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## **Topics in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education for Students with Special Needs Course Description**

In-depth exploration of issues related to students with disabilities who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Nationally recognized issues and practices for these individuals will be reviewed and how those issues are reflected within the border region we serve.

This course is specifically geared towards teachers enrolled in the Special Education or Teacher Education, MA program.

### **Prerequisites for this Course:**

Conditional acceptance into the MA Special Education program or Instructor approval.

**Required Reference Materials:** (all students will be held accountable for reflecting knowledge of APA style in through their assignments)

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By American Psychological Association

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May be purchased at the UTEP Bookstore or online at such places as [APAStyle.org](http://APAStyle.org), [Amazon](#), [Barnes and Noble](#).

### **Announcements**

There is a good chance that even though I have tried to iron out all of the procedural kinks through the course content and syllabus, there might be some unexpected changes or questions. PLEASE check the Announcements section and Help me Discussion Board, frequently (i.e. Two Times a Week Minimum) to keep abreast of course-related announcements.

### **Course Objectives**

In SPED 5321: Topics in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education for Learners with special needs, you will develop and acquire each of the following:

**Overarching Understandings:**

1. The issues facing the field of special education do not exist without influence from, and upon the field of education in general.
2. The implications of educational reform efforts to "leave no child behind" create substantial gaps for students with diverse learning needs.
3. A critical approach to the institutional practices of special education is necessary to ensure students with diverse learning needs have opportunities to reach their full potential.
4. Culture and all its diversity must be taken into account both in concept and in practice by those in the education profession.
5. A shift to reconstruct (special) education needs input from parents and students, teachers, teacher educator, researchers, and policymakers.

**Upon completion of this course students will demonstrate an understanding of how Teacher Educator Standards within the state of Texas necessitate that educators have a deep knowledge and awareness of the issues that impact CLDEs:**

1. Students will develop an awareness of the issues in the field of (special) education and the impacts of those issues on students with diverse learning needs.

**Standard I. The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.**

- 1.4k issues in definition and identification procedures for individuals with disabilities, including individuals from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
  - 1.6k variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across cultures and their effects on the relationship among child, family, school, and community;
  - 1.9k rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, students, teachers and other professionals, and schools as they relate to individual learning needs;
  - 1.2s articulate current issues and best practices in the education of individuals with disabilities;
  - 1.3s articulate the factors that influence the overrepresentation of minority students in programs for individuals with disabilities.
2. Students will develop an understanding of the impact of cultural and linguistic diversity on children's lives and their learning.

**Standard II. The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.**

- 2.2k personal cultural biases and differences that may affect one's teaching;
- 2.4s respect the culture, gender, and personal beliefs of individual students and families;
- 2.5s exercise objective professional judgment in the practice of the profession;
- 2.8s use copyrighted educational materials in an ethical manner;

- 2.1k standards and policies of the profession, including the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Code of Ethics;

**Standard X. The special education teacher promotes students' academic performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.**

- 10.5k varied cultural perspectives that affect the relationship among parents/guardians, schools, and communities with regard to effective instruction for individuals with disabilities;
  - 10.6k the impact of language development on the academic and social skills of individuals with disabilities;
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3. Students will practice critical thinking as they deconstruct and reconstruct the field of special education as a profession and a practice.
  4. Students will practice their ability to discuss and debate the different sides of issues facing learners with diverse needs.

Bilingual Teacher Educator Standards

**Standard II. The bilingual education teacher has knowledge of the foundations of bilingual education and the concepts of bilingualism and biculturalism.**

- 2.5k how to create an effective bilingual and multicultural learning environment, including knowledge of diversity; awareness of the existence of regional differences in languages; ways to address the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of bilingual learners; awareness of regional differences in languages; and ways to bridge the home and school cultural environments.
- 2.3s make appropriate instructional decisions based on program model and design, and select appropriate instructional strategies and materials in relation to specific program models;
- 2.4s address the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of bilingual learners;
- 2.5s use knowledge of diversity to plan and implement effective instruction that includes incorporating the diversity of the home into the classroom setting and selecting linguistically and culturally appropriate instructional materials and methodologies;
- 2.6s demonstrate sensitivity to learners' diverse cultural backgrounds and show respect for regional language differences; and
- 2.7s advocate equity for bilingual learners.

ESL Teacher Educator Standards

**Standard II. The ESL teacher has knowledge of the foundations of ESL education and factors that contribute to an effective multicultural and multilingual learning Environment.**

- 2.4k how to create an effective multicultural and multilingual learning environment, including knowledge of diversity; characteristics of effective

learning environments for ESL students; and ways to address the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of ESL students.

**Standard V. The ESL teacher has knowledge of the factors that affect ESL students' learning of academic content, language, and culture.**

- 7.1k strategies for effective advocacy for ESL students;
  - 7.2k the importance of family involvement in the education of ESL students and ways to bridge differences between the home and school environments; and
  - 7.3k ways in which community members and resources can positively affect student learning in the ESL program.
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5. Students will explore the research in the field of special education which focuses on current trends and issues.

**Course Structure (Time Requirements)**

For some of you this will be the first time taking an online course. Students often comment that they spend more time on online courses than when taking a "face-to-face" course. There is a common formula known in the academic world for time devoted to course related requirements. For every hour of "in-class" time, the student is expected to do at least three hours of "out-of-class" time. During a semester we would be meeting for approximately 45 hours (45 hrs. face-to-face + 45 hrs. outside work = 90 hrs. per semester). Therefore you should be planning to spend at least 10-15 hours on this course per week (this includes observations, readings, thoughtful reflections and discussions). Keep this in mind, and if you do not have the time nor access to a computer and internet, 24/7 you may want to reconsider taking this course.

**Complications: Course Content**

You can contact the instructor by email or you can leave a phone message (915-747-5266) if you are having difficulty understanding an assignment. The instructor will respond as soon as possible within 24 hrs, through the Blackboard platform. If you have any critical questions and feel like you need further guidance, please post your concern(s), comment(s), and questions on the special Discussions message board labeled "**Help Me**" which is designed for comments regarding the course and course procedures. If I do not respond right away, you might find that someone else has the answer to one of your questions. I will also be online for **Virtual Office Hours: Monday 8:00 - 10:00 PM**

1. All assignments are expected on due dates. Unless the instructor has given prior approval, all late papers, and assignments (postings) will result in a grade penalty which is up to the instructors' discretion.
  - a. All discussion board will be permanently closed one week after assignment deadlines, and you will not be allowed to post in those areas.
  - b. A student that misses Three (3) weeks of assignments and discussions will be automatically dropped from this course.
  - c. MAINTAIN electronic copies of all work submitted.
  - d. Please post your responses directly into the discussion boards (you can formulate your responses in a Word document and save your file, however PLEASE do not

post attachments in the discussion boards unless you have posted your response directly into the Discussion Board as well.

2. All written assignments will be evaluated on the basis of organization of ideas, clarity of expression, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. PLEASE PROOFREAD YOUR WORK before posting (I suggest you write everything in a word document. Then you can copy paste it into the discussion board)

If you would like someone to review your written work, you can go to the UTEP Writing Lab located in the UTEP Library, 1st floor.

3. A Word of Caution and E-Mail Guidelines: At this point, it is also important to share a word of caution, so we can become wiser about interpersonal distance learning communications. As you can see, when communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we develop some ground rules for working at a distance. The information which follows provides a framework to help you improve your online communication skills and the sending/receiving of email messages.

Avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting. For more information on NETIQUETTE can be found at [www.albion.com/netiquette](http://www.albion.com/netiquette). Only use caps when trying to highlight a specific word or concept.

4. Students with Disabilities: As per Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Center for Accommodations and Student Services (CASS) located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call 915-747-5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability.

**5. The following are the standards for Academic Dishonesty at UTEP:**

*"Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give an unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and available in the Office of the Dean of Students, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others."*

## Course Requirements and Grading

1. **Culturally Responsive Service Learning (250 Points):** Action from education is necessary to achieve educational equity, justice, and excellence for students from diverse populations. Commitment to transforming educational opportunities for diverse students requires knowledge of self, the student population, the community you serve and the public policies that impact your profession and lives of your students. Throughout this semester you will be working in small groups (no more than 4) by exploring a variety of issues that impact the lives of children, youth, and adults with disabilities in a community you select. You will address the problem and develop an action plan for addressing the problem and how you see it being implemented. You are to conduct an in-depth investigation which will explore the levels your school's/community cultural competence and cultural responsiveness to the students it serves as well as learning about the community and the public policies that are currently impacting day-to-day practice. Details are posted in the Last learning module and will provide guidance to developing this project.

**Progress report: Proposal for research and action plan - 50**

**Presentation to the class - 100**

**Lit Review Paper - 100**

2. **Participation in online weekly or biweekly discussions (160 Points):** The foundation of this course is the active participation by you in the discussions of assigned readings. Readings and discussion boards are embedded within the weekly **Learning Modules**. Please note that in most Learning Modules you will have two weeks between postings. Allowing you time to read in detail and develop thorough and thoughtful responses. See the rubric for discussion postings for more detail of what is expected.

3. **Professionalism (50 Points):** One of UTEP's primary goals is to prepare UTEP students to meet lifelong intellectual, ethical, and career challenges and to be the leaders of the 21st century. It is your duty as a UTEP graduate student to be prepared for participating in this class and to be an active participant in each discussion; these efforts provide an example of the future professional that you will become in the field. You are expected to read the assigned materials, post discussions on a timely basis, participate in discussions, respect and address differences in a professional manner. Part of your grade will be based on your weekly contributions to the discussions led by your peers. It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes made to this syllabus. Your final grade will reflect your professional demeanor throughout this course (professor's discretion).

**Assigned Readings and Discussions Rubric**

Excellent Full Credit	Adequate Partial Credit	Weak No Credit
<p>1. Responds fully to the assignment (1-page review, summary, reflection)</p> <p>2. Presents a topic statement containing the issue to be analyzed and the position to be taken</p> <p>3. Presents good critical thinking that is clear, logical, coherent, and relevant</p> <p>4. Deep and broad</p> <p>5. Evident use of APA style</p> <p>6. Invokes and uses disciplinary facts correctly</p> <p>7. Is focused, well organized, and unified</p> <p>8. Correctly documents and cites sources</p> <p>9. Is free of errors in grammar, punctuation, word choice, spelling, and format</p> <p>10. Displays originality and creativity in completing this assignment</p>	<p>Realizes adequacy in 1 through 9 and demonstrates overall competence -- but contains a few relatively minor errors or flaws.</p> <p>2. Limited use of references. Posting is mostly based on personal experiences</p> <p>A "C" paper is adequate in all regards but could use polish and usually looks and reads like a next-to-final draft.</p>	<p>Fails to realize some elements of 1 through 9 adequately and contains several relatively serious errors or flaws or many minor ones.</p> <p>A "D" paper is less than adequate for public presentation and often looks and reads like a first or second draft</p>

**How to Survive!**

In order to survive this course there are some general guidelines that will help you:

1. Make sure you complete the readings. The guiding questions and introductions will help guide you in what I consider to be important. Yet you may find other aspects of the article that you would like to add to the discussion feel free to do so. This course is designed to provide you an overview of critical issues in educating CLDE students.
2. Do put time and effort into weekly discussions. This will be a key to applying your new knowledge within real classroom settings. This will also get you on the way to becoming a reflective teacher.
3. Do post your responses. The group interactions will help us all learn from each other.
4. Make time to complete your assignments! Pretend you are actually going to the class and schedule a time to participate in the course discussions.
5. Ask questions if you are in doubt of the course content and procedures.

6. Do all of your work on a Word document first. Then cut and paste into the discussion board. Make sure you SAVE, SAVE, SAVE your work first. You can go to the My Files link on Blackboard and save your files on Blackboard. This way you can work on them on whatever computer you may be using at the time.

### **Computer Requirements**

First, let's make sure your computer has the necessary [plug-ins](#) you will need to access all the content in this course. You can [click here](#) to access UTEP's test page that will inform you if the computer you are using has the latest software available.

### **Software Requirements**

You will need the following software on your computers to efficiently work in this course. In some cases your computer may already have some of these programs installed.

- Adobe Acrobat Reader. You can get the program by going to <http://www.adobe.com> and then clicking on the icon on the center of the screen which says "Get Adobe Reader". Follow instructions to install the reader.
- Adobe Flash Player. You can get the player by going to <http://www.adobe.com> and then clicking on "Get Adobe Flash Player". Follow instructions to install the player.
- Apple QuickTime Player. You can get this player by going to <http://www.apple.com>. Once there, click on the "Downloads" tab on the top of the page and then click on QuickTime "Download" and follow instructions.
- Microsoft Office. I recommend buying this if you do not have any word processing software or presentation software. As students, you can generally buy this whole package for about \$25, far less than the store price of approximately \$400.

### **Incomplete Grades:**

Incompletes will only be offered to students who have completed 80% of course requirements and have documentation of extreme hardship (i.e. medical, loss in direct family, military deployment). Course Schedule Changes

As course instructor, I reserve the right to adjust the course syllabus or change assignments as needed. I will be sure to give you plenty of notice prior to any changes. Remember that our course syllabus and class schedule are living documents and can change.

### **Time Management**

The rule of thumb for time required for preparing for a college level course is approximately three (3) hours for every credit hour taken. This is a standard figure recommended across the board by American universities. For a 3 credit course, course you should expect to spend:

**3 hours of class time + 9 hours of study and prep time = 12 hours per week.**

### **Notice of SafeAssign**

This course may utilize third party software that has the ability to automatically detect plagiarism on documents submitted for grading.

**Copyright Notice**

Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

**Technical Assistance**

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and help desk support at: <http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/>.

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