



# DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

## School of Education

### **Learning Behavior Specialist I Endorsement Course Descriptions**

#### **SPED 522 Exceptional Children: Characteristics and the Special Education Process**

In this course, candidates study the psychology and characteristics of exceptional students, grades preschool through high school, and access to services in variety of school settings. Consideration of the impact of disabilities on development, learning, and communication processes is also addressed. A major portion of this course focuses on the special education process including laws, rules, regulations and procedural safeguards as well as development of IEPs and Behavior Management Plans. Candidates will become familiar with their role in the Response to Intervention process, and in working with exceptional students, their families and special education service providers.

#### **SPED 526 Psycho-Educational Diagnosis (Ages 3-21) (4 credit hours)**

In this course candidates are introduced to the diagnostic assessment and the processes of assessment involved in determination of the presence of disabilities. The administration, scoring and interpretation of educational tests used in the diagnosis of all types of learning problems in a variety of multi-cultural settings will be addressed. The candidates will receive specific training on how to administer achievement, processing, observation/checklist based and other types of evaluation instruments for students aged preschool through high school. Attention will be given to the terminology of assessment, importance of family history data, the ethical and legal guidelines of assessment and necessary considerations for diagnostic assessment of ELL students. Administration of a variety of CBM measures will be addressed focusing primarily on reading, math and written language probes for students in kindergarten through high school. Participants will also study interpretation of test data including analysis of diagnostic test results and analysis of progress monitoring data. Creating educational assessment reports, and preparation and communication of data for use in educational and instructional planning and data-based decision making are also elements of this course.

#### **SPED 649 Psychology and Characteristics of Students with Disabilities**

The purpose of this course is the study of the 13 major disability categories identified in IDEA with special attention to: learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, intellectual disability, attention deficit disorder, autism, other health impaired, orthopedic impairments and traumatic brain injury. The etiology, characteristics and impact of each of these disabilities on development, language development and language skills, learning and behavior of students at the preschool, elementary, middle, high school and post high school levels will be addressed. Candidates will review case studies, become familiar with issues within and across these disability categories, and engage in research on the varied aspects of these disability areas. Considerations for ELL learners with suspected disabilities and the distinction of language differences from language disabilities/disorders are addressed in this course. The impact of the diagnosis on family, the role of

culture in the diagnosis of a disability and related issues will be examined. Candidates will also become familiar with resources and sources of current information/research on these disabilities.

### **SPED 659 Managing Challenging Behaviors**

In this course, candidates will study use of appropriate non-aversive, least intrusive management procedures when presented with a variety of behavioral problems including challenging behavior. Candidates will learn the PBIS model, evidence-based practices for individual behavior management, crisis prevention, conflict resolution and effective use of reinforcement. Attention will also be given to procedures to help individuals develop self-awareness, self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem and self-determination and manage their own behavior and for fostering maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments. As part of this course candidates will study and complete functional assessments of behavior and develop behavior intervention plans based on student case studies.

### **SPED 664 Curriculum and Methods for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities**

In this course, candidates will study instructional techniques and specialized methods that may be aspects of instruction of students with moderate to severe disabilities. This includes coverage of the functional curriculum across a variety of domains including self-care, life skills, recreation/leisure, domestic, community and career/vocational. Specialized interventions and methodology for individuals (preschool through high school) with a focus on physical (including positioning/support), communication (including augmentative communication) and other techniques and methods that support student learning and development of key functional skills will also be addressed. Candidates will examine assessment and adjustment of learning environments, planning and development of instructional programs directed toward objectives established for a variety of key skills, provision of opportunities for student choice and development of positive self-concepts. This course will also include consideration of the importance of use of appropriate materials emphasizing functionality, instruction in natural settings and interactions between students with and without disabilities. Field hours are required for this course.

### **SPED 654 Academic Methods for Early Childhood-Elementary Level Students with Disabilities**

The purpose of this course is to prepare candidates to use a variety of instructional strategies and create learning experiences that encourage early childhood and elementary level student development across many skill domains and the Illinois Learning Standards. The content of this course will initially focus on various forms of lesson planning (including direct instruction, the inquiry approach, and universal design for learning). Major emphasis is placed on development of effective instructional skills including scaffolding and a variety of academic methods for instruction and remediation in the basic areas for students with a variety of disabilities. This course places particular emphasis on oral language, a balanced approach to reading instruction, written language, mathematics instruction and support of instruction in content areas (science and social studies). Candidates study evidence/research-based practices for assessment, planning and instruction and their use in varied contexts and service delivery models including: tiered RTI interventions, instruction addressing IEP goals and objectives, academic adaptations within the general education classroom, and instructional support for ELL students. Within this course, candidates are expected to prepare pre- and post-assessments, lessons and lesson plans, tools and activities for instruction of specific skills and strategies, which are based on knowledge of the discipline, student needs, the general education curriculum and IEP goals.

**SPED 655 Academic Methods for Middle and Secondary Level Students with Disabilities (2 credit hours)**

The purpose of this course is to prepare candidates to use a variety of instructional strategies and create learning experiences that encourage middle and high school level student development across many skill domains and the Illinois Learning Standards. The content of this course will focus on academic methods for students with a variety of disabilities with emphasis on RTI tier 2 and 3 academic interventions at the middle and secondary level, the use of technology as a support for math and science instruction, content area instruction, learning strategies and study skills. This course provides significant coverage of the elements of the evidence-based practice of Learning Strategy Instruction. Candidates will gain knowledge of a variety of teaching methods thus enabling them to choose and implement instructional sequences and methods that address IEP goals and objectives, consider the needs of ELL students and allow for errorless learning, development of conceptual understanding and the maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments. Development of pre- and post-assessments, lessons and lesson plans and strategies for performance data analysis are an expectation of this course.