

University of Connecticut

Course Syllabus
EPSY 1100: Introduction to Special Education

3 Credits

Instructor:
Office:
Office Hours:
Email:
Phone:

Texts and Readings:

Most readings will be posted online. You will need to either buy, borrow, or download these three books:

Jonathan Mooney (2008). *The Short Bus: A Journey Beyond Normal*. Holt Publishing.

Patricia Wood (2007). *Lottery*. Putnum Publishing.

Terry Trueman (2001). *Stuck in Neutral*. Harper Collins.

Course Objectives:

Students will:

- Become familiar with the history, laws, regulations and concepts related to exceptional students and special education in American schools.
- Gain an understanding of the characteristics of certain exceptionalities and how these characteristics might impact student learning.
- Explore their own attitudes regarding exceptional students and people with disabilities.
- Gain an understanding of the roles of various professionals in working with exceptional students in American schools.

CEC Knowledge and Skill Base for All Beginning Special Education Teachers of Students in Individualized General Curriculums

This course has been designed to address the *Council for Exceptional Children Common Core of Knowledge and Skills Essential for All Beginning Special Education Teachers*, specifically *Common Core Area 1, Foundations, Common Core Area 2: Characteristics of Learners, and Common Core Area 3: Individual Learning Differences*. See page 7 for specific skills.

Grading:

Please read each section below and note requirements and due dates. Late work is not accepted without prior approval, and will result in a grade of zero for that portion of the course. The final course grade will be based upon the following:

Exams (2; 10 points each):	20 points
Book Review (3, 10 points each):	30 points
Research Paper:	20 points
Review and Respond:	18 points
Participation:	12 points
Total:	100 points

Final Grades will be calculated according to the following:

A	93 to 100 of the total points	C	73 to 76 of the total points
A-	90 to 92 of the total points	C-	70 to 72 of the total points
B+	87 to 89 of the total points	D+	67 to 69 of the total points
B	83 to 86 of the total points	D	63 to 66 of the total points
B-	80 to 82 of the total points	D-	60 to 62 of the total points
C+	77 to 79 of the total points	F	Less than 60 of the total points

Please Note: If you require accommodations for classroom or course evaluation activities due to a documented disability, or if you have emergency medical information to share, please make an appointment to talk with me during office hours or after class. The Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at UConn provides accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at csd@uconn.edu. Detailed information regarding the accommodations process is also available on their website <https://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Also note these other important and useful resources:

Counseling and Mental Health Services	Alcohol and Other Drug Services	Office of Student Services and Advocacy
(860) 486-4705 (24 hours) www.cmhs.uconn.edu	(860) 486-9431 www.aod.uconn.edu	(860) 486-3426 http://www.ossa.uconn.edu

Exams: There will be two exams that will each cover approximately one half of the semester, and are each worth 10 points towards your final course grade. Each exam will be based upon materials from the readings, class lectures and activities. The first exam is tentatively scheduled for **10/XX/XXXX** exam is scheduled for the date of the final exam (date to be announced). Make-up exams will not be offered and missed

exams will result in a grade of zero for that exam. More detailed information about each exam will be provided in class.

Book Review: Over the course of the semester, you will read three books written by or about people with disabilities (*Lottery*, *The Short Bus*, and *Stuck in Neutral*). We will frequently break into small groups to discuss the books and how they tie to other course materials. You will write a reflective paper (no more than 2 pages) about each book and how the content relates to topics in special education or disability studies. Each is worth 10 points, for a total of 30 points.

Review and Respond: Each week, you will be provided with a list of websites and readings that are relevant to the topic discussed in class. You will be responsible for reviewing the sites, completing the online readings, and then responding to prompt questions on the HuskyCT site. There will be six of these Review and Respond exercises throughout the semester, and each will be worth three points for total of 18 points towards your final grade. To receive credit, you must post your response by the Monday before class at noon.

Research Paper: In addition to discussing the three assigned books across the semester, we will also discuss a range of perspectives, issues, and controversies related to disability. You will select a topic of interest to you, conduct research, and write a short paper that synthesizes your perspectives on these topics. You will also share your results with your classmates in class. More information will be provided on HuskyCT. This will be due on or before class on 11/XX/XXXX and is worth 20 points.

Participation: You will receive a half point for participating in each class. In total, there are 12 points possible (no participation grades on exam days).

Course Behavior Expectations:

It is expected that all students will treat all peers, guest speakers, and the instructor and with respect. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Being Respectful.**
 - ✓ Respectful language and behavior is expected of all students. Potentially controversial topics or issues may be covered or discussed within the context of this course and there may be disagreements among class members. Students in this class should feel free to discuss topics and issues in an open and professional manner. Any student who feels uncomfortable or has concerns in the context of class discussion or activities should feel free to talk with instructor.
 - ✓ Maintain a positive learning environment. Ensure cell phones, instant message and social networking sites, and other potential sources of distraction are turned off during class unless they are being employed as part of the course activities.
 - ✓ Avoid unnecessary side conversations with peers;
 - ✓ Use in-class activities and group work periods to focus on learning, not social engagement or work for other courses; and

- ✓ Do not nap in class – if you are tired or not feeling well, please leave the class until you are ready to actively participate.
- Please note that failure to extend these respects and courtesies to others may result in the behaviors being pointed out publicly and/or the student being asked to leave the class. Appropriate actions may be taken following the UConn Student Code: <https://community.uconn.edu/>.
- When discussing persons with disabilities, students should work to use “person first” language. In this manner, the person should be mentioned before describing any other features of their abilities (e.g., “person with autism,” or “student with a learning disability”). This language communicates respect and acknowledgement that ability level is one of many characteristics of a human being.
- **Be Responsible.** The following standards are expected:
 - ✓ Regular attendance and participation are a course requirement and will be monitored.
 - ✓ Submit original work and maintain **academic integrity**. If any type of academic misconduct occurs (including, but not limited to: receiving or giving assistance on exams or content checks, submitting work for another student, plagiarism – including copying text from websites or other materials), all students involved will receive a zero on that component of their semester grade and may be subjected to additional sanctions (e.g., failing the course, university suspension or expulsion). See the UConn Student Code for more details: <https://community.uconn.edu/>
 - ✓ All assignments must be submitted **on time**, and all exams must be taken at the scheduled time. *Prior permission must be received for any exception to this policy.* Without prior permission, the instructor will refuse to accept assignments, content checks, or exams and the project will receive a grade of Zero.
- **Be Informed.** This course syllabus contains a great deal of information about the course, and all students are expected to know and to follow dates, policies, and expectations outlined within. In addition, the following standards apply to all students:
 - ✓ If **class cancellation or delay** (e.g., instructor emergency, inclement weather) is required, the instructor will make a good faith effort to inform students as soon as the cancellation or delay is known. To the greatest extent possible, the instructor will send emails and update the course HuskyCT site as soon as possible, and students should check the HuskyCT site for the most up-to-date information. All of us should use good judgment in decision-making, and keep personal safety and the safety of others the foremost concern.
 - ✓ Each student is responsible for being aware of all University policies and dates set out in the Undergraduate Catalog (see <https://catalog.uconn.edu/>).
 - ✓ Deadlines for course projects or any other course component will only be changed if a student presents compelling documentation of a need for a change, and as soon as possible **before** the due date in question.
 - ✓ The assignment of an incomplete (I) grade is strongly discouraged and will be assigned *only* in the case of emergencies and where satisfactory progress has

been demonstrated in the class. The "I" must be negotiated one week *before* the end of the class and a course completion contract drawn up and signed by both the instructor and the student.

Course Technology Components:

- This course will be taught as a blended class using both face-to-face and on-line components (via HuskyCT). All course handouts, including the syllabus, class notes, assignment due dates, and other supporting course materials will be on the class website. All correspondence and course announcements from Dr. Madaus will be done through the course website, and all students are responsible for monitoring the site. If you wish to use the on-line notes during class, you are responsible for downloading and printing the relevant notes prior to class. Weekly notes will be released on Monday at 6:00 pm on the night prior to class. If you have difficulty accessing the materials, or if computer access is an issue for you, please speak to Dr. Madaus.

University Policies:

- **Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships:** *The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate Romantic relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate Romantic relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. (More information is available at <https://titleix.uconn.edu/more-information/sexual-harassment/>.)*
- **Sexual Assault Reporting Policy**—Please add this statement: *To protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report assaults they witness or are told about to the Office of Diversity & Equity under the Sexual Assault Response Policy. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. (More information is available at <https://titleix.uconn.edu/more-information/sexual-harassment/>.)*

Tentative Course Outline:

Students should have read the appropriate reading assignments before each class meeting. After each class, students should read the materials on the HuskyCT site as well. Note that this schedule is tentative and may be adjusted.

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and course overview • Who are exceptional learners? • History of disability and special education • Disability in the media, literature and entertainment 	
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues and trends • Models of disability • Universal design • Person first language • Exploring your attitudes 	<i>Stuck in Neutral</i> , Chapters 1-8.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education law, processes, and concepts • Working with multicultural students • Working with parents and families 	<i>Stuck in Neutral</i> , Chapters 8-16.
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Learning Disabilities 	<i>The Short Bus</i> , Prologue – Chapter 3
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder • Students with Traumatic Brain Injury 	<i>The Short Bus</i> , Chapter 4 (focus on pp. 62-63); Chapter 6 (focus on pp. 94-96)
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders 	<i>The Short Bus</i> , Chapter 5, Chapter 8
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Speech and Language Disorders • Students with Hearing Impairments 	<i>The Short Bus</i> , Chapter 7
Week 8	Mid-term Exam	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Emotional/Behavior Disorders 	
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Intellectual Disabilities 	<i>The Short Bus</i> , Chapter 10 (focus on pp146-154); Chapter 11 (focus on pp.172-

179); Chapter 12

- Week 10**
- Students with Physical Disabilities
 - Students who are Gifted and Talented

Lottery, pp. 1-76

- Week 11**
- Infants and toddlers with disabilities
 - Transition to adult life

Lottery, pp. 77-154

- Week 12**
- Assistive technology for students with disabilities
 - Exploring careers in special education

Lottery, pp. 155-217

- Week 13**
- Revisiting issues in special education and disability
 - Presentation of research projects

Lottery, pp. 218-274

Research Paper Due

- Week 14**
- Course wrap up

Lottery, pp. 275-305

Final Exam

Special Education Standard #1: Foundations

Knowledge:	
CC1K1	Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis for special education practice.
CC1K2	Laws, policies, and ethical principles regarding behavior management planning and implementation.
CC1K3	Relationship of special education to the organization and function of educational agencies.
CC1K4	Rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptional learning needs.
CC1K5	Issues in definition and identification of individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
CC1K6	Issues, assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services.)
CC1K7	Family systems and the role of families in the educational process.
CC1K8	Historical points of view and contribution of culturally diverse groups.
CC1K9	Impact of the dominant culture on shaping schools and the individuals who study and work in them.
CC1K10	Potential impact of differences in values, languages, and customs that can exist between the home and school.

Special Education Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners

Knowledge:	
CC2K1	Typical and atypical human growth and development.
CC2K2	Educational implications of characteristics of various exceptionalities.
CC2K3	Characteristics and effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual with exceptional learning needs and the family.
CC2K4	Family systems and the role of families in supporting development.
CC2K5	Similarities and differences of individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.
CC2K6	Similarities and differences among individuals with exceptional learning needs.
CC2K7	Effects of various medications on individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Special Education Standard #3: Individual Learning Differences

Knowledge:	
CC3K1	Effects an exceptional condition(s) can have on an individual's life.
CC3K2	Impact of learners' academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values on instruction and career development.
CC3K3	Variations in beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures and their effects on relationships among individuals with exceptional learning needs. Family, and schooling.
CC3K4	Cultural perspectives influencing the relationships among families, schools and communities as related to instruction.
CC3K5	Differing ways of learning of individuals with exceptional learning needs including those from culturally diverse backgrounds and strategies for addressing these differences.