



Social, Emotional, and Academic Issues for Special Needs Students SPED 480, 81012, Section 01W

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Jennifer Ozuna, M.Ed.

Telephone: (972) 948-9647 (cell – please text before calling) Email: Jennifer.Ozuna@etamu.edu

Office Hours: Virtual, by appointment

Preferred Form of Communication: University Email

Communication Response Time: within 72 hours, weekdays

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

No required textbook; readings provided in D2L

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to identify the social/emotional and academic needs of students with special needs in inclusive settings. Management strategies, social skill development, and academic accommodations will be targeted. A key purpose of this course is to identify collaborative strategies, tools, and approaches that will assist in making the general education classroom one where all students can be successful.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes	§235.131. Special Education Standards: Early Childhood Grade 6.	§235.133. Special Education Standards: Grades 6-12
----------------------------------	--	---

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Students will apply knowledge of formal and informal assessment procedures and how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions	(b)(10) use a variety of assessment data to write annual measurable goals and present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and identify appropriate accommodations (academic, behavior, state, and district testing) and modifications based on individual student needs, and contribute to drafting the IEP	(b)(14) use a variety of assessment data to write annual measurable goals and present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and to identify appropriate accommodations (academic, behavior, state, and district testing) and modifications based on individual student needs, and contribute to drafting the IEP;
Students will apply knowledge of procedures for planning for individuals with disabilities	(b)(9) demonstrate knowledge of the special education teacher's roles and responsibilities in creating and implementing the IEP with fidelity, including monitoring student IEP goal progress, implementing data collection of IEP goal progress, and reporting progress to the student and parents/guardians throughout the IEP year;	(b)(13) demonstrate knowledge of the special education teacher's roles and responsibilities in creating and implementing the IEP with fidelity, including monitoring student IEP goal progress, implementing data collection of IEP goal progress, and reporting progress to the student and parents/guardians throughout the IEP year;
Students will demonstrate understanding of how to promote students' educational performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations	(d) (5) design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for students with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curriculum;	(d)(3) design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for students with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curriculum;
Students will demonstrate understanding of professional roles and responsibilities and legal and ethical requirements	(h)(1) demonstrate knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Early Childhood-Grade 6 special education teacher and of other professionals who deliver special education services, including related and instructional service providers	(h)(1) demonstrate knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Grades 6-12 special education teacher and of other professionals who deliver special education services;
Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings	(h)(3) collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals to lead effective meetings that address students' instructional, emotional, behavioral, and social needs;	(h)(3) collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals to lead effective meetings that address students' instructional and behavioral needs;

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Since this is an online class, students should be able to use Zoom, the D2L platform, and other web-based instructional tools. See Technology Requirements listed below.

Instructional Methods

This course is a web-based class with four virtual seminars that will take place via Zoom. The instructor has also included various forms of instructional tools in the D2L course such as videos, helpful websites/resources, scholarly articles, and discussion topics. Assignments should be submitted in the D2L.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Enrolled students are responsible for attending seminars and completing assignments on time. The instructor may post announcements in the D2L that need to be seen and responded to in a timely manner. Additionally, please be aware that you should be spending the equivalent of three hours a week of class time (listening to lectures/accessing class materials) on a three-hour course, with additional time being required to complete assignments.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Assignments

1. **Alphabet Soup and Disability Match (15 pts. each)** - Students will use the info in Module 1 to complete these activities. The point of these assignments is to become familiar with the disability categories served in special education and common acronyms.
2. **Parent/Family Interview:** Interview a parent of a student with a documented disability. This activity is intended to help you understand how to better collaborate with families of students with special needs. **Bold parent responses.** The questions you will need to answer in your write-up are as follows:

Parent Interview Questions and Rubric	POINTS
Introduction —Disability(ies), Age, Grade, Additional Pertinent and/or Historically Relevant Information about Child—Refer to TAC 89.1040 for listing of disabilities.—3 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Question 1 —(a) How/when/where were you informed your child has a disability(ies)? (b) Based upon this experience, recommend effective strategies for informing parents of the disability(ies) of their child.—3 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 2 —Summarize your response/reaction upon learning your child has a disability(ies), including any adjustments in your response/reaction through the years.—2 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 3 —Describe reactions/responses siblings may have had (or may have) with a brother/sister with a disability.—2 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 4 —Elaborate on positive and/or negative changes in your family as a result of having a child with a disability.—2 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 5 —Compare changes (positive and/or negative) that may have occurred with extended family members, with friends, in the community as a result of your having a child with a disability.—2 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 6 —Identify services your child is receiving/has received. When did services begin? Where?—2 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 7 —Critique your satisfaction level with your participation in the planning process for services for your child.— 2 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Question 8 —If I were the teacher of your child, point out steps I may take (a) to effectively teach your son/daughter, (b) to effectively build bridges with you, the parent.—3 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
Reflection of Student Enrolled in Sped 480 —Pause for a while. Consider the impact of this Interview on you—your awareness of students with disabilities, your empathy and compassion for parents of children with disabilities, your classroom.—3 <i>professionally written sentences</i>	/2
TOTAL POINTS SCORED OF TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	/20

3. **ARD/IEP Meeting (20 pts.):** Observe an ARD meeting this semester. Your campus administrator or educational diagnostician can help you arrange this. A reflection piece is to be completed after the ARD and should address the following areas (**be sure to include the questions in your reflection and make it clear which answer corresponds to which question**): Each of the following questions are worth two points each, and the remaining two points are for professionalism (typewritten, proper grammar, and spelling)
1. Who attended the ARD? (identify individual by position, not by name)
 2. Who led the ARD?
 3. What was the purpose of the ARD (Admission, Review, or Dismissal)?
 4. What kind of information (assessment, instructional, behavioral, etc.) was shared by each committee member?

The *syllabus/schedule* are subject to change.

5. Specifically, what appeared to be the general educator's role and responsibility as a committee member?
6. How were educational goals and objectives determined?
7. How did the committee arrive at decisions concerning the student's least restrictive environment (LRE)?
8. Were there conflicts or disagreements in the ARD? If so, how were they handled?
9. Was there anything about the process that surprised you or about which you still have questions?

******If you are unable to attend an ARD, interview your mentor or a special education teacher about an ARD he/she has attended. Write that person's responses to the reflection questions.******

4. **Evidence of Accommodations/Modifications and Collaboration (20 pts. total):** Review the IEPs of the students served in your general education setting. Note the format of the documents and how mandated components are addressed. Particularly, what accommodations or modifications are specified for use in general education? **Develop a table (i.e., Excel, Word, etc.) that will allow you to have all the accommodations or modifications for each student you are serving in one accessible document.** If any of your students have a behavior intervention plan (BIP) in place, note the reinforcers and consequences outlined and how they are to be administered. **Your assignment is to submit the following:**
 - A. **Submit a copy of the accommodations/modifications table you developed** (remember to maintain student confidentiality) **(10 pts.)**.
 - B. **Submit answers to these two questions (10 points):**
 - a. Is there currently a system in place to track the effectiveness of identified accommodations and/or modifications?
 - b. How do the general and special educators communicate regarding IEPs and student success?

Note: If there is not a student with an identified disability in your classroom, check with the special education teacher or educational diagnostician on your campus to review forms that are used to create a student's IEP. Don't forget that RtI and 504 committees develop accommodations and/or interventions for struggling students. Talk about what you are doing to ensure the success of all students (so that a referral is not needed).

5. **Seminar Attendance (10 points):** We will have four virtual seminars throughout the semester. It is important that students attend each seminar and fully participate in discussions and activities. These seminars provide opportunities to discuss course concepts and real-world scenarios, collaborate with classmates, and ask questions.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Course Evaluation & Grading:

Alphabet Soup	15 pts.
Disability Match	15 pts.
Parent Interview	20 pts.
ARD/IEP Meeting	20 pts.
Evidence of Accommodations/Modifications and Collaboration	20 pts.
Seminar Attendance (4 total - 2.5 points per seminar)	10 pts
TOTAL	100 pts

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Section and Weeks	Topics	Assignments and Due Date
Seminar 1 <i>Date/time: TBD</i> Zoom link <i>Passcode: sped</i>	Overview of Syllabus/Course Assignments Introduction to Special Education	• Alphabet Soup • Disability Match <i>(Seminar Attendance)</i> Assignments Due By 9/6
Seminar 2 <i>Date/time: TBD</i> Zoom link <i>Passcode: sped</i>	The SPED Process, RTI, and Collaboration	• Parent/Family Interview <i>(Seminar Attendance)</i> Assignments Due by 10/11
Seminar 3 <i>Date/time: TBD</i> Zoom link <i>Passcode: sped</i>	IEPs, Behavior, Accommodations, Modifications	• Evidence of Accommodations/Modifications Assignment <i>(Seminar Attendance)</i> Assignments Due by 11/15
Seminar 4 <i>Date/time: TBD</i> Zoom link <i>Passcode: sped</i>	Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions and Assistive Technology	• ARD/IEP Meeting Reflection <i>(Seminar Attendance)</i> Assignments Due by 12/6

Calendar: Please note that the calendar is tentative and may change at any time and as many times as necessary during the semester. In case of any changes, you will be informed in a timely manner. **It is your responsibility to regularly check your email and D2L for announcements regarding the course.**

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all coursework in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, an ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTOR STATEMENT

Interaction with Instructor Statement If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your "myLeo" mail) and announcements in myLeo online

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

(D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

All assignments/discussions must be turned in on the assigned due date. ***Partial credit MAY be given for late assignments at the discretion of the instructor.***

A note about timeliness: it is highly advised that you DO NOT wait until the deadline for turning in an assignment. I have set the deadlines for assignments to be Sunday nights to give you the weekends for completion. You need to plan ahead for questions/completion of assignments.

Ensure that the assignment guidelines presented in the syllabus are followed. It is important that all assignments are organized according to headings and subheadings delineated in the guidelines. ***Failure to do so will result in an ungraded assignment or a lower evaluation.***

Please always submit your assignments in a Word document (NOT as a picture), so that I can use track changes to provide comments if so needed. In other words, don't submit a whole assignment in D2L by simply cutting and pasting. Always attach your assignments as their own file.

Written Assignments. Written assignments MUST be typed using double-spaced lines, include your name, and have page numbers. In addition, work submitted should reflect a professional quality in terms of scope, depth, writing mechanics, and appearance that would be expected of students at a prestigious university. Proofread all assignments as only materials with minimal or no errors will receive high scores.

Person First Language: Our language is a reflection of our attitudes. Always refer to persons with disabilities with respect. ***Degrading terminology will not be tolerated.*** In this class, we will strive to use “people first” language at all times. “People First” language always refers to the person first and not as a label or a category. For example, refer to “a student with autism” and not “an autistic” or “students with disabilities” and not “disabled students”. In addition, avoid such stigmatizing terminology as “confined to a wheelchair” (say “uses a wheelchair” instead).

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

If you have suggestions, comments, questions, or concerns about the class or the assignments, please call or see the instructor. Please do not save your suggestions for the evaluation at the end of the term when it is too late to implement your suggestions.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-code-of-conduct/>.

If you believe someone has engaged in behaviors that do not align with the Code of Student Conduct or you have other concerns, please visit the File a Report page at <https://www.tamuc.edu/office-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities/concerns-incident-reporting/>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

The *syllabus/schedule is subject to change*.
Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Graduate student academic dishonesty policy:
<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Graduate student academic dishonesty form:

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change*.

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage.

Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M University 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

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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 Services

Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone: (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax: (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University 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.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903- 886-5868 or 9-1-1.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.