

## **EDUC 2301: Special Populations**

Spring 2026

**Course Title:** Introduction to Special Populations

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### GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

#### Course Description

***Pre-requisite: Completion of EDUC 1301 or approval of the Program Coordinator.***

This course offers an enriched, pre-service course and content experience that

a) Provides an overview of the school and classrooms, gender, socio-economic status, ethnic and academic diversity and equality with emphasis on factors that facilitate learning;

b) Provides students with support to participate in early field experiences in all levels EC – 12 with course content aligned as applicable to SBEC Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards and Technology Applications Standards for all Beginning Teachers.

**Credit:** 3 Lecture, 0 Lab

**Textbook:** You do not need to purchase a textbook for this class. We will be using Open Educational Resources (OER), and they will be provided to you in each module.

#### Other Materials:

- Access to a computer (with internet access) & Blackboard

#### **Course Requirements:**

EDUC 2301, as the course title indicates, is an introduction to special populations with the teaching profession and a State requirement for the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree. In addition to completing all modules and assignments throughout the semester, students will complete observation hours at Colonial Heights and/or Oak Grove Elementary schools.

## Course Guidelines and Expectations

Category	Percent of Total Grade
Attendance/Participation/Discussion/Professionalism	15%
Weekly Module Learning Activities & Quizzes <i>Includes 18 – 20 assignments and/or quizzes over the semester</i>	30%
Interview/Transcript	10%
Lesson Plan Presentation	15%
4 Observation Field Notes	20%
Final Observation Analysis Paper	10%
Total	100%

*\*Assignment instructions and rubrics for assignments will be available in Blackboard.*

### Grades are determined by the following scale:

90 – 100% = A

60 – 69% = D

80 – 89% = B

0 – 59% = F

70 – 79% = C

### NOTES ABOUT GRADED ACTIVITIES & QUIZZES/TESTS:

- All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard.
- **Late work will not be accepted and will receive a grade of "0."**
- You may see your grade on quizzes that are auto-graded in Blackboard immediately after taking the quiz. You should be able to see your final grade and review your responses and the CORRECT RESPONSE after the due date.
- **Extra Credit:** I will offer a few opportunities to earn extra credit throughout the semester. I will post a Blackboard announcement that explains available extra credit opportunities. Extra credit will not be added to your final grade until the last week of classes.
- Student use of AI.
  - o EDUC 2301 requires some writing assignments that involve personal observations or opinions, and I want to read YOUR unique words and thoughts and not those generated by a computer program. **Please do NOT use generative AI platforms (like ChatGPT, Gemini, Co-Pilot, etc.) to generate content for the writing assignments in this class**, specifically field notes, the interview transcript and reflection essay, and the final observation analysis essay
  - o I will let you know explicitly when it is appropriate for you to use AI for an assignment.

**Unforeseen Circumstances:** If a student is dealing with an unforeseen circumstance, **the student should contact the instructor IMMEDIATELY, before the due date of an assignment. Please do not assume that the instructor will change the due date of an**

**assignment or extend the date due to unforeseen circumstances.** *It is only at the instructor's discretion that a due date may be amended or extended.* If a date is changed, it will only be changed/extended once. After that, a grade of 0 will be given for the assignment.

## **Field Experience Component**

· EDUC 2301, as the course title indicates, is an introduction to the special populations within the general education classroom and a State requirement for the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree. In addition to attending all class meetings throughout the semester, students will be given four education/field-experience assignments, each one expected to span approximately 4 hours to equal 16 hours of total time. **Students will also need to complete and pass a criminal background check before attending any observations**

· **Professionalism:** I place a **great** value on professionalism. It is KEY to being an effective teacher, and this semester is your opportunity to demonstrate this skill. Please remember that we are guests in the schools that we observe. This should be taken into consideration in your dress, speech, and actions. When you become a teacher, your professionalism is judged by students, fellow teachers, administrators, parents, and the community.

## **What is professionalism?**

Some examples of professionalism include, but are not limited to: effective communication, punctuality, respect for fellow classmates, instructor and staff (in both actions and speech), being prepared for class and proper behavior and attitude in the field (see observation requirements), how you handle situations and interact with others, maintaining confidentiality, and above all...maintaining positive public conversations held with other students concerning the education courses and program, especially in the presence of students that have not yet entered the program or the assignment.

## **GENERAL ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION**

### **Attendance/Participation/Discussion/Professionalism (15%)**

The following assignments are included in this portion of your grade: 6 - 8 weekly Padlet discussions, participation in the 3 group (Blackboard Collaborate, TEAMS, or Zoom) discussions, completed observation verification forms, & conduct during classroom observations

### **Weekly Module Learning Activities & Quizzes (30%)**

Weekly assignments and/or quizzes based on weekly readings, informational videos, guest lectures, etc., will make up this portion of your grade. These quizzes and/or assignments will be available in the weekly modules (under Content).

## **Interview Transcript/Reflection (10%)**

Interview a parent of a special-needs/exceptional child or an adult who was classified as a special-needs or exceptional child during his/her schooling. Transcribe your interview (i.e. type up a transcription of your interview questions and answers) and type a 1 – 1 ½ page reflection. *Do NOT use AI to generate text for your interview transcript or reflection essay.* You will submit this assignment through Turnitin.com (a link will be provided). Guidelines and a rubric for this assignment, along with other pertinent instructions will be made available in the Major Projects module in Blackboard.

## **UDL Lesson Plan Presentation (15%)**

You will design and present a lesson plan based on a specific grade level and a specific topic within a specific subject (e.g. a lesson on adjectives as part of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade English Language Arts (ELA) grammar unit). Your lesson plan must follow UDL guidelines and include specific accommodations for special populations. Guidelines and a rubric for this assignment, along with other pertinent instructions will be made available in Blackboard.

**\*PLEASE NOTE: Your EDUC 2301 Lesson must be a different lesson from the lesson you presented in EDUC 1301. It must also be a different lesson from the practice lessons we work with throughout the semester. Additionally, you may NOT select a TEKS from Pre-K or Kindergarten for this lesson.**

## **Field Experience & Field Notes (20%)**

You will visit 4 different school campuses to complete 16 hours of observation in the field over the course of the semester. Be sure to read carefully the “Observation Procedures and Rules” sheet. You will be required to submit a verification sheet to Mrs. Jameson at the conclusion of each observation. You will also need to take detailed field notes over each field experience. This process will be taught in class. Your field notes should provide demographic information about the campus/school district and classroom and should include a sketch of the classroom. Additionally, your field notes should address specific (given) questions. *Do NOT use AI to generate text for your field notes.* You will submit each of these field notes through Turnitin.com (links will be provided). Guidelines and a rubric for these field notes will be made available in Blackboard. In order to submit your field notes, you must have turned in your verification sheets. **Field notes are due within 2 weeks of your classroom observation date.** If an emergency arises (or you wake up sick) and you must miss your observation, please contact Ms. Jameson by email ([observations@soutplainscollege.edu](mailto:observations@soutplainscollege.edu)) and by completing the Observation Absence form. *Failure to attend your scheduled observation times (without a valid and documentable reason) will result in zeroes for all assignment-related grades, including the final observation project.*

***Please Note:*** *If students do not complete the required background check, observation paperwork sign up for observations by the given due dates, they cannot complete the observations and will be dropped from the class*

## **Final Observation Reflection Project (10%)**

This final observational analysis paper will count as your final in this class. Using your field notes, you will write a final analysis paper. In this paper, you will highlight three different concepts related to diversity in the classroom and planning instruction to suit the needs of your diverse students, citing examples and/or non-examples of each of these concepts from your observations. *Do NOT use AI to generate text for your observation analysis essay.* You will be expected to use correct APA formatting and citations. You will submit this assignment through Turnitin.com (a link will be provided). Guidelines and a rubric for this assignment, along with other pertinent instructions, will be made available in Blackboard.

**Student Responsibilities:** Students are expected to

1. “Attend class regularly” by logging into our Blackboard course on a regular basis (I suggest daily).
2. Be responsible for the learning process, such as reading and homework; participation in class discussions; asking relevant questions; and accepting responsibility for not understanding an assignment or failing an assignment
3. Be responsible for having an appropriate attitude and using appropriate language in academic environments; this includes not using condescending, inflammatory, threatening, or profane rhetoric, whether verbally or in written form, in academic environments
4. When communicating electronically or through speech, have respectful behavior toward the instructor and classmates.
5. Be responsible for appropriate behavior and courteous actions to others.
6. Be responsible for writing down all grades and applying them to the grading scale used for the class, which is shown in the course’s policy statement/syllabus
7. Submit all assignments in accordance with due dates, formats, and requirements
8. Avoid all forms of cheating (including the unethical use of AI) and plagiarism on all assignments, including improper collaboration
9. Ask questions when something is unclear—PLEASE contact me when you have questions or concerns.

## Course Schedule—EDUC 2301 (Online Section)

**Spring 2026**

*\*Please Note: I reserve the right to change this tentative schedule. If a change is made, it will be announced in class and/or in Blackboard.*

This is NOT a schedule of weekly homework assignments! This is a tentative schedule of topics and textbook chapters to be covered weekly. **For specific due dates, please consult the Weekly Module Instructions.**

*Table 4: Course Schedule with Weekly Topics and Dates*

DATE	TOPICS and CONTENT	GRADE REMINDERS
Week 1: Jan. 12 – 16	<p><i>Welcome to Class; Observation Information; Syllabus Information</i></p> <p><i>Introduction, What is Inclusive Learning?</i></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>“Addressing Our Needs: Maslow Comes to Life” by Lori Desautels</p> <p>“Inclusive Classrooms” by Reading Rockets</p> <p>“Practical Steps Toward More Inclusive Teaching” by Sarah Bray (PDF)</p> <p>“Approved Educator Standards” (TEA Website)</p> <p>“Technology Application Standards”—Standards I – V (TEA Website)</p>	<p><a href="#">Assignments/Quizzes:</a></p> <p><a href="#">Syllabus Quiz</a></p> <p><a href="#">Module 1 Quiz</a></p>
Week 2: Jan. 19 – 23	<p><i>MONDAY—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—SPC HOLIDAY</i></p> <p><i>UDL &amp; Inclusive Learning (&amp; Field Notes)</i></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>Module 2 PowerPoint</p> <p>“Landmark US Cases Related to Equality of Opportunity in K-12 Education” from Stanford University</p> <p>“The History of Special Education Law” by Peter and Pamela Wright</p> <p>IRISCENTER’s Module for Universal Design for Learning (pp 1 – 7)</p> <p>“The UDL Guidelines” by CAST.org</p> <p><b>Videos:</b></p> <p>“Special Education Law”</p> <p>2 videos embedded in “About Universal Design for Learning”</p>	<p><a href="#">Assignments/Quizzes:</a></p> <p><a href="#">Socratic Quiz—Module 2</a></p> <p><a href="#">EdPuzzle Assignment—Field Notes</a></p>

<p>Week 3: Jan. 26 – 30</p>	<p>Designing UDL Lesson Plans for the Inclusive Classroom</p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>Module 3 PowerPoint—Lesson Planning Powerpoint</p> <p>“Universal Design for Learning (UDL): What You Need to Know” by Reading Rockets</p> <p>“The Difference between Universal Design for Learning and Traditional Education” by the Understood Team</p> <p>Lesson Planning Models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o “Madeline Hunter’s Lesson Plan Model”</li> <li>o “How to Create a 5E Lesson Plan”</li> <li>o “LEARN Lesson Plan Model”</li> </ul> <p><u>Videos:</u></p> <p>“Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development”</p> <p>“Zone of Proximal Development”</p>	<p><u>Assignments/Quizzes:</u></p> <p>Practice UDL Lesson</p>
<p>Week 4: Feb. 2 – 6</p>	<p><i>Diversity in the Classroom—Special Education Processes &amp; Procedures</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>Module 4 PowerPoint—Special Education Processes and Procedures Powerpoint</p> <p>“What is Inclusion in Education” by WeAreTeachers</p> <p>“10 Basic Steps in the Special Education Process” by Partners Resource Network</p> <p>“Evaluating School-Aged Children for Disability” by Center for Parents</p> <p>“What Evaluation Testing Results Mean” by Gail Bilsky of Understood.org</p> <p>“IEP Planning: Accommodations and Modifications” by Eve Kessler</p>	<p><u>Assignments/Quizzes:</u></p> <p>ARD Teacher Input Form</p> <p>Module 4 Quiz</p>
<p>Week 5: Feb. 9 – 13</p>	<p><i>Diversity in the Classroom—Special Education &amp; Inclusion</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“Intellectual Disability”</p> <p>“Types of Learning Disabilities”</p> <p>“Introduction to Learning Disabilities”</p> <p>“Speech and Language Impairments”</p> <p>“Information about Emotional/Behavioral Disorders”</p> <p>“Complete Guide to Autism”</p> <p>“Understanding ADHD in Your Child”</p> <p>Read “5 Common Myths on Attention Deficit Problems”</p> <p>Read “What Special Education Teachers wish General Education Teachers Knew”</p> <p><u>Video:</u></p> <p>“Emotional. Behavior Disorder”</p>	<p><u>Assignments/Quizzes:</u></p> <p>Book Widgets Quiz—Module 5</p> <p><b>Interview Assignment DUE</b></p>

<p>Week 6: Feb. 16 – 20</p>	<p><i>Diversity in the Classroom—Special Education &amp; Inclusion, Part II</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“Visual Impairment, Including Blindness” by Center for Parent Info &amp; Resources</p> <p>“Deafness &amp; Hearing Loss” by CPIR</p> <p>“Deaf/Blindness” by CPIR</p> <p>“Traumatic Brain Injury” by CPIR</p> <p>“Other Health Impairments” by CPIR</p> <p>“Multiple Disabilities” by CPIR</p> <p>“Low-Incidence Disabilities; Information for Educators” by Michael Brown &amp; Tara Brinkman</p> <p><u>Videos:</u></p> <p>Guest Lecturer—Robyn Reaves</p> <p>Gest Lecturer—Christine Martin</p> <p>“Mind Matters: ‘Dear Teacher’ Messages from Students for Teachers”</p>	<p><u>Assignments/Quizzes:</u></p> <p>Book Widgets Quiz—Module 6</p>
<p>Week 7: Feb. 23 – 27</p>	<p><i>Diversity in the Classroom—Gifted &amp; Talented Students</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“Differentiation for High Achievers” by Jaye Parks</p> <p><i>GT Teacher Guidebook</i> by LaPorte ISD faculty/staff</p> <p>“Tiered Lessons for Differentiation”</p> <p>View PPT “Teaching Gifted Kids in Today’s Classroom—Chapter 1”--based on Susan Winebrenner’s “Characteristics of Gifted Students”</p> <p>View PPT Tiered Lessons for Differentiation</p>	<p><u>Assignments/Quizzes:</u></p> <p>Tiered Lesson Activity</p> <p>Module 7 Quiz</p>
<p>Week 8: Mar. 2 – 6</p>	<p><i>Diversity in the Classroom—Language Learners</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>IDRA’s Report “Creating a More Bilingual Texas”</p> <p>“What is the TELPAS and How is this Assessment Used in Texas” (TEA)</p> <p>Narda C. Hogue’s Blog “ELPS in my Classroom”</p> <p>ELPS chart (TEA)</p> <p>“6 Essential Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners” by Emily Kaplan from Edutopia.org</p> <p>“5 Effective Modeling Strategies for English Learners” by Daria Witt and Michael Soet from Edutopia.org</p> <p>“Helpful Online Resources for Teaching ELLs” by Laurel Schwartz of Edutopia.org</p> <p>“ESL and Bilingual Glossary”</p>	<p><u>Assignment Grades:</u></p> <p>Module 8 Quiz</p>

<p>Week 9: Mar. 9 – 13</p>	<p><i>Diversity in the Classroom—At-Risk Students</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“At Risk” Definition from <i>The Glossary of Education Reform</i> by Great Schools Partnership</p> <p>“At Risk Students: Success and Interventions” by Concordia University</p> <p>“Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Students” by Cory Collins and Jey Ehrenhalt from Learning for Justice</p> <p>“State of Homelessness: 2023 Edition” by National Alliance to End Homelessness</p> <p>“Tips for Teachers and Staff: How to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness”—by School House Connection</p> <p>“Definition of Bullying” by University of the People</p> <p>“Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies” by Jessica Minahan from the Assoc. for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)</p> <p><u>Videos:</u></p> <p>“Signs of Abuse and Neglect in Students” by Teachings in Education</p> <p>Guest Speaker—Dr. Kelly from TTU</p>	<p><u>Assignment Grades:</u></p> <p>Book Widgets Quiz</p>
<p><b>SPRING BREAK MARCH 16 – 20</b></p>		
<p>Week 10: Mar. 23 – 27</p>	<p><i>Creating an Effective Learning Environment for ALL Learners—Instructional Strategies and Assessments</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“Elements of Effective Instruction” by Great Schools Partnership</p> <p>“20 Differentiated Instruction Strategies and Examples” by Prodigy</p> <p>“25 Effective Instructional Strategies for Educators” by TopHat</p> <p>“226 Active Learning Techniques” by Iowa State University</p> <p>“Types of Assessments” by ASCD</p> <p>“13 Formative Assessments that Inspire Creativity” by Paige Tutt</p>	<p><u>Assignment Grades:</u></p> <p>Book Widgets: Is this an Effective UDL Lesson?</p> <p>Module 10 Quiz</p>
<p>Week 11: Mar. 30 – Apr. 3</p>	<p><i>Creating an Effective Learning Environment for ALL Learners—Assistive Technology</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p><i>IrisCenter’s</i> Assistive Technology Module (pp. 1 – 7)</p> <p><u>Video:</u></p> <p>“Understanding Assistive Technology: Simply Said”</p>	<p><u>Assignment Grades:</u></p> <p>Module 11 Quiz</p>

<p>Week 12: Apr. 6 – 10</p>	<p><i>FRIDAY—GOOD FRIDAY—SPC Holiday</i> <i>Creating an Effective Learning Environment for ALL Learners—Behavioral Supports</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“Understanding Behavior as Communication: A Teacher’s Guide” by Amanda Morin</p> <p>“Positive behavior strategies in the Classroom” by Understood.org (and follow links to other articles)</p> <p>“The Difference Between Discipline and Punishment” by Amanda Morin</p> <p>“What is a Functional Behavior Assessment” by Amanda Morin</p> <p>“Social Emotional Learning Toolkit: Family Engagement” by movethisworld.com</p> <p><u>Video:</u></p> <p>“TeachingMinute: Positive Consequences”</p> <p><b>Spring Interim, Summer I, Summer II, &amp; Fall 2026 Registration Opens 4/10</b></p>	<p><u>Assignment Grades:</u></p> <p>Module 12 Guided Notes</p> <p>Practice Functional Behavior Analysis Skills Learning Activity</p>
<p>Week 13: Apr. 13 – 17</p>	<p><i>Creating an Effective Learning Environment for ALL Learners—Collaboration and Cooperative Teaching</i></p> <p><u>Readings:</u></p> <p>“Benefits of and Strategies for Teacher Collaboration in MTSS” by Katya Henderson</p> <p>“5 Benefits for Teacher Collaboration in Education” by Damon Torgerson</p> <p>“How to Choose a Co-Teaching Model” by Sean Cassel</p> <p><u>Video:</u></p> <p>“Shared Content Teams</p>	<p><u>Assignment Grades:</u></p> <p>Module 13 Quiz</p>
<p>Week 14: Apr. 20 – 24</p>	<p><i>No Readings, Videos, or Learning Assignments this Week—work on your UDL LESSON PROJECT (Due this coming Sunday)</i></p> <p><b>*Thursday, April 23 = last day to drop Spring courses</b></p>	<p><b>ONLINE Section: UDL Lesson Project Due Sunday, April 26, at 11:59 p.m.</b></p>
<p>Week 15: Apr. 27 – May 1</p>	<p>Work on Final Observation Analysis Paper</p> <p><b>Final Observation Analysis Paper DUE MONDAY, May 4, by 8:00 a.m.—No Late Papers Will Be Accepted!</b></p>	<p><u>Participation:</u></p> <p>End-of-Semester Reflection (due Monday, May 4, at 11: 59 p.m.)</p>
<p>Week 16: May 4 – 8</p>	<p><b>Finals Week—Final Observation Analysis Essay DUE MONDAY, May 4, by 8:00 a.m.</b></p>	<p><u>Participation:</u></p> <p>End-of-Semester Reflection (due Monday, May 4, at 11: 59 p.m.)</p>