

**Course Syllabus**

**TLL 1580/2500: Foundations of Special Education**

**Fall 2022**

**Instructor:** Sheila Conway, Ph.D.

**Office:** 5147 Wesley W. Posvar Hall

**Phone**: 412-648-7212

**Email**: sjconway@pitt.edu (best way to reach me)

**Office Hours**: By Appointment email me and we can schedule - before and after class are good times

**Course Description**

This course covers information about disability and the principles and practices of special education. Areas of content include six general areas: 1) historical and legal context, 2) families 3) disability characteristics, 4) school issues and processes, 5) inclusion and 6) equity. The course is intended as an introductory-level survey of exceptionality focusing on special education school programs. An important focus of the class is learning about the experience of disabilities from individuals with disabilities, much of the course material is first person learning experiences, allowing students to learn from individuals with disabilities and their families through videos, podcasts, and readings. Students have the option to complete complete 5 special education site visits to expand their understanding of special education.

**Course Objectives**

As an introductory course learners will acquire foundational knowledge and new perspectives about the following topics:

1. The history and development of special education.
2. Legal/regulatory requirements of special education.
3. Equity issues pertaining to special education.
4. Special education and related services for individuals with disabilities at different chronological ages.
5. Various disabilities covered in Federal Special Education legislation, and appropriate special education and related services practices.
6. Family involvement in special education and related services programs.
7. Student advocacy and professional collaboration in special education.
8. Principles, practices, and limitations of assessment, instruction, curriculum design and modification, and pupil evaluation in special education.
9. Universal Design for Learning.
10. Disability identity, self-determination, community, and freedom.

**First Person Learning-** Nothing About Us Without Us

To incorporate the lived experiences and knowledge traditions of the disabled community that we hope to support. Students will learn about disabilities through a variety of media selected to amplify the voice and experiences of individual and families living with disabilities. Assignments will be posted on CANVAS and will include videos, interviews, blogs, passages from books, and podcasts. Prior to class students must submit a written response to the material. Responses should incorporate the voice of the disabled creator with direct quotes from the material.

There is no textbook for the course.

**Course Requirements**

1. Complete assignments as specified and participate in small-group activities and class discussions.
2. Complete case study projects as assigned must be present in class to participate in the in-class collaborative case studies.
3. Research and contribute to class presentation an evidence-based practice in special education.
4. Create and share a photo journal exploring one of the themes related in disability and ableism studied in class.
5. Obtain clearances and complete 5 field experience visits and submit a written reflection/response for each.
6. Midterm and Final Examination

\*\*\*\* If clearances are not submitted by the end of Drop Add period <https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7PVd9OhGYP94rHw>

an alternative assignment will be required for Field Experience.

Alternate assignment will include

* reading a contemporary non-fiction book written by an individual regarding their experiences with disability- (must be preapproved)
* writing a 5-page reaction paper about lessons learned from the author
* book review presentation

**Case Studies**

Students collaborate with classmates on 2 in-class case studies throughout the semester. The purpose of the case studies 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.

**Practices Presentation**

The purpose of this task is to engage students in analytical thinking about the linkage between the evidence base of a particular educational practice and its use with students with certain exceptionalities. Group presentations should be supported by a minimum of four current, related research studies from appropriate professional research journals (other than the text). Sources must be preapproved and cited using American Psychological Association APA formatting. More specific criteria will be distributed and discussed in class.

**Graduate students enrolled in IL 2500 will be required to submit a research paper/ literature review of an Evidence Based Practice in Special Education connected to your area of graduate studies.**

**Special Education Field Experiences and Narratives**

Students will be required to complete 5 field-based visits to a special education program in a local school. These visits will involve spending 2-3 hours for each of the 5 visits at the school (not including travel time). Professional interactions appropriate for K-12 school settings are required for all visits (i.e. attire, communication, interactions). Students must submit copies of current PA state clearances as outlined by the University prior to beginning the field experience. <https://pitt.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7PVd9OhGYP94rHw> A completed attendance sheet signed by school mentor must be submitted at the completion of field experiences. Guidelines for observations and for written narratives will be provided and reviewed in class.

**Photo journal**

A photo journal is a “way for users to provide a firsthand account of their experience with the challenge you're researching through pictures or videos”. In this course students will study their environment (i.e. local, social media, printed artifacts, structures) to illustrate their awareness and perspective shifts related to disability and ableism address in the course.

**Exams**

There will be two exams during the term for students to demonstrate understanding of concepts and themes learned throughout the term. These will be administered online during class time.

**Assignment Submission and Grading Policies**

Assignments should be submitted in CANVAS by the established due date. Special circumstances will be considered if discussed with your instructor **prior** to an assignment being late.

* All assignments should be 12-point font, 1” margins, double spaced.
* APA style formatting should be used for citations and references.

Course grades will be determined by scores on all required course assignments as follows:

First Person Learning Responses (7 @ 5 pts each) 35

Case Studies (2 @ 5 points each) 10

Photo Journal 10

Field Experience Narratives (5 entries) / or

Book Review (topic approval, paper, and sharing session) 50

Practices Presentation (Group)

Initial submission 10

Final presentation 20

Attendance and Participation 15

Midterm & Final Examinations 40

\*Graduate Student Research Paper assignment \*40

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *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 |

* G and I Grades – A student may be graduated without removing G and/or I grades from the record provided all degree requirements have been met and the student's department recommends graduation. The individual school's grading policy should be consulted for regulations dealing with the removal of I grades. Students assigned G grades are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term in which the course was taken. Once the deadline has passed, the G grade will remain on the record, and the student will be required to re-register for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation.

**Course Session Outline** (subject to change)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **TOPIC** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE** |
| 1 | Introduction to Disabilities and Special Education | 9/6 First Person Learning #1 - Cure due |
| 2 | Inclusive Schools & Models of Disability  | 9/8 First Person Learning #2 - Inclusion due |
| 3 | Historical and Legal Foundations of Special Education |  |
| 4 | Disability across the lifespan – EI and Transition | 9/20 First Person Learning #3 Transition due& |
| 5 | Families &Intersectionality in Special Education | 9/27 Picking a Topic for EBP presentation – fill out survey&9/29 First Person Learning #4 Families due |
| 6 | Learning Disabilities | 10/6 First Person Learning - #5 Learning Disabilities due |
| 7 | Emotional and Behavior Disorders | 10/13 Initial Search on EBP Topic – group assignmentCase Study in Class this Week  |
| 8 | Disability Identity, Community & Pride | 10/18 First Person Learning #6 Crip Camp the movie due10/20 Midterm Exam – ONLINE during class time\*Graduate Students only - 10/20 Start of Draft for EBP paper  |
| 9 | Intellectual Disabilities |  |
| 10 | Neurodivergence:Autism | 11/3 First Person Learning #7 – Neurodivergence due |
| 11 | Sensory Disabilities | 11/8 Alternate Assignment Paper & Sharing Due – if not in field experience |
| 12 | Evidence Based Practices in Special Education  | 11/15 & 11/17 Group EBP presentations in class – presentation due in CANVAS 48 hours prior\*Graduate students – Research Paper Due 11/14 |
| 13 | Universal Design for Learning (UDL) &Exploring accessibility on campus | Case Study in class this week both days be prepared to be outside |
| 14 | Severe and Multiple Disabilities: Family Support | Photo Documentation must be added to Link by 12/4Photo Documentation Sharing in Class on 12/6 |
| 15 | Final Exam (Dec. 8th) | All Field Experience Journal Entries and Signature Sheet must all be submitted by 12/9 |

ONGOING throughout term – complete field experience journal entry within 48 hours of observation

**General Class and University Policies**

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in all interactions. The faculty encourages you to approach this as a time to learn and practice using these professional behaviors. In this course, the expected professional behaviors are outlined below. Points may be deducted from your final grade due to unprofessional behavior.

* Confidentiality
	+ You are responsible to maintain the confidentiality of all the students you work with in field placements related to your coursework at the University of Pittsburgh. When writing or completing assignments for courses or speaking about your field experience and the students you work with, use pseudonyms (not initials) for student, teacher, and school names. In public, it is your responsibility to keep written assignments and any other materials bearing the names of students, teachers, or staff secure from the view of others.
* Academic Integrity
	+ Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. <https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code>
* Attendance
	+ Students are expected to attend and actively participate *all* sessions. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class and will be factored into final grade. Students are responsible for all content covered in missed sessions.
* Participation
	+ You are expected to actively participate in course discussions and activities with civility and openness to learning from others.
* Communication
	+ Please communicate openly with your 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 me about special circumstances as soon as possible and always prior to the related class session and/or assignment due date.
* Courtesy
	+ Courteous behavior includes staying on-task during the class, being open to learn with classmates and engage in open dialogue with classmates and instructor and coming to class prepared.
* Disability Services
	+ 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, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term. I try to practice what I preach and commit to supporting your access to all learning and assessment in this course.
* Statement on Classroom Recording
	+ To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students’ recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

**DIL Student Grievance Procedures**

The rights and responsibilities of faculty and students are described in the University’s Academic Integrity Guidelines at:

<http://www.education.pitt.edu/portals/0/current%20students/Policies%20and%20Forms/graduate%20policies/academic%20integrity%20guidelines.pdf>

The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in DIL believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow this procedure:

1. The student should talk directly to the faculty member to attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the student should talk to the relevant program coordinator.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should talk to the associate chair of TLL (currently Dr. Tinukwa Boulder).
4. If needed, the student should next talk to the SOE associate dean of students (currently Dr. Andrea Zito).
5. If the matter still remains unresolved, the student should file a written statement of charges with the dean’s designated Academic Integrity Administrative Officer (currently Dr. Andrea Zito).

**Links to 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.education.pitt.edu/portals/0/current%20students/Policies%20and%20Forms/graduate%20policies/academic%20integrity%20guidelines.pdf>

Plagiarism Resources and Information

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

Disability Policies

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