



EDUC 2301 - Introduction to Special Populations EDUC2301.401 Course Syllabus

Description

An enriched, integrated pre-service course and content experience that provides an overview of schooling and classrooms from the perspectives of language, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnic and academic diversity, and equity with an emphasis on factors that facilitate learning. The course provides students with opportunities to participate in early field observations of P-12 special populations and should be aligned as applicable with State Board for Educator Certification Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities standards.

Prerequisites [EDUC 1301](#)

Semester Offered

Fall and Spring

Credits 3

Lecture Hours 3

Lab Hours 0

Extended Hours 1

Contact Hours 64

State Approval Code 13.0101.51 09

Instructor Name Christine Dobbs

Semester/Year Fall 2025

Meeting Time and Location

Online—students are expected to spend at least 3-4 hours per week** reading, reviewing, and participating in assigned activities for successful completion of this course.

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Panola College to move to altered operations. During this time, Panola College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to: online learning management system (CANVAS), online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Panola College's website (www.panola.edu) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, CANVAS for each class for course-specific communication, and Panola College email for important general information.

Student Basic Needs

Unexpected circumstances may arise, but Panola College offers various resources to support students. If you need mental health services or are facing challenges with transportation, affording class materials and supplies, or accessing food regularly—issues that may impact your class performance—please visit panola.edu/resources.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance of classes and laboratories is required of all students. When a student has been ill or absent from class for approved extracurricular activities, he or she should be allowed, as far as

possible, to make up for the missed work. If a student has not actively participated by the census date, they will be dropped by the instructor for non-attendance. This policy applies to courses that are in-person, online, hybrid, and hyflex.

Attendance in online courses is determined by submission of an assignment or participation in an activity. According to federal guidelines, simply logging into a distance learning course without participating in an academic assignment does not constitute attendance. Distance learning is defined as when a majority (more than 50%) of instruction occurs when the instructor and students are in separate physical locations. Students must engage in an academic activity prior to the course census date.

When an instructor feels that a student has been absent to such a degree as to invalidate the learning experience, the instructor may recommend to the Vice President of Instruction that the student be withdrawn from the course. Instructors may seek to withdraw students for non-attendance after they have accumulated the following number of absences:

Fall or spring semesters:

3 or more class meeting times per week - 5 absences

2 class meeting times per week - 3 absences

1 class meeting per week - 2 absences

The student is responsible for seeing that he or she has been officially withdrawn from a class. A student who stops attendance in a class without officially withdrawing from that class will be given a failing grade; consequently, the student must follow official withdrawal procedures in the Admissions/Records Office.

Please note: Health Science and Cosmetology courses may require more stringent attendance policies based on their accreditation agencies. Please see the addendum and/or program handbook for further information concerning attendance.

Pregnant/Parenting Policy

Panola College welcomes pregnant and parenting students as a part of the student body. This institution is committed to providing support and adaptations for a successful educational experience for pregnant and parenting students. Students experiencing a need for accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting will find a Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations Request form in the Student Handbook or may request the form from the course instructor.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Course Policy

No use of Generative AI permitted.

This option assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, whether they are working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person or entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Panola College's standards of academic integrity.

Instructional Goals and Purposes

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a) information about the education of students with special needs and b) opportunities to observe professional teachers in their teaching environments.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the characteristics of exceptional learners (e.g. Learning Disabilities, Gifted and Talented), including legal implications. (PPR St I)
2. Describe and analyze characteristics of diverse learners (e.g. language, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity) and how diversity impacts learning. (PPR St I)
3. Describe the impact of socio-economic status on learning and creating equitable classrooms. (PPR St I)
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the benefits and challenges of racial, ethnic, and other types of cultural diversity in the classroom. (PPR St I, II)
5. Complete a minimum of 16 contact hours of field experience in P-12 classrooms with special populations. (PPR St IV)

Course Content

Students in all sections of this course will learn the following content:

Standard I. The teacher designs instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment.

1. Identify the required components of an individualized education plan (IEP).
2. Identify examples of related services for students with special needs.
3. Identify high and low incidence disability groups and outline their behavioral characteristics.
4. Define terms/characteristics associated with special needs students, including least restrictive environment, inclusion, mental retardation, speech and language impairments, emotional or behavioral disorders, ADHD, gifted/talented, at risk, sensory impairments, autism spectrum disorders, physical and health disabilities, and traumatic brain injury.
5. Identify effective classroom assessment approaches, including the role of assessment in the content areas.
6. Describe various interventions or techniques that can be used according to student learning domains.
7. Articulate the important concepts of reading, writing, and mathematics instruction.
8. Extend and revise lesson plans to accommodate learners with special needs.

Standard II. The teacher creates a classroom environment of respect and rapport that fosters a positive climate for learning, equity, and excellence.

1. Illustrate the importance of using technology in the classroom, including assistive technology.
2. Select strategies to reinforce appropriate behavior.

Standard III. The teacher promotes student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high-quality feedback.

1. Identify models of collaboration and cooperative teaching.
2. Discuss the importance of parent/family/school collaboration in educating students with special needs.
3. Identify effective classroom assessment approaches, including the role of assessment in the content areas.

Standard IV. The teacher fulfills professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

1. Trace the evolution of services for children with special needs.
2. Summarize major provisions of important legislation, including the Disabilities Education Act, IDEA 2004, No Child Left Behind Act, and Section 504 (PL 93-112).
3. Explain the role and function of the multidisciplinary team.
4. Identify models of collaboration and cooperative teaching.

Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery

Students in all sections of the class will have access to this course via the Canvas Learning Management System. Online students will be required to attend 16 hours of off-campus classroom observations. Students may be required to test at the Carthage Testing Center in person. Instruction and class participation will include:

- Instructor online facilitation
- Online submission of assignments
- Email via Canvas Inbox
- Videos
- Discussion Board
- Practice Exams
- Exams
- Quizzes
- Journals
- On-site Field Experience

Major Assignments/Assessments

The following items are assigned and assessed during the semester and used to calculate the student's final grade.

Assignments

Assignments

Assignments include written responses to a question or topic pertaining to each individual chapter. There is a format to follow, a minimum word count, and plagiarism/AI check.

To earn a passing grade, all required documents for the sixteen-hour field study component **MUST** be submitted **ON** or **BEFORE** the **DUE DATE**. Students who do not complete all sixteen hours will not receive credit for the course, regardless of performance on other assignments.

90-100 % A

80-89% B

70-79% C

60-69% D

Below 60% F

Assessments

Assessments

Quizzes: There are chapter and other content quizzes related to the topics under study.

Exams: Students will complete at least 2 unit exams and a comprehensive final exam, all proctored.

Course Grade

The grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

- Field Experience Journal and Documentation = 20%
- Written Assignments for each chapter = 30%
- Quizzes for each chapter = 10%
- Proctored Unit Exams, including a comprehensive Final Exam = 40%

Field Experience Journal and Documentation: Students will complete sixteen hours of on-site observation in grades Pre-K-12 in Texas public schools, with emphasis on observing special populations. A time log, teacher evaluations, and a reflective journal will document completion of the observations. Failure to complete the entire sixteen-hour assignment will result in a grade of F in the class, regardless of performance on other assignments.

Texts Materials, and Supplies

- **TEXTBOOK(S):**
None
- **SOFTWARE:** Web browser - Google Chrome - updated as necessary; access to MS WORD; **NOTE THIS CLASS CANNOT BE COMPLETED VIA CELL PHONE**

Required Readings

Open Educational Resources provided throughout the course.

Other

- Courses conducted via video conferencing may be recorded and shared for instructional purposes by the instructor.
- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <https://www.panolacollegestore.com>.

- For testing services, use the following link: <https://www.panola.edu/student-services/studentsupport/academic-testing-center>.
- The Accommodations & Disability Support (A&DS) Office at Panola College provides and facilitates support services and accommodations for students with disabilities. The A&DS office works under the federal guidelines included in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act. Please contact the Accommodations & Disability Support (A&DS) Office located in the Charles C. Matthews Student Center or go to <https://www.panola.edu/disabilitysupport> for more information.
- Withdrawing from a course is the student's responsibility. Students who do not attend class and who do not withdraw will receive the grade earned for the course.
- Student Handbook: <https://www.panola.edu/> (located on at the bottom under student)