



Course Syllabus: Exceptional Individuals
College of Education and Professional Studies
SPED 5013 Section X10
Fall 2025 Aug 25-Dec 13

Contact Information

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ZOOM for Class <https://msutexas-edu.zoom.us/j/4982114111>

Instructor Response Policy

I am usually very prompt in my communication, if I do not respond in 24 hours, send a gentle reminder. I will return emails on the weekend by the following Monday.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education (15th Edition; 2023); Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen.

Course Description

Etiology, characteristics of and concepts related to exceptional individuals

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies (if applicable) 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Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the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](#)

Artificial Intelligence

Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) have now provided generative and creative applications such as Chat GPT, Google Bard, Guru, Microsoft Copilot, and others. Certainly, these tools can be quite useful in the learning process; however, the content they generate does not represent the effort and learning of the student. **Submitting AI generated work in place of the original and genuine work of the student will be considered a form of academic misconduct.**

Grading/Assessment

Table 1: Assignments

Assignments	Points
Midterm	50
Final Exam	50
Research Review 6 total	150
Lecture Notes (5 Recorded Lectures)	50

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	270-300
B	240-269
C	210-239
D	180-210
F	Less than 180

Note: All assignments must be completed, if even one assignment is missing, you have not meet the class requirements and will receive and "F"

Homework

All work will be submitted in proper Drop Box on D2L

Exams

The midterm and final exams will each cost 50 points. They will cover all the information in the textbook and lectures. They will be multiple-choice, short-answer, and brief essays (these will be provided before the exam).

Projects Required

Six research reviews will be required in this course. Detailed instructions are in Appendix C

Lecture Discussion Board

There will be four lectures (and possibly articles) that will need to be listened to and discussed. For your discussion, you must a) thoughtfully respond to the content with something that you can relate to, something that was interesting, or add some additional insight and b) respond to at least one thoughtful post of your peers.

Late Work

Please adhere to due dates. If you are struggling with time management, please communicate with the professor.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: Aug 28 [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: Sep 22

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" Nov 24 [Academic Calendar](#).

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 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](#).

Instructor Class Policies

Assignments must be submitted via D2l and use a word document or PDF

Inclement Weather

This class will continue in the case of campus closure due to inclement weather. If inclement weather interferes with your technology or technology access just communicate with me and we adjust.

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.

Course Schedule

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
8/25	Study Text,	N/A
9/1	Study Text, Research Review 1	N/A
9/8	Study Text	N/A Lecture 1 Notes due (9/8)
9/15	Study Text, Research Review 2	N/A
9/22	Study Text, Research Review 3	
9/29	Study Text, Research Review 4	Research review 1-3 due 9/29 Lecture 2 Notes due (9/29)
10/6	Midterm Exam Covers Chap 1-7	N/A
10/13	Study Text, Research Review 5	N/A
10/20	Study text	N/A Lecture 3 Notes due 10/20
10/27	Study Text, Research Review 6	N/A
11/3	Study text	N/A
11/10	Study Text, Research	N/A Lecture 4 Notes due 11/10
11/17	Study Text, Research	N/A Research Review
11/24	Study Text,	(4-6 due 11/17)
12/1	Study Text.	NA Lecture 5 Notes due 12/1
12/8	Study Text.	Final Available

References/Scientific-Based Research/Additional Readings:

Schultz, E.K., & Simpson, C. G. (2013). Factors influencing teacher behavior with students with diverse learning and behavioral needs. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*, Spring/Summer 2013.

Schultz, E.K., Stephens, T.L., & Olvera, P. (2024). Intellectual Development and the Core-Selective Evaluation Process: Gaining Insight and Understanding of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities. *Contemporary School Psychology*, Spring.doi.org/10.1007/s40688-024-00499-3

Schultz, E.K., Smith, E., & Zamora-Robles (2023). Evaluating Emergent Bilinguals for Specific Learning Disabilities: Considering Second Language Development and Culture, the editors of the *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals* (JAASEP) would like to congratulate you on the acceptance of your article for our Fall 2024 edition.

Schultz, E.K., Ramirez, K., & Stephens, T.L. (2023). Differentiating speech language impairment and specific learning disability: Implications for comprehensive evaluations. *The DiaLog: Journal of the Texas Educational Diagnosticians' Association*, 52, (1), 12-17.

Stephens, T.L., Gardner, R.L., Schultz, E.K., Holman, S.B., Moon, G., & Rueter J. (2023) The state of the special education referral and assessment process. *The DiaLog: Journal of the Texas Educational Diagnosticians' Association*, Spring.

Stephens, T.L., Olvera, P., Schultz, E.K., & Gardner, R.L. (2022) Conducting a targeted SLD assessment using the core-selective evaluation process (CSEP): Implications for assessing English learners. *Contemporary School Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-022-00443-3>

Appendix A

The Standards covered in this class are from the SBEC TExES Overview and Exam Framework for Educational Diagnosticians (253).

Table Domain I—Identification and Assessment

Competency 001—(Identification for Special Education Evaluation and Services): Apply knowledge of requirements for identifying students who meet disability criteria and for determining the need for specially designed instruction and related services.

Standard	Assignment/Activity	Assessment
Demonstrate knowledge of federal and state criteria and identification procedures for determining students' eligibility for special education services, including all components of Child Find mandate requirements.	Text Book Lecture	Midterm/Final
Apply knowledge of risk factors, characteristics of disabilities, and other indications that a student may have a need for specially designed instruction and related services.	Text book Research reviews Lecture	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper Lecture notes
Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships between assessment and evaluation, goals and objectives, and services for students with disabilities.	Text book Research reviews Lecture	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper Lecture notes

Table Domain II—Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

Competency 004—(Academic Instruction and Strategies): Apply knowledge of educational implications of disabilities, appropriate curricula, and instructional strategies, including accommodations, modifications, and interventions, for students with disabilities.

Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.	Text book Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper
Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based instruction and curricula for the development of individual students' academic skills within the continuum of services in the least restrictive environment (LRE).	Text book Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper
Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities within the continuum of services.	Text book Research reviews	Midterm/Final Research Synthesis paper
Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.	Text book	Midterm/Final

Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.	Text book	Midterm/Final
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Table Domain III—Professional Responsibilities

Competency 006—(Consultation and Collaboration): 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.

Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills (e.g., knowledge of family systems, parents/guardians supporting student development and educational progress).	Text book	Midterm/Final
Apply understanding of the special education process to assist parents/guardians and school staff in navigating through initial referral, Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, reevaluations, transition planning, and dismissal and/or graduation.	Text book	Midterm/Final
Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.	Text book	Midterm/Final

Appendix B

WCOE Standards (InTASC):

The outcomes for graduates of professional programs are based upon knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the following 10 elements:

The Learner and Learning

Standard #1: Learner Development

Standard #2: Learning Differences

Standard #3: Learning Environments

Content Knowledge

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

Standard #5: Application of Content

Instructional Practice

Standard #6: Assessment

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

Professional Responsibility

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice Standard

#10: Leadership and Collaboration

https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_2011.pdf

Appendix C

Research Reviews and Synthesis Instructions

This assignment requires you to a) access peer-reviewed research from the MSU databases, b) critically analyze the contents, and c) apply what you have learned to your current or future role. Students from several different areas of study are enrolled in this class, so you must apply the research from the topics below to your field. For example, an educational diagnostician would apply the research to assessment, a dyslexia therapist would apply the research to dyslexia, and school counselors would apply the research to counseling.

Topics are and do them in this order: 1) Autism, 2) Intellectual Disabilities, 3) Emotional Disability (search using the word "Emotional Disturbance" in general, 4) MTSS/RTI and Learning Disabilities, 5) Disability and the Family, 6) Co-teach/Inclusion (pro and cons)

For **each** topic listed, you must:

1. Find four relevant peer-reviewed research articles no more than 20 years old, preferably 10 years or less.
2. Using APA format, properly cite the articles you selected.
3. After reading the research, prepare a 2- to 3 page synthesis of what you found. In other words, take the four articles and synthesize the findings (synthesize means "combine a number of things into a coherent whole").
4. After the synthesis, write a succinct paragraph on how you will use this information now and/or in the future.
5. You **must** use the format in these instructions to get credit and use **headings** in the outline.
6. You must submit multiple reviews on ONE document (see syllabus). You will lose credit if you submit multiple reviews separately.

You will be graded on:

1. Proper APA citation

5 Points	2 Points	1 point
All articles are cited correctly	2 of 3 articles are cited correctly	Less than 2 are cited correctly

2. Synthesis

5-4	3-2	1-0
Combine elements of all 4 articles with a coherent theme. Not simply a description of each article	Combine elements of all 4 articles with some coherence.	A description of each article

3. Application

5-4	3-2	1-0
Applies information to present and/or future thoroughly and thoughtfully.	Applies information to present and/or future but application is superficial at times	Superficial application void of analysis.

4 Writing

5-4	3-2	1-0
Adheres to APA, paragraphs use "economy of expression" and have depth.	Paragraphs are "wordy", some APA mistakes.	Too wordy, poor grammar, sentence structure, lacks paragraph breaks, etc.

Score is X/20.

Format. Use these headings to organize your paper.

Worked Cited:

Synthesis:

Application:

Other information:

1. For APA help

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html#

2. No cover page required

3. Mimic the style you read in the research articles