

# **EDUC 0221:**

## **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Westfield State College

Fall 2010 Instructor: Terri M. Griffin, Ed.D.

Online Course: PLATO

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### **Course Description**

Students with Special Needs is an online course that offers students an introduction to the field of Special Education. This course provides students with an opportunity to consider the ways in which our nation's schools identify and provide services to children with Exceptional Learning Needs (ELN). Historical and current approaches to the education of children with special needs will be examined, as well as issues such as identification, assessment, program development, and evidenced-based classroom teaching practices. Special attention will be given to legislation that protects the rights of students with special needs, issues of diversity, inclusionary practices and policies, and the role of the teacher in differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners. This course provides an introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and considers the UDL principles that serve as a framework for creating the type of learning environments and opportunities that support the success of every child, including children with disabilities, children from high risk environments, children from diverse language and/or cultural backgrounds, and children identified as 'gifted.' Please note that this course **REQUIRES** each student to complete 15 hours of documented observation in a public school setting. Students **CANNOT** pass this course without completing this requirement and submitting appropriate documentation to the instructor (and the WSC Ed Dept. Office).

### **Course Rationale**

An appropriate educational experience should be available to all children, including those with exceptional learning needs. Teachers play a critical role in supporting the success of children with disabilities, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children who live in poverty. It is essential, then, that teacher candidates understand the challenges faced

## Required Texts:

1. Gargiulo, R.M. & Metcalf, D. (2010). *Teaching in today's inclusive classrooms: A universal design for learning approach*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 0495097152

Textbook available at WSC Bookstore or as rental through:  
<http://www.cengagebrain.com/shop/en/US/storefront/US?cmd=CLHeaderSearch&fieldValue=0495097152>

\*Each student will also be required to read the following three fictional texts. Two are chapter books geared for upper elementary/middle schoolers (the Betancourt and Janover books) and one book is written for young adults (the Haddon book). Students will read and complete assignments for each book. These books can be either purchased from the WSC bookstore, an online vendor, or borrowed from a library for use in completing related assignments:

2. Betancourt, J. (1993). *My name is Brain Brian*. New York: Scholastic.

ISBN-10: 0-590-44922-2

3. Haddon, M. (2003). *The curious incident of the dog in the night-time*. NY: Vintage Books.

ISBN: 978-1-4000-3271-6

15 hours of observation, students will submit a “Summary Report” that synthesizes their field learning with their course learning. Guidelines for these assignments will be provided. Students must include documentation for all hours (School personnel need to verify hours by signing document provided to students.). Student must complete field work and related assignments in order to pass this course. Please see more information regarding this component of the course in related course folder.

3. IRIS Modules: On several occasions, students will be asked to complete a learning module developed by Vanderbilt University’s School of Education. To complete these assignments, students will go to <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/onlinemodules.html> and view assigned online modules. Students will type up and submit responses to sections entitled: Initial Thoughts, Assessment, and Wrap Up, for each module. More information regarding these assignments will be made available within relevant weekly folders.

4. Quizzes: There will be 3 multiple choice format quizzes that assess mastery of text and class content. Students will have a time frame within which to complete each quiz online.

5. UDL Book Project: Students will work in small groups and engage in a series of projects that offer an opportunity to closely examine learners with varied special needs and consider how to teach them in an inclusive setting using UDL principles. Students will read *My name is Brain Brian*, *Zipper the kid with ADHD*, and *The curious incident of the dog in the night-time* and work in small groups to create learning profiles for each of the main characters in each book (e.g. Brian, a learner with Dyslexia, “Zipper”, a learner with ADHD, and Christopher, a learner with Autism). Each group will then consider how to meet the needs of these learners within the content of a general education class by using principles of Universal Design for Learning. Each group will share their final project with class. More information

Discussion postings, for example, will generally be due on the Tuesday of the week assigned to allow classmates time to read and respond to