

**Rutgers University
Graduate School of Education
Department of Educational Psychology
Special Education**

**Psychology of the Exceptional Child
15:293:525
Fall 2021**

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Phone Number: By arrangement	
Office Hours: By arrangement	Prerequisites: By arrangement w/ advisor
Online	Permission Required: By arrangement w/ advisor

Learning Goals:

Parenthetical information relates to New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

Upon completion of this course, students can expect to:

1. Identify and describe the historical milestones, legal basis, and current issues in educational programs for students with exceptionalities (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #4);
2. Understand key controversial issues in current special education policy and practice, including LD identification, RTI, and disproportionality (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #6);
3. Identify the psychological and educational characteristics of students with mild to moderate disabilities (e.g., learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disabilities, mental retardation, speech and language impairments) (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #1);
4. Identify the psychological and educational characteristics of students with moderate to severe disabilities (e.g., sensory impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, multiple handicaps) (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #1);
5. Identify the psychological and educational characteristics of students with giftedness (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #1);
6. Identify the characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental influences on a child and family including cultural and linguistic diversity,

- socioeconomic status, abuse/neglect, and substance abuse (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #2);
7. Describe the differential characteristics of individual students with disabilities including level of severity and multiple exceptionalities across the lifespan (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #2);
 8. Articulate the continuum of educational placements for students with exceptionalities and benefits and drawbacks of each (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #3);
 9. Identify the impact of exceptionality on the family (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #10);
 10. Be familiar with agencies, professional organizations, and related Web resources for information relevant to support of special education students (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #10);
 11. Be familiar with national advocacy groups addressing needs of students at risk for, or with disabilities, as well as resources, processes, and means to help these students address social and institutional barriers that impede equal access to services and supports that facilitate success in school, home, and the community (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #10);
 12. Understand the current status of evidence-based research and practice standards in special education (2014 New Jersey Professional Teaching Standard #7 & #8).

Course Catalog Description:

This course develops foundational knowledge in the characteristics, identification, educational needs, and development of students with disabilities. Content includes the influence of exceptionalities on the cognitive, educational, communication, motor, and social development of individuals with disabilities and other exceptionalities. The legal and ethical basis for comprehensive programs for exceptional children and adults are discussed.

Class Textbook:

Hallahan, D.P., Kaufman, J.M., & Pullen, P.C. (2019). *Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education (14th Ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Optional Textbook:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Supplemental Resources :

All Supplemental Resources (articles, assignment components, powerpoints, etc., are linked to modules in Canvas ; usually in the Weekly Overviews. If you cannot locate something, or if a link seems to be broken, please let me know immediately.

Overview of Course Activities:

This course includes substantial weekly readings, structured review, discussion of readings and associated topics, quizzes on course materials, disability film analysis, disability laws comparison/contrast, IRIS Classroom Diversity module review, and a best professional practices guide project. Powerpoint Slides that highlight select content from each week's assigned textbook readings, reinforcing key concepts and providing a partial review, have been integrated into the each week's introductory page.

Each week of the course will run from Monday morning through Sunday night (with the exception of Week 1 which begins on Wednesday). Students are strongly encouraged to complete all of the assigned course readings in advance of the course week in effect. Review the Syllabus and let me know if you have any questions about.

Question and Answer Forum:

There is a **Question & Answer Forum (Q&A Forum)** that you will find in the Course Home Module of the course. Students are encouraged to post questions they have about the more challenging parts of the assigned readings, as well as related topics the class covers, in the online Q&A Forum. It is always a good idea to first try to answer your own questions by rereading content and conferring with fellow students. But if you cannot resolve the issue, post the question and I will usually post an answer within a day. Chances are that if you are uncertain about part of the readings, some fellow students are also uncertain, so everyone can benefit from this feature of the course. The Q&A Forum can and should also be used for general course housekeeping issues or questions. This Q&A Forum is always available in the same location and should be used throughout the entire Course.

Professional Discourse:

As current and future teaching and allied field professionals, students are expected to present themselves and act in the online class discussions as they would in a professional meeting in the school district where they work. This applies to several dimensions of professional conduct:

- Students are expected to be respectful of divergent beliefs and opinions that may be voiced in online class discussions, offering constructive questioning and feedback as appropriate.
- Except where otherwise customary (e.g., deaf community terminology), students are expected to use *person-first language* when speaking of students with disabilities (e.g., *student with a learning disability*, NOT, *LD student*), and never use demeaning terms such as *retard*. Students should avoid language that objectifies human beings as “things” of pity, such as, *wheelchair-bound*, *confined to a wheelchair*, or *suffers a disability*.
- There are many websites dealing with this issue. A Google search will reveal quite a few. You can try the following: <https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/people-first-language.html>

Grading Policy:

1. Class discussion / participation (66 points)
2. Quizzes (10 @ 10 pts = 100 pts + 2 @ 15 pts = 30 pts (130 points)
3. Movie Analysis (20 points)
4. Disability Laws: Compare/Contrast Essay (22 points)
5. IRIS Classroom Diversity Module Review (22 points)
6. Best Professional Practices Guide (60 points)

Course Grades: (out of 320 possible points)

GRADE	PERCENT	POINTS
A	93.00 – 100.0 %	Point totals will be converted to percentages. N.B. A grade of 86.99 earns a B, not a B+ Any mid-course modification of course assignments will be reflected accurately as percentage of total possible points earned.
B+	87.00 – 92.99 %	
B	81.00 – 86.99 %	
C+	77.00 – 80.99 %	
C	70.00 – 76.99 %	
F	Under 70 %	

Late Assignments Policy:

All assignments are expected on time. This includes Discussion Thread responses which are “real time” activities; consequently, **initial responses and responses to classmates cannot be made up after the week in which they are due.**

Late assignments will receive a reduced grade; generally, a flat reduction in grade equivalent to 10% of the total possible assignment grade per day late (or part thereof). Students with bona fide

emergencies should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss special arrangements to avoid grade penalties. The instructor will work constructively and collaboratively with students who communicate early regarding special problems completing assignments on time, with no grade penalties in situations where advance communication takes place and the circumstances are deemed reasonable, but will not be supportive of last minute or “night before” requests for extensions on assignment due dates. Personal vacations and work related responsibilities (conferences, back to school nights, etc.) are not considered to be “special problems.” If you are taking multiple courses, it is up to you to manage competing responsibilities.

Assignments:

Participation. Students are required to participate in online class discussions. For each unit, the instructor will post 2-3 discussion prompts. For each discussion prompt, each student is required to post an original contribution (about 5-6 sentences; never 1 or 2), and at least one reply to another student’s original posting or student’s response to another student’s original posting (also about 5-6 sentences; never 1 or 2). [See exemplars below]. Students will be graded on the thoughtfulness, meaningful and correctly cited connections to the readings and other course materials, originality, and overall quality of their postings/replies to others. * Students must post all their comments for the week by Midnight, Sunday. Students are required to read all other student postings as well as postings by the instructor. This may require that you return to the Discussions after you have completed your own posts. Assume no qualitative or quantitative differences between your initial response to a prompt and your subsequent response to a classmate. They share equal weight when it comes to grading.

*** DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE GRADING VALUE OF CORRECTLY CITED CONNECTIONS TO COURSE MATERIALS IN BOTH INITIAL AND RESPONSE POSTS. PERSONAL OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCES ARE STRENGTHENED WITH THE SUPPORT OF EXPERTS. IN SOME INSTANCES, THE PROMPT STIPULATES THE NATURE OF THE CITATION. WHEN NOT STIPULATED, THIS IS LEFT UP TO THE STUDENT TO CRAFT. SEE ONLINE DISCUSSION GRADING RUBRIC IN THE COURSE HOME MODULE.**

Discussion Prompt Responses / Exemplars:

EXAMPLE DISCUSSION PROMPT: *Discuss what you see as potential promises and pitfalls associated with RTI.*

EXAMPLE: high-quality posting (thoughtful & focused): I believe that RTI is not a panacea, but rather, an unproven approach to LD identification and prevention of early reading problems that may hold promise. Using early screening and intervention for emerging reading problems, avoiding a “wait-to-fail” approach, RTI can help change the learning trajectory for many early elementary students for the better. But as **Fuchs, Fuchs, and Compton (2012)** suggest, to do this well would require a massive commitment of financial and human resources, professional

development, staff buy-in, and administrative leadership in the schools. And the question remains, once a student receives remediation through multiple RTI tiers, and is subsequently referred, evaluated, and classified as having a learning disability, what types and intensities of academic services will they receive, compared to those in the RTI tiers to which they were not fully responsive? We also need to consider the new roles for both general and special education teachers under an RTI approach and the data management systems necessary to help make it all work well (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Stecker, 2010).

EXAMPLE: low-quality posting (less than thoughtful & focused): I like what Robert said about RTI and I agree with most of his points. His response was very thoughtful. I mean, you can't expect schools and teachers to solve all of the world's problems—there really are limits. And what about the parents? What are their responsibilities to help kids learn to read early on? Everybody needs to work together under an RTI model to help kids succeed.

Quizzes. The course includes 12 weekly quizzes based on the assigned readings and other course materials, e.g., internet resources. The quizzes are used for various learning purposes. Quizzes are designed to help students engage in structured review of content from assigned readings. Students will be required to demonstrate a complete knowledge of key points and issues in the readings and to apply this knowledge in conjunction with critical thought. The format allows for students to develop personal professional connections to the material. Quizzes will be **open notes, open book**. Quizzes require brief responses to student-chosen excerpts from Course Materials. Though, "brief", these responses should be "content rich". Any questions regarding the quizzes should be directed to the course instructor.

Movie Analysis. Students will view a movie related to the course content from a list provided by the instructor and submit a three (3) page analysis. Assignment information and grading rubric will be available in a Canvas Module.

Students with Disabilities: Laws; Compare & Contrast. Drawing on **course resources**, and your own research, submit a three (3) page essay that clearly presents the similarities (comparisons) and differences (contrasts) between The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (formerly known as No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – NCLB '01). Assignment information and grading rubric will be available in a Canvas Module.

IRIS Module: Classroom Diversity; A Review. This assignment involves a careful review and written elaboration of the entire IRIS Module: Classroom Diversity – An Introduction to Student Differences which you will find linked here: (<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/div/>) It may help you to start by viewing the 4-5 minute video entitled Navigating an IRIS STAR Legacy Module: <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources/website-navigation-videos/navigating-an-iris-star-legacy-module/> Assignment information and grading rubric will be available in a Canvas Module.

Best Professional Practices Guide. Students will create a 12-15 pages research-based /evidence-based best practices booklet in one of the following topic areas:

- Working with students with [you select one] Disability/Disorder (e.g., LD, EBD, ID, Autism, etc.)
- Working with families of students with disabilities
- Bullying and violence prevention (must devote sufficient attention to students with disabilities)
- Disproportionality in special education identification
- Classroom and school-wide behavior management
- Teaching in an inclusive [elementary / middle school / high school] classroom
- Early literacy supports and methods for non-responders (students not learning to read through typical instructional approaches)
- Transition for high school student with disabilities
- Other focus topic discussed with and **approved by instructor** (before student begins working on it)
- Assignment information and grading rubric will be available in a Canvas Module.

Required Readings. Students should read, review, and digest required readings and activities, prior to each week's class and be prepared to ask questions and discuss the material. Anticipate your reading load by looking ahead in the Syllabus. Some weeks are heavier than others. Also, some readings are dense and require a second reading. A second reading, by the way, can be a productive strategy to employ with many students; those with disabilities and those without!

Additional Course Resources. Please remember to carefully scrutinize all resources as you complete assignments, e.g., rubrics, etc. Questions or confusions should be dealt with early rather than later through communication via the Q&A Forum. It is likely that the answer(s) to your question(s) will benefit others in the class!

Email Connection and Response to Emails. It is critical to your success in this online environment that you have a working email that is **CONNECTED** to the class website. If you do not already have one, please see to this important detail immediately. Also, I **intend** to respond to all emails sent to me if the quantity is reasonable and the topics are pertinent. **Likewise, I would appreciate a response to all emails I send to you.** I need to know that you are in continuous communication with me. A simple "I received this" or "I got the message" will suffice. If you don't receive a timely email response from me, try a second time! Please use my Rutgers email: Rkmowl@gse.rutgers.edu

Academic Integrity Policy:

The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>). Please familiarize yourself with the university

policy on academic integrity at
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf

For all assignments and class activities, **no copying of any kind is allowed**, unless copied text is placed within quotations and author/source is appropriately cited. Re-submission and / or re-working of assignments previously submitted in other courses is not permitted. Excessive use of quoted material in essay assignments, quizzes, and tests is strongly discouraged and this will tend to result in lower grades. **Students need to express themselves using their own language.** **Clear evidence of plagiarism will likely result in a grade of F for the assignment AND course.**

Office of Disability Services:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Disclaimer:

The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to this information throughout the semester.

Course Schedule

SESSION #	CONTENT COVERAGE	ASSIGNMENTS & READINGS
1 9/1-9/5 <i>Movie Analysis Assigned</i>	Course Home Module: Read Everything! Syllabus Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of special education • Evidence-based practices • Professional Declaration of Intentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughly Review Course Home Module • Chapter 1 (HKP) • Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence (2003) • The History of the Hippocratic Oath (Hulkower, 2010)
2 9/6-9/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOCUS TOPIC: IDEA 2004 and the intersection of IDEA and NCLB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yell Chapters: #5 (IDEA) & #8 (NCLB) • Education Policy Brief on Impact of NCLB (Cole, 2006)
3 9/13-9/19 <i>Movie Analysis Due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Practices • Multicultural Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 2 & 3 (HKP)
4 9/20-9/26 <i>C/C Essay Assigned</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOCUS TOPIC: Disproportionality in special education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages 52-56 (HKP) • Over-Identification of Students of Color (Artiles et al., 2002) • Justifying and Explaining Disproportionality (Artiles et al., 2010) • Discipline Policies, Successful Schools, and Racial Justice (Losen, 2011)
5 9/27-10/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and Families • Child Well-Being • Parental Rights in Special Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 (HKP) • A.E. Casey Reports • PRISE • NJAC 6A:14 • The Right to Special Education in New Jersey
6 10/4-10/10 <i>C/C Essay Due</i> <hr/> <i>Module Review Assigned</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 (HKP) • Students with Disabilities as Citizens in the Classroom (Kliwer, 1998)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 (HKP)

10/11-10/17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Brief History of the Field of Learning Disabilities (Hallahan et al., 2013) • Rethinking Learning Disabilities (Lyon et al., 2002)
8 10/18-10/24 Module Review Due <hr/> BPPG Assigned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOCUS TOPIC: Response to Intervention and evolving views of Learning Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTI: Definition, Evidence, & Implications (Fuchs et al., 2003) • RTI Blueprint (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001) • RTI & LD (NJCLD, 2005) • The “Blurring” of Special Education (Fuchs et al., 2010) • Comprehensive Assessment and Evaluation of Students with LD (NJCLD, 2010)
9 10/25-10/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 (HKP) • Treatment of ADHD in School Settings (Piffner et al., 2006) • Rethinking ADHD & LD in DSM5 (Tannock, 2013) • 80+ Classroom Accommodations for Children or Teens with ADHD
10 11/1-11/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional or Behavioral Disorders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 (HKP) • Classification and Definition of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (Cullinan, 2004) • A National Perspective on Children with Emotional Disorders (Bradley et al., 2004)
11 11/8-11/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOCUS TOPIC: Behavior Management, school-wide discipline, and violence/disruption prevention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Can We Improve School Discipline (Osher et al., 2010) • Rethinking Effective Bully and Violence Prevention Efforts (Cohen et al., 2015)
12 11/15-11/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Disorders • Deaf or Hard of Hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 10 & 11 (HKP) • NCLB Effects on Deaf & Hard of Hearing Students (AERA, 2007) http://aer.sagepub.com/content/44/3/460.full.pdf+html
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving Holiday: 11/24-11/28 	
13 11/22-12/5 BPPG Due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Low Incidence, Multiple, and Severe Disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 9 & 13 (HKB) • Problem Behavior Interventions for Young Children with Autism (Horner et al., 2002) • Effective Practices for Students with Asperger Syndrome (Myles & Simpson, 2001)

14 12/6-1212	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blindness or Low Vision • Physical Disabilities and Other Health Impairments • Special Gifts and Talents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 12, 14, & 15 (HBK)
12/13	Course Ends	

Assigned / Due Dates

TASK	ASSIGNED	DUE
Discussion Prompts / Responses		Sunday, Midnight
Quizzes		Sunday, Midnight
Movie Analysis	Week 1 (9/1)	Week 3 (9/19)
Movie Analysis Approval (email)	Week 1 (9/1)	Week 2 (9/5)
Disability Law: Compare/Contrast Essay	Week 4 (9/20)	Week 6 (10/10)
IRIS Classroom Diversity Module Review	Week 6 (10/4)	Week 8 (10/24)
Best Professional Practices Guide	Week 8 (10/18)	Week 13 (12/5)
Best Professional Practices Guide Approval (email)	Week 8 (10/18)	Week 9 (10/24)