000

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

Weekly Assignments

You will complete weekly assignments each week, related to the subject covered in the book chapter each week. Some assignments will be group work and others will be individual. Most weeks, you will have the opportunity to work on the assignment in class.

Quizzes

A quiz will be completed for 12 chapters. The quiz will be due before the chapter is covered in class. The quizzes are open book and the answers can be found in the chapter.

Disability Category Presentation

Everyone will complete a presentation on one disability category which will be assigned at the beginning of the semester. All details related to this can be found in D2L.

Additional Assignments

You will be required to complete the Dyslexia Module through TEA website. The certificate must be uploaded to D2L and TK20 once completed. You will also complete the Accommodated Lesson Plan assignment. All information related to this assignment can be found in D2L.

Attendance/Participation

Attendance and participation will be earned each class at 5 points per class.

Mid-Term Exam

There will be no mid-term exam in this course.

Final Exam

There will be no final exam in this course.

Extra Credit

There is no planned extra credit for this course, however, there may be opportunities that arise for extra credit during the semester.

Late Work

All assignments are expected to be submitted on 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/tests may be accepted if cleared with me prior to the due date or within 48 hours of due date in the case of illness or an emergency. Please contact me ASAP to work out a plan in these situations.

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, however, 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.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 28th

Deadline to file for graduation: September 22nd

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 24th

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.

Submitted Work

Correct spelling and use of appropriate grammatical skills are expected on each written assignment or project. Assignments/projects will be typed and will utilize an appropriate style (Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced).

Unacceptable work will be returned un-graded or lead to a reduction in grade. In addition, plagiarized or copied work will receive a grade of ZERO with no make-up allowed.

Attendance

I expect you to attend every class, to arrive on time, and to participate in all class activities and discussions. Throughout the semester, you will be accumulating participation points based on your presence in class and your participation in various activities during that class period. If you must miss class for a legitimate reason, please notify me in advance, if possible. Missed work should be completed and may be subject to penalties if late.

There are a few dates on the calendar when I will be out of town and therefore we will not meet for class. However, there will be assignments due on these dates that you must complete and submit to D2L to receive attendance credit for that date.

Online Computer Requirements

This course 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](#).

Inclement Weather

In the case of campus closure due to inclement weather, please check D2L for updates and possible changes to assignment due dates.

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 Northwestern State University (NSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room/board charges that were paid to NSU 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, Northwestern 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](#) or email disabilityservices@msutexas.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 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 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 [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

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	Tuesday	Thursday	Due Dates
Week 1 – Aug 25	Intro to course	People First Language	People First Language Activity Due 9/1
Week 2 – Sept 1	Chapter 1 The Purpose and Promise of Special Education	Chapter 1 cont'd The Purpose and Promise of Special Education	Chapter 1 Quiz Due 9/3 Chapter 1 Activity Due 9/8
Week 3 – Sept 8	Chapter 2 Planning and Providing Special Education	Chapter 2 cont'd Planning and Providing Special Education	Chapter 2 Quiz due 9/10 Chapter 2 Activity Due 9/15

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Due Dates
Week 4 – Sept 15	Chapter 3 Collaborating with Families	Chapter 3 cont'd Collaborating with Families	Chapter 3 Quiz due 9/17 Chapter 2 Activity Due 9/22
Week 5 – Sept 22	Chapter 4 Intellectual Disabilities	Chapter 4 cont'd Intellectual Disabilities	Chapter 4 Quiz due 2/18
Week 6 – Sept 29	Chapter 5 Learning Disabilities	Chapter 5 cont'd Learning Disabilities	Chapter 5 Quiz due 10/1 Chapter 5 Activity due 10/6
Week 7 – Oct 6	Chapter 6 Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Chapter 6 cont'd Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Chapter 6 Quiz due 10/8 Chapter 6 Activity due 10/13 Accommodated Lesson Plan Check Point 1 Due 10/13
Week 8 – Oct 13	Chapter 7 Autism Spectrum Disorders	Chapter 7 cont'd Autism Spectrum Disorders	Chapter 7 Quiz due 10/15 Chapter 7 Activity due 10/20
Week 9 – Oct 20	Chapter 8 Communication Disorders	Chapter 8 cont'd Communication Disorders	Chapter 8 Quiz due 10/22 Chapter 8 Activity due 10/27
Week 10 – Oct 27	Chapter 9 Deafness and Hearing Loss	Chapter 9 cont'd Deafness and Hearing Loss	Chapter 9 Quiz due 10/29 Chapter 9 Activity due 11/3
Week 11 – Nov 3	No In Person Class Accommodated Lesson Plan Check Point 2	No In Person Class TEA Dyslexia Module	Accommodated Lesson Plan Check Point 2 Due 11/10 TEA Dyslexia Module Due 11/10
Week 12 – Nov 10	Chapter 10 Blindness and Low-Vision	Chapter 10 cont'd Blindness and Low-Vision	Chapter 10 Quiz due 11/12 Accommodated Lesson Plan Check Point 3 due 11/17
Week 13 – Nov 17	Chapter 11 ADHD, Health Impairments and Physical Disabilities	Chapter 11 cont'd ADHD, Health Impairments and Physical Disabilities	Chapter 11 Quiz due 11/19 Chapter 11 Activity due 11/24
Week 14 – Nov 24	Chapter 12 Low-Incidence Disabilities, Deaf-Blindness, and TBI	No Class- Thanksgiving Break	Chapter 12 Quiz due 11/26 Chapter 12 Activity due 12/1
Week 15 – Dec 1	Accommodated Lesson Plan	Accommodated Lesson Plan	Accommodated Lesson Plan due 12/5
Week 16 – Dec 8	Finals Week- No final and No class	Finals Week- No final and No class	Enjoy your semester break!

