



**SPED 524**  
**Characteristics of Students with Mild Disabilities**  
**Summer II 2024 Online**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

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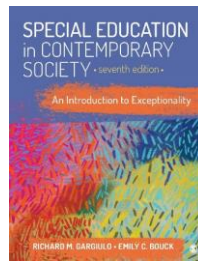
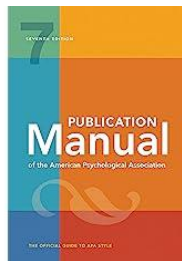
Email: [Beth.Jones@tamuc.edu](mailto:Beth.Jones@tamuc.edu) (preferred method of contact)

Office Hours: by appointment; Please do not hesitate to contact me, preferably through e-mail, if an appointment is needed.

**Textbook(s) Required**

American Psychological Association. (2009). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Gargiulo, R. M. (2020). Special education in contemporary society: An introduction to exceptionality (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Sage.



**Course Description**

***University Catalog Description***

SPED 524 examines characteristics of students identified as having emotional/behavioral disorders, mild mental retardation (intellectual disabilities), and learning disabilities, with applications for other exceptionalities. The content includes state and federal rules and regulations, issues and trends, instructional strategies, school-home partnerships, and formal and informal assessment.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

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1. The student will describe how educators and other professionals determine the difference between “typical” and “atypical” behaviors

2. The student will demonstrate an understanding of philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education
3. The student will develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of professionals, parents, students, and the community
4. The student will describe historical points of view and contributions of culturally diverse groups to the field of special education
5. The student will examine characteristics of students with exceptionalities and effects of exceptionalities on learning and development.
6. The student will be an active online communicator and collaborator about achievement of all students in each content area in a variety of settings.
7. The student will analyze research-based procedures about proactive development of student-centered learning environments emphasizing social, emotional, and academic achievement of all students.
8. The student will describe past, present, and future models of assessment and intervention, including technological advances
9. The student will discuss issues and trends in special education, including key legislation, litigation, and use of innovative technology

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Texas Special Education Standards EC-G and 6-12:</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Texas Diagnostician</b></p>
<p>1. <b>Standard B. Legal and Ethical Guidelines.</b> The Early Childhood-Grade 6 special education teacher demonstrates knowledge of all applicable state and federal laws, including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008; Texas Education Code specific to students with disabilities; Texas Administrative Code specific to students with disabilities; and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. The Early Childhood-Grade 6 special education teacher must:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">3) demonstrate knowledge of IDEA 2004 eligibility categories; EC-6 (19) and 6-12 (24) demonstrate understanding that students served through special</p>	<p>1. <b>Standard V.</b> The educational diagnostician knows eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(1) The educational diagnostician knows and understands:</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">(A) characteristics of individuals with disabilities, including those with different levels of severity and with multiple disabilities;</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">(B) educational implications of various disabilities; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">(C) the variation in ability exhibited by individuals with particular types of disabilities.</p>

education may also have other special populations identifiers (i.e., gifted and talented, English learner, highly mobile and at risk, and dyslexia);

**2. Standard C. Understanding and Addressing Each Individual's Developmental and Learning Needs.** The Early Childhood-Grade 6 special education teacher must:

EC-6 (3) demonstrate knowledge of how exceptionalities can interact with development and learning;

6-12 (3) understand the impact of exceptionalities on developmental milestones, executive functioning, and social skills;

(9) demonstrate knowledge of how developmental academic, social, and functional characteristics of individuals with high support needs impact levels of support needs;

## **Technology Requirements**

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This is an online course that will be conducted within eCollege. To get started with the course, go to <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>. You will need your CWID and password to login to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your login please contact Technology Services at (903) 468-6000. Contacting eCollege

The following options are available 24 hours/7 days per week:

1. Help: Click on the help button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (e.g., "How do I submit to dropbox?", "How do I post to the discussion board?")
2. Chat Support: Click on "Live Support" button on the toolbar within your course to chat with an eCollege representative
3. Phone: 1-800-656-5511 (toll free) to speak with an eCollege Technical Support Representative
4. Email: [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to indicate a support request with an eCollege Technical Support Representative

## **Communication**

The instructor is available virtually by Skype and email. If you would like to schedule an appointment, the best way is to email. We can then set up a time to chat when it is convenient for you.

## **Special Education Department Email Guidelines**

In an attempt to provide a framework for professional communication, emails must contain the following:

- Subject Line: Course (e.g., SPED 595); additional information if desired (e.g., Statement of Research Interests)
- Address the reader
- Adhere to writing mechanics rules
- If asking for assistance with an issue, please list at least 3 things you have done to try and remediate the issue prior to contacting me (these should probably include looking at the syllabus/course rubrics/eCollege, contacting a colleague, and checking your text, etc.).
- Close with your name
- Please send emails from your University accounts. The instructor will not discuss grades over email. If you would like to discuss your grade, please make an appointment.

## **Course and University Procedures/Policies**

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### ***Course Participation***

Students are expected to actively participate in the course, complete readings, and submit assignments no later than the due dates indicated on the course schedule.

### ***Academic Integrity***

By accepting this syllabus, the student pledges to uphold the principles of Academic Integrity expressed by the Texas A&M University-Commerce community and the Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education Department. The student agrees to observe these principles and to defend them against abuse by others.

- Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper citation. The instructor reserves the right to submit your work to Turnitin®, SafeAssign®, or similar plagiarism detection services, for an integrity assessment as needed.
- Copyright rules also apply. Use of graphics or data must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to journal articles, books, popular press articles, e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, and information from websites. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to use any data, graphic, or material that you did not create.

- Any attempt to circumvent the integrity of the testing process or otherwise evade the fullest demands of class assignments in an unethical manner constitutes cheating. This can mean looking on another student's exam, consulting notes or books during an exam unless specifically permitted by the instructor, stealing an exam and circulating it among other students. Any offense wholly or partially touching the above definition constitutes cheating for the purposes of this class.
- Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any act of academic dishonesty may result in earning a "0" in the course. All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to the applicable program coordinator and department chair. APA Style and Formatting All work should be submitted using APA style. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) or to access one of the internet sites that provides a summary of this information. All work produced outside of class must be typed unless otherwise noted. <http://www.psywww.com/resource/apacrib.htm> is offered as a companion to the APA style manual. However, it should not be considered a substitute for directly consulting the APA manual, 6th edition for standard of procedures for applying APA style.

### ***Policy on Artificial Intelligence***

- Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.
- Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).
- Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. **If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.**
- In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

### *University Procedures*

#### *ADA Requirements Students with Disabilities:*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library- Room 132  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
Fax (903) 468-8148  
[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

### *Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.

Nondiscrimination Statement A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Learning Activities**

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- Student directed discussion and presentation of key concepts
- Independent library research
- Analysis and synthesis of course readings using APA format
  - Application of course concepts to case studies and practical scenarios
  - Analysis of course materials using a variety of mediums, including web-based resources, applicable professional organizations, and peer-reviewed journal articles

**Overview of Assignments & Grading: When submitting to the Dropbox, you can find them by going to Activities-Assignments in D2L.**

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• **Weekly Discussions (100 pts)** Students will respond to weekly discussion threads, pertinent to the topic for that week.

#### **Discussions include the Introduction, Parent Interview, Course Reflection & Others**

1. **Personal Introduction and Statement of Interests (5 points-graded in Discussions)** Students will craft an introduction and statement of interests. Students will post their statements to the student lounge located within our course shell. Each statement will include information about your program, current employment/career goals, and areas of interest. Additional details and examples will be provided. Completion of the assignment will result in a score of 5 points.
2. **Course Reflection Requirements:** Students will complete a one-page reflection summarizing their experiences through the semester. Specifically, students will think about their perceptions regarding course content. Topics of interest might include disability awareness, special education policies, why there is a research to practice gap in your field, the importance of high-quality instruction and intervention, or any other areas of interest. Students

should document their learning and growth as a result of participating in this course.

- **Responses to Readings (75 pts)** Students will complete five recorded responses to the assigned readings using Flip and post the links to their videos in the D2L shell.
- **Dyslexia Training (30 pts)** Students will submit verification of completion of a TEA training in the characteristics and intervention of dyslexia as well as their signature on a form posted in DocSharing verifying the student has accessed and reviewed all dyslexia resources shared by the instructor. **All forms must contain an original signature and be submitted to the DropBox.**
- **Disability Presentation (25 points)** Within the 13 federal disability categories, the student will investigate a **sub-category** of his/her choosing (e.g., Anxiety Disorder, Dyscalculia; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Retinitis Pigmentosa, Down Syndrome, Cri de Chat Syndrome, etc.).
  1. Students will create an interactive presentation that includes research-based citations regarding identification, the social, academic, medical, and emotional implications across the lifespan (birth through adulthood), and evidence-based resources for school personnel. Some presentation options include narrated Power Point®, Prezi®, or Youtube video.
  2. Students will then utilize **Google Jamboard** (<https://youtu.be/6OTRZLNyIic>) to allow classmates to ask questions and give feedback on their presentations. The Google Jamboard link needs to be included with your presentation. This is intended to get you familiar with using Jamboard. The goal is to think about other ways you could use this technology in your classroom (i.e. bell ringers, discussions, exit tickets, enhance engagement).
- **Case Study Analysis (25 points)** The instructor will provide several case studies requiring the student to apply their knowledge of special education to real world scenarios. Students will choose two case studies over the course of the semester and answer corresponding questions. A rubric will be provided.
- **Special Education Critical Concepts (10 x 5 points, 50 points)** Students will use an instructor provided template OR choose a differing preferred method for presentation (i.e... Google Slides, Padlet, etc.) to complete a detailed outline of key concepts related to each of the federal high incidence disability categories. These outlines will provide a synthesis of key course concepts and assist with preparation for the special education department comprehensive exam (see Special Education Graduate Handbook for additional information about the Comprehensive Exam). **The idea is to make them comprehensive and shareable with parents. Be creative on formatting/methodology for presentation. Submissions must be typed.**

Info to Include in each Critical Concept page:

1. IDEA Definition, including types as appropriate. In preparation for comps, you may choose to include your study technique for remembering the definition, such as the example in DocSharing of the 5 components of the ED definition illustrated as fingers on a hand. (You can use this one for ED if you choose, but you will need to come up with the remainder on your own.)
2. Causes
3. Prevalence (provide percentages/numbers as much as possible)
4. Prevention
5. Characteristics
6. Teaching strategies/Accommodations
7. Assistive Technology
8. Resources

You will have ONE page for each of the following topics:

Learning Disabilities

OHI-ADHD

Speech and Language Impairments

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Emotional Disturbance

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**GRADING: 5 pages @ 10 points each = 50 points total**

**\*\*Note:** The other disabilities that fall within these categories can be listed as part of the definition.

**\*Final Project-Transition Assignment:** Students will submit written responses to provided prompts related to transition of students with learning disabilities and other high-incidence disabilities into postsecondary education. **Submissions should be made to the DropBox under Activities-Assignments.**

Assignments should be submitted to the D2L DropBox with the corresponding name (under Activities-Assignments). All written assignments should be typed and adhere to the American Psychological Association manual, whenever appropriate. In addition, all written assignments must contain a header with the name of the person submitting the assignment in the actual document itself (not just the file name when it is uploaded). Late assignments and examinations will not be accepted. All assignments should reflect university level spelling, syntax, and grammar.

It is recommended that students retain electronic and hard copies of ALL course products. Products from this class can become part of one's individual professional portfolio.



**Grading:**

Weekly discussion posts	100
Responses to Readings (5)	75
Case Study Analysis	25
Dyslexia Training	30
Disability Presentation	40
Special Education Critical Concepts Synthesis	50
Final Project-Written Responses	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>

Grading Scale A = 90-100% D = 60-69% B = 80-89% F = 59 and below C = 70-79%

**Course Outline**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Please note that this syllabus serves as a guideline for the course and is subject to change as necessary. It is the student's responsibility to check eCollege and email for updates regularly.

**PROPOSED COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readmgs</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>
1	Introduction: People, Concepts, and Perspectives	* Gargiulio Ch. 1 * Procedural Rights and Safeguards	Introduction <b>DUE 7/9/24</b>  <a href="#">IRIS Perceptions of Disability Module and Types of ARDs Discussions</a> <b>DUE 7/10/24</b>
2	Policies, Practices, Programs/Parents and Families	* Gargiulio Ch. 2 * Guidelines for Writing About Persons with Disabilities * Snow (2004) *Gargiulio Ch. 4	<b>Response to Readings Discussion</b> AND Person First Language Activity <b>DUE 7/12/24</b>
3	Mild Intellectual Disabilities	*Gargiulio Ch. 6	<a href="#">Parent Interview</a> <b>DUE 7/14/24</b>
4	Learning Disabilities and Dyslexia	* Gargiulio Ch. 7	<b>Response to Readings Discussion</b> AND Dyslexia Training Activity Verification <b>DUE 7/16/24</b>
5	Other Health Impairments/ADHD Physical Disabilities	*Gargiulio Ch. 8 * Gargiulo 14	<b>Response to Readings</b>

			<b><i>Discussion</i> DUE 7/18/24</b>
6	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	* Gargiulo 9	Case Study (choose 1 of 2) <b>DUE 7/21/24</b>
7	Autism Spectrum Disorders	*Gargiulo 10	<u>Practitioner v. Research Articles</u> <b><i>Discussion</i> DUE 7/23/24</b>
8	Speech and Language Impairments	* Gargiulo 11	<b><i>Response to Readings Discussion</i></b> AND Critical Concepts Outlines <b>DUE 7/25/24</b>
9	Gifted and Talented (Gargiulo Ch. 15)	* Gargiulo 15	<u>Discussion</u> <b>DUE 7/28/24</b>
10-13	Evidence Based Practices (reading, math, writing/social emotional characteristics)	* Evidenced-Based Practice Module 1-3	<u>EBP and Cooperative Learning</u> <b><i>Discussions</i> DUE 7/30/24</b>
14-16	Universal Design for Learning/Assistive Technology	*Gargiulo Ch. 5	Disability Presentation <b>DUE 8/1/24</b>  <b><i>Response to Readings Discussion</i></b> AND Jamboard response to at least two peer presentations <b>DUE 8/4/24</b>
Finals Week	Wrap-up; Student Presentations and Final		Final Project <b>Due 8/6/24</b>  <u>Course Reflection</u> <b>DUE 8/8/24</b>

Responses to Readings=Blue/Italics  
Discussion=Green/Underlined