



**University of North Texas
College of Education-Programs in Special Education
EDSP 3210 Educational Aspects of Exceptional Learners**

Instructor: Pamela Peak, PhD
Office Location: Matthews Hall 322H
Phone Number: 940-565-4192
Email: Pamela.Peak@UNT.edu

Course Description

Overview of the unique physical, cognitive and behavioral needs of exceptional learners. The teacher's role in identification and referral procedures and implementation of effective educational practices as required by federal and state law are examined.

Competency Goal Statements

Upon completion of this course students will:

1. Identify and describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education
2. Identify special education (disability) categories outlined by the federal government
3. Discuss the purpose and components of the multitiered systems of support (MTSS) framework
4. Identify components of individualized education plans (IEP) for students with special learning needs
5. Describe the characteristics of collaboration with other educators, paraprofessionals, families, and community partners to support exceptional learners
6. Describe how to best meet the needs of exceptional learners in our culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms
7. Examine and recognize different characteristics of students with varying disabilities (high incidence and low incidence)
8. Identify effective instructional practices for designing, differentiating, and delivering instruction
9. Examine universal design for learning and how to promote access to the general education curriculum for all learners

Class Materials and Attendance

Attendance:

This course is entirely online and asynchronous. Your attendance is directly tied to the amount of time you spend engaging with the course content. All of this is tracked through Canvas and can be seen by me, your instructor.

Lectures:

Asynchronous material in this course is linked for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. Class materials are the intellectual property of the university, the publisher, and/or the instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

Readings:

Teaching in Inclusive Classrooms Bryant-Sage Vantage Learning Platform, ISBN: 9781071913918
Additional required articles and readings will be made available on Canvas

Assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically using **Canvas** in a format approved by the instructor. **Most assignments are due on Sundays at 11:59 p.m.** unless otherwise noted.

Introduction Post

An initial introduction post is required for all students at the start of the semester to check on attendance of the course on Canvas.

Weekly Activities

We will be using the Sage Vantage Learning Platform (through your Canvas course) for our textbook, reading activities, video activities, and chapter quizzes. Please pay attention to when each component of the module is due as outlined via Canvas.

You will also have activities that coincide with each module. More details are provided on Canvas.

TEA Dyslexia Modules

All candidates completing an Educator Preparation Program (EPP), seeking initial certification in any certification class, must receive instruction in the detection and education of students with dyslexia as required in the Texas Education Code (see TEC §21.044(b)) and the Texas Administrative Code [reference 19 TAC §228.57(c)(2)]. The TEALearn dyslexia course meets the requirements and is a required component of this course. This is not a quick process and will take you multiple hours and days to complete so please plan accordingly! More information and links are provided on Canvas.

Interview Project

An interview project will be completed as a culminating project for this course. Further information will be provided on Canvas.

Assignments	Points
Introduction Post	10
Response to Intervention Activity	30
Paraprofessional Activity	50
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners Activity	50
Categories of Disabilities - High Incidence Activity	50
Categories of Disabilities Activity - Low Incidence	50
Dyslexia Modules (TEA Requirement)	200

Module Reading Activities	32
Module Video Activities	64
Chapter Quizzes	120
Interview Project	100
Total Points	756

90-100 percent = A

80-89.99 percent = B

70-70.99 percent = C

60-60.99 percent = D

59.99 percent and below = F

Submission Guidelines

Read assignment instructions carefully before starting and before submitting work to ensure accuracy and completeness. All assignments must be submitted through Canvas, and students are responsible for verifying that submissions post successfully. Statements such as “I thought I submitted it” or “my internet was not working” are not considered acceptable reasons for late work. If you anticipate computer or connectivity issues, please plan accordingly.

Assignment Deadlines, Submission Expectations, and Course Tokens:

The expectation is that assignments are submitted on time, as this supports both your progress in the course and timely instructor feedback. I also understand that unexpected situations may arise, and for this reason each student is provided with three course “tokens” that may be used for limited assignment extensions. See *Course Grading* in Canvas for complete details regarding assignment deadlines, submission expectations, and token procedures.

Turnaround Time:

I aim to return graded work to you within one week of the due date.

Grade Disputes:

You are required to wait 24 hours before contacting me to dispute a grade. Within that time, you will review the assignment details and reflect on the quality of the work you turned in. If you would still like to meet, email me to schedule a meeting (I cannot discuss grades over email or discuss a classmate’s grade). You should come to our meeting with specific examples demonstrating that you earned a higher grade than you received. You forfeit your right to a grade dispute if you miss your scheduled meeting. If you do not contact me to schedule a meeting within seven days of receiving your grade, you also forfeit your right to a grade dispute.

Extra Credit:

There are no extra credit assignments in this course.

Use of AI:

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) for assignment completion (beyond grammatical and spelling correction) **violates UNT’s Academic Integrity Policy**. Large language models such as Chat GPT rely on any information that is accessible on the internet. Certain niche subjects, autism intervention for example, are rife with conflicting and/or inaccurate information and AI will use all of it. You don’t know what you don’t know... so do the work and learn from research-based sources.

APA Guidelines:

Use APA 7th edition guidelines for all written assignments. Refer to the [APA Website](#) for APA format guidelines. In particular, it is expected that you know how to paraphrase and cite information appropriately to meet both APA guidelines and to avoid plagiarism.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING

It is important that all students evaluate the course through the Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) evaluation instrument when it is opened near the end of the semester.

OTHER RESOURCES

As part of the support system at UNT, here are some additional resources that are mostly FREE of charge. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at any time. Thank you.

Counseling Center: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-counseling>

UNT Well: <https://hps.unt.edu/rhs/untwell>

Food Pantry: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/food-pantry>

Substance Abuse Center: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/rise/programs/sure-program>

Student Health and Wellness Center: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>

Money Management Center: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-money-management-center>

Legal Services: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>

Career Center: <https://careercenter.unt.edu/>

EDSP 3210 Course Schedule

Week	Module	Topic	Assignments
Week 1 May 18 - 24	Module 1	Inclusive Teaching as Responsive Education	Reading Activities Video Activities
Week 2 May 25 – 31	Module 1	Inclusive Teaching as Responsive Education	Chapter Quiz
Week 3 June 1-7	Module 2	Delivery of Individualized Services to Students With Different Learning Needs	Reading Activities Video Activities Response to Intervention Activity Chapter Quiz
Week 4 June 8-14	Module 3	Developing Collaborative Partnerships in Schools and with Families	Reading Activities Video Activities Paraprofessional Activity Chapter Quiz
Week 5 June 15-21	Module 4	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners and Families and Gifted and Talented Learners	Reading Activities Video Activities Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners Activity Chapter Quiz
Week 6 June 22-28	Module 5	Understanding Learners With the Most Common Disabilities or Conditions	Reading Activities Video Activities Categories of Disabilities - High Incidence Activity Chapter Quiz

Week 7 June 29-July 5	Module 6	Understanding Learners With Less Common Disabilities or Conditions	Reading Activities Video Activities Categories of Disabilities Activity - Low Incidence Chapter Quiz
Week 8 July 6-12	Module 7	Designing and Delivering Differentiated Instruction	Reading Activities Video Activities TEA Dyslexia Modules Chapter Quiz
Week 9 July 13-19	Module 8	Promoting Access to the General Education Curriculum	Reading Activities Video Activities
Week 10 July 20-24	Module 8	Promoting Access to the General Education Curriculum	Chapter Quiz Interview Project (due Wednesday)

NOTE: This schedule is subject to change given unusual circumstances and professor discretion. Readings, assignments, discussion postings, and other course information is included on Canvas.

Texas Educator Preparation Standards - Special Education Specialist

Texas Education Administration Special Education Specialist (EC-6) Standards Met:

(a) Special Education Standards. The standards identified in this section are targeted for teachers of students who receive special education services. The standards address the discipline associated with the theory and practice of teaching students who receive special education services. The standards inform appropriate teaching techniques, methods, and teacher actions, judgments, and decisions by taking into consideration philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education, characteristics of students who receive special education services, understandings of the needs and strengths of students who receive special education services, and the backgrounds and interests of individual students.

(b) Legal and Ethical Guidelines. The Early Childhood-Grade 6 special education teacher demonstrates knowledge of all applicable state and federal laws, including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008; Texas Education Code specific to students with disabilities; Texas Administrative Code specific to students with disabilities; and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

(1) demonstrate knowledge of the major state and federal legislation (e.g., IDEA, Section 504, ADA, ADAAA) that has affected knowledge and practice of the education of individuals with high support needs;

(2) demonstrate knowledge of the history of exclusion of and discrimination against people with disabilities;

(3) demonstrate knowledge of IDEA 2004 eligibility categories;

(4) demonstrate knowledge of all required components of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as outlined in federal and state law;

(5) demonstrate knowledge of all sections of the special education legal folder and where to store required documentation;

(6) demonstrate knowledge of the legal responsibility of all school staff to fully implement an IEP;

(7) demonstrate knowledge of the legal responsibility of all teachers and school staff to protect the confidentiality and dignity of students with disabilities;

- (8) demonstrate knowledge of the special education teacher's roles and responsibilities regarding Child Find;
- (9) demonstrate knowledge of the special education teacher's roles and responsibilities in creating and implementing the IEP with fidelity, including monitoring student IEP goal progress, implementing data collection of IEP goal progress, and reporting progress to the student and parents/guardians throughout the IEP year;
- (12) select and develop resources to improve communication and collaboration with family and community;
- (13) demonstrate knowledge of the role and responsibilities of the special education teacher in preparing for an Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) committee meeting, including collecting required data, interpreting the results of progress monitoring and classroom assessment data, and visually representing and interpreting data to show student progress;
- (14) demonstrate knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the required members of an ARD committee;
- (15) demonstrate knowledge of the required components of a typical ARD committee meeting agenda;
- (18) apply knowledge of individuals served through special education as well as special education laws and policies to facilitate and advocate for families' full participation in the education of their students;
- (19) demonstrate understanding that students served through special education may also have other special populations identifiers (i.e., gifted and talented, English learners, highly mobile and at risk, dyslexia);
- (20) advocate for family and student participation in the IEP, ARD meetings, and transition plan;
- (24) demonstrate a foundational knowledge of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Texas Education Administration Special Education Specialist (6-12) Standards Met:

- (11) demonstrate knowledge of the state and federal requirements for transition planning beginning at the age of 14;
- (12) demonstrate knowledge of the special education teacher's roles and responsibilities regarding Child Find;
- (13) demonstrate knowledge of the special education teacher's roles and responsibilities in creating and implementing the IEP with fidelity, including monitoring student IEP goal progress, implementing data collection of IEP goal progress, and reporting progress to the student and parents/guardians throughout the IEP year;

(h) Professional Learning and Collaboration.

- (1) demonstrate knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Early Childhood-Grade 6 special education teacher and of other professionals who deliver special education services, including related and instructional service providers;
- (12) select and develop resources to improve communication and collaboration with family and community;

Texas Education Administration Special Education Specialist (6-12) Standards Met:

- (1) demonstrate knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Grades 6-12 special education teacher and of other professionals who deliver special education services;

Texas Administrative Code: 19 TAC §228.57

- (c)(9) instruction regarding students with disabilities, the use of proactive instructional planning techniques, and evidence-based inclusive instructional practices, as required under TEC §21.044(a-1)(1)-(3)