

**Midwestern State University  
Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education  
SPED: 4113 Foundations of Special Education**

**Contact Information:**

Instructor: Emily N. Rutherford, EdD

Office Hours: Monday 1:00pm- 3:00pm Tuesday 8:00am-10:00am, Wednesday 10:00am – 11:00am

Office Phone: 940-397-4800

Email: emily.rutherford@msutexas.edu

**Course/Catalog Description:** Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education. Introduction to roles and responsibilities of the special educator, and legal and ethical requirements of the profession. Theoretical perspectives related to the nature and needs of persons with disabilities; involvement in disability advocacy.

**Required Text :**

No text required, required readings will be provided.

**Required Technology:**

All students must have internet access and word processing software. Students will also be required to upload requested documents into TK20 throughout the semester.

Username and password reset requests can be made by contacting Suzy McDowell at suzy.mcdowell@msutexas.edu.

**Student Assistance Office Hours:**

Monday – 1:00pm-3:00pm

Tuesday – 8:00am-10:00am

Wednesday – 10:00am – 11:00am

Thursday: by appointment

Friday – by appointment

**Instructor Response Policy**

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

**WCoE Conceptual Framework**

The outcomes for graduates of professional programs are based upon knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the following elements:

- **Learner Development** - understand how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and design and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

- **Learning Differences** - understand individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- **Learning Environment** - work with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- **Content Knowledge** - understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- **Application of Content** - understand how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- **Assessment** - understand and use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
- **Planning for Instruction** - plan instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- **Instructional Strategies** - understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- **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.
- **Leadership and Collaboration** - seek appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

### Objectives

The candidate will meet the following Texas Educator Standards for special educators/educational diagnosticians. These are aligned with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) knowledge and skills standards as they apply to students with disabilities. This course provides candidates with a knowledge base of the environment in which they may work. Satisfactory completion of the course will document that students have demonstrated the ability to:

Objective	Standards
Candidates will evaluate current legislation pertaining to students with disabilities and their families, as well as ethical standards related to professional practices in the field.	Standard I: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.
Candidates will discuss significant philosophical and historical aspects of special education, as well as emerging issues, practices and research in the field.	Standard I: The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.
Candidates will describe effective communication strategies with parents from diverse backgrounds and professionals from other disciplines and community useful for those working with exceptional students.	Standard III: The special education teacher knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings
Candidates will examine the roles and responsibilities of a special educator.	Standard II: The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

**See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies**

**Dispositions** Candidates 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 can (do not wait until the night before).

4. All assignments are due Sunday night by midnight unless otherwise specified. You have two full weeks to complete your assignments; therefore, no late work will be accepted.

### Grading Procedures

Assignment	Details	Points
Introduction		10
Discussions	5 (10 point each)	50
Class Assignments	4 (10 points each)	40
Special Education Philosophy		50
Midterm Exam		100
Final Exam		100
Total		350

Grade	Points
A	350-305
B	304-260
C	259-215
D	215-170
F	169 and below

### Important Dates

Date	Activity	Notes
01/10/2022	Disability Rights/Awareness	Introduction due 01/16/2022 by midnight
01/17/2022	What is Special Education?	01/17- MLK no classes. I will return on Tuesday Discussion 1 and Class Assignment 1 due 01/23/2022 by midnight
01/24/2022	Disability Theory	Discussion 2 and Class Assignment 2 Due 01/30/2022 by midnight
01/31/2022	Midterm Exam	Must be taken by 02/06/2022 midnight
02/07/2022	Special Education Philosophy	Discussion 3 and Special Education Philosophy due 02/13/2022 by midnight
02/14/2022	Roles and Responsibilities of the special educator	Discussion 4 and Class Assignment 3 due 02/20/2022 by midnight

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Notes</b>
02/21/2022	Communication and Collaboration	Discussion 5 and Class Assignment 4 due 02/27/2022 by midnight
02/14/2022		No assignments this week
03/07/2022	Final Exam	Must be taken by 03/08 midnight

## **Assignments**

All written work should be written in a professional manner. Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

## **Introduction**

Candidates will introduce themselves to their peers using a multi-media platform (screen-cast-o-matic or any platform of their choosing)

## **Discussions**

Candidates will participate in 4 discussions on the class discussion board. Each candidate must make an initial response to the prompt by Tuesday and midnight and reply to 2 of their classmates by Sunday at midnight of the week the discussion is assigned.

Initial discussion posts must be 5-10 sentences in length and replies to classmates must be 3-5 sentences in length in order to receive full credit.

## **Class Assignments**

Candidates will be given brief class assignments that are relevant to the week's activities. Instructions will be posted in D2L for each assignment.

## **Special Education Philosophy Statement**

Candidates will develop a statement of their beliefs about special education which includes one disability theory.

## **Exams**

Candidates will take a midterm and final exam. The exams will be administered on D2L and consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

## **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**

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

## **Important Dates**

Last day for term schedule changes: January 13<sup>th</sup>

Deadline to file for graduation: February 14<sup>th</sup>

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" March 21st

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Voids](#)

## **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 this 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 classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly

on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

### **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) 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](#).

### **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2019-20](#)

### **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](#)

### **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.

### **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.

### **References/Scientifically-Based Research/Additional Readings:**

Connor, D. J., Gabel, S. L., Gallagher, D. J., & Morton, M. (2008). Disability studies and inclusive education—implications for theory, research, and practice. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 12(5-6), 441-457.

Cook, B. G., & Schirmer, B. R. (2003). What is special about special education? Overview and analysis. *The Journal of Special Education*, 37(3), 200-205.

Danforth, S., & Rhodes, W. C. (1997). Deconstructing disability: A philosophy for inclusion. *Remedial and Special Education*, 18(6), 357-366.

Frederick, J. K., Raabe, G. R., Rogers, V. R., & Pizzica, J. (2020). Advocacy, Collaboration, and Intervention: A Model of Distance Special Education Support Services Amid COVID-19. *Behavior analysis in practice*, 1-9.

Mcphail, J. C. (1995). Phenomenology as philosophy and method: Applications to ways of doing special education. *Remedial and Special Education*, 16(3), 159-165.

Retief, M., & Letšosa, R. (2018). Models of disability: A brief overview. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 74(1).

### **Appendix A: Standards/Competencies**

[Special Education EC-12 Standards](#)  
[Texas Educational Diagnostician Standards](#)  
[Exam Competencies](#)  
[High Leverage Practices](#)

WCOE Standards (InTASC):

The outcomes for graduates of professional programs are based upon knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the following elements:

- Learner Development - understand how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and design and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- Learning Differences - understand individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- Learning Environment - work with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- Content Knowledge - understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- Application of Content - understand how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- Assessment - understand and use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
- Planning for Instruction - plan instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- Instructional Strategies - understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

- 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.
- Leadership and Collaboration - seek appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

### **Appendix B: Note about COVID**

Scientific data shows that being fully vaccinated is the most effective way to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 and has the greatest probability of avoiding serious illness if infected in all age groups. Although MSU Texas is not mandating vaccinations in compliance with Governor Abbott's executive orders, we highly encourage eligible members of our community to get a vaccination. If you have questions or concerns about the vaccine, please contact your primary care physician or health care professional. Given the recent rise in cases, individuals are also strongly encouraged to wear facial coverings when indoors among groups of people, regardless of vaccination status. Although MSU Texas is not currently requiring facial coverings, they have been an effective strategy in slowing the spread.