



Course Syllabus: Teaching Special Needs in an Inclusive Setting

Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
and Professional Studies
SPED 3623 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

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.

Effective August 2, 2026, the State of Texas adopted new requirements related to the delivery of asynchronous coursework in educator preparation programs. Under the new requirements, asynchronous coursework is defined as self-paced, non-simultaneous instruction in which students access course materials and complete assignments within the time frame prescribed by the course. A course is considered asynchronous when more than 50% of the coursework is delivered asynchronously. To ensure that this course meets the new state requirements, students will be required to participate in a synchronous Zoom meeting once each week. These meetings will provide opportunities for live instruction, discussion, interaction, and engagement with the instructor and classmates.

Synchronous class meetings for this course will be held on Wednesdays from 8:15 am to 9:55 am. Students are expected to attend and actively participate in each weekly Zoom meeting. The Zoom link is available in D2L → SPED 3623 Weekly Zoom

Meeting. This schedule is being implemented to ensure that the course complies with current Texas requirements governing the delivery of educator preparation coursework.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

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

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

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
Accommodated Lesson Plan	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
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. A few weeks, there will be an additional assignment related to the Accommodated Lesson Plan. 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 will a little effort you should be able to do well on the quizzes.

Accommodated Lesson Plan

This assignment will provide an opportunity to apply your knowledge of disabilities and classroom accommodations. This activity will be completed towards the end of the semester but should be reviewed in advance so that as you learn about each disability, you can think about classroom accommodations that would be beneficial. This assignment is required for course credit. There will be 3 checkpoints during the semester to gauge your understanding of the assignment before it is time to complete the full lesson plan. The grades for the checkpoints will not go toward your final grade, but it is in your best interest to do them so that you will know whether you are on the right track to complete the accommodated lesson plan correctly at the end of the semester.

TEA Dyslexia Course

The TEA Dyslexia Course is a requirement for this course. If have already completed the TEA Dyslexia Course as part of your application for the teacher certification program, then upload your certificate in the drop box in D2L and to TK20 (even if you have already uploaded it to TK20 before). If you have not completed the course, follow the link in D2L to complete the course and upload your certification to

D2L and TK20. This is a requirement for this course and if this task is not completed you will receive an incomplete for the course.

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 2 points for every day an assignment is late. Please contact me if extenuating circumstances arise that prevent you from submitting 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

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.

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](#).

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.

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.

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 Tuesdays 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 Zoom meeting: Wednesday 9/2 at 8:15 am	Chapter 1 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/8
Week 3 – Sept 7	Chapter 2 – Planning and Providing Special Education Zoom meeting: Wednesday 9/9 at 8:15 am	Chapter 2 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/15
Week 4 – Sept 14	Chapter 3 – Collaborating with Families Zoom meeting: Wednesday 9/16 at 8:15 am	Chapter 3 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/22
Week 5 – Sept 21	Chapter 4 – Intellectual Disabilities Zoom meeting: Wednesday 9/23 at 8:15 am	Chapter 4 Quiz and Activity – Due 9/29 Accommodated Lesson Plan Checkpoint 1 – Due 9/29
Week 6 – Sept 28	Chapter 5 – Learning Disabilities Zoom meeting: Wednesday 9/30 at 8:15 am	Chapter 5 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/6
Week 7 – Oct 5	Chapter 6 – Emotional or Behavioral Disorders Zoom meeting: Wednesday 10/7 at 8:15 am	Chapter 6 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/13
Week 8 – Oct 12	Chapter 7 – Autism Spectrum Disorders Zoom meeting: Wednesday 10/14 at 8:15 am	Chapter 7 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/20
Week 9 – Oct 19	Chapter 8 – Communication Disorders Zoom meeting: Wednesday 10/21 at 8:15 am	Chapter 8 Quiz and Activity – Due 10/27 TEA Dyslexia Course – Due 10/27

Week	Topics for the Week	Weekly Activities - Due on Tuesdays at Midnight
Week 10 – Oct 26	Chapter 9 – Deafness and Hearing Loss Zoom meeting: Wednesday at 10/28 8:15 am	Chapter 9 Quiz and Activity – Due 11/3 Accommodated Lesson Plan Check Point 2 – Due 11/3
Week 12 – Nov 2	Chapter 10 – Blindness and Low Vision Zoom meeting: Wednesday 11/4 at 8:15 am	Chapter 10 Quiz – Due 11/10
Week 13 – Nov 9	Chapter 11 – Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Health Impairments, and Physical Disabilities Zoom meeting: Wednesday 11/11 at 8:15 am	Chapter 11 Quiz and Activity – Due 11/17 Accommodated Lesson Plan Check Point 3 – Due 11/17
Week 14 – Nov 16	Chapter 12 – Low-Incidence Disabilities: Multiple Disabilities, Deaf-Blindness, and Traumatic Brain Injury Zoom meeting: Wednesday 11/18 at 8:15 am	Chapter 12 Quiz– Due 11/24
Week 15 – Nov 23	Work on Accommodated Lesson Plan Zoom meeting: No meeting due to Thanksgiving Break	Accommodated Lesson Plan -Due 12/1
Week 16- 11/30	Work on Accommodated Lesson Plan Zoom meeting: Wednesday 12/2 at 8:15 am	Accommodated Lesson Plan -Due 12/1