University of Pittsburgh

School of Education

Department of Instruction and Learning

**Course Syllabus**

**IL 1580/2500 Foundations of Special Education**

**Summer 2020**

**Instructor: Amy Srsic**

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Class Meetings:** Online

**Course Description:** This course covers information about human exceptionality and the principles and practices of special education.

**Method of Instruction:** PowerPoint presentations, textbook readings, supplementary readings/videos, small group and whole group discussion boards.

**Required Text:** Hardman, M.L., Drew, C.J., & Egan, M.W. (2016) Human Exceptionality: School Community and Family. (12th Edition), Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

**Course Objectives**

1. The student will acquire general knowledge about the background of special education.
2. The student will acquire general knowledge about legal/regulatory aspects of special education.
3. The student will acquire general knowledge about multicultural/diversity issues pertaining to special education.
4. The student will acquire general knowledge about special education and related services for individuals with disabilities at different chronological ages.
5. The student will acquire general knowledge about various types of disabilities, and appropriate special education and related services practices.
6. The student will acquire general knowledge about parent and family involvement in special education and related services programs.
7. The student will acquire general knowledge about teamwork in special education.
8. The student will acquire general knowledge about principles and practices of assessment, instruction, curriculum design and modification, and pupil evaluation in special education.

Note: The syllabus, course schedule and readings are subject to minor adjustments, as determined by the instructor. Please check CourseWeb on a regular basis.

**Course Requirements**

**Weekly requirements:**

1. Complete text readings and review PPTs, handouts, videos and any other resources posted on CourseWeb each week.
2. (a) Detail and post thoughts/ideas/commentary each week to discussion board

(b) Respond to thoughts/ideas/commentary posted by peers each week in discussion board

1. Complete participation activities
2. Complete 10 quizzes

**Long-term requirements:**

1. Complete 2 group case study projects.
2. Write 1 APA style research paper on an evidence-based practice in special education.
3. Present findings from the research paper via PowerPoint presentation uploaded to Discussion Board.

**Course Organization and Weekly Flow**

The course is organized into 12 modules that, for the most part, correspond to the chapters of the required text. All content will be shared through CourseWeb. Each week students will complete one module containing several tasks and activities that correspond to the course overview. Below is the typical sequence of events for each week:

* *By* ***Saturday*** *(noon)* – Instructor opens weekly folder and posts materials that discuss main points of chapter(s).
* *By* ***Wednesday*** *(midnight)* – Students post thoughts/ideas/commentary in discussion board related to the chapter.
* *By* ***Friday*** *(midnight)* – Students (1) respond to thoughts/ideas/commentary posted by peers in discussion board, (2) complete assigned activities, and(3)complete quiz.

**Submission Guidelines**

Assignments must be completed and submitted on the due date by midnight. Assignments should be submitted electronically via CourseWeb. Special circumstances will be considered if discussed with the instructor prior to the assignment being late. Late assignments will earn reduced point value unless arranged in advance with the instructor.

**Grading Policies**

Point values for course requirements will be distributed as follows:

12 Total Thoughts/Ideas/Commentary Posts and 24 Peer Responses *(3 points each)* 108 points

10 Quizzes *(5 points each)* 50 points

1 Practices Paper Draft 40 points

1 Practices Paper (Final) 40 points

1 Practices Paper Presentation 10 points

2 Case Studies *(10 points each)* 20 points

Participation *(complete all posted activities)*  15 points

**TOTAL:** **283 points**

**Point Distribution**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Percentage of Points Earned*** | ***Letter Grade*** | ***Level of Attainment*** | ***Grade Points*** |
| 94-100% | A | Superior | 4.00 |
| 90-93% | A- |  | 3.75 |
| 88-89% | B+ | Adequate | 3.25 |
| 83-87% | B |  | 3.00 |
| 80-82% | B- |  | 2.75 |
| 78-79% | C+ | Minimal | 2.25 |
| 73-77% | C |  | 2.00 |
| 70-72% | C- |  | 1.75 |
| <70% | F | Failure | 0.00 |

**Assignments**

* All assignments should be 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1” margins, double-spaced. Be sure your name is included on every document.
* APA style should be used for citations and references where appropriate.
* Assignments should be submitted electronically via CourseWeb using the designated tab by midnight of the scheduled due date.
* Please, upload your assignment (Word document or video post) and save the document as: **Last Name\_Assignment** (e.g., Srsic\_Practice Paper).

**Weekly Thoughts/Ideas/Commentary** **Discussion Board Posts with Peer Response**

Students are encouraged to take notes when reading and viewing assigned resources. Students will post thoughts/ideas/commentary (i.e., fact, opinion, concern, strategy, technique, helpful tip, personal experience, etc.) they learned from the week’s material in the corresponding Discussion Board thread. Posts should be thorough and should reference the resource(s) as appropriate. Posts are due on **Wednesdays by midnight** to allow time for peers to respond. You will then respond thoroughly and thoughtfully to **at least two** peer posts. Response posts are due on **Fridays by midnight.** See rubric for details on how responses will be scored.

**Quizzes**

The purpose of the quizzes is to check students’ understanding of “big ideas” related to the topic areas. Quizzes will consist of true/false, multiple choice, matching items, and short answer. Quiz content will be drawn from text chapters, PPTs, supplemental readings and videos. There will be 10 quizzes given throughout the semester, which will be posted in the weekly module. Quizzes are due **Fridays by midnight.**

**Practice Paper**

Students are required to review literature in order to write a paper relative to a specific topic. Multiple students may be assigned the same topic so that students can engage in meaningful and collaborative discussion surrounding one topic. However, each student is responsible to write and submit his or her own paper. Students must respond with a description/analysis supported by current sources from related professional journals, not including the class text. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, formatted according to APA style (see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition, 2009). Papers must have a minimum of 8 pages, but not more than 10 pages in length. This page limit does not include the title page, references, rubric, or any appendices. **Undergraduate** students must use a minimum of **6** professional references. **Graduate** students must use a minimum of **8** professional references. The purpose of the paper is to engage students in analytical thinking about the linkage between a particular educational practice and its use with students with certain exceptionalities. There will be one paper assigned during the semester. Students are to submit a draft of the paper. See the course overview for draft and final paper due dates. See rubric for details on how papers will be scored.

**Practice Paper Presentations**

Students are required to present their paper topic. You will do this by creating a PowerPoint presentation and uploading it to Discussion Board. The PowerPoint must introduce and describe the topic, share the current literature, review the synthesis of the information, report on drawn conclusions, and discuss the importance to the field of education. The purpose of presentations is to share specific findings with others as well as engage in the presentation of academic information. Students with the same topic may select 1 of 3 options when preparing/delivering presentations.

* *Option 1*: If location permits, work as a group in face-to-face meetings to create the final presentation.
* *Option 2*: Work as a group via online meetings to create and put together the final presentation.
* *Option 3*: Prepare and deliver individual presentations.

In any situation, students sharing the same topic are encouraged to collaborate and share findings, presentation ideas, etc. Presentations must be created and uploaded to Discussion Board using PowerPoint or similar presentation software and should be 8-10 slides in length. See the course overview for the presentation due date. See rubric for details on how presentations will be scored.

**Case Study Reports**

Students are required to complete case study reports throughout the semester. Students will be assigned to a small group of 2-3 students. Each group will be given a total of two case studies to complete. Case studies will be completed via individualized Discussion Board threads on CourseWeb designated for each case study. Members of the group will collaborate in a discussion of each case study and prepare and submit one report for each case study. All members of the group are expected to participate in the development of the case study report by posting comments, ideas, answers, resources, etc. Once the all group members have finished contributing to the discussion, one or more group members will take responsibility for entering the group’s response to the case study questions by answering the specific questions in order. One suggestion is to rotate the responsibility for compiling the information (i.e., Sam and Kim are working together. Sam compiles case study report 1 and Kim compiles case study 2 report). This person is then to submit their group’s final report via CourseWeb. The purpose of the case study report is to engage in analytical thinking by applying knowledge learned in class to real situations and scenarios. It also helps the learner solidify the course’s big ideas and key concepts. See the course overview for due dates. See rubric for details on how case study reports will be scored. You can upload both your notes and final submission within your Discussion Board thread

**Participation**

Throughout the semester, ungraded activities will be posted in the weekly modules. These activities are intended to be quick, informal “check-ins” to make sure students understand and can apply important concepts covered. Completion of the activities will be monitored and students will receive points for completing each activity. See rubric for details on how students will be held accountable for “participating” in these activities.

**Brief Course Overview** *(See Detailed Overview for specific readings, handouts, tasks, activities, and additional assignments).*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic**  Text Chapter(s) | **Major Assignment Due by Friday @ Midnight** |
| 1 | 5/4 – 5/8 | **Introduction to Exceptionality**  Chapter 1 |  |
| 2 | 5/11 – 5/15 | **Laws and Regulations**  Chapter 2 | *Quiz 1* |
| 3 | 5/18 – 5/22 | **Begin research/reading for Practice Paper Draft** |  |
| 4 | 5/25 – 5/29 | **Begin writing Practice Paper Draft** |  |
| 5 | 6/1 – 6/5 | **Inclusion/Collaboration/Early Intervention**  Chapter 3 | *Quiz 2* |
| 6 | 6/8 – 6/12 | **Transition to Adult Life**  Chapter 4 | **Case Study Report #1**  *Quiz 3* |
| 7 | 6/15 – 6/19 | **Diversity/Parents and Families**  Chapter 5 and 6 | *Quiz 4* |
| 8 | 6/22 – 6/26 | **Learning Disabilities**  Chapter 7 | **Practices Paper Draft** |
| 9 | 6/29 – 7/3 | **Emotional and Behavior Disorders/ADHD**  Chapters 8 and 14 (ADHD Only) | *Quiz 5* |
| 10 | 7/6 – 7/10 | **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**  Chapter 9 | **Case Study Report #2**  *Quiz 6* |
| 11 | 7/13 – 7/17 | **Communication and Autism Spectrum Disorders**  Chapters 10 and 11 | *Quiz 7* |
| 12 | 7/20 – 7/24 | **Severe and Multiple Disabilities**  Chapter 12 | **Final Practices Paper**  *Quiz 8* |
| 13 | 7/27 – 7/31 | **Sensory Disabilities**  Chapter 13 | **Practices Paper Presentation**  *Quiz 9* |
| 14 | 8/3 – 8/7 | **Physical Disabilities and Other Health Disorders/Gifted Education**  Chapters 14 and 15 | *Quiz 10* |

*\*The instructor reserves the right to change the schedule, assignments, and content at any time.*

**General Class Policies**

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in all interactions with faculty and peers. In this course, the expected professional behaviors are outlined below. Points may be deducted from your final grade due to unprofessional behavior.

* Academic Integrity
  + Academic integrity is essential to the success of all students in higher education. Please refer to the University’s code of student obligations: <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/aistudcode1.html>. As a faculty, we take this issue very seriously and will not tolerate violations.
* Participation
  + You are expected to actively participate in all online course discussions and activities. This helps you better learn the material and it helps your instructor gain better insight into your learning. You are expected to complete all required readings according to the timeline delineated in the course syllabus. If you do not understand something, please, ask!
* Communication
  + Please communicate openly with the instructor regarding your understanding of course material, assignments, and course format. If you need assistance or wish to discuss any aspect of the course, do not hesitate to ask. Communicate with your instructor about special circumstances as soon as possible and always prior to the related class session and/or assignment due date.
* Courtesy
  + You are expected to interact online in a professional manner. Additionally, you are expected to use professional language in class and in written communication. Papers and emails that are written in an unprofessional manner (i.e., grammatically incorrect, typos, misspellings, overly informal) are considered unacceptable. Students muse use “person-first” language.
* Students with Disabilities
  + If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union (412) 648-7890, [drsrecep@pitt.edu](mailto:drsrecep@pitt.edu), (412) 228-5347 for P3 ALS users, as early as possible in the term.  DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

**University Policies**

Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

<http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/07/07-01-03.html>

Sexual Harassment

<http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/07/07-06-04.html>

Grading System

<http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/reggrades.html>

<http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-01-03.html>

Academic Integrity

<http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/acguidelinespdf.pdf>

Plagiarism resources and Information

<http://www.english.pitt.edu/undergraduate/understand-and-avoid-plagiarism>

Disability Policies

<http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drsdocumentationguidelines>