



EDUC 2301-001-I3
Introduction to Special Population
Fall 2025
Internet Session

Instructor: Robert Castro, rcastro@com.edu, 409-933-8442

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Office (Student) Hours & Location: Mon & Wed: 1:00 – 5:00: LRC A-215B

Required Textbook:

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Course Description: An enriched, integrated pre-service course and content experience that provides an overview of schooling and classrooms from the perspectives of language, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnic and academic diversity, and equity with an emphasis on factors that facilitate learning. The course provides students with opportunities to participate in early field observations of P-12 special populations and should be aligned as applicable with State Board for Educator Certification Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities standards. To earn credit for the course, students must complete a minimum of 16 contact hours of field experience in P-12 classrooms with special populations.

Course Prerequisite:

Students must have:

- EDUC 1301 Introduction to Teaching

Course requirements (including description of any special projects or assignments):

- **Log into Brightspace at least twice a week** to check for Announcements and e-mail, to complete the weekly quiz, to post a discussion response to the weekly prompt, to review the Module Content, and to retrieve tools needed to complete course assignments and observations. You must monitor and respond to any and all assignments/discussions specified in the Semester Outline/Course Calendar available in Brightspace, and at the end of this document, within prescribed timelines, and you must monitor and respond to instructor initiated Brightspace e-mail within 3 calendar days. The instructor will likewise monitor and respond to Brightspace student-initiated e-mail within 3 calendar days. (This does not apply to weekends or during periods when COM is officially closed.)

- **Participate in all Brightspace** activities in a professional manner (see Guidelines for Professionalism portion of this document and the Participation & Professionalism Grading Rubric located in the Brightspace Menu in the Course Forms folder.)
- **Complete with satisfactory evaluation and submit all assignments within the time limit prescribed by the instructor. Due to the online format for this course, assignments are to be submitted as electronic copies.** Detailed descriptions of assignments and associated grading rubrics can be found in your Brightspace Course Menu in the “Assignments” link. Assignments and their due dates are indicated in the Semester Outline toward the end of this document but are subject to revision if circumstances dictate or if there is consensus among instructor and students. **See Makeup, Late Work, and Extra Credit Policies that follow.**
- **Maintain a quiz average of 50% or better.** Weekly quizzes will be administered through Blackboard, and students are responsible for taking quizzes within the date/time parameters indicated on the Semester Outline (at the end of this document). **Brightspace quizzes will not be re-opened once the availability parameter has elapsed.**
- **COMPLETE A MINIMUM OF 16 DOCUMENTED HOURS OF “LAB/FIELD EXPERIENCE” AS SPECIFIED BELOW.**

Lab/Field Experience Requirements:

Lab/Field experience will be completed online using videos this semester. To earn credit for this course, students will be **required** to complete a **minimum of 16** documented hours of “lab/field experience”. School personnel are required to meet standards designed to assure the safety of the learner population; because this course will have students observing in a variety of classroom settings, they will be required to submit an application for a criminal background check. If a student has a felony **conviction** for certain offenses against children and families, **they may not be eligible to work or volunteer in the public schools or childcare facilities at which these “labs/field experiences” will take place.**

If you have questions about this requirement, consult with your instructor. Future “Lab/field experiences” for this course will require that you make arrangements with appropriate school administrators to schedule the 16 hours as specified in each of the assignments. All course assignments, assignment descriptions, grading rubrics, and assignment-related resources can be found in the Brightspace “Assignments” link. The timeline for accomplishment of these observations is delineated in the Semester Outline (found at the end of this document).

Observation Guidelines:

Because the primary objective of this course is to introduce you as a student to the teaching profession, it is imperative that you gain some initial first-hand exposure to the profession. All instructions and forms related to these observations can be found in Brightspace under the "Assignments" link.

Classroom Conduct Policy:

College of the Mainland requires that students enrolled at COM be familiar with the Standards of Student Conduct, which can be found in the on-line Student Handbook. <https://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook>. Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the Student Code of Conduct. Any violations of the Code of Conduct will result in a referral to the Dean of Students and may result in dismissal from this class.

Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula (methods of evaluation to be employed to include a variety of means to evaluate student performance):

Brightspace Quizzes	=	10%
Professionalism: Assignment, Participation, Discussion	=	90%
Total	=	100%

Assignments and Special Projects:

Each major assignment and project have a detailed description that is in the “Assignment” and “Content” tab on the Top Menu. Students should use the associated grading rubric for each assignment for specific content/format requirements.

Assessment Methods:

Participation and Professionalism will be assessed using the Class Participation Record Keeping Form and the associated grading rubric which can be found in the “Course Forms” and “Assignment” folders on the Brightspace Course Menu.

Detailed Assignment/Project descriptions and associated grading rubrics for all other major assignments and projects are located in the “Assignment” folder on the Brightspace Course Menu as well.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit for the course may be earned by:

- Completing the online course evaluation at the end of the course for bonus points toward your Professionalism score which is 90% of your course grade.
- Completing all online quizzes by the due dates indicated on the Semester Outline, which will earn an additional 5 percentage points toward your quiz average (10% of your course grade).
- Completing all observations by the last due date indicated on the Semester Outline which will earn an additional 5 percentage points toward your Professionalism average (90% of your course grade.)

Grading Scale:

College of the Mainland’s grading system is as follows:

A (90 - 100%)	=	Superior achievement of course objectives
B (80 - 89%)	=	Outstanding achievement of course objectives
C (70 - 79%)	=	Achievement of minimum objectives

D (60 - 69%)	=	Marginal achievement of course objectives
F (Below 60%)	=	Failure to achieve course objectives
I	=	A temporary grade given to indicate that, in the instructor's judgment, the student can complete the course objectives within a specified extension of time.

Make-Up Policy:

If a student misses an assignment or test due to an **emergency absence, or illness**, it is the student's responsibility to promptly arrange for make-up work. Parameters for make-up work will be made at the discretion of the instructor and may not be an option, depending on the circumstances. **Keep in mind, if you have not spoken to me and made arrangements for submission, the assignment, project, or quiz *WILL NOT be accepted*.** Do not expect the instructor to remind you.

Revised or Resubmitted Work:

Assignments and projects submitted on time may be revised and resubmitted if resubmitted within one week of the date the graded assignment/project was returned to the student.

For Field Experiences (if necessary): If for any reason you are unable to show up on an agreed upon date/time, contact the school in advance. Remember that the making and keeping of these arrangements is an indication of how you would perform as an employee of the school, so do not miss a scheduled observation except under emergency circumstances. Make alternative arrangements to complete the Field Experience as soon as possible.

Attendance Policy:

College of the Mainland does not allow a certain number of "cuts"; therefore, you must log in to this course at least once a week. An absence from online session is the responsibility of the student and the student will receive a Participation Grade of 0 for that session. (This will negatively impact the participation and professionalism portion of the student's final course grade.) Excessive absenteeism from online sessions and/or failure to keep up with Blackboard content/assignments will result in the student's failure to accomplish the course learning outcomes and will result in a grade of "F" for the course.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via Brightspace or other LMS)

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment

1. Describe the characteristics of exceptional learners (e.g. Learning Disabilities, Gifted and Talented), including legal implications.	6. Personal Responsibility	1. Teaching Philosophy Project
2. Describe and analyze characteristics of diverse learners (e.g. language, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity) and how diversity impacts learning.	1. Critical Thinking Skills	1. Teaching Philosophy Project
3. Describe the impact of socio-economic status on learning and creating equitable classrooms.	5. Social Responsibility	1. Annotated Bibliography Project
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits and challenges of racial, ethnic, and other types of cultural diversity in the classroom.	2. Communication Skills (written, oral & visual)	1. Final Exam 2. Lesson Plan Project
5. Recognize the various multiple intelligences/learning styles in order to be able to implement instructional practices that meet the needs of all students;	5. Social Responsibility	1. Field Experiences 1-4

Academic Dishonesty:

Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams – is an extremely serious offense and will result in a grade of zero on the exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Department Chair, Shinya Wakao at 409-933-8107 or swakao@com.edu.

Course outline: See Important Due Date Document at End of Syllabus

SESSION	Blackboard Content	ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS DUE (B=Brightspace, H=Homework, & F=Face-to-face)
Week 1 (Orientation)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Brightspace, see “Read Me First” and complete all of the “Getting Started” tasks (B) Post Response to Discussion #1 and Journal (B) Read Ch. 1 (H)
Week 2 Module 1 (Ch. 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductions/IceBreaker Criminal Background Letters/ Documentation Course overview/goals for the course – “KWL” Expectations for “Annotated Bibliography” Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post Response to Discussion #2 (B) Quiz #1 (Ch. 1) due to be taken (B) Prepare “Ann. Bibliography” (H) Read Chapter 2
Week 3 Module 1 (Ch. 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education in a changing society What is multicultural education? Rethinking schools and learning Difficulty of change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post Response to Discussion #3 (B) Quiz #2 (Ch. 2) due to be taken (B) <p>Submit "Evidence Based Presentation" title selection (B)</p> <p>Submit F. E. Observation #1 (B) due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 3 (H) Prepare “Evidence Based Presentation” (H)
Week 4 Module 2 (Ch. 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical perspective on U.S. pluralism legislative & judicial landmarks Theoretical perspective to multicultural education Legislative and judicial landmarks Outcomes for today’s learners/programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #4 (B) Quiz #3 (Ch. 3) due to be taken (B) Read Ch. 4 (H) Prepare “Evidence Based Presentation” (H) Complete Field Experience Observation #1 (H)
Week 5 Module 2 (Ch. 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring & defining culture Applying the concept of culture The culture learning process Socializing agents, & understanding cultural differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #5 (B) Quiz #4 (Ch.4) due to be taken (B) Read Ch. 5 (H) Complete Field Experience Observation #2 (H)
Week 6 Module 2 (Ch. 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Today’s schools: where cultures intersect Cross-cultural psychology and interactions Applying the culture-general model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #6 (B) Quiz #5 (Ch. 5) due to be taken (B) <p>Submit F. E. Observation #2 (B) due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 6 (H)
Week 7 Module 3 (Ch. 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developmental models of ethnic & racial identity Intercultural competence Developing intercultural sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #7 (B) Quiz #6 (Ch. 6) due to be taken (B) <p>Submit “Evidence Based Presentation” project due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 7 (H)
Week 8 Module 3 (Ch. 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding race, ethnicity, and prejudice Strategies for reducing prejudice Improving intergroup relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #8 (B) Quiz #7 (Ch. 7) due to be taken (B) Read Ch. 8 (H)
Week 9 Module 4 (Ch. 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education in a global society Curriculum development with a global purpose What students should study/how teachers should teach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #9 (B) Quiz #8 (Ch. 8) due to be taken (B) <p>Submit F. E. Observation #3 (B) due</p> <p>Submit Peer Presentation Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 9(H) Complete Field Experience Observation #3 (H)

Week 10 Module 4 (Ch. 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are learning communities Characteristic of learning communities Variations in culture, language, and learning style Perspectives on second-language acquisition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #10 (B) Quiz #9 (Ch. 9) due to be taken (B) Read Ch. 10 (H)
Week 11 Module 4 (Ch. 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious pluralism in the U.S. Perspectives on religion & schooling in the U.S. Classrooms that attend to religious pluralism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #11 (B) Quiz #10 (Ch. 10) due to be taken (B)
Submit Teaching Philosophy (B) due		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 11(H) Prepare Teaching Philosophy for submission (H)
Week 12 Module 5 (Ch. 11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale for collaborative teaching & learning Characteristics of a collaborative classroom How do gender equity and ethical issues related to gender & sexuality fit into collaborative classrooms? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post response to Discussion #12 (B) Quiz #11 (Ch. 11) due to be taken (B)
Submit F. E. Observation #4 (B) due		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 12 (H) Prepare Lesson Plans for submission.
Week 13 Module 5 (Ch. 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does developmentally appropriate mean/not mean and why is it important? Characteristics of developmentally appropriate classrooms Perspectives on age and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz #12 (Ch. 12) due to be taken (B)
Submit missing work.		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Ch. 13 (H) Complete Field Experience Observation #4 (H)
Week 14 Module 5 (Ch. 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is exceptionality? Characteristics of inclusive classrooms Making inclusive teaching work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz #13 (Ch. 13) due to be taken (B) Do online course evaluation & earn bonus points for Professionalism score (H)
Submit Lesson Plan Online		
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equitable education for all: impact of social class and social status Perspectives on assessment & educational equity Teachers and the “self-fulfilling prophecy” Where are we today and where do we need to go? 	Submit F. E. Observation #5 due
Week 16	Final Week of Class	Final Week all items due on (B) Wednesday.

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook <https://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.html>

An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact:

Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator

Phone: 409-933-8919

Email: AccessibilityServices@com.edu

Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is October 1. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 14. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is November 25.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.

Technology Outage Policy: Students are responsible for completing all course work by the due dates stated in the syllabus. Occasionally the College may experience emergency campus-wide technology outages, should this

occur during a Quiz or submission of an Assignment, you will need to notify the instructor. You will need the Quiz to be reset or for the instructor to extend assignment due date. The assignment due date will be extended or the quiz will be reset after the campus-wide outage is confirmed by Informational Technology. An Announcement will be sent to all students relaying the information about the new due date for the assignment or quiz.

In case of a personal technology issue or if you have questions about an assignment or need clarification of requirements, you are expected to contact the instructor using Course Email. The College has a number of [computer labs](#) so access to requisite technology needed to complete assignments should not be an issue.

Course Communication: Online course communication will be conducted through the Brightspace Message or Email and Microsoft TEAMS. The “Mail” link is located in the Course Menu under “Communication”. You must monitor and respond to instructor-initiated e-mail within 3 calendar days. The instructor will likewise monitor and respond to student-initiated e-mail within 3 calendar days. (This does not apply to weekends or during periods when COM is officially closed.) Feedback on Assignments will be provided on Brightspace by accessing the My Grades tool on the Course Menu.

Netiquette: When communicating via the online mechanisms of this course it is important to remember that those communications are conducted in a public forum and should reflect a level of professionalism reflective of that forum. At a minimum such communications should be respectful of others and use appropriate writing mechanics (spelling, grammar, etc.).

For more information, go to: <http://www.studygs.net/netiquette.htm>

EDUC 2301 Important Due Dates

Assignment	Due Date
Discussion Quizzes	Weekly
Evidence Based Presentation	October 13
Presentation Review	October 27
Teaching Philosophy	November 10
Lesson Plan Online	December 1
Field Experience Due Date	
Field Experience #1	September 8
Field Experience #2	October 6
Field Experience #3	October 27
Field Experience #4	November 24
Field Experience #5	December 1

Quiz and Discussion	
Orientation Assignment	August 25
Quiz 1 and Discussion 1	September 1
Quiz 2	September 8
Quiz 3 and Discussion 2	September 15
Quiz 4	September 22
Quiz 5 and Discussion 3	September 29
Quiz 6	October 6
Quiz 7 and Discussion 4	October 13
Quiz 8	October 20
Quiz 9 and Discussion 5	October 27
Quiz 10	November 3
Quiz 11 and Discussion 6	November 10
Quiz 12	November 17
Discussion 7	December 1