

**AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Special Education**

**CAPSTONE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION  
SPED 6205  
3 SEMESTER HOURS (0-3-3)**

**Professor:** Michael O'Connor, Ph.D.  
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**Office Hours:**

M: 12:30- 4:30

T: 12:30- 4:30

W: 12:00- 2:00

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is the culminating graduate course in the M.Ed. Special Education program. In this course an electronic portfolio and graduate research project are produced. It incorporates a competency based research-to-practice project using data-based strategies and interventions in a special education applied setting. 20 hours of field experience is required. Grading is on the A, B, C, D, F, WF, etc. scale.

**TEXT:**

There is no textbook for this course. We will rely entirely on online sources. Links are given in the Course Schedule, but for convenience are also given here:

CEC website:

[www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

Exceptional Children article on research in special education overview:

[http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/Final\\_Manuscript-Scientific\\_Research\\_in\\_Special\\_Education\\_R3.pdf](http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/Final_Manuscript-Scientific_Research_in_Special_Education_R3.pdf)

CEC publication on data-based decision-making:

[http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CEC\\_Today1&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=4229](http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CEC_Today1&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=4229)

**Optional readings:**

Research Design article:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/design.php>

Two group experimental designs:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/expsimp.php>

Quasi-Experimental Designs:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/quasiexp.php>

MCREL site for educational research overview:

<http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Research/primer/appendixA.asp>

### **LiveText:**

All students admitted to degree programs in the College of Education are required to purchase *LiveText* software through the ASU bookstore. *LiveText* is an electronic, web-based data management service that allows students and faculty to create, store, and publish documents online using a word-processing format. All students will upload assignments, their portfolio, and other required documents into *LiveText*. *LiveText* works better with the Mozilla Firefox browser rather than Internet Explorer. Students may Google Mozilla Firefox and download it to their computers.

### **College of Education Conceptual Framework**

Understanding for Teaching, Teaching for Understanding

The preparation of educators is the most critical of all professions, without educators there are no other professions. The professional educator is the key element in the learning process. Building on the key elements of the professional educator, the Conceptual Framework of the unit of Augusta State University consists of a vision and mission with an overarching theme to produce **prepared, able, and responsive** professionals to teach diverse learners.

This vision and mission is a shared responsibility between campus colleagues, public school practitioners, and involved community agencies requiring the partnership of the entire education unit including the College of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the local community educational system and the Professional Development School Network.

Element: Prepared (PD)

P2: Use self assessment and analysis to form the basis for collaboration with colleagues and the development of a desire to be a lifelong learner.

P3: Participate in graduate study to extend and refine the knowledge base of educators to build expertise.

P4: Possess an understanding of the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) or their professional field of study and be able to create learning experiences that enable all students to learn.

P6: Demonstrate knowledge of how to implement effective verbal and nonverbal information and technology techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in educational settings.

Element: Able (AD)

A1: Understand, use, and support a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the learner's development of critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

A4: Understand and use authentic assessment to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.

R1: A respect for the dignity of all persons. All children can learn and have the right to an opportunity to do so.

R3: Understanding of how students differ in their approaches to learning and demonstrate the commitment for meeting their educational needs in fair, caring, nondiscriminatory, and equitable manners.

R4: Ability to be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and actively seeks the opportunity to grow professionally

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will meet a common core of knowledge and skills essential for special educators by demonstrating the following competencies:

1. Demonstrate graduate level ability to evaluate the soundness of published research procedure and findings and relate outcomes to present knowledge of characteristics of and best practice strategies for students with disabilities.

[NCATE/PSC- 1, 2; INTASC-1, 8, 9; CEC-CC1K1, 2K3, 7K1; BoR-IIB(1)]

2. Demonstrate graduate level ability to think critically about current issues and diverse topics in special education by developing and implementing a research-to-practice project that demonstrates use of competencies in knowledge, skills, dispositions, and evaluation to improve educational outcomes of diverse students with disabilities.

[NCATE/PSC 1, 2, 3, 4; INTASC-1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9; CEC- CC3K5, 4S3, BoR- IH, IIB (1, 2), IIIA]

3. Demonstrate technology competencies associated with research, application, evaluation, and presentation, including: computer database search, written reports using word processing, graphic display of student outcome data, and power point presentation.

[NCATE/PSC-1, 2, 3; INTASC- 6, 8, 9; CEC- CC5S6, 7K4, 8S3; BoR- IIB (6)]

4. Demonstrate a high level of professionalism and integrity in practicing within the CEC Code of Ethics in verbal and written communication with special education and general education colleagues, parents, and community personnel.

[NCATE/PSC- 1, 3, 4; INTASC-6, 9, 10; CEC- CC1S1, 7S3, 9S1-12; BoR- IIA (6)]

**Method of Instruction:**

This course is structured as an independent research project. Students will meet throughout the semester with the instructor for individual guidance on their research projects. The class will meet in four seminars during the semester for lectures, presentations, and discussions of the readings. In addition, students will discuss their research designs in roundtable discussions in the seminars. Attendance at all seminars is strictly required.

**GRADUATE CAPSTONE PROJECT**

The graduate Capstone project is the culmination of the program of study leading to the Master of Education degree in Special Education. Through this project the candidate will demonstrate applied knowledge of special education issues and skill on competencies required by NCATE, PSC, and CEC.

The project will employ research methodologies currently utilized in the field of special education research. Topics and research designs will be specific to each candidate's specialty area and/or area of personal research interest.

The candidate will research the topic, and design his or her own project. At the end of the semester, candidates will present a report for faculty and students.

**COURSE SCHEDULE****Week 1**

-Class does not meet.

-Assignment: Read the following two articles/documents online and be prepared to **answer questions and discuss each article in detail** in our first seminar. Please print out each of these and bring these copies to the first seminar.

1. Exceptional Children article on research in special education overview:

[http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/Final\\_Manuscript-Scientific\\_Research\\_in\\_Special\\_Education\\_R3.pdf](http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/Final_Manuscript-Scientific_Research_in_Special_Education_R3.pdf)

2. CEC publication on data-based decision-making:

[http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CEC\\_Today1&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=4229](http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CEC_Today1&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=4229)

**Optional** source for review of statistical methods:

Research Design article:

<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/design.php>

Click on all sections under "Design" on the left-hand side.

(This material will not be tested, but is provided as a review of material covered in your educational research methods class, a prerequisite for this course. You do not need to print this material or bring it to class).

**Week 2****Seminar I: Class meets.**

- Course overview
- **Roundtable discussion/oral test of assigned readings, as assigned.**

**Week 3**

Schedule 1<sup>st</sup> Individual Meeting (students must arrange all meetings via email):  
-Discuss possible research topics/designs

**Week 4**

Individual research into topics  
Assignment: Write research proposal

**Week 5**

**Due: Initial Proposal due to instructor (submit via email)**

**Week 6**

Individual Project Implementation

**Week 7****MID-POINT CHECK for Proposal Acceptance:**

**Your Project proposal MUST be accepted by the instructor by the official mid-term date. If your proposal has not been accepted by this date, I will strongly advise you to drop the course.**

**Week 8:** Individual Project Implementation.

**Week 9:** Individual Project Implementation.

**Week 10:** Individual Project Implementation.

**Week 11:** Individual Project Implementation.

**Week 12:** Individual Project Implementation.

**Week 13:** First draft due to instructor

**Week 14:** Revise and edit according to instructor guidance.

**Week 15:** Revise and edit.

**Week 16:** Final draft due.

Presentations to colleagues and the COE.

Note: Presentations will be either a poster session, or individual presentations (to be determined by class vote).

## ASSESSMENT

<b>Final Project</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Seminar Attendance and Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Final Presentation</b>	<b>20%</b>

<b>GRADE SCALE</b>	<b>90-100</b>	<b>A</b>
	<b>80- 89</b>	<b>B</b>
	<b>70- 79</b>	<b>C</b>
	<b>60- 69-</b>	<b>D</b>
	<b>below 60-</b>	<b>F</b>

A grade of *Incomplete* for the course will only be given under documented extraordinary circumstances or events not due to a student's own negligence that prevent completion of specific assignments and deadlines. Please consider the requirements specified in the syllabus as you plan your schedule.

### Lab Requirements

***All SPED courses require 30 hours of field experience for EACH class!***

To find all the required Forms/Documents needed for your Graduate SPED Courses go to [http://www.aug.edu/elcse/specialed\\_forms.php](http://www.aug.edu/elcse/specialed_forms.php)

Assignment requirements related to specific courses will be addressed in each course syllabus.

See Attendance Documentation Directions for specifics on how to enter hours into Elroy and other information regarding the total number of required hours for your appropriate program.

If you are **CURRENTLY TEACHING...**

1. Students are required to obtain the correct signatures and turning in the completed forms in the **Mentor Teacher Packet for Employed Students**. Forms in this packet must be turned into Dr. Hogan (UH #302) *no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of classes!*
2. You must enter your **hours into Elroy** throughout the semester.
3. You must make sure your mentor teacher completes the **online Teacher Evaluation**. The link to this evaluation is located in the Mentor Teacher Packet for Employed Students.

If you are **NOT CURRENTLY TEACHING...**

1. You are required for completing the **Lab Placement Request Form** and turning in to Dr. Hogan (UH #302) *no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of class*, in order to receive your placement.
2. Once placed, you are required to obtain the **NonEmployed Collaborating Teacher Packet** from the website, review the information with your collaborating teacher and return all forms to Dr. Hogan (UH #302) within 2 weeks of obtaining your placement.
3. You must enter your **hours into Elroy** throughout the semester.
4. You must make sure your collaborating teacher completes the **online Teacher Evaluation**. The link to this evaluation will be emailed to the appropriate person and is located in the NonEmployed Collaborating Teacher Packet.

### Academic Honesty

Students are expected to read and strictly adhere to the entire Academic Honesty policy found in the 2011–12 *Augusta State University Catalog*. In part, the policy reads:

Academic honesty requires the presentation for evaluation and credit of one's own work, not the work of others...Plagiarism is the failure to acknowledge indebtedness. It is always assumed that the written work offered for evaluation and credit is the student's own unless otherwise acknowledged. Such acknowledgement should occur whenever one quotes another person's actual works, whenever one appropriates another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they are paraphrased, and whenever one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials unless the information is common knowledge.

(p.46)

### MyASU Account

MyASU is a web based portal that contains a variety of information and services. A myASU account is created for all new applicants and stays with the student throughout their time at ASU and after graduation. MyASU gives you

- Access to JagMail (web-based Email system)
- Classroom tools such as class bulletin boards and class chat rooms
- Campus & Personal Announcements
- Access into ELROY (your personal student information)
- Access to [GeorgiaVIEW Vista](#) (An On-Line Course management system)

Students are encouraged to check their JagMail account daily. Students are responsible for any assignments or deadlines sent to them via JagMail. If you have trouble accessing your myASU account, you should contact Information Technology Services at 737-1676. Computers

and printers are available free of charge in computer labs throughout campus as well as the library and campus Internet cafes for students who do not have access from a home computer.

### **Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling and Special Education Website**

Students are invited to visit the departmental website at: <http://www.aug.edu/clinical> A variety of forms, some interactive, may be downloaded from the website. There are also newsletters, registration information and announcements which students will find useful. Most forms are in Adobe Acrobat. All campus computers have Adobe Acrobat Reader installed and students can download Adobe Acrobat Reader for their home computer at no charge from: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/>

### **Writing Center**

You may contact the ASU Writing Center (737-1402) for help with developing and improving composition skills. If you would like additional help with writing or with learning APA style, inform the class instructor.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who are registered with the Office of Disability Services should schedule an appointment with the instructor before the third week of class to discuss academic accommodations. If the student does not initiate this meeting, it is assumed no special accommodations or modifications will be necessary to meet the requirements of this course. You may make an appointment by calling the Counseling and Testing Center (706) 737-1471 or visit their office located in the Quadrangle, next to Fanning Hall (Business Office).

### **Student Safety**

Student safety is of primary importance. Students leaving classes late in the evening are encouraged to stay in groups of two or more and to report all suspicious behavior or persons to the ASU Office of Public Safety (emergency number 706-729-2911; non-emergency 706-737-1401). Emergency telephones are located in the University Hall parking lot and various other locations on campus.

### **Cell Phones**

The use of cell phones for calls, text messaging, or other tasks is prohibited in class.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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