



**SPED 5321**

Topics in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse  
Education for Learners with Special Needs

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**Bb Ultra(link in Blackboard under: Virtual Meetings/Office Hours)**  
and by Appointment

## **Topics in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Education for Students with Special Needs**

### **Course Description**

This course will explore issues related to students with disabilities who are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds. A review of how nationally recognized issues and practices for CLD students and how those issues are reflected within the U.S./Mexico border region are discussed.

This course is specifically designed for graduate level students enrolled in the Special Education or Teacher Education programs.

### **Prerequisites:**

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

**Required Reference Materials:** all students are accountable for using APA style in all written assignments including course discussions. I strongly recommend that you have full access to the:

**Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Sixth Edition**

By American Psychological Association

**ISBN: 978-1-4338-0559-2**

May be purchased at the UTEP Bookstore or online at such places as

[APAStyle.org](http://APAStyle.org), [Amazon](http://Amazon), [Barnes and Noble](http://Barnes and Noble).

### **Helpful links:**

APA LINKS: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability>

**All readings are available as downloadable PDF files**

### **Announcements**

There is a good chance that even though I have tried to clear all of the procedural kinks through out the course content and syllabus, there may be some unexpected changes or questions. PLEASE check the **Announcements section** and **Help Me** Discussion Board bi weekly to keep abreast of course-related announcements.

### **Course Objectives:**

Through this course 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 the field of education in general.
2. The implications of educational reform efforts such as No Child Left Behind, and implications of high stakes testing, 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. Those in the education profession must take culture and all its diversity into account both in concept and in practice and understand the relationship with family, school, and community.
5. A shift to reconstruct (special) education needs input from parents and students, teachers, teacher educators, community members, researchers, and policymakers.

**Upon completion of this course students will demonstrate an understanding of how the teacher educator standards within the state of Texas establish the need that educators have a deep knowledge and awareness of the issues that impact CLDE students:**

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.

**Texas Education Agency (TEA) Special Education 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.

**TEA Special Education 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;

**TEA Special Education 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;

**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.

## TEA ESL Teacher Educator Standards

### **Standard II. The English as a Second Language (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.

3. Students will practice their ability to discuss and debate the different sides of issues facing learners with diverse needs through online discussions.
4. Students will explore current issues related to the field of special education through exploring community organizations and engaging in a case-study project.

### **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 (credit hour taken), 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).

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

This includes community research, readings, thoughtful reflections and discussions. Critical to your success in this course is accessibility to a computer and internet. You are not expected to participate on online discussions on a daily basis, but you do want to have a block of time where you are responding to in-class discussions without any interruptions. **Weekly postings will be required.** You will be working on a Community Based Case Study (CBCS) that will require time throughout the semester to conduct active community based research.

### **Navigating this Course:**

#### **Preferred contact with the instructor:**

1. POST all content related questions in the **"Help Me"** link in LEARNING MODULES. If you are having difficulty understanding the course content, others might be having the same questions. The **"Help Me" link** 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 respond within 24 hrs.
2. If you prefer to contact me by phone, please send me an email with your phone number, in the **Blackboard Mail link**. I will be happy to contact you. Make sure you let me know what the best times for me to contact you.
3. **For any technical questions with Blackboard please call the UTEP HelpDesk (747-HELP (4357)).** Hours of Operation: Monday- Thursday: 7am-9pm. Friday: 7am-8pm. Saturday: 9am-2pm. Sunday: 12pm-5pm

**Due Dates:** All assignments are expected on due dates. Unless given prior approval, all late papers, and assignments (postings) **may** be considered for partial credit.

- a. A student that misses Three (3) weeks of assignments and discussions will be automatically dropped from this course.
- b. Please MAINTAIN electronic files/copies of all work submitted.
- c. Please post your responses directly into the discussion boards (DO formulate your responses in a Word document first 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.

**All assignments will be evaluated** based on organization of ideas, clarity of expression, grammar, spelling, and punctuation and APA format. PLEASE PROOFREAD YOUR WORK before posting. Compose your responses in a word document **first**. Copy & paste your response into the discussion board AND attach a file with your response.



NOTE: Please have someone review your written responses prior to posting. Either you can go in person to the UTEP Writing Lab located in the UTEP Library, 2nd floor or you can find a link to the UWC under the Getting Started Technology Tips link on the Home page of the course.

**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. 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 ALL 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.

The following website has some good tips on communicating electronically:  
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/effective-e-mail-communication/>

**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.

**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. Community based Case Study Project

**250 Points**

Action from educators 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 individually in developing an in-depth case study which explores the cultural competence and responsiveness to the students with disabilities **outside** of daily school activities. Specifically this case study must be conducted in an after school and/or weekend program in a community setting (organization) that serves individuals with disabilities and their families. **One place you can start your search** is through the El Paso del Norte Children's Development Center (<https://pdnchildrens.org/>) to explore the multiple community based organizations that support children and families with disabilities in El Paso.

By Week 4, you are to identify a particular organization that serves children or adults with disabilities. Your in-depth case study will begin with an approved research question (discussed by you and Dr. Calvo) that you will post in your Journal/Field notes link. Your knowledge of the organization will lead to the research you will conduct based on an issue you wish to investigate.

What sections will be included in your final case study report?

- a) **Literature review** to include at least 8-10 research based articles;
- b) **A review of the public and internal policies** of that organization; and how do they guide the day-to-day practices to serve individuals with disabilities and their families;
- c) **Data collected** through documentation of your work may include a combination of: observation notes, pictures (with consent), three interview transcriptions (with consent) conducted with parents, organization directors, and or staff members; collection of possible informational flyers, links to social media if appropriate, and personal reflection field notes. You will be documenting your progress in the Journal/Field notes link in Bb, through on-going weekly progress notes.

Your final grade for this project will be based on (1) the Case Study Report: a written report (in APA format) of your findings. (2) The presentation that will be shared with your peers in the format of a webpage or power point (with active links, videos, pictures, other documentation- as deemed appropriate for your presentation).



#### **4. Professionalism (10 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 aspect of this course; these efforts provide an example your professionalism. 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 contributions to the discussions. 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).

#### **How to succeed in this course.**

In order to succeed 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 your responses to the readings. Of course, you may find some other interesting points that you may present as well as long as you are supporting your positions with research. This course is designed to provide you with an opportunity to discuss critical issues that are faced in schools when educating CLDE students.
2. Do put forth time and effort into discussions. A reflective practitioner takes time to research and reflect on current issues and practice. The provided readings have been selected to spark your interest in related topics. You may or not agree with them, and that is fine as long as you support your position with evidence based research.
3. Do post your responses. The group interactions will help us all learn from each other.
4. Make the time to put your thoughts together and “attend” class. Pretend you are actually going to the class and schedule a time to participate and prepare for 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 and attach your WD document. Make sure you SAVE, SAVE, SAVE your work first. You can go to the My Files link in Blackboard and save your files in Blackboard. This way you can work on them from whatever computer you may be using at the time.
7. Do work on your Case Study research project throughout the semester. Do Not wait until the end of the semester!
8. Complete all Journal/Field Note entries

9. Communicate with your professor and your peers

**Computer Requirements**

First, 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 at the UTEP Bookstore.

**Incomplete Grades:**

Incompletes are only be offered to students who have completed over 80% of course requirements and have documentation of extreme hardship (i.e. medical, loss in direct family, military deployment) towards the end of the semester (after drop course deadline).

**Notice of SafeAssign**

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

**Copyright Notice**

Copyright law protects many of the materials that are posted within this course. 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.



**NOTE:**

*As course instructor, I reserve the right to adjust the course syllabus or modify assignments as needed. I will be sure to give you plenty of notice prior to any changes. Remember that the class schedule is a living document and can change with prior notification.*