



Course Syllabus: Practicum in Special Education

**Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education
and Professional Studies
SPED 6943 Section X20
Spring 2026**

Contact Information

Instructor: April Crutcher

Office: Bridwell 312

Office hours: Tues / Thurs 9:30 am – 11:00 am; Wednesday 1 pm – 3 pm

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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

No textbook required.

Course Description

Field experience (180 hours) in a special educational setting specific to the candidate's career goals under the supervision of experienced personnel. Required for students seeking Texas educational diagnostician certification. May be repeated for credit.

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. Explain the evaluation process.
2. Understand ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities of a diagnostician.
3. Critically examine collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies, and related service personnel.
4. Understand student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.
5. Know eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.
6. Select, administer, and interpret appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.
7. Examine of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.
8. Know skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.
9. Synthesize students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.
10. Know appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.

See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies

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.

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: Assignments, Details and Points

Assignments	Details	Points
Site Supervisor Paperwork	Documents uploaded to TK20	50
Child Protection Training	1 Certificate	50
Interactive Practice Exam	Score Report from Certify Teacher	100
Full and Individual Evaluation	2 FIEs (100 points each)	200
Formal Observations	3 Observations (100 points each)	300
Informal Observations	3 Observations (50 Points each)	150
Time Log	Completed and Approved Log	100
Practicum Evaluation	Completed by site supervisor/mentor	50
Total	n/a	1000

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900-1000
B	800-899
C	700-799
D	600-699
F	599 and below

Assignments

Please see D2L for detailed information regarding all assignments for this course. Contact Mrs. Crutcher with any questions regarding course assignments and requirements.

Site Supervisor Paperwork

The first step in your practicum process is to choose a site supervisor/mentor for your practicum experiences. It is important that you choose a site supervisor/mentor that you will work well with and can provide you with the guidance necessary to promote learning in your field. The minimum requirements for the site supervisor/mentor are:

1. Current Certification in the Candidate's Field
2. Minimum of 3 Years' Experience in the Candidate's Field

Once you have determined who you would like to serve as your site supervisor/mentor, you will contact them and ask if they would be willing to do so. Then, you will complete the required forms (found in TK20) and turn into TK20 as directed.

Child Protection Training

All MSU students and faculty working or volunteering in a program where they have contact with minors, either on or off campus, must complete the Child Protection Module through the HR website. This training is to satisfy the State of Texas requirements for youth protection on/off campus involvement of minors. Upon completion, students will receive a certificate, which will be uploaded for credit.

Certify Teacher and Interactive Practice Exam

Students will complete an interactive practice exam designed to simulate their testing experience for the certification exam. Information on accessing the practice exam can be found in D2L. The exam must be completed and your score report uploaded into D2L for a grade. You are required to pass the practice exam and score 80% or better in each domain and log 10 hours of study time in Certify Teacher in order to complete the practicum course. If you do not complete both of these requirements by the end of the semester, you will receive an incomplete for practicum until you meet the requirements.

Full Individual Evaluation

Students will complete two full individual evaluation reports, under supervision of their site supervisor/mentor. As allowed, you will administer, score, interpret, and write an assessment report according to the district you are working in. A copy of the full reports will be uploaded into D2L with any identifying information blacked out. Please contact me well in advance of the due date for the FIE if you do not have access to student information to use to write your FIEs.

Formal and Informal Observations

You will have three formal observations during the semester. Specific details regarding the formal observations can be found in D2L. For each formal observation, you will demonstrate your knowledge and skills related to the Educational Diagnostician Standards. Formal Observation forms will be emailed to you after your observation is completed. You are to print, sign, have your site supervisor/mentor sign, and upload this form into D2L and TK20 by the due date. A one-page reflection of the observations will also be uploaded with the signed forms. To receive credit for this course, these documents must be signed and uploaded into TK20 and D2L by the due dates indicated in D2L. No exceptions will be given.

You will also have 3 informal observations. The process for the informal observations is detailed in D2L. You will receive an informal observation form after completion of each informal observation which will need to be signed by you and your site supervisor/mentor and uploaded into D2L and TK20 by the due date.

Time Log

A time log of activities you complete to address each educational diagnostician standard must be kept in this course. You will find a file with step-by-step instructions in D2L in the "Time Log Materials" folder. To receive credit for this course, all required hours must be documented and approved by your site supervisor/mentor in TK20 by the due date. No exceptions will be given. This semester, you have a requirement of 180 hours. You will need to document everything you do that can be connected to a diagnostician standard. You will need to document start and stop times for each activity (ex. 2:00-3:00pm). You will not be able to document overlapping times. Make sure to document time in each standard by the end of the semester. You may choose to keep track of your hours in a notebook or other form then enter hours through the TK20 link or you can log each activity after it occurs. It is up to you, just make sure you are meeting the required hours and have met each standard by the end of your Practicum course. Because your site supervisor/mentor has to approve your hours, I do suggest submitting your hours approximately once a month so that your site supervisor/mentor does not have to review all of your hours at the last minute at the end of the semester.

Activity Suggestions:

1. Administer, score, and interpret additional assessments beyond what is required.
2. Observe a diagnostician go through the process of data analysis of eligibility decisions.
3. Attend ARDs where the diagnostician goes over testing and MDRs.
4. Ask if you can go through a few folders of students who did not qualify for special education and find out why and the thought process behind it.
5. Ask to review any assessments that were bilingual or had some other special circumstance.
6. Administer, score, and interpret, brief report additional assessments to "non students". You may either use kits at your school or let me know and I will send you kits of tests that you have not used if I have them available.
7. If you attend a professional development at an ESC that meets the standards, you may use some of those hours.
8. Hours spent studying for and taking the practice exam in Certify Teacher can not be counted toward your 180 practicum hours.

Note: You are responsible for asking your site supervisor/mentor to approve your time log hours BEFORE the due date. A help guide for your site supervisor is posted in D2L. You may print or email it to your site supervisor if they have questions about the process. If all 180 hours are not approved before the due date, you will not receive credit for the course.

Reminder - You must have 180 hours total and hours that address every standard by the end of this semester in order to get credit for the course.

Practicum Evaluation

A final practicum evaluation will be completed at the end of the semester. This is an opportunity to reflect on strengths and weaknesses of the student and get explicit feedback from the university supervisor and site supervisor.

*Please refer to the handbook for information on practicum evaluations that result in a candidate not being recommended for certification. Students MUST be recommended by the university and site supervisor to receive a recommendation for certification.

Mid-Term Exam

There is no mid-term exam for this course.

Final Exam

There is no final exam for this course.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will not be offered for this course.

Late Work

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

Make Up Work/Tests

Make up work/tests will only be accepted in extreme circumstances (death in the family, illness, etc.). Mrs. Crutcher must be contacted prior to the assignment 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: February 2nd

Deadline to file for graduation: February 16th

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 29th at 4:00 PM

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

This course is an online course. There may be opportunities to meet through Zoom and it will be in the student's best interest to participate in these meetings. Meetings will be recorded, however, for those who are unable to attend.

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

In the case of campus closure due to inclement weather, this course will continue as scheduled.

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 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](#)

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](#).

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.

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

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

Course Schedule

Date	Activity	Notes
ASAP	All site supervisor/mentor forms due to TK20	You cannot receive credit for this course without this paperwork along with all course assignments
ASAP	Mentor Training due	Sent to site supervisor/mentors via email - Upload form from site supervisor/mentor into TK20
ASAP	Access to Certify Teacher	Information regarding access to Certify Teacher will be shared at the beginning of the semester
1/20/2026	Class Zoom	6:00 PM Zoom meeting
2/1/2026	Child Protection Training Module Due	Upload certification in D2L
2/8/2026	1 st Observation Due	Observation 1 will be completed by this date.
2/28/2026	1 st Observation Forms due	Formal and Informal Observation 1 Forms and Reflection due in TK20 and D2L
3/1/2026	FIE 1 Due	FIE 1 due in Dropbox in D2L
3/15/2026	2 nd Observation Due	Observation 2 will be completed by this date.
3/31/2026	2 nd Observation Forms due	Formal and Informal Observation 2 Forms and Reflection due in TK20 and D2L
4/12/2026	3 rd Observation Due	Observation 3 will be completed by this date.
4/26/2026	FIE 2 Due	FIE 2 due in Dropbox in D2L
4/30/2026	3 rd Observation Forms due	Formal and Informal Observation 3 Forms and Reflection due in TK20 and D2L
5/8/2026	Time Log Due	All hours due in TK20 – must be approved by supervisor
5/8/2026	Practice Exam Scores due	Passing Practice Exam score report screenshot due in D2L
5/8/2026	Practicum Evaluation Due	Mentor must complete the evaluation in TK20- will be sent via email

Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Appendix A: Standards/Competencies/Assignment Alignment

[Educational Diagnostician Standards](#)

Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment
Explain the evaluation process.	Competency I, 001 TAC 239.83 Standard VII	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam

Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment
Understand ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities of a diagnostician.	Competency II, 002, 007 TAC 239.83 Standard VII	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam, Educator and Student Expectations
Critically examine collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies, and related service personnel.	Competency III, 006 TAC 239.83 Standard VI	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam, Educator and Student Expectations
Understand student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.	Competency IV, 002, 004, 005 TAC 239.83 Standard I	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam
Know eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.	Competency V, 001, 002, 007, 008 TAC 239.83 Standard I	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam
Select, administer, and interpret appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.	Competency VI, 002, 007 TAC 239.83 Standard II, III, VIII	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam
Examine of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.	Competency VII, 001,002,003, 004,005,006 TAC 239.83 Standard II, III	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam Educator and Student Expectations
Know skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.	Competency VIII, 006 TAC 239.83 Standard II, III	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam
Synthesize students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.	Competency IX, 002, 005 TAC 239.83 Standard IV	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam
Knows appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.	Competency X, 004, 005 TAC 239.83 Standard IV	Practicum Experiences Assessments, Practice Exam

Appendix B: Standards/Competencies

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.

Educational Diagnostician Examination Framework