

SPECIAL EDUCATION (SPED)

SPED-5515 Characteristics and Identification of Disabilities and the Law (3 semester hours)

The focus of this course will be on the defining characteristics of disability classifications in common use in the schools (learning disabilities, cognitive issues such as mental retardation and traumatic brain injury, autism, emotional disorders, and physical disabilities/other health impaired), including discussion of subtypes within disability groupings that have been suggested by research, educational, or clinical practice. Definition of exceptionality and incidence rates and how they vary by state or urban/ suburban/rural area will be considered. Historical perspective will be given regarding major national education laws, including IDEA and the most recent reauthorization. Discussion will center on how these laws have been interpreted and how this impacts the service provision in the schools, both for students who receive accommodations (504 Plans) and for those who receive services from a variety of school professionals. The special education referral process will be studied, delineating how and when either a 504 Plan or an Individual Education Plan might be established. Also, state-level legislation that has influenced identification and placement will also be discussed. Ethical and legal issues related to issues such as confidentiality or the reporting of suspected abuse will also be considered.

SPED-5520 Cognitive Development and Disabilities (2 semester hours)

This course will address research and theories related to typical cognitive development and learning and disorders associated with the cognitive processes, ranging from constructivist research to information processing and brain imaging. A historical perspective will also be provided. Additionally, contrasts will be drawn between the impact on various types of processing strengths and weaknesses, such as auditory or other sensory processing and memory (both working memory and long term memory), and how they might impact learning and behavior, as well as remedial efforts for differing disabilities, such as learning disabilities, mental retardation or acquired disorders (traumatic brain injury). Task analyses focusing on receptive/expressive (input/output), visual/auditory, and verbal/nonverbal aspects of cognitive tasks will be undertaken for students ranging from primary to high school. The development of more metacognitive tasks, such the ability to monitor behavior, actively solve problems, and use study skills, will also be discussed, particularly for the middle and high school years.

SPED-5530 Oral Language Development and Disorders (3 semester hours)

The normal course of oral and nonverbal language development will be contrasted with atypical development, with a focus on the P-12 period. Aspects of language development and techniques for treatment will cover issues related to phonological awareness, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics; additionally, consideration will be given to how the impact of these aspects of language changes through the middle and high school years, both in the school and the community. Further study of the utility and practice of standardized tests specific to oral language development will be undertaken. Additionally, candidates will learn to conduct informal language analyses of school-aged (P-12) students in order to identify oral language weaknesses. Remedial techniques and potential accommodations, based on identified difficulties, will be an additional focus. Specific focus will be given to communication intervention for some cognitive disorders, such as autism, including alternative and augmentative communication. The use of sign language and second language acquisition, and how diagnosis and service provision can overlap, will also be discussed. Finally, software technology in common use will be learned, with requirements to integrate the use of software and other interventions into lesson plans.

Prerequisite(s): SPED-5515, Current TB test.

SPED-5540 Diversity and Disability Issues: Students, Families, Schools and the Community (2 semester hours)

The focus of this course will be on how various social institutions, particularly the school and family, may define disability and how this may impact collaboration and communication in regard to service provision in special education. Research regarding how identification and service delivery, as well as the student's learning, may be impacted by issues of diversity, including disability, ethnicity/culture, socioeconomic level, language/linguistics/dialects, and gender, will be studied. The potential for bias during assessment and/or instruction and the potential impact on learning will be investigated. Moreover, how these issues are reflected in family systems and identity and how differences might lead to misconceptions or misunderstandings will be discussed. Finally, how strategies to support identity formation and retention can be incorporated into lesson plans or classroom activities will be addressed.

SPED-5555 Prosocial Skills and Challenging Behaviors (3 semester hours)

This course will span the teaching of both prosocial and challenging behaviors. Moreover, it will cover both the current theories of social-emotional development and the disorders for the school-aged years and adolescence, with some discussion of life-span issues. Focus will be placed on identification/assessment and intervention of social deficits as they impact the schools. Discussion will focus on developing prosocial behavior, thereby facilitating involvement in the least restrictive environment, and how intervention may be adjusted based on needs of students with varying disabilities. Social behavior will be viewed broadly, ranging from the individual's self-perceptions such as self-esteem and self-determination, to his or her ability to engage socially not only in the school but in the family and community. Particular focus will be placed on time-management and self-advocacy for the middle and high school years. Moreover, research regarding the impact on behavior of preconceptions held by teachers and others regarding the students will be studied. Finally, medical, psychological, or related service interventions will be discussed and how the schools collaborate with these professional groups. The second half of the course will focus on behavioral interventions for more challenging behaviors and how issues may change from the elementary to high school years. Environmental modifications, techniques of non-aversive behavioral control and methods to maintain attention, and effective reinforcement techniques will be taught. Techniques such as problem-solving, crisis prevention, and conflict resolution, also potentially used to develop prosocial behavior, will be discussed in relation to more significant behavior problems, including issues such as self-stimulation and self-abuse. Issues related to the law and the range of service provision both inside and outside the school, such as residential placements, will be discussed in relation to challenging behaviors.

SPED-5565 Strategies and Assistive Technology for Students With Low Incidence and Multiple Disabilities (3 semester hours)

This course will focus on intervention techniques, adaptations and assistive technology for students with more severe disabilities. This will include but may not be limited to: mental retardation, traumatic brain injury, orthopedic impairments, other health impaired and autism. Functional adaption of curriculum will be addressed as well as resources available in the community. Study will span the needs of students in relation to life skills, recreation/leisure, community, and career/vocational issues and how to develop appropriate goals and objectives and implement them effectively to meet those needs.

SPED-5570 Trends: Collaboration, Differentiating Instruction in the Inclusive Classroom, and Transition (3 semester hours)

Remedial theories and modes of intervention for the preschool to postsecondary years will be investigated, ranging from individual to small group to inclusion classroom settings. An overview of how remedial efforts in oral language, reading, writing, mathematics, nonverbal and social issues might interrelate will be delineated. Current trends in service provision will be explored, such as response to intervention models. The role of the special educator as a facilitator for differentiating curriculum and providing accommodations in the regular education classroom will be highlighted, as well as co-planning and co-teaching models. Moreover, transition services and how they might be impacted by differing needs dependent upon disability will be an additional focus. Local and state resources that pertain to issues of employment, sexuality, independent living and learning, and social participation in leisure activities will be explored, particularly for the middle and high school student. Special educators' varying roles, from addressing family concerns and advocacy to supervision of para-educators, will be discussed. Candidates will be exposed to professional organizations in the field and will develop a professional development plan and a personal philosophy of special education. The necessity for consultation, collaboration and flexibility of services will permeate all discussion of theory and models.

SPED-5615 Psychoeducational Assessment of Students with Disabilities (3 semester hours)

The procedures for formal assessment of the issues underlying learning, academic performance, psychosocial behavior, and vocational skills for the P-12 grades will be examined. Issues related to cognitive development, in regards to intelligence or processing (e.g., memory, speed of processing), and testing will be discussed. Nonbiased assessment practices and modification or adaptations for mode of response will be addressed. Candidates will practice administration, scoring, and interpretation of the results of standardized tests in common use in the schools. Case studies will be used to understand the process of differential diagnosis, including interviews, functional assessment of behavior, and assessment of the learning environment; and oral and written dissemination of results that include planning for instruction based on interpreted results. Moreover, curriculum-based assessment and portfolio assessment will be investigated. Readings will focus on research of the possible limitations of formal and informal testing – that is, the relative efficacy of the differing diagnostic approaches, including response to intervention, and how they might facilitate service provision.

SPED-5640 Mathematics and Science Intervention for Students With Disabilities (3 semester hours)

The development of mathematical and science knowledge and reasoning will be studied in conjunction with disorders of these domains. Candidates will learn to assess and remediate weaknesses in both physical, biological, and social sciences and mathematics, including the use of manipulatives and software technology. Strategy instruction as applied to the sciences will be a focus for middle and high school levels, as well as common accommodations. The development of lesson plans to deal with difficulties that may be encountered in topics such as estimation, mental mathematics, measurement, algebra, geometry, patterns and problem-solving in mathematics; the inquiry process, experimentation and safety in science; and integration and interrelatedness of areas within the social sciences will be covered. For all domains, the importance of utilizing authentic activities that take into account issues of diversity and facilitate the student integrating academic skills to the spheres of family, community, vocation, and recreation will be stressed.

Prerequisite(s): SPED-5515; SPED-5615.

SPED-5810-9 Selected Topics in Special Education (Variable semester hours)

This course will address a specific area of study in Special Education not already covered by other course offerings. Prerequisites vary by topic.

SPED-6501/EDU-6501 Assessment of Diverse Learners: Special Education and ESL (4 semester hours)

Participants will examine the assessment issues that affect ELLs and students with special needs. Candidates will review the types of assessments used to identify, place, and reclassify ELLs and students in special education programs. Candidates will learn to evaluate assessments as a means of generating educational recommendations for an IEP or other academic assessment measures.

SPED-6515 Characteristics and Identification of Disabilities and the Law for Diverse Populations (3 semester hours)

The focus of this course will be on the defining characteristics of disability classifications in common use in the schools including subtypes within disability groupings that have been suggested by research, educational, or clinical practice. Concepts of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), and the value of educating all students in the public schools will be addressed.

SPED-6520 Reading Disabilities Theory and Intervention (3 semester hours)

The focus of this course will be on the theoretical models of reading development and disorders and how these theories have impacted the definition of the causes, diagnosis and treatment of reading disorders. Normal development of pre-reading and reading skills will be contrasted with atypical development. Research regarding how reading achievement relates to decoding and phonological awareness; word recognition; vocabulary; comprehension; fluency; self-monitoring; and instruction/service provision (individual, small group and whole-class programs) will be studied, with practice of intervention techniques. For the middle and high school years, techniques effective for various domain areas will be stressed, as well as how accommodations in relation to reading can be integrated into the student's curriculum. In addition, the course will include further training on the standardized tests and software technology interventions specific to reading, as well as the performance of informal measures such as running records and informal reading inventories, with a focus on error analysis, interpretation and communication of results to students, families and colleagues.

SPED-6525 Cognitive Development and Disabilities of Diverse Learners (3 semester hours)

Addresses research and theories related to typical cognitive development and learning and disorders associated with the cognitive processes. Ranging from constructivist research to information processing and brain imaging. Contrasts will be drawn between the impact on various types of processing strengths and weaknesses, such as auditory or other sensory processing and memory functions. The development of more metacognitive tasks will also be discussed, particularly for the middle and high school years.

SPED-6530 Written Language Development and Disorders (3 semester hours)

This course will study theories and research regarding the development and disorders of written language, including handwriting, spelling, and written discourse, from emergent literacy to strategies for research and essay forms used more extensively in middle/high school. The range of impact, dependent on disability, will be investigated, both in regard to academic, social, and vocational pursuits. Formal and informal assessments to elicit and analyze written language samples will be learned and practiced, as well as lesson plans using remedial techniques and software technology commonly in use for varying disabilities, ranging from learning disabilities to physical disorders impacting the physical act of writing.

Prerequisite(s): SPED-5515.

SPED-6545/EDU-6545 Collaboration, Differentiation, Instruction, and Transition for Diverse Learners (3 semester hours)

Remedial theories and models of intervention for the preschool to postsecondary years will be investigated, ranging from individual to small group to inclusion classroom settings. Current trends in service provision will be explored, such as response to intervention, multi-tiered support system, and PBIS models. Transition services and how they are structured based on student needs, as impacted by the qualifying disability will be an additional area of focus. Candidates will be exposed to resources to develop a professional plan and personal philosophy of working with students with ESL and/or special education needs.

SPED-6550 Introduction to Educational Research (2 semester hours)

Candidates will receive an overview of qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. The course will encompass the efficacy of use of basic statistical methods, including correlation, testing of means, analysis of variance and regression. The focus will be on the in-depth understanding and evaluation of research from peer-evaluated journals of the field and in conducting more advanced action research.

SPED-6555 Prosocial and Problematic Behavior Strategies for Diverse Learners (3 semester hours)

This course will span the teaching of both prosocial and challenging behaviors. It will address the current theories of social-emotional development and the disorders for the school-aged years through adulthood. Focus will be placed on identification, assessment, and intervention of social deficits as they impact both students with social emotional disorders and the school community. Environmental modifications, techniques of non-aversive behavior control, methods to maintain attention, and effective reinforcement techniques will be explored.

SPED-6560 Unified Field Experience (3 semester hours)

While observation and clinical experience in previous courses are more dependent on the domain being studied, this course stresses the integration of theory and pedagogical methodology across domains based on the assessed needs of the individual student. Candidates will collaborate and work with the same students for extended periods of time, developing lesson plans and writing reports that incorporate informal assessments, goals/specific objectives, and progress after remedial efforts. Candidates will conduct conferences with parents to communicate progress/results. Approximately 50 hours of supervised clinical field experience will be required.

Prerequisite(s): Clinical background check; current TB test; SPED-5615; SPED-6520; SPED-6530.

SPED-6565 Strategies and Assistive Technology for Students with Multiple Disabilities and Diverse Learners (3 semester hours)

This course will focus on intervention techniques, adaptations, and assistive technology for students with more severe disabilities. Functional adaptation of curriculum will be addressed, as well as resources available in the community. Study will span the needs of students in relation to life skills and how to develop appropriate goals and objectives and implement them effectively to meet those needs.

SPED-6570 Internship and Action Research Seminar (4 semester hours)

Because candidates will come to the program with an existing licensure, the focus of this field experience will be to ensure the students' overall field experiences cover both the range/severity/age levels of all disabilities covered by the LBS I licensure. Candidates should expect the need to be flexible regarding hours, based on the needs of the schools. Placements will encompass the K-21 age range, affording candidates with experience in a range of ages. Candidates will capitalize on skills learned in earlier courses to conduct formal, informal and functional assessments. Based on this information, they will generate and implement lesson plans, establishing an effective learning climate for their students. Additionally, candidates must demonstrate the ability to collaborate with colleagues, para-educators (candidates should expect a supervisory role as well), other professionals within the school and community, and families to meet students' academic, social and life skill needs. Seminars will be spaced to afford candidates support in completing their comparative case study action research projects and to provide a forum for support, in addition to that provided by supervisors, during the internship process.

Prerequisite(s): SPED-6560 with a grade of "B" or better; completion of all master's courses required for special education LBS I licensure, maintaining a GPA of 3.0, and officially reported passing score on the pertinent Illinois licensure tests (Assessment of Professional Teaching K-12, Learning Behavior Specialist I [content area], and Special Education Curriculum Test), FBI fingerprints check, National Sex Offender list check, TB test, passing the DCFs-Mandated Reported Training.

SPED-6600 Supervisor of Programs for Children with Disabilities (3 semester hours)

Study of the theory and practice of leadership in special education within the larger organizational system. Develop an understanding of the responsibilities and potential challenges related to the organizational and administration, as well as balancing the fiscal and human resource structure, needed to run an effective special education program. Current research on best practices and service delivery models of special education for the individual student through analysis and assessment of program functioning more broadly is covered.

SPED-6670 Special Education Finance (3 semester hours)

This course will focus on financial management of special educational programs, taking the perspective of the student/family, the school, the district, the state and the country. Moreover, the course will provide an overview of how special education financial management fits into the larger financial needs of these same entities; this will allow the administrator to have perspective on how financial policy and sources of revenue affect all stakeholders. Themes will include the financial impact of federal and state mandates and laws such as Child Find, 504, Response to Intervention, and IDEA as well as how these impact more school-based issues such as extended school year, transportation, and categorical funding.

SPED-6680 School Leadership and the Law for Special Populations (3 semester hours)

This course blends the significant legal foundations for students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) which are instrumental to the development and implementation of Special Education and ELL programs, services, policies and practices. The legal foundations will be balanced with rich historical and philosophical perspectives. The influence of specific legislation, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 23 IL Section 226 of the Administrative Code and the Illinois School Code will be intertwined with the relevant case law. Candidates participate in a "Moot Court" simulation to demonstrate an understanding of the overall legal process impacting the decision making of the educational leader. There will be an emphasis on ethical responsibilities, the development of core values, and informed decision making related to education, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners.

SPED-6690 Current Research in Cross-Categorical Special Education Programming and Assessment (3 semester hours)

Current research on data-driven best practices and service delivery models of special education for the special education student through analysis and assessment of program functioning more broadly. Explores the professional development process to keep special education teachers apprised of new advances, utilizing adult learning theories and addressing identification, service delivery, and use of assistive technology for special education. This course stresses district-wide utilization of Response to Intervention and measurement of P-12 student learning with a particular focus on programming and assessment.

SPED-6750 Student Teaching in Special Education (8 semester hours)

The student teaching experience involves placement in a special education setting under the supervision of a certified teacher. Placements will encompass the K--21 age range, affording candidates with experience in a range of ages. Candidates will capitalize on skills learned in earlier courses to conduct formal, informal, and functional assessments. Based on this information, they will generate and implement lesson plans, establishing an effective learning climate for their students. Additionally, candidates must demonstrate the ability to collaborate with colleagues, para-educators (candidates should expect a supervisory role as well), other professionals within the school and community, and families to meet students' academic, social and life skill needs. In short, the candidate will learn to fill all roles and major functions expected of the special educator, with the benefit of supervision. Additionally, this will assure maximum exposure during the candidates' field experiences to the range/severity/age levels of all disabilities covered by the LBS I certification.

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the School of Education, a 3.0 or better GPA in special education courses, a grade of "B" or better in SPED-6560 Unified Field Experience, officially reported passing score on the pertinent Illinois certification tests (Assessment of Professional Teaching K-12, Learning Behavior Specialist I, and Special Education Curriculum Test), all special education coursework for the major, FBI fingerprints check, National Sex Offender list check, TB test, and passing grade on ISBE Child Abuse Reporting regulations.

Co/prerequisite(s): SPED-6760.

Additional fee required

SPED-6760 Seminar for Student Teaching in Special Education (2 semester hours)

Student teaching seminars will provide candidates with support in completing their comparative case study projects, with a focus on P-12 student learning. The objective will be for the candidate to learn to communicate student progress effectively through relaying effective teaching strategies and the modes of assessment that were used to demonstrate student achievement of goals. They will also provide a forum for support, in addition to that provided by supervisors, during the field experience process.

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the School of Education, a 3.0 or better GPA in special education courses, officially reported passing score on the pertinent Illinois certification tests (Assessment of Professional Teaching K-12, Learning Behavior Specialist I (content area), and Special Education Curriculum Test), all Special Education coursework for the major.

Co/prerequisite(s): SPED-6750.

SPED-6810-9 Selected Topics in Special Education (Variable semester hours)

This course will address a specific area of study in Special Education not already covered by other course offerings. Prerequisites vary by topic.