UT Tyler

EDUCATION & PSYCHOLOGY

School of Education

Course: EDSP 3351.060 – Managing and Instructing Diverse Learners
Semester: Spring 2026
Time: Tuesdays 9:30 – 12:20
Location: Room TBD

Instructor: Derek Daskalakes, Ph.D.
Office: BEP 212D
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 – 4:00
Zoom Link: Zoom Room (Dr. D.)
Email: ddaskalakes@uttyler.edu
** Please include your course number in your email subject line (e.g. EDSP 3351)

Interaction with Instructor:
My preferred method for you to contact me is via Canvas e-mail or ddaskalakes@uttyler.edu. I will make every effort to respond quickly to your communications, but understand that my response will be quicker during the week than during the weekend.

Catalog Course Description:
An orientation to the field of special education and student diversity, including characteristics of individuals with special needs, cultural and/or linguistic differences, gifts and talents, and appropriate services for each population. Includes effective discipline models and behavior modification principles for managing diverse student populations.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Course Objectives	Activities	Assessment (Including Performance-Based)	Standards Alignment
Demonstrate an understanding of the unique abilities and disabilities of groups of individuals classified as exceptional.	Engage in on-line activities and small group discussions Textbook readings	Activities Discussions Quizzes and exam Final project	**TES:** 2(A)(ii), 2(B)(ii), 2(C)(iii)
Demonstrate an understanding of cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback Final project	**TES:** 1(C)(i), 2(A)(ii), 2(B)(iii), 2(C)(iii)
Identify major concepts, ideas, and themes relevant to the education of individuals	Textbook and journal article readings	Assignments, Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback Final project	**TES:** 1(C)(i), 2(B)(ii), 2(C)(iii), 5(D)(i)

identified as exceptional.	On-line modules related to exceptionalities		
Identify major legislation and political events that have affected the education of individuals with disabilities.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback	**TES:** 1(C)(i), 2(A)(iii), 2(B)(ii)
Identify appropriate educational delivery systems for diverse and exceptional populations.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments Teacher interviews	Assignments Instructor feedback Quizzes and exams Interview report	**TES:** 1(B)(ii), 1(C)(i), 1(F)(i)(iii), 2(B)(ii)(iii), 2(C)(iii)
Demonstrate strategies for establishing positive interactions between students with and without special needs.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback	**TES:** 4(A)(i)(ii)(iii)
Demonstrate interest in the welfare of individuals with diverse needs and recognition of society's challenge to help them realize their potential.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments Teacher interview	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback Interview report	**TES:** 1(C)(i), 1(D)(iii), 2(B)(iii), 2(C)(ii), 4(A)(i)(iii), 4(D)(iv)
Identify and assess behavioral problems.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments Discussions PBIS and classroom management activities	Assignments Discussions Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback	**TES:** 2(B)(ii), 5(C)(i)(ii), 5(D)(i)
Identify antecedent and consequential events and other environmental assessments and behavioral intervention plans.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments FBA and BIP activities	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback FBA and BIP activities	**TES:** 5(B)(i)(iii), 5(C)(i)(ii), 5(D)(i)
Utilize techniques of positive behavioral support, including functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans.	Textbook and article readings PBIS and classroom management activities FBA and BIP activities	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback FBA and BIP activities	**TES:** 4(C)(i)(ii), 5(A)(ii), 5(C)(i)(ii), 5(D)(i)(ii)
Highlight strategies to promote socially appropriate behavior.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments PBIS activities	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback	**TES:** 4(A)(i)(ii)(iii)
Recognize peer influences on behavior.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback	**TES:** 4(A)(ii)(iii)
Acquire skills for promoting appropriate social interactions with peers and adults.	Textbook readings and on-line assignments	Assignments Quizzes and exam Instructor feedback	**TES:** 6(B)(i)

Evaluation and Grading – Grading is based on the total number of points accumulated by each student at the end of the semester for all evaluations including assigned activities, discussions, quizzes, projects, zoom conferences, and exams.

Summary of Course Assignments:

Assignment	Point Value
Attendance + Class Participation	100
Chapter Quizzes	30 per quiz (x6 = 180 total points)
Reflection Activities	15 per activity (x7 = 105 total points)
Discussion Board Activities	15 per activity (x4 = 60 total points)
IRIS Module	25
Parent Flyer Assignment	15
Scavenger Hunt Activities	15 per activity (x2 = 30 total points)
Teacher Interview	50
Final Exam	100
Total Possible Points	665

** Note that these points are subject to change and may vary depending on circumstance.

Grading is based on your accumulated point total represented as a percentage.

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

Brief Overview of Assignments:

Attendance + Participation – Students will be expected to attend class regularly, and productively engage with all in-class activities and assignments. Note that physically attending class is not the same as participation, and both are required to receive weekly points. The instructor may deny points if, based on their discretion, the student fails to meet this expectation.

Chapter Quizzes – Canvas-based quizzes will be used to assess student understanding of course concepts covered through assigned readings and class discussions.

Reflection Activities – Students will be asked to complete a variety of reflection activities that will require them to review a video or case example before responding to critical question in writing. Responses are expected to reflect thoughtful engagement with the relevant course concepts and readings. Meaning, these assignments are not opinion-based, but will require students to critically think about the course material as it applies to a concrete example.

Discussion Board Activities – Students will be asked to complete discussion board activities by responding to a series of questions related to the relevant course material, and then engage productively with their class peers. Similar to the reflection activities, responses are expected to reflect thoughtful engagement with the relevant course concepts and readings. Further, peer

engagement is expected to be both respectful and meaningfully productive (e.g., adding to the discussion rather than approving or repeating material).

IRIS Module – Students will complete an IRIS module assignment and submit the relevant completion documentation to Canvas.

Parent Flyer Assignment – Students will create a flyer describing the IEP contents and process for a parent audience.

Scavenger Hunt Activities – Students will use a variety of sources to develop appropriate answers to critical questions.

Teacher Interview – This activity will require you to interview a current K-12 public school teacher. Interviews should be completed face-to-face unless prior approval is granted. **See Appendix A for specific requirements and interview guide.**

Final Exam – Students will complete a final exam that is designed to assess their comprehension of the relevant course material as it pertains to the course learning objectives described above.

Assignment Submission **–** All assignments are expected to be submitted to Canvas in accordance with the relevant assignment description provided there. Assignments will not be accepted through email or through any non-Canvas avenue without prior approval from the instructor.

Teaching Strategies – The following instructional strategies will be employed in both in-class and virtual formats during this class:
- Lecture, multimedia, and cooperative learning
- Case study analysis
- Critical thinking and writing

Required Text and Related Readings

Smith, D., Tyler, N., & Skow, K. (2018). *Introduction to Contemporary Special Education: New Horizons* (2nd ed.). Pearson.

- Your instructor may assign additional readings during the course of the semester. Your instructor will provide access to those readings as needed.

Course Policies

Classroom Behavior – There are three hard rules to know and follow when in course-related settings (physical and digital):
- (1) Be respectful of me
- (2) Be respectful of each other
- (3) Be respectful of the learning environment

Electronics – Learning requires focus. Thus, unless we are using your personal devices for a class-related activity, they should be put away and turned off (unless you've confirmed with me

you need it on for some emergency reason). The only exception is if you have official documentation from the University indicating that a laptop or similar device is necessary for your learning.

- Do not text during class
- Do not check social media during class
- Unless you are taking notes during class, close the laptops
- If you are using your laptop during class, turn the message notifications off
- If your use of technology continues after I ask you to put it away and/or it is distracting to the learning environment, I will ask you to leave the room
- If you need to have your phone on for extenuating circumstances, please let me know. (i.e. dependent contacting you, loved one awaiting news, medical procedures, and so on)
- **** Note that the instructor reserves the right to ban the use of electronics during class if, based on their discretion, students fail to meet the expectations outlined above.**

Code of Conduct – Please see section 2.09 of the University of Texas at Tyler Handbook of Operating Procedures for specific information about expectations related to student conduct. It is the responsibility of the student to bring to the instructor's attention any question, misunderstanding, or confusion they have concerning classroom policy or course requirements BEFORE an adverse effect on the student's grade results.

Canvas – Students will be expected to access and use Canvas frequently while enrolled in the course. Students will access class notes, assignments, grades and course information through Canvas. Any changes made to the course schedule, schedule of assignments, or any special assignments will be posted to Canvas. I also send emails and course announcements through Canvas to often communicate important information. Make sure you have your notifications set up to alert you to my announcements – I can show you how to do this if needed. You might also consider downloading the Canvas app on your phone, which offers another way to receive alerts from Canvas.

Email – Students can also send communications to my official UT Tyler email address (see above for address). I will make every effort to respond in a timely manner, but understand that my response time will vary depending on the day of the week and time of your message.

Make-Up Work – There will be NO make-up activities or exams for this course unless absence is due to illness or emergency. Students are expected to submit relevant documentation (e.g. doctor's note) when requesting a make/up activity.

Late Assignments – Education is a deadline-heavy profession, and so it is expected that assignments be turned in on time. An assignment will be considered late if it is not turned in by the deadline specified on Canvas. If you do not have a working computer, you need to make arrangements to use the campus computers. Assignments should be submitted in the assignment folder on Canvas. ***Late assignments are not accepted*** ***unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor at least 24 hours in advance***. Assignments and due dates are posted on Canvas.

Written Assignments – Written assignments must be typed using double spaced lines 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. Assignments should be typed in Times New Roman with 12-point font.

Academic Dishonesty – To be successful in this class, you must invest time for study. Honesty is expected. Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, collusion) will NOT be tolerated and will result in a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. A second infraction will result in automatic failure of the class. Dishonesty is defined as (a) the use of unauthorized materials, (b) any communication with peers during quizzes, (c) representing another's work as one's own (i.e. plagiarism), or (d) fabricating information. The professor reserves the right to determine occurrences of cheating. Additional information on Academic Dishonesty is found in the Selected University Policies section of this syllabus.

Plagiarism – Your work needs to be in your own words!! Plagiarism will be an automatic zero for an assignment and grounds for a disposition. Assignments will be required to be submitted within the plagiarism software (TurnItIn) within Canvas.
- A similarity score of 25% or greater indicates that you may have engaged in unethical behavior. Any written assignments with a 25% or greater score may receive a grade of zero at the discretion of the instructor.

Artificial Intelligence Statement – UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. **All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code**. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. **You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.**

If an AI tool is used to generate any part of the content for an assignment, its contributions must be properly cited.
Person First Language – Our language is a reflection of our attitudes. Always refer to persons with disabilities with respect. 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".

Teacher Candidate Dispositions – The University of Texas at Tyler School of Education has

developed Teacher Candidate Disposition Assessment outlining professional behaviors educators are expected to demonstrate in their interactions with students, families, colleagues and communities. The process assumptions, dispositions to be assessed, and examples of deficiencies within each disposition assessment categories are available at the UT-Tyler School of Education website: www.uttyler.edu/education (access School of Education; School of Education Disposition Assessment). It is expected that all students enrolled in EDSP 3351 will adhere to and demonstrate these teacher candidate dispositions at all times.

College of Education and Psychology (CEP) Vision and Mission

Core Purpose of the College of Education and Psychology
To prepare competent, caring, and qualified professionals in the field of education, psychology, and counseling; to foster discovery; and to advance the knowledge base in our respective disciplines.

Vision: The CEP will be a global leader in responding to needs in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling, with a focus on the East Texas region, by creating innovative academic and scholarly pathways and partnerships.

Mission: The mission of the CEP is to prepare competent and passionate professionals in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling; to advance knowledge and expertise; and to impact these fields locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

UT TYLER'S SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Texas Education Standards: The School of Education are committed to teaching and implementing the Texas Educator Standards at the highest level. The School of Education faculty use the Texas Education Standards, along with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards used by educator preparation programs throughout the United States.

The list of Texas Education Standards can be accessed here.

Access the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators can be accessed here.

Provisional Course Calendar
** Subject to change – all changes will be communicated via Canvas

Week/Date	Topics/Themes	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 Jan. 13	• Intro to course • Intro to instructor • Intro to syllabus	• None prior to class • Review course shell in Canvas	• Begin reviewing course readings
Week 2 Jan. 20	• Overview of exceptionality in education • Connections with social justice	• Ch. 1 (1-25)	• Reflection Activity #1 (When the Moon Comes Up) • Discussion Board #1
Week 3 Jan. 27	• Overview of special education instructional concepts • Person first language • EBP, UDL, RTI/PBiS	• Ch. 2 (26-46)	• Quiz #1 (Ch. 1-2) • Full IRIS Module – Perceptions of dis.
Week 4 Feb. 3	• Diversity and culture in education • English Learners	• Ch. 3 (47-70)	• Discussion Board #2
Week 5 Feb. 10	• Overview of special education law • IEP contents and procedures	• Ch. 4 (71-100)	• Quiz #2 (Ch. 3-4) • Parent Flyer
Week 6 Feb. 17	• Overview of speech and language impairments • Characteristics and interventions	• Ch. 5 (101-135)	• Reflection Activity #2 (Misunderstood Minds)
Week 7 Feb. 24	• Overview of learning disabilities • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field	• Ch. 6 (136-166)	• Quiz #3 (Ch. 5-6) • Discussion Board #3
Week 8 Mar. 3	• Overview of ADHD • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field	• Ch. 7 (167-201)	• Reflection Activity #3 (2 videos) • Discussion Board #4
Week 9 Mar. 10	• Spring Break – no class	•	•

Week 10 Mar. 17	• Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field	• Ch. 8 (202-240)	• Quiz #4 (Ch. 7-8) • Scavenger Hunt Activity #1 (IRIS on ASD)
Week 11 Mar. 24	• Overview of intellectual disabilities • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field	• Ch. 9 (241-275)	• Reflection Activity #4 (Educating Peter)
Week 12 Mar. 31	• Overview of emotional and behavioral disabilities • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field	• Ch. 10 (276-312)	• Quiz #5 (Ch. 9-10) • Reflection Activity #5 (EBD + FBA)
Week 13 Apr. 7	• Overview of physical and health conditions that impact education (OHI) • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field • Overview of assistive technology and some common uses	• Ch. 11 (313-341)	• Reflection Activity #6 (IRIS on AT) • Scavenger Hunt Activity #2 • Teacher Interview Assignment
Week 14 Apr. 14	• Overview of gifted and talented education • Characteristics, interventions, and debates in the field	• Ch. 15 (440-480)	• Quiz #6 • Reflection Activity #7 (Podcast)
Week 15 Apr. 21	• N/A	• N/A	• Final exam

Appendix A Teacher Interview

You will need to locate a current K-12 public school teacher to interview for the purposes of this assignment. This interview may be conducted in person or via Zoom (both have their advantages). A list of mandatory interview questions can be found below, but note that you are not limited to them and can include additional questions that may be interesting and relevant for you. Further details to your support your work on the assignment will be provided through Canvas and in-class discussions.

Following the interview, you will be required to write a report (3 to 4 pages) on your experience.

The report should include these 4 sections: *(all sections must be labeled)*
- **Section I – Teacher Description**
- **Section II – Information Obtained**
- **Section III – Reflection**
- **Section IV – Your learning**

Section I – Teacher Description: This <u>BRIEF</u> section will include such information as: number of years teaching, number of years in current position, subjects taught, and type of degree.

Section II – Information Obtained from the Teacher: Use the list of mandatory questions for your interview. Do not plan for a lengthy interview and be sensitive to feelings and emotions. Summarize response (not a verbatim transcript of the interview). This section needs to be written as a narrative not as a question-and-answer session. Meaning, you are writing about the interview as an event and not simply repeating the questions and answers.

Mandatory Questions:
- What preparation did you receive to work with students with disabilities, either through your university teacher training program or your alternative certification program and any training you currently receive from your school district / campus?
- How are you made aware that a student with a disability will be in your classroom and how are you able to prepare, if at all?
- In what ways do you collaborate with the special education staff on your campus?
- Outside of report cards, how do you collaborate or share information on progress with the families of students receiving or referred for special education?
- How are you involved in the development of a student's IEP?
- What strategies do you find the most effective in working with students with learning disabilities?
- When changes are made in special education law or district special education procedures, how are you made aware?
- How is a student on the campus referred for special education?
- If you could change one thing about special education, what would it be?

Section III – A description and analysis of your reaction/reflection on the experience of interviewing a teacher in the field.

Section IV – Explanation of what you believe you have learned through the assignment that might contribute to you becoming a better teacher/SLP.

Submission requirements:
- ➢ Put your name and page numbers on your paper
- ➢ Double space, 12-point font
- ➢ Label all sections
- ➢ Summarize interview responses (not verbatim transcript)
- ➢ ** Further details will be provided on Canvas