



Course Syllabus: Special Graduate Topics in Special Education
Gorden T. & Ellen West College of Education and Professional Studies
SPED 6953 Section x20
Spring 26 Jan 20-May 9

Contact Information

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Instructor Response Policy

Please allow 24 hours for a response during the week (M-F). I will answer emails from the weekend on Mondays. I prefer D2I email, but you may use my MSU email as well. I am usually very prompt in my reply, so if I do not respond within 24 hours, please resend

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Johnson, E.S. & Clohessy, A.B.. (2014) Identification and evaluation of learning disabilities. Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Course Description

Group investigation of emerging issues in special education. May be repeated with the consent of the coordinator

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

The standards and competencies addressed in this course are drawn from the **Texas Educational Diagnostician Preparation Manual**, which is itself based on the **State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) standards codified in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 239, Subchapter C**. These state rules define the knowledge and skills required for candidates seeking the **Educational Diagnostician certificate** and form the basis for the **TExES Educational Diagnostician (253) examination framework** (see *SBEC TAC Chapter 239, Subchapter C* at <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/laws-and-rules/sbec-rules-tac/sbec-tac-currently-in-effect/ch239c.pdf>). The competencies covered in this course are aligned directly to those domains and elements, encompassing culturally responsive evaluation, assessment selection and interpretation, instructional decision making, collaboration

with families and professionals, and data-based analysis and recommendations. By aligning to these standards and competencies, this course ensures that instruction reflects current state expectations for professional practice and prepares candidates for both certification and effective practice as educational diagnosticians in Texas

Educational Diagnostician Standards and Competencies Addressed

Domain I: Identification and Assessment

- **Competency 001(C):** 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.
- **Competency 001(D):** Demonstrate knowledge of issues related to the identification of and the overrepresentation and underrepresentation in special education of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations.
- **Competency 002(D):** Demonstrate the ability to choose relevant and appropriate assessments based on the technical quality of the instruments, referral concerns, data needed to make decisions, and individual student characteristics, including ethnic, cultural, linguistic, age, or socioeconomic factors, and demonstrate knowledge of how to ensure fairness and equity in assessment results.
- **Competency 002(E):** Apply knowledge of targeted individualized assessment strategies to inform instruction, including authentic assessment, curriculum-based assessment, progress monitoring, teacher observations, and student feedback.
- **Competency 002(I):** Apply knowledge of procedures and strategies for effectively collaborating with families and with other professionals in assessing and evaluating students with disabilities.

Domain II: Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

- **Competency 004(A):** Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
- **Competency 004(B):** 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.
- **Competency 004(C):** Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities.
- **Competency 004(D):** Apply knowledge of making individualized recommendations to assist the Admission, Review, and Dismissal committee in developing appropriate and ambitious Individualized Education Programs that target students' individual academic needs and goals.
- **Competency 004(F):** Analyze individual results of assessments, evidence-based practices, interventions, and previous recommendations to assist with making decisions about individualized instruction for students.

Domain III: Professional Responsibilities

- **Competency 006(A):** Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills, including knowledge of family systems and supporting student development and educational progress.
- **Competency 006(B):** Apply understanding of the special education process to assist parents and school staff in navigating initial referral, Individualized Education Program development, reevaluations, transition planning, and dismissal or graduation.
- **Competency 006(C):** Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs.

Domain IV: Analysis and Response

- **Competency 008(A):** Analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative assessment data to identify student strengths and needs, including the presence or absence of a disability.
- **Competency 008(B):** Synthesize data to generate evidence-based instructional or intervention recommendations.
- **Competency 008(C):** Describe how instructional or intervention recommendations are implemented and progress monitored.

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: Points allocated to each assignment

| Assignments | Points |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Module 1: EB Activities | 100 |
| Module 2: Textbook Activities | 100 |
| Module 3: Instructional Matching | 100 |

| Assignments | Points |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Module 4: SLD identification (CSEP) | 100 |
| Module 5: ADHD and Speech Language | 100 |
| Lecture Notes (4 at 25 points) | 100 |
| Research Paper | 100 |
| Total | 700 |

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

| Grade | Points |
|--------------|---------------|
| A | 630-700 |
| B | 560-629 |
| C | 490-559 |
| D | 420-489 |
| F | Less than 420 |

Assignments

All assignments will be submitted using the Dropbox feature of D2L. All work must be submitted either in Word or Adobe.

Quizzes

No quizzes unless embedded in Module

Exams

No Exams.

Projects Required

1. You will have Five Modules to complete this semester. Each will have video instructions and written instructions.
2. We have 4 scheduled Zoom lectures. They will be recorded for those who cannot make it. You must submit a two-page summary of the lecture (even if you are there) to get credit.
3. One 5-page paper (not counting the reference section) using the university databases. You can select a relevant topic appropriate for an evaluator. You should select a topic that you want to know more about. Examples could be Dyslexia Identification, Autism and Reading disabilities, Best practice in assessing adaptive behavior, etc.)

Late/Missing Work

Please adhere to due dates, and communicate with the instructor if you are unable to meet deadlines. **If ANY assignment is not completed, then you will receive an "F" for the course.**

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: Jan 23 [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: February 16 [Academic Calendar](#).

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 29th Check date on [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

There are no "attendance" requirements, but you should log in regularly to D2L for updates.

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 AI Class Policies

Students may use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT or similar technologies) as support for brainstorming ideas, organizing thoughts, clarifying concepts, or revising language. However, all submitted work must represent the student's own original thinking, understanding, and voice. AI tools may not be used to generate entire assignments, analyses, or responses submitted for credit, nor may they be used to bypass the learning process. Students are responsible for ensuring the accuracy, originality, and academic integrity of their work.

When AI tools are used, students must clearly disclose how the tool was used (e.g., idea generation, outlining, grammar review, or clarification of concepts). Failure to appropriately disclose AI use or using AI in a manner inconsistent with these guidelines may be considered a violation of academic honesty policies.

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 of: | Activity | Due date |
|----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1/20 | Module 1 | NA |
| 1/26 | Module 1 and paper | NA |
| 2/2 | Module and paper | Lecture Notes one due |
| 2/9 | Module and paper | NA |
| 2/16 | Module 2 | Module 1 due 2/16 |
| 2/23 | Module and paper | Lecture Notes 2 due |
| 3/2 | Module and paper | NA |
| 3/9 | Module 3 | Module 2 Due 3/9 |
| 3/16 | Module 3 | NA |
| 3/23 | Module and paper | NA |
| 3/30 | Module 4 | Module 3 Due 3/30 |
| 4/6 | Module and paper | NA |
| 4/13 | Module 5 | Module 4 due 4/13 |
| 4/20 | Module and paper | NA |
| 4/27 | Module and paper | Module 5 due 4/27 |
| 5/4 | Paper | Paper due 5/6 |

References/Scientific-Based Research/Additional Readings:

Schultz, E.K., Smith, E., & Zamora-Robles (2024). Evaluating Emergent Bilinguals for Specific Learning Disabilities: Considering Second Language Development and Culture. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals (JAASEP)* Fall 2024.

Sattler, J.M, Shaw, S.R., Schultz, E.K., D'Intino, J., Daou, K.A., & Cousineau-Perusse, M. (2024). *Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Assessment of Children, Cognitive Foundations*, 7th Edition, La Mesa: CA; Sattler Publishing.

Schultz, E.K., Stephens, T., & Winters, J. (2024). Failure to Meet State Standards in Basic Reading or Reading Fluency: Are All These Students Dyslexic? Accepted for Fall publication

Stephens, T.L., Schultz, E.K., (2024). *Core-Selective Evaluation Process: Overview and Procedures* 2nd edition; Dragonfly Press.

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., 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>

Schultz, E.K., & Stephens, T.L. (2021). Core-Selective Evaluation Process (CSEP): From Conceptualization to Contemporary Practice. Authors' Perspective and Updates. Dragonfly Publishing, available <https://www.csep.online/documents.html>.

Schultz, E.K, & Rutherford, E., (2021) Review of the book Psychoeducational Assessment and Report Writing, 2nd edition, by Dombrowski, S. *The DiaLog: Journal of the Texas Educational Diagnosticians' Association*, Fall.

Schultz, E.K., Rutherford, E., & Cavitt, D., (2021). Intellectual Development and Specific Learning Disability: The Role of Norm-Referenced Tests. *Special Education Research, Policy & Practice*, Fall 2021.

Stephens-Pisecco, T.L., Schultz, E.K., (2019). Core-Selective Evaluation Process: Overview and Procedures; Dragonfly Press.

Schultz, E.K., & Stephens-Pisecco, T.L. (2019). Exposing educational propaganda: A response to Benson et al. (2018) "Critique" of C-SEP. *The Dialog*, 48, 1.

Appendix A: Standards/Competencies/Assignments

| Assignment/Module/ Course Activities | Standard or Competency |
|---|---|
| EB Module Lecture Notes | <p>Domain I: Identification and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 001(C): 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. • Competency 001(D): Demonstrate knowledge of issues related to the identification of and the overrepresentation and underrepresentation in special education of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. • Competency 002(D): Demonstrate the ability to choose relevant and appropriate assessments based on the technical quality of the instruments, referral concerns, data needed to make decisions, and individual student characteristics, including ethnic, cultural, linguistic, age, or socioeconomic factors, and demonstrate knowledge of how to ensure fairness and equity in assessment results. • Competency 002(I): Apply knowledge of procedures and strategies for effectively collaborating with families and with other professionals in assessing and evaluating students with disabilities. <p>Domain III: Professional Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 006(A): Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills, including knowledge of family systems and supporting student development and educational progress. |

| Assignment/Module/ Course Activities | Standard or Competency |
|---|--|
| Module: Book Activities Module: SLD Identification Lecture Notes | <p>Domain II: Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 004(A): Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations. • Competency 004(B): 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. • Competency 004(C): Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities. • Competency 004(D): Apply knowledge of making individualized recommendations to assist the Admission, Review, and Dismissal committee in developing appropriate and ambitious Individualized Education Programs that target students' individual academic needs and goals. • Competency 004(F): Analyze individual results of assessments, evidence-based practices, interventions, and previous recommendations to assist with making decisions about individualized instruction for students. <p>Domain III: Professional Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 006(B): Apply understanding of the special education process to assist parents and school staff in navigating through initial referral, IEP development, reevaluations, transition planning, and dismissal or graduation. • Competency 006(C): Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs. |

| Assignment/Module/ Course Activities | Standard or Competency |
|--|---|
| Module: Book Activities Lecture Notes | <p>Domain I: Identification and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 002(E): Apply knowledge of targeted individualized assessment strategies to inform instruction, including progress monitoring and data-based decision making. <p>Domain IV: Analysis and Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 008(A): Analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative assessment data to identify student strengths and needs. • Competency 008(B): Synthesize data to generate evidence-based instructional or intervention recommendations. • Competency 008(C): Describe how instructional recommendations are implemented and progress monitored. |

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| Module 5: Language and ADHD Lecture Notes | <p><u><i>Domain II: Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 004(A): Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations. • Competency 004(B): 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. <hr/> <p><u><i>Domain I: Identification and Assessment</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency 001(C): 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. • Competency 002(E): Apply knowledge of targeted individualized assessment strategies to inform instruction, including authentic assessment, curriculum-based assessment, progress monitoring, teacher observations, and student feedback. |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|---|
| | <div><div><u>Domain IV: Analysis and Response</u></div><div>-</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competency 008(A): Analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative assessment data to identify student strengths and needs.</div></div> |
|--|---|