

**DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING, HIGHER EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**

EDSP 687: Family Partnerships in Special Education

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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.

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
AS1, EC1, InTASC2
2. rights and responsibilities of parents and students with disabilities
AS1, EC1, InTASC2
3. cultural influences on families and service delivery systems
EC1, In TASC2
4. specific provisions, guidelines, and legal regulations of IDEA, 2004
AS1, EC2, In TASC10
5. differences and similarities between IDEA, Section 504, and ADA for citizens with disabilities
AS1, EC2, In TASC10
6. strategies for helping parents deal with the stresses of special education service provision
AS1 and 2, AS6, In TASC2 and 10
7. the personal cultural biases that affect special educators
EC1

8. communicating and collaborating with parents of students with disabilities
AS6
9. issues critical to families with a member with a disability across the lifespan
AS6, EC2, In TASC2
10. various disability service systems other than special education
EC2 and 5

In TASC Core Teaching Standards

- *The Learner and Learning Standard 2 Learning Differences*
- *Professional Responsibility Standard 10 Leadership and Collaboration*

COE Conceptual Framework: Emerging Commitments (EC)

- *EC1 Equity and Diversity*
- *EC2 Advocacy*
- *EC5 Innovation and Creativity*

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): Advanced Content Standardsw (AS)

- *AS1 Leadership and Policy*
- *AS6 Collaboration*

Required Readings: All readings will be posted on Blackboard or handed out in class. Each will be posted and reviewed before the lecture to which it pertains.

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 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 50 points. I expect you to attend all classes.

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. We will begin work on this assignment in class but each student is responsible for completing his or her individual set of responses. This is worth 25 points.

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 have been 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. A sample of questions to be answered is:

1. What are examples of disability services that are entitled and those that are eligibility driven? Why is this concept so important for special educators and families to understand?
2. What is Social Security and why is it so important to citizens with disabilities?
3. What is Medicaid, what is its relationship to SSI, and how does one apply for it?
4. What are Medicaid waivers and why are they so important to some students and adults? What are Maryland's waiver programs?
5. What do case management agencies such as DORS and DDA pay for or provide and how does one apply for them?
6. What is the relationship of SSI, Medicaid, and state case management agencies to local not for profit agencies that provide disability services?
7. Who provides free or low cost legal services to people with disabilities?
8. What does a state DD Council do? What are Parents' plan of MD and MCIE? How do you find a parent information center such as parents' Place in other states?
9. Why are local social services so important to people with disabilities?

Besides providing answers and resources for the questions listed above, each teacher candidate must provide descriptions of and resources related to family advocacy. There should also be a section on miscellaneous resources that you have found. This assignment is worth 30 points.

4. **Parent/Guardian Interview**

You will conduct an interview with a parent or guardian of a student receiving special education. 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 are

made available to students for review.

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 15 double-spaced, types 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. This assignment is worth 30 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:

99-100	A+	88- 89	B+	78-79	C+	68-69	D+	59-F
93-98	A	83-87	B	73-77	C	63-67	D	
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-	

Assignment Point Totals:	Points
Participation	50
Scenarios	25
Interview	30
Resource Guide	30
Total	135 POINTS

Course Evaluation (CourseEvalUM):

Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. 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: 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.

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 609.335.2464 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. Actually, any time frame longer than one hour is long.
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 the guidelines from previous 665 classes and any other 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.
7. Do not lead the family to believe that you can actually provide support in any way but do let them know that you will get back to them with any information you find on areas you have discussed.
8. Send a thank you note and let the family know how much you appreciated the chance to do an interview with them.

Guidelines for Writing Parent Interview Report

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. 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. Use the attached rubric to ensure that you have covered all the required content.

Please double-space the entire document. Thank you.

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

Sept 2 - Introduction and Disability History

Sept 9 - Disability History and the Role of Families

Sept 16 - Parental and Student Legal Rights

Sept 23 – Legal Rights continued

Sept 30 - Work on Legal Scenarios

Oct 7 - Lifespan Issues and Cultural Differences (Legal Scenarios due)

Oct 14 - Communicating with Families and Conducting Family Interviews

Oct 21 - Disability Supports and Services

Oct 28 - Disability Supports and Services

Nov 4 - Advocacy

Nov 11- Interviews Due

Nov 16 -20 No class (Full immersion week in placements)

Nov 25- Thanksgiving (no class)

Dec 2-- Work on Resource Guide

Dec 9 - Resource Guides due

All readings will be posted on Canvas or given out in class prior to the lecture to which they pertain

Grading Rubric for Family Interview

Instructional Inquiry Project Requirements	Points Earned	Comments
1.one question with content from each of four themes		
2. intro describes cultural differences of family from candidate		
3.questions/self critique reflect impact of religion, birth order, family traditions, level/type of disability on family and student		
4. supports/services recommended relate to specific needs expressed in interview by family		
5.supports/services recommended include materials and information that will help family with IEP planning and implementation		
6.supports/services recommended reflect materials and information that will help family access community services for now and in future and state and federal funding for the services		
7.self critique reflects understanding of cultural bias, importance of learning new information to serve families		
8.self critique reflects areas of strengths and weaknesses in communicating with families		
9.interview report reflects sensitivity for cultural, gender, religious, ability level, SES, sexual orientation differences		
10.interview report reflects teacher candidate knowledge of confidentiality of information, nonjudgmental reporting, and ethical standards in advocating for student and family		
TOTAL Points:	/30 Points	
GRADE:		
Overall Comments:		