

**WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY**  
**College of Education**  
**Department of Special Education and Counseling**

**COURSE OF STUDY**

Theme: Preparing Inquiring Educators: Knowledge,  
Understanding and Application

**A. Course Title: SPED 629, Current Issues in Special Education**  
**Credits: 3**

**B. Course Description:** This course provides: current perspective on issues and controversies special educators confront, with emphasis on relationships between regular and special education programs and teachers. Selected topics are explored through readings, discussion, and exploratory research, e.g., inclusion, accountability, high-stakes assessment, diversity, and the efficacy of special education practices. A foundation for thesis study is provided, focusing on the knowledge and skills needed to conceptualize empirical research. Candidates review multiple sources of material to identify a researchable topic, state hypotheses, and engage in a preliminary literature search in preparation for the master's thesis.

**C. Prerequisites, Co-Requisites and Restrictions:**  
SPED 542 Foundations of Learning Disabilities

**D. Course Objectives:** LDT-C candidates will . . .

1. articulate a personal philosophy of the role of special education in the public schools
2. will identify the theoretical issues that have informed special education
3. identify critical problems in the delivery of special education services
4. identify, analyze and evaluate contrasting positions on controversial issues in special education
5. will identify the challenges and the benefits of collaboration between general and special education
6. identify methods, ethics, and dispositions needed to communicate effectively, build productive partnerships and empower parents/guardians from diverse culture and language backgrounds
7. select an area to investigate and identify the issue that the masters thesis will address
8. develop an empirical hypothesis that can be tested within the timeframe and the resources of the LDT-C candidate.

**E. LDT-C Candidate Learning Outcomes:** LDT-C candidates will . . .

1. identify a learning disabilities topic of appropriate breadth for thesis study that demonstrates understanding of the field
2. develop empirical hypothesis(es), based on a preliminary literature search and will formulate this information into a research paper

<b>SLO's</b>	<b>CEC</b>	<b>NJ PTS</b>	<b>NJ CCCS</b>
Identification of a topic for Thesis study	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	3.1-3.5, 4.1-4.5, 9.1, 9.2
Develop an empirical Hypothesis for research	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	3.1-3.5, 4.1-4.5, 9.1, 9.2

**F. Course Content:**

1. Role of special education in today's schools
2. Accountability – high stakes testing and other forms of assessment
3. Diversity – identification, assessment, and the identification of students of color
4. Bilingual students with disabilities
5. Classification and labeling policy and practices
6. Culturally responsive teaching practices
7. Legal and economic issues in special education
8. Placement issues – inclusion, pull-out services & self-contained classes
9. Efficacy of instructional practices in special education
10. Early intervention
11. Transition - preparation of students with disabilities for post-secondary settings
12. Parent/school collaboration
13. Disciplining students with disabilities
14. Preparation of teachers of students with disabilities
15. Collaboration with regular education
16. Trends in special education – ABA, Assistive Technology

**G. Teaching/Learning Methods:**

- Lecture and discussion
- Assigned readings
- Small group projects
- Case studies
- Audio-visual materials
- Guest lecturers
- Reflective writing and sharing

**H. Performance-Based Assessment:**

1. Identification of a learning disabilities topic of appropriate breadth for thesis study, as approved by the instructor
2. Development of an empirical hypothesis(es), and preparation of a research paper based on a preliminary literature search, as assessed by a rubric

**I. Recommended Text/Readings:** Ysseldyke, J., Algozzine, B., & Thurlow, M. L. (2000). *Critical issues in special education* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) Boston: Houghton Mifflin

**J. Preparer's Name:** Peter Griswold, Ed. D.

**K. Department Approval Date:**

**L. Current Revision:** N/A

**M. Current Department Approval Date:** N/A

**N. Selected Bibliography:**

Donvan, S. M. & Cross, C. T. (2002). *Minority students in special education and gifted education*. Washington, D. C: National Research Council.

Egnor, D. (2003). *IDEA reauthorization and the student discipline controversy*. Denver, CO: Love Publishing.

Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (1998). Competing visions for educating students with disabilities: Inclusion versus full inclusion. *Childhood Education, 74*, 309-316.

Gay, G. (2002). Culturally responsive teaching in special education for ethnically diverse students: Setting the stage. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 15*(6), 613-630.

Guranik, M. J. (2001). *Early childhood inclusion: Focus on change*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Hosp, J. L. & Reschly, D. J. (2004). Disproportionate representation of minority students in special education: Academic, demographic and economic predictors. *Exceptional Children, 70*, 185-200.

Kavalle, K. A. & Forness, S. R. (2000). History, rhetoric, and reality: Analysis of the inclusion debate. *Remedial and Special Education, 21*(5), 279-296.

McCray, A. D. & Garcia, S. B. (2002). The stories we must tell: Developing a research agenda for multicultural and bilingual

- special education. *Qualitative studies in Education*, 15(6), 599-612.
- Murdick, N., Gartin, B. & Crabtree, T. (2002). *Special education law*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Nougaret, A. A., Scruggs, T. E., & Mastropieri, M. A. (2005). Does teacher education produce better special education teachers? *Exceptional Children*, 71, 217-230.
- Parrish, T. B. (2001, April). Who's paying the rising costs of special education? *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, 14(1). 4-12.
- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2001). Washington, D. D. American Psychological Association.
- Sorrells, A. M., Rieth, H. J. & Sindelar, P. T. (2004). *Critical issues in special education: Access, diversity and accountability*. Boston: Pearson.
- Sleeter, C. E. (2001). Preparing teachers for culturally diverse schools: Research and the overwhelming presence of whiteness. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52(2), 94-106.
- Turnbull, H. R., Turnbull, A. P. Shank, M., Smith, S. & Leal, D. (2001). *Exceptional lives: Special education in today's schools* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Villa, R. A. & Thousand, J. S. (Eds.). (2005). *Creating an inclusive school* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Winzer, M. A. & Mazurek, K. M. (Eds.) *Special education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Issues of inclusion and reform*. Washington, D. C: Gallaudet Press.
- What every special educator must now: The standards for the preparation and licensure of special educators* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2003). Arlington, VA: CEC
- Yell, M. L. & Drasgo., E. (1999). A legal analysis of inclusion. *Preventing school failure*, 43, 118-123.
- Yell, M. L. & Drasgo, E. (2000). Litigating a free appropriate public education: The Lovaas hearings and cases. *Journal of Special Education*, 33, 205-214.

