

TLL 1580/2500: Foundations of Special Education

Summer 2024

Instructor: Dr. Phillandra S. Smith

Pronouns: she/her

Email: psmith06@pitt.edu

Office: 5159 Wesley W. Posvar Hall

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the principles and practices of special education. We will examine schooling and dis/ability from a critical perspective using narrative accounts from teachers, students, and families who have lived experience with disability. The course content focuses on four general areas: 1) disability history and the development of special education, 2) the legal context of special education, 3) special education disability categories, and 4) inclusive strategies. Interwoven into each of these four areas will be conversations about equity.

Books Required:

The following texts are required for this course and are available through the university bookstore:

Frank, & Richards, S. (2021). *Essentials of special education: what educators need to know*. Routledge.

The Frank & Richards text is available as free e-text through the library website.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe the 13 disability categories covered under IDEA, distinguishing between high incidence and low incidence disabilities.
2. Compare and contrast several disability models and make connections between the various models and how they might inform different understandings of disability.
3. Describe key aspects of disability history in the United States.
4. Describe the legal context of special education and several key court cases that serve as legal precedence for the rights of students with disabilities.
5. Discuss disability pride, disability justice, and issues of equity pertaining to special education.
6. Describe the related services for individuals with disabilities at different chronological ages.
7. Discuss the role of parent and family involvement in special education and related service programs.

8. Identify the importance of collaboration in special education.
9. Identify, describe, and utilize strategies for inclusion in the classroom and community.

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

Canvas Information:

You have been entered into the IL 1580/2500 worksite on Canvas. I will post course readings, important information, and additional resources here. You will submit ALL assignments using Canvas. Additionally, you can keep track of your grades using the Canvas. Check your grades regularly to make sure there are no errors and that you didn't miss anything.

Accommodations

I am committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment or achievement, I invite you to meet with me to discuss additional strategies that might be helpful to your success in this course.

If you believe you need academic adjustments (accommodations) for a disability please contact Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ALS users, as early as possible in the term to discuss your needs and the process for requesting academic adjustments. DRS is responsible for coordinating disability related academic adjustments and will determine reasonable accommodations for this course. Since academic adjustments may require planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

University of Pittsburgh Teacher Education Course Expectations

The teacher education faculty at the University of Pittsburgh view our courses as communities of practice. This means that we engage in collective critical inquiry and reflection that is focused on building shared knowledge over time. To be an active member of our community of practice in this asynchronous course it is important to complete all of the weekly readings and tasks. Each week you should be prepared to engage with your course instructor, course colleagues, and course materials virtually.

This course is asynchronous. Completing your weekly tasks will count as your participation and attendance. Each week the modules will be released every Friday morning. Your weekly tasks and assignments are due the following Friday at 11:59pm. The idea here is to give you a full week to complete all assignments. Assignment submission portals will be locked at midnight on Fridays. Submit your assignments before this time as late assignments will not be accepted.

While we believe course attendance participation adds value to the community of practice, we also know there may be times when students may not be able to complete tasks on time due to medical emergencies and other extenuating circumstances. In these cases, you are afforded **one late pass**. A late pass allows you to submit your weekly assignments up to a week after the due date. To use your late pass you must communicate with me prior to the assignment deadline. Using a late pass does not shift the date of any upcoming assignments.

Email Policy

Please allow up to 24 hours for an email response from me. If you email me on a Friday, I will respond on or before the end of the day on Monday. If you email me over the weekend, there is a chance I won't see your email until Monday. Please put "Urgent" in the subject line if you have an emergency that requires an immediate response.

Asynchronous Classroom Dispositions

1. Complete all readings and assigned tasks before Friday at midnight.
2. Your assigned discussion group is your "team." Your team needs you to complete your assigned tasks in order to complete their tasks as well. If your team reports you for not completing tasks twice, you will be asked to complete all of the group tasks on your own for the rest of the semester.

Assignment Guidelines

Assignments should be completed and submitted via Canvas by the due date. All assignments are due on Friday at 11:59 pm unless otherwise noted. If you need to submit an assignment late, communicate with me **prior** to the assignment being due that you will be using your late pass.

- ☐ All papers must be in APA format, typed, double spaced, in 12-point font, with standard 1-inch margins. For guidance on APA format, please visit https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html
- ☐ Be highly descriptive in your writing so that if a film producer/director were reading your work they would be able to recreate the scene or situation you have described. Do not be afraid to share details or to use active verbs and descriptive adjectives. Be specific in your writing – illustrate your points with concrete examples.
- ☐ Be sure not to assume your reader knows what you know or even that the reader knows about the topic you are writing about. In other words, write as if you are writing for an audience that is completely unfamiliar with your writing topic.
- ☐ Be sure to carefully edit and spell check your work.
- ☐ Review the rubric for the assignment and ask yourself if the paper meets the specific requirements of the assignment.

Course Requirements

1. **WEEKLY ACTIVITIES** (90 points - 10 points each week). Each week you will complete assigned course readings and complete tasks that require you to synthesize what you have read. These tasks will range from group discussions, individual tasks, case studies and more. You are expected to complete weekly course readings and tasks every class. Your full participation is also expected in any group or partner work. In other words, I expect high caliber work from all aspects of the course. Engagement requires that you be fully prepared, actively participate, contribute, and engage with your colleagues' ideas each week.
2. **SECTION ESSAYS** (75 points - 25 points x 3 essays). You will complete and submit a short essay at the end of each section of the course. Sections essays require you to bring together all the material you covered in the section to respond to a given essay prompt. You are expected to cite material you have watched and read in the section. Undergraduate student essays should range 2-3 pages excluding references. Graduate student essays should range 4-5 pages excluding references. A rubric will be provided for each essay.

3. **FINAL EXAM** (35 points). For your final you are being asked to write one essay in response to a question below that synthesizes the themes and concepts from course readings and discussions this semester. You are expected to make clear and concise connections to course themes and material. You will be graded on both the content of the response and the quality of the writing. It is expected that you will convey your understanding and ideas in writing that is clear, coherent, organized, concise, and properly cited.

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

<i>Points Earned</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Level of Attainment</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>
200 - 187	A	Superior	4.00
180 -186	A-		3.75
175 - 179	B+	Adequate	3.25
164 -174	B		3.00
159 - 163	B-		2.75
155 - 158	C+	Minimal	2.25
145 - 154	C		2.00
140 - 144	C-		1.75
<140	F	Failure	0.00

Course Session Outline

Week	Date	Topic Text Chapter(s)	Readings & Assignment/s
Section 1			
1	5/13	Getting started: Introductions & Understanding Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FlipGrid Introductions • Canvas reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Perspectives on Disability ◦ Theories of Education • Complete disability model Venn Diagram. • Respond to Canvas discussion board question in your teams.
2	5/20	History of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Disability & Society ◦ From isolation to segregation • Create a disability timeline and a special education timeline.
3	5/27	Schooling, Ableism, & the Construction of Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Who is Bobby? ◦ Ableism in Education • Complete your section essay.
Section 2			

4	6/3	Legal Context of Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Read your assigned court case • Read Frank & Richards Chap 1 • Complete your assigned portion of the group discussion based on the case you read.
5	6/10	Eligibility & Early Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Frank & Richards Chap 3 ◦ Frank & Richards Chap 5 • Complete the case study assignment.
6	6/17	Equity & Access to Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch “Pushed Out: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools” • Canvas reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The Struggle for Citizenship ◦ Disability Justice • Complete the struggle for citizenship capture sheet.
7	6/24	Disproportionality, Classroom Organizing, & School Grouping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Misunderstood & Mistreated • This American Life Podcast • Complete your section essay.
Categories of Disability			
8	7/1	Special Education Categories of Disability Learning Disabilities & Speech/Language Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Frank & Richards Chap 4 • Use your readings from this week to complete the high incidence disability chart.
9	7/8	Autism & ADHD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Through my eyes ◦ I was diagnosed with ADHD as an adult. • Respond to Canvas discussion board question in your teams.
10	7/15	Intellectual Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Presuming Competence • Watch Intelligent Lives • Respond to Canvas discussion board question in your teams.
11	7/22	Transition Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Narrating Access & Agency ◦ Transition

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Involvement in Transition Planning ● Respond to Canvas discussion board question in your teams.
12	7/29	Strategies for Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Canvas readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sins Invalid ○ Teaching Strategies for students with special needs ○ Differentiation ● Complete your section essay.
13	8/5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Essay Due

Your Well-Being Matters

College/Graduate school can be an exciting and challenging time for students. Taking time to care for yourself and seeking appropriate support can help you achieve your academic and professional goals. You are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax.

It can be helpful to remember that we all benefit from assistance and guidance at times, and there are many resources available to support your well-being while you are at Pitt. If you or anyone you know experiences overwhelming academic stress, persistent difficult feelings and/or challenging life events, you are strongly encouraged to seek support. In addition to reaching out to friends and loved ones, consider connecting with a faculty member you trust for assistance connecting to helpful resources. The [University Counseling Center](#) is also here for you. You can call 412-648-7930 at any time to connect with a clinician.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930. You can also contact the Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.

General Class Policies

You 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 the 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.
- Communication
 - Please communicate openly with me 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

- o You are expected to interact in a professional manner. Additionally, students 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.

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>

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>