

**Student Course Syllabus**  
**Introduction to Graduate Studies in Special Education**  
**SPED 708**

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Office Hours: Any time by **appointment**.

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with information about current issues and trends in special education. It provides a forum for students to develop critical thinking and writing skills and will prepare them to be more effective graduate students, while introducing them to discipline specific research methodologies. Students will reflect on and determine an area of professional interest that will guide their professional studies.

**Purchase Texts:**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> edition)

**Required Reading**

Other required readings are accessible through D2L web learning site.

**Course Objectives:**

	<b>Wisconsin Teaching Standards</b>	<b>Artifacts</b>
1. Articulate multiple viewpoints regarding current issues in special education.	WTS #1, 9 CL	In-class essay; D2L Discussion
2. Describe research methodologies commonly employed in special education.	WTS #1	In-class activities
3. Read and evaluate primary sources of research from professional journals. Answer questions such as the following: (a) Is the article a primary source or a secondary source, (b) Does the research design match the question(s) posed?, or (c) Are the author(s)' conclusions valid?	WTS #1,9	Article critiques quantitative and/or qualitative research

4. Critically evaluate secondary sources of research. Be able to identify sources of bias, faulty logic, and discriminate between opinion and fact.	WTS #1,9	Psuedoscience critique D2L Discussion
5. Develop scholarly-writing skills.	N/A	Homework, APA test, timed essays, research paper
6. Synthesize and integrate information from a variety of sources.	WTS #1, 6	Scholarly paper in APA style; In-class essay; presentation; D2L Discussion
7. Become familiar with the work and research interests of faculty members in the Department of Special Education.	N/A	Select an advisor
8. Determine ways to implement research-based practices in the classroom.	WTS #4	D2L Discussion

CL = Promotes *collaborative leadership* goals

### Course Outcomes/Assignments

- Attend class and **participate** by asking questions and making comments.
- Participate in D2L discussion on a regular basis by initiating and responding to posts. Discussions should be anchored in the articles associated with the two discussion threads—“What’s ‘special’ about special education?” and “Does ‘place’ matter?” Discussions can also take off from the pseudoscience critiques and influential person reflections. Discussion topics will open up for a limited number of days as indicated on the Weekly Outline (30 points).
- Read Chapter 21, “Critical Reading,” from the text *Direct Instruction Reading*. Read an article related to current issues in special education from a newspaper, light journal, or website. Apply the four critical reading skills in the chapter and post your critique in Discussions. Post the URL or attach as a PDF file. “Psuedoscience” commentaries that demonstrate bias or flawed logic work best for this assignment. An excellent source of news related to special education is CEC's Smart Brief. You can subscribe at <http://www.smartbrief.com/cec/> (10 points)
- Select one person from the list of influential persons in special education identified by Polloway (2000). Find out about that person and describe the person’s accomplishments and how he or she has influenced the field of special education. Reflect on how they have influenced you specifically. Post your reflection as an attachment in Discussions by September 28 (10 points)
- Select, read, summarize, and evaluate (with particular attention to threats to validity) two primary research studies. The first study must be an experimental or quasi-experimental study. The second may be any type of research, but if you critique a correlational, single subject, survey, or qualitative study, you will have to read the appropriate article (see references) to provide background information to evaluate the type of research study you

- select. Double dipping is encouraged (i.e., read an article that is related to your research paper topic). Submit to drop box in D2L on October 12 and October 26 (20 points each).
6. Complete homework on APA reference style (5 points each).
  7. Complete Integrative Practice on how to write right (2 points each)
  8. Complete quiz on basic APA style for references and citations in text (20 points).
  9. Pass (more than 80% correct) an open-book test using APA style manual (40 points)
  10. Read the publication, *Using Research and Reason in Education*, and complete study guide. (10 points).
  11. Complete a two-hour final exam designed to simulate the graduate written examination. (20 points).
  12. Write a “mini” research paper (10-15 pages) in APA style. The paper must synthesis research on an appropriate topic (60 points) drawing on *primary* sources of information. The paper will be completed in stages. All proposals must be submitted electronically through the digital drop box in D2L.
    - One-page proposal with 5 annotated references and bibliography (minimum of 10 citations). (October 5)
    - Revised proposal, two level outline, 10 annotated references and bibliography (minimum of 20) (October 26)
    - Conference with instructor (October 26-30)
    - First draft followed by individual conference with instructor (Nov. 9-13).
    - Second draft for peer editing (Nov. 23)
    - Final draft (Dec. 7)
  13. Give a 10-minute presentation to the class on your research paper topic (20 points).

### **Grading Policy**

Students in the revised M.S.E. (admission since January 2001), must received an A or B in the course in order to continue in the graduate program. Students in the “old” program must receive a C or better. According to University policy, “courses in which grades below C are earned are not applicable to degree requirements. Courses in which grades of C are earned may be applied toward degree requirements, providing the student has sufficient grades of A to achieve the required overall grade point average of 3.0, or B” (Graduate Catalogue, p. 22).

Grades will be awarded on a percentage basis.

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct will be dealt with according to University regulations and will be treated very seriously. Webster’s dictionary defines *plagiarism* as the act of taking ideas or writings of someone else and passing them off as one’s own. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct.

## Weekly Outline

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
Sept. 14	<b>General concepts in educational research</b> <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. Angela Dalhoe</i>	Ravitch, 1998 [in class]
Sept. 21	<b>Using the Library</b> Meet in Library 1033 <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. Vicki Snider</i>	Homework; Stanovich & Stanovich, 2003 Study guide and reflection due
Sept. 28	<b>Experimental research</b> <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. Rose Battalio</i>	Homework; Gersten et al., 2005 D2L DISCUSSION: Polloway, 2000
Oct. 5	<b>Other types of research</b> <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. Steve Dempsey</i>	Homework Johnson 1997; Banda & Therrien, 2008 Research paper proposal
Oct. 12	<b>Evidence-based practices</b> <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. Cathy Thorson</i>	Homework; Cook, Tankersley, & Landrum, 2009 Abstract #1 due
Oct. 19	<b>Psuedoscience</b> <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. Joe Morin</i>	Homework Carnine et al., 2010
Oct. 26-30	<b>D2L</b>	Homework; Abstract #2 Revised proposal and individual conference D2L DISCUSSION: Psuedoscience
Nov. 2-6	<b>D2L</b>	Open book APA Test (online) D2L DISCUSSION: Dunn, 1968; Will, 1986
Nov. 9-13	<b>D2L</b>	First draft of paper and individual conferences D2L DISCUSSION: Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Zigmond, 2009
Nov. 16-20	<b>D2L</b>	D2L DISCUSSION: Lieberman, 2001; Kauffman, 1999
Nov. 23	<b>Peer editing</b> <i>Faculty advisor: Dr. J. Todd Stephens</i>	Second draft of research paper In-class APA Quiz
Nov. 30-Dec. 4	<b>D2L</b>	D2L DISCUSSION: Cook & Schirmer, 2003; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995
Dec. 7	<b>Presentations</b> <i>Panel of post-graduates</i>	Final draft of research paper
Dec. 14	<b>Written Comps simulation</b>	

## References

References are available on electronic reserve and are accessible through a link on Blackboard. Starred references are optional articles that describe how to evaluate correlational, qualitative, survey, and single-subject research.

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- \*Brantlinger, E., Jimenez, R., Klingner, J., Pugach, M., & Richardson, V. (2005). Qualitative studies in special education. *Exceptional Children, 71*, 195-207.
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- Cook, B. G. & Schirmer, B. R. (2003). What is special about special education? *Journal of Special Education, 37*, 200-205.
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