EDSP 687: Family Partnerships in Special Education

Instructor: Miji Kim
Email: miji.cosmo@verizon.net
Phone: 410 707 7912
Office Hours: 10 am-12 pm on Wednesdays
And by appointment at 1240 A Benjamin Building (301) 405-6481
Class Time: Wednesdays 1:15-4:00 pm
Location: Benjamin Building Room 2101

Academic Integrity:
The University is one of a small number of universities with a student-administered Code of Academic Integrity and an Honor Pledge. The Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. The University of Maryland Honor Pledge, proposed by the Student Honor Council and approved by the University Senate, reads:

_I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment)._ 

Unless you are specifically advised to the contrary, the Pledge statement should be handwritten and signed on the front cover of all major papers, projects, or other academic assignments submitted for evaluation in this course. Students who fail to write and sign the Pledge will be asked to confer with the instructor. Compliance with the code is administered by the Student Honor Council, which strives to promote a “community of trust” on the College Park campus. Allegations of academic dishonesty should be reported directly to the Honor Council (301-314-8204).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:
The University is legally obligated to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability, you should contact Disability Support Services (301-314-7682) to ascertain the specific accommodations that may need to be provided. The rules for eligibility and the types of accommodations a student may request can be reviewed on the DSS web site at http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/receiving_serv.html.

It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester
of any documented disabilities so reasonable accommodations can be made to assist learning and evaluation in the class.

Attendance Guidelines/Religious Observances:
University policy excuses the absences of students for illness (self or dependent), religious observances, participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond the student's control. The University provides students with excused absences the opportunity to reschedule significant assessments, except in cases where the nature of the assessment precludes the possibility of rescheduling, OR to perform a substitute assignment without penalty.

Students claiming an excused absence must submit the request in writing and supply appropriate documentation, e.g. medical documentation. The student must notify his or her instructor of the reason for absence as soon as possible. Where the reason for absence from a scheduled assessment is known well in advance (for example, in cases of religious observance or participation in university activities at the request of University authorities), the student must inform the instructor by the end of the schedule adjustment period. Prior notification is especially important in connection with final examinations, since failure to reschedule a final examination before conclusion of the final examination period may result in loss of credits during the semester.

**NOTE:** If for some reason, you cannot attend our Wednesday class, you have the option to make up the class in the Thursday section which meets from 4-7 pm the following evening that we regularly meet. You must give me 24 hour prior notice via email and get permission from me to attend the Thursday section.

Purpose:
The purpose of this course is to assist students pursuing generic certification in infant/primary special education, elementary/middle special education, and middle/secondary special education in developing flexible theoretical frameworks as well as practical skills and sensitivity in working with families of students with disabilities. The course will cover the theoretical bases for current approaches to supporting families, while also highlighting anomalies and challenges presented by the growing diversity of U.S. society. An overview of relevant research will be presented with an emphasis on the development of a critical awareness of formal and informal supports for families. Students will become familiar with current local, state and federal policies governing the delivery of services to families, and will learn how to collaborate with families in accessing services and developing individualized, long range planning for children, youth, and young adults with disabilities.
Competencies:

Student will demonstrate knowledge of:

1. the history of disabilities and changing role of families:  
   \textit{AS1,EC1, InTASC2}

2. rights and responsibilities of parents and students with disabilities  
   \textit{AS1,EC1,InTASC2}

3. cultural contexts influencing families and service delivery approaches  
   \textit{EC1,InTASC2}

4. specific provisions, guidelines, and legal regulations of IDEA, 2004  
   \textit{AS1,EC2,InTASC10}

5. differences and similarities between IDEA, Section 504, and ADA for citizens with disabilities  
   \textit{AS1,EC2,InTASC10}

6. strategies for promoting equity for families with limited resources or for those for whom English is a second language  
   \textit{EC1and2,AS6,InTASC2and10}

7. the personal cultural biases that affect special educators  
   \textit{EC1}

8. advocating for parents of students with disabilities  
   \textit{AS6}

9. issues critical to families with a member with a disability across the lifespan  
   \textit{AS6,EC2,InTASC2}

10. various disability service systems other than special education  
    \textit{EC2and5}

In TASC Core Teaching Standards

- \textit{The Learner and Learning Standard 2   Learning Differences}
- \textit{Professional Responsibility Standard 10 Leadership and Collaboration}

COE Conceptual Framework: Emerging Commitments(EC)

- \textit{EC1 Equity and Diversity}
- \textit{EC2 Advocacy}
• **EC5 Innovation and Creativity**

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): Advanced Content Standards (AS)
- **AS1 Leadership and Policy**
- **AS6 Collaboration**

**Required Readings:**


Additional Readings: Other readings will be distributed in class or the website URL will be provided. A majority of the readings will be posted on Blackboard.

**MSDE Teacher Technology Standards:**
Assignments in the course help teacher certification candidates meet certain Maryland Teacher Technology Standards.
- Interagency Resource Guide- Standard I, Indicator 1 and 2
- Legal Scenarios-Standard I, Indicator 3 and 4
- Family Interview- Standard IIA, Indicator 1

**Assignments:**

1. **Readings and Class Participation**
   You should try to read assigned materials prior to each class and attending class is crucial to completing assignments. Attendance is the most important aspect of this course and is worth 75 points. If you miss one more than one class, you will not get an A in this course. *InTASC2 and 10, EC1, 2, and 5*

2. **IDEA/504/ADA Scenarios**
   This assignment involves finding the legally correct solution to various scenarios that typically occur for students and families according to IDEA, Section 504 or the ADA. Your response to each scenario must be typed and specifically referenced. The information for completing these scenarios will be covered in class lectures and you must complete the assignment by yourself. It is worth 35 points. *AS1 and EC2*

3. **Interagency Resource Guide**
   You must develop a resource guide with materials related to accessing services outside of special education such as Social Security benefits, health insurance,
transportation, higher education, case management, social services, and informal family supports. The guide must be organized in such a way that facilitates families and students learning how to access resources outside of special education.

The guide must contain a list of questions which I have developed related to accessing services. You will answer the question and provide resources from the internet or other sources as a reminder of how to find such information when a family member or student is seeking such information in the future. Besides providing answers and resources for the questions related to federal, state, and local formal services, you must provide descriptions of and resources related to the following areas: (a) advocacy organizations and parent support groups; (b) self-advocacy and self-determination and materials; (d) miscellaneous materials/resources helpful to students with disabilities and their families.

Finally, the resource guide must be durable, portable, and well organized. It can be presented as a notebook, file folder, or any format that is easy to use and reuse over the years. Because so much material related to community services, including applications, are most easily accessed on the internet, it is critical that each teacher candidate include as many of theses references as possible. You may compile your guide with a group of students, but I must see each individual guide. It is worth 50 points. *In TASC2 and 10, EC1,2, and 5, AS1 and 6*

4. **Parent/Guardian /Family Interview**

You will conduct an interview with a parent or guardian of a student receiving special education. This family must be culturally different from you. The student should be the same age as the students whom you wish to teach if at all possible. This interview should occur at a time and place that is convenient for the parent. It should focus on themes described in the literature as important in communicating with families of students with disabilities. These themes include: (a) impact of the disability on the family; (b) roles and responsibilities of family members; (c) impact of cultural and religious beliefs; (d) family needs regarding advocacy/social services; and (e) family needs regarding special education/school services. Each of these themes will be covered extensively in class readings, lecture, and discussion/activities prior to conducting the interview. As well, interviewing techniques and possible questions related to each theme will be reviewed. Sample interviews from past classes will be made available to students for review. This is worth 50 points.

You will submit a written report describing and summarizing the interview process and results along with an analysis of parent needs and a self critique of your
interview skills. This report must be no longer than 20 double-spaced, typed pages and must contain the following information: (a) summary of questions and answers related to four of the five themes; (b) an introduction containing descriptions of how the interview was set up and conducted, the nature of the student’s disability, and the ways in which the family’s culture is different from the candidate’s; and (d) a self critique of your interview skills and suggestions for improving your skills in future situations. *In TASC 10, EC2, AS6*

5. **Midterm Exam**

Your midterm will be an open book, take home exam based on readings and lectures covering disability history, legal rights, cultural and lifespan issues, and communicating with families. If you keep up with the study guides related to each lecture, read, and come to class, you will do well on this exam. You must complete the take home exam without help from other students and I will not answer any questions about the exam once it has been given to you. The exam is worth 35 points.

**Grading:**

Your final grade for the class will be calculated as a percentage of the total points earned. Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

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<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>99-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>88-89</td>
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<td>78-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>93-98</td>
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<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<th>Assignment Point Totals:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Scenarios</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Resource Guide</td>
<td>50 POINTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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**Course Evaluation:**

Your participation in CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you have as a member of the UM academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to improving teaching and learning at UM. Go to [www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluation of EDSP 687. By completing all your evaluations each semester, you will have access to
the summary reports of thousands of courses online at Testudo. CourseEvalUM will be open for you to complete your evaluations starting about two weeks prior to the last day of the term before exams begin: **The Fall 2010 CourseEvalUM submission dates are Tuesday, November 29th through Wednesday, December 14th.** Please go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

**Guidelines for writing the Family Interview**

**Part I - Introduction** - A 1-3 page introduction describing the family you interviewed, the process you used for arranging the interview, the setting, and any feelings you had as you approached the event. Include any letters or describe other communication that you had with the family before or after the event.

**Part II - Interview Data** - Write each question you asked and a summary of each answer. Please include any interruptions by other people, certain reactions from you or others, or interesting factors that you observed. You may want to tape the interview so that you can listen to the interview to write this section. Don't forget to ask permission to tape before you do it, and ensure the family that the interview will be confidential. Please omit all names in this section.

**Part III - Critique** - Write a 4-10 page critique of this entire process with an emphasis on what you learned, how you would do this for your students' families, and what you would do differently on the next interview. When you are describing what you learned, please refer back to specific questions and responses as outlined in Part II of the report. In this section, you must address each of the five areas in which we designed questions. Use headings to organize this section of your paper.

**General Guidelines** - I will grade this project on content and writing style and appropriateness. Use your APA style manual or a similar one if you have questions. Please check your grammar, punctuation, basic style rules, and spelling before turning this in. I will be happy to look at a draft if you are concerned.

**Double space the entire document !!!**

**General Guidelines for Conducting the Interview**

1. Write the family or person you are interviewing to remind them of the date and time and thank them for doing this. Please tell them to call me at (410) 707-7912
if they have questions about confidentiality, purpose, or use of this information.

2. Ask permission ahead of time to tape the interview, and don't press the issue if anyone is uncomfortable.

3. Do not let the interview go any longer than 1 1/2 hours unless you are absolutely sure that the family is comfortable. Many families enjoy this and will want to talk for several hours. Allow three hours for this assignment.

4. Send questions that you are interested in asking to the family ahead of the interview if you want to. You could include this list with your introductory letter. You could also call ahead and ask the person(s) if they would like to see some of the questions you are interested in asking prior to the interview. Sending questions ahead could cause the family to react negatively if the questions are too personal or if you have too many questions. Guard against these two barriers.

5. Review materials you have on general interviewing/listening skills. Be prepared to be an active listener and allow the family to take the lead.

6. Be prepared to not get through all your questions. Simply let the family know that you are interested in learning about the five areas as they relate to the family.

6. Be honest about the fact that you are doing this for a class and that the experience is one designed for you to learn how to more effectively communicate with families. Do not lead the family to believe that you are there to change or provide support services.

7. Write a thank you note or letter to the family immediately after the event!

**Schedule of Classes** *(This may change depending on our progress each day.)*

8/31 and 9/1  Intro and Assignment Review

9/7 and 9/8  History of Disability
(READ CHAPTER 5 IN TEXT AND OTHER ELMS READINGS)
ASI, ECI, In TASC2
9/14 and 9/15  Student and Family Legal Rights  
(READ CHAPTER 6 AND 9)  
AS1, ECI In TASC2

9/21 and 9/22  Student and Family Legal Rights  
(READ CHAPTER 10 AND OTHER ELMS READINGS)  
AS1, ECI In TASC2

9/28 and 9/29  Cultural and Lifespan Issues  
(READ CHAPTER 1, 2, 3 AND 4)  
EC1 In TASC2

10/5 and 10/6  Communicating with Families/ Interviewing Families  
(READ CHAPTER 7 AND 8 AND YOU CAN START INTERVEWS AFTER THIS CLASS)  
EC1 AND 2, AS6 In TASC 2 and 10

10/12 and 10/13  Exam Review/Legal Scenarios/Interview Questions  
AS1, EC2 In TASC10

10/19 and 10/20  Disability Systems and Services  
(READ CHAPTER 12)  
AS6, EC2 IN TASC 2

10/26 and 10/27  Disability Systems and Services and Advocacy  
(READ CHAPTER 13)  
AS6, EC2 IN TASC 2

11/2 and 11/3  Midterm/ Legal Scenarios/ Parent Interviews

11/9 and 11/10  NO CLASS Use week to conduct Parent Interview

11/16 and 11/17  NO CLASS Placement immersion week

11/23 and 11/24  NO CLASS HAPPY THANKSGIVING BREAK

11/30 and 12/1  Work on Resource Guides/ Finding Resources

12/7 and 12/8  Present Resources to Class/ Resource Guides due  
(FAMILY PANEL)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/2 and 11/3</td>
<td>Legal scenarios due at class time</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/11</td>
<td>Take home Midterm Exam due at 5PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/21</td>
<td>(Monday) Parent Interview due at 5 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/7 and 12/8</td>
<td>Resource Guides due at class time</td>
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