



Course Syllabus: Ethics and Practice Standards in SPED
West College of Education and Professional Studies
SPED 6963 Section X40
Summer 2025

Contact Information

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Instructor Response Policy

I will respond to emails within 24 hours unless it is the weekend or holiday. If you send an email during the weekend or holiday, I will respond no later than the first business day after the weekend or holiday.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Howe, K. R., Boelé, A. L., & Miramontes, O. B. (2018). The ethics of special education. Teachers College Press.

Course Description

This course provides a foundation for candidates who are going to assume leadership positions in the field of special education, with an emphasis on the organization and structure of special education programs, policy analysis, and the role of the special education administrator. Includes current legal issues and trends and independent study in an area of interest.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies The Standards covered in this class are from the SBEC TExES Overview and Exam Framework for Educational Diagnosticians (253).

(b)Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education.

(1) The educational diagnostician knows and understands:

(A) state and federal regulations relevant to the role of the educational

diagnostician;

(B) laws and legal issues related to the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs;

(C) models, theories, and philosophies that provide the basis for special education evaluations;

(D) issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement in the least restrictive environment within a continuum of services; and

(E) rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, and teachers and other professionals in relation to individual learning needs.

(c) Standard II. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities.

(1) The educational diagnostician knows and understands:

(A) ethical practices regarding procedural safeguards (e.g., confidentiality issues, informed consent) for individuals with disabilities;

(B) ethical practices related to assessment and evaluation;

(C) qualifications necessary to administer and interpret various instruments and procedures; and

(D) organizations and publications relevant to the field of educational diagnosis.

(e) Standard IV. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.

(1) The educational diagnostician knows and understands:

(A) the characteristics, needs, and rights of individual students in relation to assessment and evaluation for placement in the least restrictive environment within a continuum of services.

See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies and Appendix B for assignment/standards alignment matrix

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

Assignments	Points
Discussion – Introduce Yourself	5

Assignments	Points
Weekly Assignments (4@75 points each)	300
Weekly Quizzes (5 @ 20 points each)	100
Ethics Dilemma Project	100
Professional Development Project	100
Final Exam	100
Total Points	705

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	635-705
B	564-634
C	494-563
D	423-493
F	Less than 422

Course Schedule

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 7/7 -7/13	1. Discussion Board - Introduce Yourself 2. Weekly Quiz - Chapter 2 3. Weekly Assignment - Code of Ethics Comparison	7/13
Week 2 7/14-7/20	1. Weekly Quiz - Chapter 3 2. Weekly Assignment - Discussion - Personal Code of Ethics	7/20
Week 3 7/21-7/27	1. Weekly Quiz - Chapter 4 2. Weekly Assignment - Case 4	7/27
Week 4 7/28-8/3	1. Weekly Quiz - Chapter 5 2. Weekly Quiz - Chapter 6 3. Weekly Assignment - Case 7 4. Professional Development Project	8/3
Week 5 8/4-8/7 (Short Week!)	1. Ethics Interview (due 8/6) 2. Final Exam (due 8/7)	8/6 8/7

Ethical Dilemma Project

Students will explicitly delve into an ethical dilemma by considering the possibilities, challenges, and consequences of various potential decisions. They should draw from their assigned readings as well as independent research that they may do to investigate issues of which they need to learn more. This activity aims to help students think about how to approach ethical issues, so they are prepared to address them in their careers as special educators/diagnosticians.

Professional Development Project

The candidate must select a topic pertinent to their area of study (Learning Disability, Emotional disturbance, Dyslexia, Low-Incidence disability, Autism, parent advocacy, etc.) They are then to create 1-1.5 hour training complete with PowerPoint (max 20 slides), training notes (approx. 1/2-3/4 page per slide), and clear evidence of the research literature (10 articles) used to create the training, citing all sources. In addition to delivering professional development, the candidates are to solicit written feedback from peers. (In other words, present this to one or two peers as if you were presenting and get their feedback.) Finally, the candidate will develop a brief professional development plan based on this information, self-assessment with relevant standards, and entire experience.

Weekly Assignment

Each week you will have a weekly assignment which is outlined in D2L. Complete assignments as specified.

Weekly Quizzes

You will take a True/False quiz for each book chapter for a total of 5 quizzes worth 20 points each.

Mid-Term Exam

There will be no midterm in this course.

Final Exam

You will take a True/False final exam for this course.

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be given in this course.

Late Work

Late will only be accepted in extreme circumstances (death in the immediate 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: Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: June 23, 2025

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" July 23, 2025.

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. Students must login to the D2L site for this class at least 2 times each week. Although it is not required, attendance for live zoom meeting is highly recommended. If you are not able to attend the live zoom meeting, it will be recorded for you to view later. Lecture notes for all lectures, live or recorded, are required.

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

This is an online class, so inclement weather will not alter 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 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](#).

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.

References/Scientifically-Based Research/Additional Readings:

American Psychological Association, APA Task Force on Psychological Assessment and Evaluation Guidelines. (2020). APA Guidelines for Psychological Assessment and Evaluation. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/guidelines-psychological-assessmentevaluation.pdf>

Eriksen, J. L., & Cormier, D. C. (2024). Considering ethical obligations to overcome stagnant psychological report-writing practices. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 55(4), 336–344. American Psychological Association.

Kathrin E. Maki, John H. Kranzler & Jessica M. Wheeler (2022): Ethical Dilemmas in School Psychology: Which Dilemmas Are Most Prevalent Today and How Well Prepared Are School Psychologists to Face Them?, School Psychology Review, DOI: 10.1080/2372966X.2022.2125338

Appendix A: Standards/Competencies/Assignment Alignment

Standard	NTASC	Assess/Assignment
b) Standard I. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education.	Standard #1: Learner Development Standard #2: Learning Differences Instructional Practice Standard #6: Assessment Standard #7: Planning for Instruction Standard #8: Instructional Strategies	Case Reviews, Quizzes, Readings, Ethical Dilemma Project, Weekly Assignments
(c) Standard II. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities.	Professional Responsibility Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration	Case Reviews, Quizzes, Readings, Ethical Dilemma Project, Weekly Assignments

Standard	NTASC	Assess/Assignment
(e) Standard IV. The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making. (A) the characteristics, needs, and rights of individual students in relation to assessment and evaluation for placement in the LRE	Standard #3: Learning Environments Standard 4: Content Knowledge Standard 5: Application of Content	Professional Development Project, Readings, Weekly Assignments

Appendix B: Instrument: Professional Development Project Rubric

SPED Prof Dev Project Criteria	Accomplished 4	Expected 3	Developing 2	Below 1
SPED Competency 004 (Academic Instruction and Strategies): <i>Apply knowledge of educational implications of disabilities, appropriate curricula, and instructional strategies, including accommodations, modifications, and interventions, for students with disabilities.</i> CEC.APS.2, 3, 4	The candidate's presentation and topic: a. relates to current relevant need b. contains a rationale on why this topic is important for specific disability c. sourced adequately in both research AND practice d. includes a statement on how this training will improve practice AND presentation contains all current evidence-based practice including: a. strategies and curriculum materials AND b. links to access resources AND demonstrates a clear understanding of accommodations and modifications with examples that: a. differentiate modifications from accommodations AND	The candidate's presentation and topic contain only 3 of the 4 following: 1. relates to current relevant need 2. a rationale on why this topic is important for specific disability 3. sourced adequately in both research AND practice 4. a statement on how this training will improve practice AND presentation contains all current evidence-based practice including: a. strategies OR curriculum materials AND b. links to access resources AND demonstrates a clear understanding of accommodations and modifications with examples that:	The candidate's presentation and topic contain only 2 of the 4 following: 1. relates to current relevant need 2. a rationale on why this topic is important for specific disability 3. sourced adequately in both research AND practice 4. a statement on how this training will improve practice HOWEVER, presentation contains some practices that do not have sufficient evidence of effectiveness OR is missing links to resources AND demonstrates some superficial understanding of accommodations and modifications with NO distinction	The candidate's presentation and topic contain only 1 of the following: 1. relates to current relevant need 2. a rationale on why this topic is important for specific disability 3. sourced adequately in both research AND practice 4. a statement on how this training will improve practice HOWEVER, presentation does not contain current practices, no links OR does not make a distinction between accommodations and modifications OR <4 types of accommodations OR any misinformation

SPED Prof Dev Project Criteria	Accomplished 4	Expected 3	Developing 2	Below 1
	b. include the 4 types of accommodations	a. differentiate modifications from accommodations OR b. include the 4 types of accommodations	OR <4 types of accommodations	
SPED Competency 006 (Consultation and Collaboration): <i>Understand strategies and approaches for effective consultation and development of collaborative relationships with students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and other professionals and apply skills for scheduling and management of timelines and reporting requirements.</i> CEC.APS.4, 6, 7 CAEP A.1.1.4	The candidate's presentation demonstrates ALL of the following: a. knowledge of responsive consultation and collaboration b. understanding of the special education process c. knowledge of the roles of people in school d. knowledge of encouraging participation e. principles of record keeping f. knowledge of legal timelines	The candidate's presentation demonstrates 5 of the following: a. knowledge of responsive consultation and collaboration b. understanding of the special education process c. knowledge of the roles of people in school d. knowledge of encouraging participation e. principles of record keeping f. knowledge of legal timelines	The candidate's presentation demonstrates 3 of the following: a. knowledge of responsive consultation and collaboration b. understanding of the special education process c. knowledge of the roles of people in school d. knowledge of encouraging participation e. principles of record keeping f. knowledge of legal timelines	The candidate's presentation does not demonstrate: a. knowledge of responsive consultation and collaboration b. understanding of the special education process c. knowledge of the roles of people in school d. knowledge of encouraging participation e. principles of record keeping f. knowledge of legal timelines
SPED Competency 007 (Legal and Ethical Practice): <i>Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.</i> CEC.APS.3, 5, 6	The candidate's research project demonstrates ALL of the following: a. knowledge of models and theories b. knowledge of state and federal laws c. knowledge of due process rights d. knowledge of ARD guidelines e. knowledge of all individual rights and responsibilities f. ethical practice g. assessment instrument qualifications h. knowledge of relevant organizations	The candidate's research project demonstrates 6 of the following: a. knowledge of models and theories b. knowledge of state and federal laws c. knowledge of due process rights d. knowledge of ARD guidelines e. knowledge of all individual rights and responsibilities f. ethical practice g. assessment instrument qualifications h. knowledge of relevant organizations	The candidate's research project demonstrates 4 of the following: 1. knowledge of models and theories 2. knowledge of state and federal laws 3. knowledge of due process rights 4. knowledge of ARD guidelines 5. knowledge of all individual rights and responsibilities 6. ethical practice 7. assessment instrument qualifications 8. knowledge of relevant organizations	The candidate's research project does not demonstrate: a. knowledge of models and theories b. knowledge of state and federal laws c. knowledge of due process rights d. knowledge of ARD guidelines e. knowledge of all individual rights and responsibilities f. ethical practice g. assessment instrument qualifications h. knowledge of relevant organizations

