

Students with Disabilities in the Schools
EDP 389H (Unique ID 11280)
Thursdays, 2-5pm in SZB 444

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie W. Cawthon. My last name is pronounced “Caugh-thun”.

Office: SZB 254G.

Office hours: By appointment.

Email: stephanie.cawthon@mail.utexas.edu. I check email regularly, so this is the best way to reach me.

Office phone: 512-471-0287. The best time to reach me by phone is in the afternoons. If I am not there, please leave a message with your name, number, and a good time to call.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a thorough grounding in the policy issues that contextualize educational practice for students with disabilities in elementary and secondary education. You will also develop key skills for your graduate work and beyond with the following activities:

- 1) Critical analysis of research articles.
- 2) Identify researchable topics and formulating potential research designs.
- 3) Articulate the extent to which the field integrates research, policy, and practice.
- 4) Examine specific academic interventions and evaluate studies of their effectiveness.
- 5) Review court decisions and discuss the precedents they bring to the field.
- 6) Think creatively about how research can help resolve open questions in education for students with disabilities.
- 7) Reflect on how the policy context will affect your own professional practice.
- 8) Write and present summaries of research for your intended audience.

Course Requirements

1) Participation. We will read and discuss relevant research articles, court decisions, and scholarly pieces that address policy issues in the field. We will consider the research questions and methods of these pieces in detail. Demonstrating that you have read and critically considered the readings, as well as participation in course activities, will fulfill the requirement for active participation. **This will include a written response to most weeks’ readings (more on this in a separate handout). Active participation in discussion will constitute 15% of your course grade.** Your discussion grade will include consideration of class attendance. Missing *more than one* class period without prior arrangement will result in a half-grade (e.g., A to A-) deduction to your final course grade.

2) Presentation. Each person will become an expert on one topic in the field and share their research with the class. This assignment will involve identifying and reading at least five additional research articles and /or theoretical/conceptual papers to those

assigned for the week. The student expert will present a 30-minute overview of their topic to the class. These expert presentations will be graded on clarity, critical analysis, and coherence. Experts should provide a bibliography to share with the class at the time of their presentations, with an electronic copy to be posted on Blackboard. More information about this assignment will be provided on the first day of class. **The expert presentation will constitute 25% of your grade.**

3) Midterm. We will have one midterm in this class that will take place during class time. The midterm will be a mix of short answer and essay questions. More information about the midterm and sample questions will be provided. **The midterm will constitute 25% of your grade. There will not be a final exam.**

4) Research Proposal or Program Evaluation Plan. This written assignment has two options. Students will design either their own research study or program evaluation plan. The final project is a 12-15 page written document as the final paper for this course. The topic of this paper must focus on an academic intervention such as peer tutoring, bullying prevention, reading fluency, mathematics achievement, motivation, etc. More information about this assignment will be provided during class and we will have activities throughout the semester to aid in the preparation of this final product. **The papers will constitute 35% of your grade. Final papers are due by 5pm on Thursday April 25th.**

Policies and Expectations

- (1) **Honor Code.** I expect all of us to follow the honor code: "The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."
- (2) **Students are expected to arrive to class on time,** to avoid disrupting other students' learning experiences. There are no formal penalties, simply a request out of respect for the class, instructor, or guest speaker.
- (3) **E-mail.** Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. Regular e-mail management will also minimize the risk that the inbox will be full, causing the e-mail to be returned to the sender with an error. Undeliverable messages returned because of either a full inbox or use of a "spam" filter will be considered delivered without further action required of the University.
- (4) **Please turn your cell phones to silent-alert.** I do not mind if you discreetly leave the room to take an urgent call on occasion. This policy also applies to texting – please do not check email, Facebook, or text during class. If you have an emergency, step outside for the call or text. Please just try to avoid disturbing others. If you need to leave early, please let me know before class. This will help me make sure you have all the information you need before you leave.
- (5) **Cheating will not be tolerated.** Academic dishonesty is a serious matter, and steps will be taken in cases where students are suspected of engaging in any form of

unauthorized collaboration, cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresentation of work. If you have questions about how to avoid plagiarism by properly citing your references, please do let us know. Students may visit the webpage of the Office of Dean of Students, Student Judicial Services, for more information

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>

- (6) **Respect of other students' views, experiences, and questions is expected.** I expect everyone to contribute at least to some degree, and for everyone to be respectful of others' contributions, even if opinions widely differ. I also expect all of you to listen while others talk and for no one to "hog" the talk time.
- (7) **Accommodations.** Upon request, according to standard policies at The University of Texas, I will provide appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Be certain to register with the Office of the Dean of Students, Services for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 / 471-4641 TTY.
- (8) **Holy Day Observances.** I will allow make-up work for assignments and exams due to absences or schedule conflicts for religious observances. You must **notify me by email 7 days prior** to the holy day observance in order to make arrangements unless the day falls within the first 7 days of the semester. In that case, I require notification within 24 hours of the first class meeting.

Course Materials

Blackboard. We will utilize Blackboard for all course materials such as the readings, website links, additional resources, and copies of class handouts.

Tentative Course Schedule

This course schedule provides an outline of the topics and readings for the semester. There may be some shifting of topics due to interests of students in the course, conference schedules, and holiday observances. We will also have a concluding session for students to discuss their final papers (the last day of class). **A finalized schedule will be available in the second week of the term.**

Week 1: January 16th: Overview of the Course and Historical Context

Kauffman, J. (1999-2000). The Special Education Story: Obituary, Accident Report, Conversion Experience, Reincarnation, or None of the Above? *Exceptionality*, 8(1), 61-71.

De Valenzuela, J.S., Copeland, S., Qi, C., & Park, M. (2006). Examining educational equity: Revisiting the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education. *Exceptional Children*, 72, 425-441.

Week 2: January 23rd: Federal Policy

www.IDEA.gov website.

Cawthon, S. (2007). Hidden benefits and unintended consequences of No Child Left Behind for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44, 460-492.

Week 3: January 30th: Looking at and Using Data

Linan-Thompson, S., Cirino, P., & Vaughn, S. (2007). Determining English Language Learners' response to intervention: Questions and some answers. *Learning Disabilities Quarterly*, 30, 185-195.

Tankersley, M., Harjusola-Webb, S. & Landrum, T. (2008). Using single subject research to establish the evidence base of special education. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 44, 83-90.

Week 4: February 6th: Parents, Placement, and School Choice

Supreme Court Decision No. 91-1523 (1993) Florence County School District Four, et al. v. Shannon Carter.

Proceedings transcript before the Supreme Court (1993) Florence County School District Four, et al. v. Shannon Carter.

Conroy, T., Yell, M. & Katsiyannis, A. (2008). Schaeffer vs. Weast: The Supreme Court on the burden of persuasion when challenging IEPs. *Remedial and Special Education*, 29, 108-117.

Week 5: February 13th: English Language Learners and Special Education

Rueda, R. & Windmueller, M. (2006). English Language Learners, LD, and Overrepresentation: A Multiple-Level Analysis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 39 (2), 99-107.

Abedi, J. (2008). Classification system for English Language Learners: Issues and Recommendations. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 27, 17-31.

Week 6: February 20th: Online Discussion of Readings on Early Childhood Policy

Scott-Little, C., Kagan, S. Stebbins, V. (2006), Conceptualization of readiness and the content of early learning standards: The intersection of policy and research? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 21 153-173.

Hojnoski, R. & Missall, K. (2006). Addressing school readiness: Expanding school psychology in early education. *School Psychology Review*, Volume 35, No. 4, pp. 602-614

Week 7: February 27th: The Family Context

Harry, B. (2008). Collaboration with culturally and linguistically diverse families: Ideal vs. Reality. *Exceptional Children*, 74 (3), 372-388.

Graue, B. (2005). Theorizing and describing pre-service teachers' images of families and schooling. *Teacher's College Record*, 107 (1), 157-185.

Week 8: March 6th: MIDTERM EXAM.

Week 9: March 13th. No Class (Spring Break)

Week 10: March 20th: Online Discussion of Transition Services and High School Completion

Sinclair, M., Christenson, S., & Thurlow, M. (2005). Promoting school completion of urban secondary youth with emotional or behavioral disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 71, 4, 465-482.

District Court Decision No. C06-494P. JJ/ML/KL vs. Mercer Island School District (2006).

Week 11: March 27th: Accommodations and Assessment

Christensen, L. L., Braam, M., Scullin, S., & Thurlow, M. L. (2011). *2009 state policies on assessment participation and accommodations for students with disabilities* (Synthesis Report 83). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Cawthon, S., Kaye, A., Lockhart, L. & Beretvas, S. N. (2012). Effects of linguistic complexity and accommodations on estimates of ability for students with learning disabilities. *Journal of School Psychology*, 50, 293-316.

Week 12: April 3rd: NO Class. AERA. Prepare for writing workshop next week.

Week 13: April 10th: Writing Workshop. No Readings.

**Week 14: April 17th: Higher Education and Professional Training
Drafts of Papers Due for Feedback.**

Mc Cray, E. (2012). Learning while teaching: A case study of beginning special educators completing a Master of Arts in Education. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, <http://tes.sagepub.com/content/35/3/166.full.pdf>

Arivett, D., Rust, J., Brissie, J., & Dansby, V. (2007). Special education teachers' perceptions of school psychologists in the context of IEP meetings. *Education*, 127, p378-388.

Week 15: April 24th. Special Education Reform.

Cook, B., Gerber, M., & Semmel, M. (1997). Are effective schools reforms effective for all students? The implications of joint outcome production for school reform. *Exceptionality*, 7(2), 77-95.

Mclaughlin, M. & Rhim, M. (2007). Accountability Frameworks and Children with Disabilities: A test of assumptions about improving public education for all students. *International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education*, 54 (1). P25-49.

PAPERS DUE Monday April 28th by 5pm.

Week 16: May 1st Last Day of Class
No Readings Due.