EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES  
EP 820  
Westminster College

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Exceptional lives: Special education in today's schools. (7th ed.)
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall

Virtual Office Hours:  Monday, 3:00-4:00;  Wednesday; 3:00-4:00

Rationale:

The purpose of the course is to develop skills for recognizing and effectively teaching students with various exceptionalities. Collaboration and inclusion are emphasized. Broad areas to be covered in this course are areas of exceptionality, major trends and issues in special education with emphases on collaboration and inclusion, service delivery models, roles of general and special class teachers, role of the principal as an instructional leader, individual education programs, family and community involvement.

Exceptional Children and Individual Differences will address the following standards for Pennsylvania Principal certification:

IB (1,5)The role of the principal as an instructional leader who focuses on teaching and learning including: teaching skills, differentiated instruction and inclusionary practices.

Assignments: Respond to Discussion board questions relative to school leadership

Interview of school administrator
IC (1) Over representation of diverse students in Special Education

Assignments: Create a timeline of IDEA and Chapter 14 Regulations

IC (2) Prevention and Early Intervention

Assignments:
Class discussion.

IC (3) Effective instructional strategies for students with disabilities in Inclusive Settings

Assignments: Response to Discussion questions

Research paper

Disability specific presentation

IEP

ID (1,2,3) Historical and contemporary issues in school law and the legal responsibilities of school administration including: special education, due process, LRE, student medication, discipline, suspension and expulsion, record keeping, assessment data, and privacy.

Assignments: Create a timeline of IDEA

IEP assignment

IF (1,4, 5) The proactive role of the principal in school/community relations including understanding roles of parents, promoting parenting participation, and understanding human behavior.

Assignments:

Research paper

Disability specific presentation

Interview of Student, Parent, and Teacher

Response to Discussion Questions

IID The professional education program provides evidence that School Principal Certification candidates demonstrate their knowledge of and competence in applying the fundamental concepts of current research and best practices.

Assignments: Research paper

Disability specific presentation
Video critique

III (A, B, D) The professional education program evidences that each certification candidate demonstrates knowledge and competencies that foster professionalism and ethical practices in school/community settings.

Assignments: Research paper
Disability specific presentation
Chapter summaries
Class discussions

Course objectives:

The student will:

- Explain the roles of legislation and litigation in the education of students with exceptionalities.
- Identify the impact of special education and general education reforms on students with exceptionalities.
- Discuss classifications of students with exceptionalities and the nature and impact of exceptional conditions on the individual.
- Describe social, cognitive, locomotor, physical, adjustive, emotional, communicative, and intellectual behavior of children with exceptionalities at different age levels.
- Describe the characteristics, etiology, and prevalence of specific exceptionalities.
- Discuss the relationship of home, school, and community environmental conditions to the behavior and outlook of students with exceptionalities.
- Explain the roles of inclusion and collaboration for students with exceptionalities.
- Incorporate the six values for people with exceptionalities into teaching.
- Identify the role of the principal with regard for special education, due process, least restrictive environment, student medication, and discipline.

Disability Policy

Students who desire some form of accommodation for a diagnosed learning disability or physical problem must inform their instructors at the beginning of each semester (within two weeks) as to the nature of the disability and type of accommodation requested. If the disability or physical problem is diagnosed during the semester, students should inform their instructors immediately of the problem and accommodations needed. Student with disabilities should also inform the Disabilities Coordinator in the Office of Student Affairs, who is available to assist in evaluating the disability and to facilitate communication between the College and the student in considering special accommodations. The type of
accommodation provided will depend on the needs of the student, the circumstances of the student’s classes, and the resources of the College. Because of limited resources, final determination of whether an accommodation can be provided will be at the discretion of the College.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism, cheating and class disruptiveness is not permitted. Students should be intimately familiar with Westminster College's Academic Integrity Policy. The Westminster Policy provides a detailed description of those behaviors which are not permitted, the procedures that will be followed in every case of violation of the policy and the consequences of violating the policy. Students are also required to follow the Pennsylvania Code for Professional Practice and Conduct. Failure to access and to become familiar with either code are not justifiable excuses.

Cheating on exams or assignments, plagiarism, or class disruptiveness may result in penalties ranging from an “F” on an assignment or the course to expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the offense. Unless specifically described, all assignments are to be done individually and not in groups.

**Required Assignments:**

1. Due to the interactive nature of many of the in-class assignments, students are expected to have read the chapters to be discussed before class so that they may fully participate in the activities. **Discussion Questions** will be posted each week. Students will make one original post and two substantive replies to peers. Discussion posts are due by midnight on Tuesday and replies/responses are due by midnight on Thursday of that week. *(40 points)*

2. **Research Paper** (50 points) **Due Week Eight.** The project will consist of a professional report on the latest theory and research available pertaining to the human development topic (that has been approved by the instructor) of your choice relating to your current teaching situation or future interests in education. Paper specifications:
   1. At least 6 pages (no more than 10, double-spaced of text.)
   2. Supporting materials (tables, graphs, pictures, etc.) of the paper are to be placed in appendices and are not counted as the body of the paper.
   3. Use current APA style 5th edition (Style Manuals are available in the bookstore. Helpful website: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
   4. Use level headings where appropriate
   5. At least 6 references must be used and cited properly in the body of the paper, and properly noted in the Reference section of the paper.
3. **Multimedia Presentation** – create a multi-media presentation about the content of your research paper. (15 points). **Due week eight.**

4. **Glog** - (10 points) Create a glog about the six core values of IDEA **Due week one.**

5. **Video Critique** (10 points). Watch at least 3-4 videos on the subject of autism from [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) or [www.teachertube.com](http://www.teachertube.com). Determine which one provides the learner with the best and most accurate information and justify your selection in a one page paper. **Due week five.**

6. **Two Brochures** –One brochure for Learning Disabilities **(due week two)** and a second brochure for Hearing Loss **(due week six)** (10 points each)

7. **Review of an IEP and an IFSP** (10 points) You will be given an annotated IEP and an annotated IFSP and compare both. **Due week two.**

8. **Read a book or watch a video about an individual with intellectual disabilities.** Write a one page paper comparing how the individual was portrayed compared to information in the text. (15 points) **Due week four.**

9. **Quizzes** – two 10 point quizzes – multiple choice questions

10. **Compare and contract enrichment vs. acceleration** (10 points) **Due week seven.**

11. **Major principles for working with families** (10 points). Create a word document that outlines the major principles for working with families.

**Grading Criteria:**

Grading will be based upon a point system. Total points possible will be 200. Grades will be determined in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>186-200</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>180-185</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>172-179</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>168-171</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>160-167</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>152-159</td>
<td>76%</td>
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Expectations

1. **Professionalism** – You are expected to adhere to the netiquette policy as outlined in the News.

2. **Integrity in your assignments** – All written assignments are expected to demonstrate graduate level work with the correct use of grammar, writing mechanics, spelling and proper format. All assignments are due at the beginning of class and considered late thereafter. Late assignments will lose 10% the first week and 20% the second week. No late assignments will be accepted after two weeks.

   - **Note:** The contents and requirements of this syllabus are subject to change at the professor's discretion

**Course Outline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chap.</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Week One** | Overview of Today’s Special Education – IDEA/RTI                      | 1 & 2 | Read Chapters  
Create a Glog addressing the six values of IDEA  
Respond to Discussion Questions |
|          | Ensuring Progress in the General Curriculum: Universal Design and Inclusion |       |                                                                           |
|          | Role of the principal as an instructional leader                       |       |                                                                           |
| **Week Two** | Today’s Families and Their Partnerships with Professionals         | 4 & 5 | Read Chapters  
Create a brochure for Learning Disabilities  
Respond to Discussion Questions |
|          | Understanding students with Learning Disabilities  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)  
How we suppress genius and create learning disability: Scott Sonnon at TEDXBellingham - TEDxtalks |       |                                                                           |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Discussion Questions</th>
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| Week Three | Understanding students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders  
Discussion of *I Am a Heart Attack* by Licia Morelli  
Understanding Students with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)  
ADHD AS a Difference in Cognition, Not a Disorder: Stephen Tonti at TEDxCMU-Stephen Tonti | 7 & 8 Read Chapters  
Read *I Am a Heart Attack* by Licia Morelli  
Respond to Discussion Questions  
| Week Four  | Understanding Students with Intellectual Disability  
Understanding Students with Multiple Disabilities  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)  
A Day in the Life of a Special Education Teacher- Neil Rubino | 9 & 10 Read Chapters  
Quiz #1  
Respond to Discussion Questions  
[https://youtu.be/tcWtAmVB9-0](https://youtu.be/tcWtAmVB9-0) | |
| Week Five  | Understanding Students with Autism  
Understanding Students with Physical Disabilities and other Health Impairments  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)  
Physical Disabilities – Hope Menges | 11 & 12 Read Chapters  
Autism Video Critique Due  
Respond to Discussion Questions  
[https://youtu.be/L_y99AsKJVk](https://youtu.be/L_y99AsKJVk) | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read Chapters</th>
<th>Respond to Discussion Questions</th>
<th>Quiz #2</th>
<th>Presentations and Research Paper due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week Six</td>
<td>Understanding Students with Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
<td>13 &amp; 14</td>
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<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a> Understanding Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding Students with Hearing Loss</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a> Hearing Loss in the Class</td>
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<td>Assistive Technology for Visual Impairments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Seven</td>
<td>Understanding Students With Visual Impairments</td>
<td>15 &amp; 16</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a> Assistive Technology for Visual Impairments</td>
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<td>Understanding Students Who are Gifted and Talented</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a> TED talk – Gifted, creative and highly sensitive children/Heidi Hass Gable/TEDxLangleyED</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Eight</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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Grading rubric for the APA style research paper

(50 points possible)

Content:

1. Identification of issues (15)

2. Organization of ideas (6)

3. Clarity of thought (7)

APA format:

4. Running head (1)

5. Title page (1)

6. Title on first page of text (1)

7. Level headings (1)

8. Citations in body of text (2)

9. Quotations (2)

10. References (3)

11. Appendix/Other materials (1)

Mechanics:

12. Pagination (1)

13. Margins (1)
14. Grammar (3)

15. Spelling (3)

16. Punctuation (2)

**TOTAL**
VIDEO CRITIQUE

(20 points)

Watch a minimum of three videos from www.youtube.com or www.teachertube.com on Autism and determine which one provides the learner with the best and most accurate information. Provide the website along with a justification for your selection (one page). Your justification should include:

Use the following format:

1. Why was this video best?
2. Explain whether individuals with cultural differences and/or exceptionalities were portrayed realistically, stereotypically, or as superhumans.
3. Accuracy of the content
4. Why do you think people would have more or less positive attitudes about persons with exceptionalities or cultural differences after viewing this film?
5. What did you learn about individuals with exceptionalities or cultural differences from watching the film?

Rubric for film critique

Each of the five components will be evaluated according to these guidelines:

4 = Exemplary
3 = Above Average
2 = Average
1 = Below Average
0 = Unacceptable