Teaching Adolescents with Special Educational Needs
Special Education 433

Spring 2010
Class Time: Mondays from 7:00 to 9:40 PM
Classroom: Salazar 2024
Unit Credit: 3
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Overview of the Course

Education 433 is an introductory course which presents a survey of theory, program concepts and teaching practices related to students with special needs. Emphasis is placed on understanding and addressing the educational and social needs of secondary aged students with disabilities as well as gifted and talented students. Legislation, policies, and practices pertaining to the education of students with special needs in a secondary setting are presented. Knowledge, skills, and strategies including disability and gifted and talented identification, major roles and responsibilities in the Individual Education Program (IEP) process and collaboration between general and special educators aimed at successful inclusive educational practices are also addressed. 10 hours of field experience are included. Elements of this course will include the use of the Internet and the World Wide Web. This course is a pre-requisite for the Single Subject Credential Program at Sonoma State University.

Required Readings


2. Additional materials as assigned by the course instructor

3. Class Website: http://www.sonoma.edu/users/p/phelan/433/

Course Objectives

Upon Completion of Education 433, students will demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge and understanding of a wide variety of exceptionalities associated with any one or a combination of specific learning, physical, health, sensory, communication, developmental, social or emotional or cognitive difficulties.
Knowledge of special education and gifted/talented legal issues and public policy provisions at the state and national levels.

Knowledge of the major provisions of the Individual Education Program (IEP) process including the role of the general education teacher, other team members; ability to participate as an effective member of an IEP team.

Ability to identify and describe the structure and key features of educational programs at the secondary level comparing traditional and progressive approaches to assessment, instructional methods, social and physical environment designs as well as behavioral and discipline procedures.

Knowledge and skills in assessing the learning and language needs of culturally/linguistically diverse populations within the context of special education and gifted and talented referrals, placements and instructional programs.

Ability to modify or adapt curriculum to improve access for all secondary students including those with special education and gifted/talented needs.

Understanding of the value of the family role in educational partnerships; ability to collaborate with families to develop and implement Individual Educational Plans (IEP's).

Understanding when and how to address the social interaction for students with disabilities within the classroom or school site setting.

Develop a tolerance of opposing viewpoints and a willingness to listen to others.

Course Requirements

1. Punctuality, consistent attendance, and timely completion of all assignments
2. Engaged participation in class discussions and online activities
3. Thoughtful completion of in-class assignments
4. 10 hours of fieldwork observations and field paper
5. Three (3) “Key Concept” papers
6. Final Exam

Grading Criteria

Education 433 is based upon a grade-only format. A total of 380 points are possible in this course and your grade is based upon the percent of these points achieved following the criteria listed below. The following elements will be utilized in evaluating student performance:

- Class attendance and discussions: 60 points (5 per class)
- In-class assignments: 100 points
- Field work activity: 100 points
- Key Concept papers: 105 points (35 each)
- Final Exam: 80 points

Total Points: 445 points

A (100-95%)  B (86-84%)  C (76-74%)
A- (94-90%)  B- (83-80%)  C- (73-70%)
B+ (89-87%)  C+ (79-77%)  D and F = same breakdown
**Disability Accommodations**

If you have a disability that requires accommodation in this class, you must notify the instructor before the second week of class regarding the nature of the accommodation you need. You must register with the campus Disability Resource Center located in Salazar Hall (Phone: 664-2677). The Center will then provide you written documentation of your verified disability and the recommended accommodations which you must then present to the instructor.

**Description of Assignments**

1. **Class/Online attendance and participation**
   Your punctual attendance is expected weekly- attendance is monitored and calculated as part of the class grade. Class lectures and activities are essential to course objectives. Students who miss more than three classes will be asked to repeat the course.

2. **Field Work Observation**
   This typed document should clearly summarize your fieldwork activities. For the fieldwork report, which you will share on the last day of class, you will investigate the role of school in the life of a middle school or high school student and then consider the student with a disability. Do students with and those without disabilities have similar educational experiences? Consider how these educationally related experiences influence a student without a disability and then consider how it does or does not change for a student with a disability. Begin this report by describing your field experience using the format provided for you in the fieldwork guidelines (copied below).

Observe a special education program on a secondary campus (Resource Specialist Program or Special Day Class). Make observations regarding the following areas:

   a) What supports and services are available to the students?
   b) How is the program structured/what is the daily schedule?
   c) Who is a part of these programs?
   d) What’s the organizational structure and physical layout of the campus?
   e) Where are general and special education classes housed?
   f) Do all students have access to the same school-wide events/activities?
   g) Are there written policies/guidelines about how students/families access special education supports and other services (S.S.T. or I.E.P. process)?
   h) What programs are available to students with special needs?
   i) How do educators coordinate these services?
   j) Talk with specialists and general education teachers at the site about services for students with special needs. What are the strengths and challenges of the existing programs?
   k) Who’s responsible for providing special education services? (Specialists? General Education Teachers? A combination of the two?)
   l) What expectations does the faculty have for students with disabilities? Are these different than those for students without disabilities?

Investigating these concepts, think about the structure, routine, and expectations which this school offers students. Your fieldwork, your own experience, and the experiences of your family and friends may also be an important source of information as you explore these ideas. Reflect on what you see as the positive and negative aspects of what you have observed.
Lastly, consider what you have learned this semester about the framework of support for students with disabilities. Given “what is” versus “what can be” how is this school doing in addressing the needs of all students including those with disabilities?

Your paper should be between 3-5 pages long synthesizing your observations and thinking. Format for reporting should include the following headers:

- Description of Field Experiences
- Expectations
- Reflection
- Recommendations for Improvement
- Log of Field Experience (school, program being observed, date, hours)

3. Key concepts papers (3 type written papers each 1-2 pages in length)
   These papers are intended as a personal reflection or summary on a topic prepared by the instructor. Please refer to the Key Concept Assignment Guide for topics and expectations.

4. On-line activities & in-class assignments
   Located at: http://www.sonoma.edu/users/p/phelan/433 students may use study guides, view class web resources and take the self tests that correspond to each chapter of the class text. Various in-class activities are evaluated to monitor student understanding of class objectives and lesson outcomes.

5. Final Exam
   The class final will be a cumulative review of important topics from the semester. All questions will be drawn from the WebCT chapter self tests.