



Mount Saint Mary College

Division of Education
PSY 3401 Psychology of the Exceptional Learner
Fall 2019

Wednesdays, 4:00- 6:45 PM – Room: Hudson 104

Instructor: Andrea Tejedor, Ed. D.

Office Hours: By Appointment

Contact Information:

Office Location: Hudson Hall

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Weather: 845-569-3500 and eClass

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will focus on psychological characteristics of children and youth who deviate from the norm because of intellectual, physical, sensory, and emotional disabilities, in addition to the implications for educational programming. Fieldwork is required.

Prerequisites: A grade of C+ or better in PSY3010 or PSY 3230, or permission of instructor.

COURSE GOAL:

The goal of this course is to serve as an introduction to the field of special education. It is designed to give students an overview of the philosophy, pedagogy, and proper lexicon associated with current special education practices. This course intends to assist in the preparation of those individuals who will work with students who are at risk or who require an individual education plan (IEP) or Section 504 modifications. This course will emphasize an understanding of the implications that specific disabilities have for educational programming, daily living, and family dynamics.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., & Wehmeyer, M.L., Shogren, K.A. (2016). *Exceptional lives: Special education in today's schools* (8th ed.). New Jersey: Merrill. Electronic Version

STUDENT OUTCOMES:

Through readings, research, lectures, field participation, projects, and class discussions, you will:

- Identify the major components of federal and state law, including referral, eligibility procedures, due process, and parental involvement.
- Define current terminology in the field of special education.
- Demonstrate an understanding of current trends and issues in special education.
- Describe the continuum of services as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each.
- Define and discuss the characteristics of each disability as recognized by NYS.
- Discuss general methods and strategies for meeting the social and educational needs of students with various disabilities.

COURSE ALIGNMENT WITH CEC STANDARDS

This course addresses *Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Special Education Content Standards*:

Standard #	Standard Description
CC1K1	Models, theories, philosophies, and research methods forming the basis for spec.ed. practice.
CC1K2	Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management planning and implementation.
CC1K4	Rights and responsibilities of individuals with exceptional learning needs, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional needs.
GC1K1	Definitions and issues related to identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
GC1K8	Principles of normalization and concept of least restrictive environment.
CC2K2	Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities.
CC2K4	Family systems and the role of families in supporting development.
GC2K4	Psychological and socio-emotional characteristics of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC3K2	Impact of learner's academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
GC3S1	Relate levels of support to the needs of the individual.
CC4K1	Evidence-based practices validated for specific characteristics of learners and settings.
GC4K1	Sources of specialized materials, curricula, and resources for individuals with exceptional needs.
CC5K2	Basic classroom management theories and strategies for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
GC5K3	Methods for ensuring individual academic success in one-to-one, small group, and large-group settings.
CC7K1	Theories and research that form the basis of curriculum development and instructional practice.
CC7K3	National, state or provincial, and local curricula standards.
CC8K1	Basic terminology used in assessment.
CC8K5	National, state or provincial, and local accommodations and modifications.
GC8K4	Procedures for early identification of young children who may be at risk for exceptional learning needs.
CC9K2	Importance of the teacher serving as a model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Please Note: *Professional dispositions are included in the standards for teacher candidates. Professional dispositions are the attitudes and behaviors that are expected of teachers. In order to practice these dispositions, you are expected to be kind, thoughtful and respectful of each other and of the instructor. You are expected to refrain from texting during class and to turn off phones unless they are being used in class. You are expected to participate fully in class discussions and to be active listeners. You are expected to complete assignments conscientiously and on time. You are expected to ask thoughtful questions, and to be reflective and introspective. **We have high expectations for you as you will have for your students and in this class you will be the kind of student you want your future students to be.***

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES:

- Mini-lectures, discussions
- Readings
- Field work
- eClass forum responses, and online classes
- Videos
- In-class presentations
- Written assignments
- Simulations

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Course assignments are designed to facilitate mastery of the course objectives.

- 1. Text Readings & Classroom Discussions:** You are expected to read all assignments on time and *contribute to class discussions*. The class will be conducted as a combination of lecture, discussion, and small group activities; your participation in discussions is vital to your learning and to the class as a community of learners. *Please feel free to share newspaper, magazine or journal articles, or to identify URLs for videos or other Internet content related to course topics.*
- 2. Attendance & Class Sessions:** Content will be presented in class that will supplement the required text readings. We will be discussing a variety of issues and topics related to special education during each class and participating in many activities. Your attendance and participation is essential to gain the full benefit of this class.
- 3. Fieldwork:** You will observe and interact with one or more students referred for, or classified as having a disability recognized by NYS at an approved site for a total of ten (10) hours. You may select your own site or be placed by the instructor. The paperwork essential for your observations will be explained before you begin your fieldwork. You will complete a fieldwork report. (The length of the report should depend on what you incorporate in your findings. Suggested length: 5-7 pages.) Your paper will be submitted, twice, in the middle and the end of the semester. **Please maintain confidentiality; use pseudonyms. Do not include the names of the district, school, or any specific individuals:**

You must keep the Mount Saint Mary College Field Work Log Sheet for this assignment. Submit the original log sheet to the Office of Field Placements, be sure to keep a copy for your records, and submit a copy with your paper.

Your paper will include among other items:

- Description of one or two students with disabilities, including their motor-development, language skills, social skills, developmental growth, and behavior patterns.
- Description of the facility and the classroom(s) you visit.
- Reflections of your observations in relation to course content and your research. You must be explicit and thorough in your discussion, either support or refute what you have learned regarding educational approaches, modifications, classroom management approaches, and how the classified student's disabilities affect performance academically and socially.

4. **Book Reflection:**

Part I: Choose one book that has a main character with a disability. The age of the character should coincide with your certification area and with the children you are observing, if possible. (The Curriculum Library has a large selection of books for you to choose from.) As you read the book throughout the semester, relate the text to your experiences and course content, and post updates on our forum. Suggestions for posts include:

- A short summary of the section you are reading.
- A description of the disability of the character
- A description of the character
- A description to the family dynamics if appropriate
- Discussion of how you would adapt or modify your classroom environment and lessons to include the character
- Discussion of how the text may be used as a teaching tool

You cannot wait until the end of the semester to begin this assignment. You must choose a book and begin posting immediately.

5. **Journal Article Review:**

Choose a journal article from the list of articles on eClass. Write a focused review using the form provided. Be prepared to discuss the journal article in class.

6. **Choose one of the following assignments:**

- a. Choose an item from the curriculum library that supports the need of a special learner.
- b. Go to the Curriculum Library and MAKE a form of assistive technology or learning tool that can address a need presented by a special learner (academic, social, emotional or physical).

7. **Group Project:**

Each group will research a topic related to course content and will present their findings to the class in a *memorable* way. Technology and multi-sensory approaches should be used to bring the content to life and to engage the audience.

8. **Quizzes, Exams and Homework:**

There will be four quizzes during the semester based on the core concepts and ideas presented in class lectures, assigned chapters, readings, and discussions. Quiz items may come directly from the chapter readings, presentations, class activities, and handouts. Dates of quizzes will be announced in class. There will be a **cumulative final examination. It is essential to attend class, complete assignments and readings**

TASKSTREAM

This course requires the learner to have an activated TaskStream account. The Academic and Behavioral Support Plan Rubric is a Key Assessment in this course and will be uploaded by the learner into the TaskStream account. The final version must be uploaded prior to the last day of the term in order to pass this course.

Teacher Candidate Professional Dispositions Form:

Within TaskStream you will complete a self-report on your professional dispositions at the end of this course. In addition, your instructor will complete a faculty report on your professional dispositions as well. This should be completed during the last week of class. The Teacher Candidate Professional Dispositions form is required in order to pass this course.

Guidelines for Written Assignments:

All written work must be typed, in 10-12 point font, double-spaced with one-inch margins using a computer or word processor and must be in APA 6 format. You may purchase the manual in the bookstore or consult the MSMC library web site for general rules.

An APA tutorial is also posted on the eClass for this course.

Avoid Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is against MSMC policy. The MSMC official policy is stated in both the Catalog and the Student Handbook.

Grading Scale/Evaluation:

Course Assignments	Points
Assessments (including final)	300
Forums and online classes	300*
Fieldwork Project	300
Journal Article Review	30
Curriculum Library Project	50
Group Project	100
Extra Credit Project for December 6, 2019	75

Rubrics with self- evaluation completed must be attached to all assignments.

**Points may change depending on number of online experiences.*

Grading Scale/Evaluation:

The following scale will be used to convert a numerical grade into a letter grade:

A	95-100	C	73-76
A-	90-94.99	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	F	62 and below
C+	77-79		

Division of Education Policy Regarding Writing:

In grading any work submitted by a candidate, if the instructor identifies five or more errors in spelling (including apostrophes), grammar, and/or sentence construction, the instructor will discontinue reading that work and will return it to the candidate with a grade of zero. At the discretion of the instructor, the candidate may correct the document and resubmit it once. **In this case, the candidate may receive no more than the equivalent of 78% on the document, receiving a lower grade if otherwise warranted.** This grade will be final for the document. (This policy does not apply to work written in class, such as on a test.)

College Policies

The student is responsible for complying with all policies in the Student Handbook including the academic honesty policy.

College-Wide Policy on Academic Honesty

The mission of Mount Saint Mary College is concerned with "...the development of sound values, goals and commitments on the part of students. Equipping students to play responsible roles in society has been a consistent aim of our institution." Instances of academic dishonesty subvert the mission of the College and the experience students derive from it. These instances harm the offender as well as students who maintain academic honesty. The Mount community, therefore, commits itself to do all in its power to prevent such dishonesty and imposes impartial sanctions upon those who harm themselves, their fellow students and the College in this way.

Definitions:

Generally, academic dishonesty may be defined in the following ways:

- a. Cheating: using or attempting to use, giving or attempting to give, unauthorized materials, information, assistance or study aids in any academic exercise or evaluation (tests), unless the nature of the academic exercise legitimizes cooperative learning;
- b. Plagiarism: copying or imitating the language, ideas or thoughts of another person, and passing off the same as one's original work;
- c. Falsification: forgery, alteration or misuse of academic documents, records or forms.

For additional information, please go to the Student Handbook located on www.msmc.edu under *Student Life*.

Mount Student Support

Services for students with disabilities:

It is the policy of Mount Saint Mary College to accommodate students with disabilities in accordance with federal and state laws. If you, as a student with a disability, have difficulty accessing any part of the course materials or activities for this class, please notify the instructor immediately.

Accommodations for test-taking should be arranged in advance. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be determined. Please call the office at 845-569-3638, or email them at disabilityservices@msmc.edu, or access further information at http://msmc.edu/Student_Services/Students_with_Disabilities.

If you have met with the Disability Services Office and have been given an accommodation letter, please make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss the logistics and implementation of your accommodations.

Tutoring:

Free individualized and small group tutoring is available to all MSMC undergraduates in most major subject areas through the Office of Student Success. Drop-in tutoring only is available for some Natural Science and Nursing courses with no appointment necessary. A schedule for the drop-in tutoring is posted every semester on the [Tutoring Center](#) site.

The Writing Center also has tutoring. Make an appointment through: msmc.edu/writingcenter

Many students face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academics, social life, or emotional wellbeing. MSMC Counseling Services offers a variety of confidential services to help students through

difficult times including counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, and mental health screenings. Students can contact Counseling Services by phone at 845-569-3115 or email at counseling@msmc.edu. For more information about Counseling Services go their webpage at https://www.msmc.edu/Student_Services/Counseling.