



**Master of Science in Education Program
TCH ED 327/MS ED 427: Educating Exceptional Children**

Fall 2021

Monday, 6:00-9:00pm

Online

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

In this course we explore multiple major theories of typical cognitive and affective development, and their concomitant approaches to understanding and managing neurodiversity in the inclusive classroom. The focus is on integrating across theoretical frameworks in order to maximize classroom support and minimize the need for individual differentiation for students with physical, academic or emotional challenges, such as learning disabilities, emotional disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and autism spectrum disorder. Theoretical concepts are introduced in both readings and lectures. Students will also be introduced to Special Education Law and IDEA disabilities to intertwine theory with practical application. Teamwork exercises designed to promote research and theory-based practice provide students with opportunities to analyze case studies, while developing skills in meeting the needs of all learners.

We will approach this class from a variety of perspectives. As with all teaching, we must always understand the needs of the students in our class. We will probe your individual philosophy and expand your repertoire for educating students with disabilities in a general education setting.

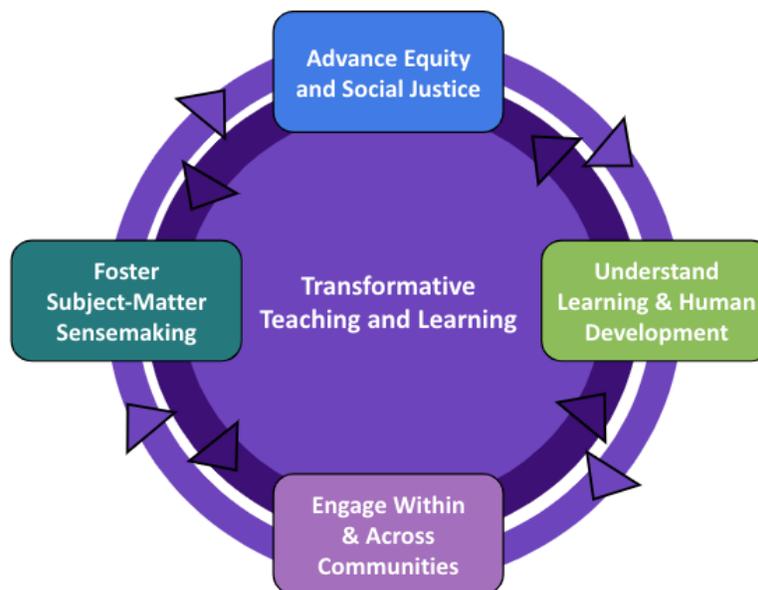
Course Objectives

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Compare and contrast theories of atypical cognitive and affective development as they apply to the identification, understanding and management of language, learning, behavioral and physiological disabilities in diverse learners.
2. Assess the impact that disabilities have on cognitive, physical, emotional, social and communication development of an individual and provide opportunities that support the intellectual, social and personal development of all students.
3. Analyze multiple approaches to assessment, accommodation and intervention in childhood exceptionalities, including current laws, regulations, and educational practices.
4. Assess the efficacy, maintenance and generalization of intervention techniques across functional environments.
5. Explain how students differ in their approaches to learning and how to create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
6. Plan and design instruction based on knowledge of discipline, students, community and curricular goals.
7. Adapt expectations, classroom environments and curricula to meet the needs of diverse learners.
8. Raise the self-awareness and strategic functioning of exceptional children to help them manage their own learning and behavior at home, school and work.
9. Collaborate and conference with schools and families to advocate for appropriate goals, accommodations, interventions, and transitions for children, emphasizing respect for individual differences and cultural diversity.

Northwestern Teacher Education Guiding Commitments

Guiding Commitments for Developing Educators to Engage in Transformative Teaching and Learning



Academic Integrity Policy

Students in this course are required to comply with the policies found in the booklet, *“Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic Guide.”* All papers submitted for credit in this course must be submitted electronically unless otherwise instructed by the professor. Your written work may be tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern or to download the guide, visit: [Academic Integrity: Office of the Provost](#)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Northwestern University is committed to providing the most accessible learning environment as possible for students with disabilities. Should you anticipate or experience disability-related barriers in the academic setting, please contact

[AccessibleNU](mailto:accessiblenu@northwestern.edu) to move forward with the university's established accommodation process (e: accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; p: 847-467-5530). If you already have established accommodations with AccessibleNU, please advise as soon as possible, preferably within the first two weeks of the term, so we can work together to implement accommodations. Disability information, including academic accommodations, is confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

COVID-19 Testing Compliance

To protect the health of our community, Northwestern University requires unvaccinated students who are in on-campus programs to be tested for COVID-19 twice per week. Students who fail to comply with current or future COVID-19 testing protocols will be referred to the Office of Community standards to face disciplinary action, including escalation up to restriction from campus and suspension.

Support for Wellness and Mental Health

Northwestern University is committed to supporting the wellness of our students. Student Affairs has multiple resources to support student wellness and mental health. If you are feeling distressed or overwhelmed, please reach out for help. Students can access confidential resources through the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Religious and Spiritual Life (RSL) and the Center for Awareness, Response and Education (CARE). Additional information on all of the resources mentioned above can be found here:

- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Northwestern Religious & Spiritual Life](#)
- [Center for Awareness, Response & Education](#)

Student Attendance Policy

Student attendance at every class meeting is expected. Your presence as part of a collaborative learning community is key to your development and the development of your colleagues. If for some reason you must be absent from a class session, you must inform the instructor before your absence. Because of the short number of overall class sessions in the quarter system, missing two class sessions puts your ability to pass the class in jeopardy. Missing three class sessions will result in an automatic grade of "Incomplete" and you will have to retake the class at another time.

Course Expectations, Policies, and Grading

Community Climate

To facilitate the nurturing of all class members in their pursuit of knowledge, mutual respect, professionalism and consideration for colleagues are expected at all times. As educators and learners, we must share a commitment to diversity and equity, removing barriers to education so that everyone may participate fully in the community. In this course, we respect and embrace the unique experiences that brought each person here, including backgrounds, identities, learning styles, ways of expression, and academic interests. The broad spectrum of perspectives represented by our community enriches the collective experience, and we strive to meet each with openness and respect.

Person-First Language

Students are expected to use person-first language when discussing or writing about persons with disabilities or persons from non-traditional backgrounds. Person-first language refers to identifying an individual as a human being, *first*; then who possesses a disability, *second*. Person-first language maintains the dignity and worth of individuals with disabilities.

Grading Scheme

A	300-270
B	269-240
*C	239-210 (C- : 219-210)
D	209-180
F	179 and below

Course Technology

The [Northwestern IT Support Center](#) is available to support technology needs. Please contact them as often as needed.

Canvas

Synchronous class meeting times will be a time for active engagement, collaboration, sharing of ideas and learning new information. Students are also expected to engage asynchronously during the week. With the exception of information shared in synchronous sessions, nearly all announcements and assignments are accessed and submitted through Canvas. Please make accessing Canvas part of your daily routine. The [Canvas Student Center](#) includes information on communicating in Canvas, navigating a Canvas course, grades, additional help, and more. The [Canvas at Northwestern](#) website provides information on getting to know Canvas at Northwestern and getting Canvas support. The [Canvas Student Guide](#) provides tutorials on all the features of Canvas. The [Canvas Accessibility Statement](#) and [Canvas Privacy Policy](#) are also available.

Zoom

Zoom will be used for synchronous meetings. This platform allows for sharing computer screens, a collaborative white board for demonstrations, and other features. Zoom can be used for group projects. The [Zoom for Students in Canvas](#) page has guidance specifically for students, and the [Zoom support page](#) provides additional information on using Zoom. The [Zoom Privacy Policy](#) and the [Accessibility Features on Zoom](#) are also available.

Guidance on Class Recordings

This class or portions of this class may be recorded by the instructor for educational purposes and available to the class during the quarter. Your instructor will communicate how you can access the recordings. Portions of the course that contain images, questions or commentary/discussion by students will be edited out of any recordings that are saved beyond the current term.

Prohibition of Recording of Class Sections by Students

Unauthorized student recording of classroom or other academic activities (including advising sessions or office hours) is prohibited. Unauthorized recording is unethical and may also be a violation of University policy and state law. Students requesting the use of assistive technology as an accommodation should contact [AccessibleNU](#). Unauthorized use of classroom recordings – including distributing or posting them – is also prohibited. Under the [University's Copyright Policy](#), faculty own the copyright to instructional materials – including those resources created specifically for the purposes of instruction, such as syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, and presentations. Students cannot copy, reproduce, display, or distribute these materials. Students who engage in unauthorized recording, unauthorized use of a recording, or unauthorized distribution of instructional materials will be referred to the appropriate University office for follow-up.

Course Texts

Required Texts

1. Friend, M., & Bursuck, W. D. (2019). *Including Students with Special Needs: A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers*. (8th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.
2. Tomlinson, C. (2017). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Academically Diverse Classrooms*. (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Supplemental Text

Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Assignments

All assignments will be graded for meeting the descriptions below, additional guidelines set forth in Canvas, and conforming to standard English, spelling and grammar. You are a writing model for your students, and must speak and write professionally for instruction and communication with parents, colleagues and others. Written material submitted must be typed, *double-spaced, and where indicated, submitted in APA (7th edition) format. American Psychological Association: [APA Style](#).

You are expected to keep up with weekly readings and come to class ready to contribute to an active conversation about those readings. Assignments are due in Canvas on the dates indicated on the course schedule, by 11:59 pm. You are encouraged to make your best effort to submit all assignments on time, with the understanding that sometimes circumstances arise that are beyond our control. If you need an extension, please contact the professor. Assignments submitted late without prior approval will not be eligible for full credit.

Assignment Descriptions

1. **Reflective Response (10 points each, 60 points total)**

Each week, you will engage in a variety of course content. The material should promote some form of opinion, reaction or response. You will write a ONE page, *single-spaced reflective response on course concepts and ideas. Responses must reflect new learning, how you will apply your learning, and your remaining wonderings.

2. **Family Interview e-Presentation (100 points)**

You will conduct a personal interview with a parent/guardian of an adult or student with a disability. If appropriate, you may instead interview the adult or the student. You may use the sample questions on Canvas to guide your interview.

A 5-slide (you may add an additional cover slide), 10-minute e-presentation overview of the subject's disability from your interview must be presented. **Tell the individual's story!** This assignment must be uploaded in the designated area of our Canvas site by 11:59p on your presentation date. You are also expected to submit your transcript from the interview (which may be linked on your final slide). In your presentation, include:

- i. An overview and characteristics of the disability
- ii. Disability manifestation in classroom setting (home or workplace if the subject is an adult)
- iii. Management techniques, resources & supports
- iv. Teaching implications for individuals who may present with a similar disability
- v. Relevant research/resources in [APA format](#) (3 resources required; class text can count as 1 if appropriate).

3. **Observation Journal (50 points)**

In partnership with [NU's Center for Talent Development \(CTD\)](#), you will observe exceptional students who are gifted and talented. At the conclusion of your observation, you will submit an observation journal. You may use this [Observation Template](#) to guide your observations. Your journals will be assessed in Canvas, according to the rubric included in this syllabus.

4. **Differentiated Instruction Presentation (50 points)**

Read selected/assigned chapters from the Tomlinson (2017) text, *How to Differentiate Instruction in Academically Diverse Classrooms*. (3rd ed.). You will teach your chapters to the class. The goal of this assignment is to provide a broad overview of your chapters (incorporating perspective and insights you have learned as a result of the reading), while engaging colleagues in learning, reviewing, and investigating the content.

Create a brief presentation in the electronic format of your choice. Remember, this text is all about differentiation, so be creative! Incorporate the use of a game, or some form of interactive activity to enhance student learning. You may incorporate any interactive format you like, and any design that will keep interest, and advance learning in response to the chapters. Further, your instruction must include evidence of the incorporation of information gleaned from previous chapters (there does not need to be evidence from every chapter). Your final presentation should highlight the most salient points in the chapters. Presentations should be no more than 30 minutes total, budgeting appropriate time for direct instruction *and* your interactive game/activity. You will provide and receive feedback on your presentation using the [DI Observation & Feedback Tool](#). Your final product will be assessed in Canvas, according to the rubric included in this syllabus.

5. **Attendance/Class Engagement & Participation/Dispositions (40 points)**

See Student Attendance Policy on page 3 of this document.

Course and Teaching Assessments

Reflective Response (6 total, 10 points each)	60 points
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Observation Journal	50 points
Differentiated Instruction Presentation	50 points
Family Interview Presentation	100 points
Attendance/Class Engagement & Participation/Dispositions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submits assignments on time, following directions, attending all meetings ▪ Actively engages & participates in class activities and discussions ▪ Articulates information in a professional manner that adds educational value (in both oral and in written forms) ▪ Respectfully comments on the work of peers, demonstrates awareness of course content in relation to observation of own teaching philosophy 	40 points <i>(4 points per week)</i>
Total Possible	300 points

Key Course Readings and Assignments

Course Flexibility and Student Input:

This syllabus and course outline represent a best estimate of the topics we will discuss and the activities we will complete. The course may evolve based on the interests, experiences and needs of our unique learning community.

Please bring an open mind, questions, and ideas to share so this class can be dynamic and relevant. You are expected to read and view all appropriate material prior to the class discussion. It is your responsibility to check Canvas announcements regarding changes, assignment due dates, and availability of course documents and resources. Selected materials on relevant topics may be assigned throughout the quarter.

Learning experiences may include lectures, cooperative learning groups, presentation, written projects, observation and others.

Session Date	Topic	Assignment/Due Date
Week 1 9/27	Introductions, Syllabus, Canvas Foundations ADA, 504, IDEA ISBE Disability Areas	Acronyms Chapter 1 (F&B) Sign Up (Family Interview & DI) YouTube: Special Books by Special Kids
Week 2 10/4	Special Education Procedures & Services	Chapter 2 (F&B) Reflective Response #1
Week 3 10/11	Partnerships & Collaboration Students with Special Needs other than Disabilities	Chapters 3 & 8 (F&B) <i>Guests: Susan Corwith & Kate Cichon, CTD</i> <i>Article: "Rethinking What Gifted Education Means and who it Should Serve"</i> Activity Reflective Response #2
Week 4 10/18	Students with High Incidence Disabilities Students with Low Incidence Disabilities	Chapters 6 & 7 (F&B) <i>Tentative: Guest Speaker</i> Reflective Response #3

		<p>Video: <i>Traumatic Brain Injury</i> Video: <i>Orthopedic Impairments</i> Video: <i>Tour of a Successful Classroom for Students with Severe Disabilities</i> Video: <i>Surviving Anxiety: Salome Tibebe</i> Video: <i>Traumatic Brain Injury</i> Article: <i>"The Forgotten Ones"</i></p>
Week 5 10/25	<p><i>Legal Presentation</i> Responding to Student Behavior</p>	<p>Guest: <i>Jennifer Smith, Attorney</i> Chapter 12 (F&B) Reflective Response #4 Articles & audio: <i>"Far From Home" NPR Series</i> Video: <i>Pre-K Expulsions & Implicit Bias</i></p>
Week 6 11/1	<p>Assessing Needs Planning Instruction</p>	<p>Activity Chapters 4 &5 (F&B) Family Interview E-Presentations Reflective Response #5 <i>Zaretta Hammond: Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain</i> webinar</p>
Week 7 11/8	<p>Adjusting Instruction Differentiated Instruction (DI) Observation & Feedback Tool</p>	<p>Chapter 9 (F&B) Family Interview E-Presentations Reflective Response #6 Video: <i>Differentiating Instruction</i></p>
Week 8 11/15	<p>Strategies for Student Independent Learning Evaluating Student Learning</p>	<p>Chapters 10 & 11 (F&B) CTD Observation Journal DI Presentation Group Planning</p>
Week 9 11/22	<p>DI Chapter Presentations - Groups 1 & 2</p>	<p>DI Chapter Presentations Differentiation Project Due for Groups 1 & 2</p>
Week 10 11/29	<p>DI Chapter Presentations- Groups 3 & 4</p>	<p>DI Chapter Presentations Differentiation Project Due for Groups 3 & 4</p>

**Assignments are posted in Canvas including additional readings and course content.
This list does not include all requirements for the week.*

Scoring Rubrics

Some assignments will be assessed according to the following scoring rubrics:

Observation Journal			
Area	Criteria	Points	Score
Description	Description of classroom activities, student engagement, teaching strategies, assistive technology, etc.	10	
Integration of course content	Response integrates an element of the course. This can be from readings, class material, or class presentations.	10	
Application of concept	Response applies what you have learned to a real life situation. This can be an 'Aha'	20	

	moment, an application to your future teaching or questions you may have that remain.		
Presentation	Journals, while meant to be a personal reflection of your learning, must still be coherent, organized and professionally written.	10	
Total		50	

Differentiated Instruction Presentation			
Area	Criteria	Points	Score
Content Coverage	A broad overview of assigned chapter content (incorporating perspective and insights you have learned as a result of the reading) is delivered. The content delivery style engages colleagues in learning, reviewing, and investigating the content. The presentation is sufficiently self-explanatory so someone not listening to your presentation understands the most salient points in the chapters.	10	
Presentation	Presentation is professional and creative with clear organization, well developed themes, proper citation (if relevant) and void of technical errors.	10	
Engagement Activity	Engagement Activity is well-designed, highly interactive, easy to implement, and has a clear connection to chapter content.	10	
Preponderance of Evidence	While not every area of the DI Observation & Feedback Tool must be observed, the preponderance of evidence across domain components is observed.	10	

Collaboration	Collaboration with classmates & group partners is shared, authentic and clear. Communication is two-way.	5	
Incorporation of Prior Learning	There is clearly identifiable evidence that prior learning is incorporated into the presentation.	5	
Total		50	

Family Interview Presentation Rubric				
	Developed	Developing	Points	Score
Overview of characteristics of the disability	Candidate demonstrated knowledge of laws and legal documents that protect individuals with exceptionalities, assigning them to specific categories for service.	Inadequate knowledge of relevant laws, documents and/or disability categories.	15	
Discussion of familial cultural & contextual factors.	Candidate demonstrated knowledge of contextual factors (family structure, SES, level of education of parents/guardians, family values, cultural identity) that may impact the growth and development of an individual.	Limited description of the family context.	15	
Discussion of how the individual's disability influences family life and the home environment.	Candidate collected information and discussed the aspects of family life that involve an individual with exceptionalities.	Limited discussion of the family life of an individual with exceptionalities.		
Discussion of student's and parents' experiences at school.	Candidate collected information and discussed the family perspective on school experiences of a student with exceptionalities	Limited discussion of school experiences.	15	
Discussion of	Candidate collected information	Limited discussion of	15	

management techniques, resources and supports	and discussed effective management techniques, interventions, resources and supports.	management techniques, interventions, resources and supports.		
Reflection on the learning from the interview and teaching implications	Candidate demonstrated skills of reflection on the learned information and the ability to apply the learned information to future practice.	Limited reflection.	15	
Communication of ideas and APA Style.	Candidate wrote logically and communicated ideas clearly. The paper is free of grammatical and mechanical errors and it is in compliance with APA style.	Inadequate writing.	25	
Submission of interview transcript	Substantive transcript submitted.	Transcript limited or missing.		
Total			100	