

**Raritan Valley Community College  
Academic Course Outline**

**HMNS 240 Introduction to Special Education**

**I. Basic Course Information**

- A. Course Number and Title: HMNS 240—Introduction to Special Education
- B. New or Modified Course: Modified
- C. Date of Proposal or Revision: Spring 2008
- D. Sponsoring Department: Humanities, Social Sciences & Education
- E. Semester Credit Hours: 3 credits
- F. Weekly Contact Hours: 3           Lecture: 3  
  Laboratory: 0
- G. Prerequisites: ENGL 111
- H. Laboratory Fees: N/A
- I. Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair: Stephen Kaufman, [skaufman@raritanval.edu](mailto:skaufman@raritanval.edu)

**II. Catalog Description**

*Prerequisite or Co-requisite: ENGL 111-English 1.*

This course examines the causes, the teacher's role in the identification process, curricular approaches, and appropriate legislation with regard to special education issues for children and young adults with disabilities. Various types of disabilities, including mental retardation, learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, communication disorders, hearing and visual impairments, physical disabilities and giftedness are introduced. The changing field of special education is examined with particular emphasis on the early childhood and elementary education years. The impact of these changes toward greater diversity and inclusion on children, families, educators, and the community are also considered. The course addresses the various transitions and support needs of families and students with disabilities as they move from early intervention, to preschool, elementary, secondary and transition to post-secondary education and adult life. Special emphasis is placed on person centered planning, strategies that promote inclusion and linkages with adult service providers. Offered in the Spring Semester.



### III. Statement of Course Need

This course is required for the Early Childhood A.A. degree and the A.A.S. degree option. It is an elective for education students in the Transfer A.A. degree program.

### IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course is NOT a General Education course.
- C. This course fulfills a requirement in the A.A. Early Childhood degree and A.A.T. Education degree.
- D. Course transferability: This course is transferable as stated on the NJ Transfer website.

### V. Outline of Course Content

- A. Disability Paradigms: Past and Present
  - 1. Historical Overview
  - 2. Current Trends
  - 3. Adult Services
- B. Special education legislation
  - 1. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973
  - 2. P.L. 94-142 (1975)
  - 3. I.D.E.A. (1990)
  - 4. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- C. Multicultural issues
  - 1. Diversity
  - 2. Statistics
  - 3. Non-discriminatory testing
  - 4. Creating a culture of inclusion
- D. Families
  - 1. Family Systems Theory
  - 2. Models of Adaptation
  - 3. Parent Rights
  - 4. Procedural Safe Guards
- E. Special Education
  - 1. Defined
  - 2. The IEP
  - 3. Differential Instruction
    - a. Curricular adaptations
    - b. Instructional modifications
    - c. Accommodations
    - d. Assistive Technology
  - 4. Transition to Adult Life
- F. Specific Learning Disabilities

1. Dyslexia
2. Dysgraphia
3. Dyscalculia
4. Other non-verbal learning disabilities
- G. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- H. Cognitive Disabilities
  1. Mental Retardation
  2. Traumatic Brain Injury
- I. Physical disabilities
  1. Cerebral Palsy
  2. Spina Bifida
  3. Seizure Disorders
  4. Multiple Disabilities
  5. Other Health Impairments
- J. Emotional & Behavioral Disabilities
  1. Zero Tolerance
  2. Functional Behavioral Assessment
  3. Positive Behavioral Support
- K. Speech and Language Impairments
- L. Sensory Impairments
  1. Blindness and Low Vision
  2. Deafness and Hearing Impairments
  3. Dual Sensory Impairments
- M. Autism Spectrum Disorders
  1. Aperger Syndrome
  2. Autism
  3. Rett Syndrome
  4. Childhood Disintegrative Disorder
  5. Pervasive Developmental Delay-Not otherwise specified
- N. Gifted and Talented

## VI. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

### Educational Goals

Students will:

1. develop an understanding of the historical influences and philosophies that have shaped special education services (G.E. 6).
2. examine the values and biases underlying our response to students with disabilities (G.E. 5, 6).
3. examine the requirements and fundamental principles imbedded in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and other legislation and litigation that supports and regulates special education (G.E. 4, 5, 6).
4. use technology to prepare an oral presentation and lesson plan for students with specific disabilities in early childhood, elementary and secondary education settings (G.E. 3).

5. develop an understanding of disabilities within the context of diversity and multiculturalism (G.E. 1, 5, 6).
6. become familiar with basic planning and teaching strategies to support students with disabilities in inclusive classroom settings K-12(G.E. 3, 6).
7. become familiar with transition planning and the adults service system in order to prepare special education students for the future (G.E. 1, 4, 6).
8. enhance their understanding of and sensitivity toward parents of children with special needs (G.E. 2, 6).

### **Learning Outcomes**

Students will be able to:

1. identify the major characteristics associated with common learning and other developmental disabilities
2. describe the historical and philosophical influences that impact services for children and adults with disabilities
3. identify the major provisions of the legislation and litigation affecting children with disabilities and their families
4. identify instructional adaptations and accommodations appropriate for students with special needs in a variety of K-12 special education and early intervention settings
5. develop an accommodation plan when presented with specific student scenarios
6. describe and interpret educational characteristics for students with major disabilities
7. identify strategies for working effectively with parents of children with special education needs

## **VII. Modes of Teaching and Learning**

- A. lecture/discussion
- B. small-group work
- C. computer-assisted instruction
- D. guest speakers
- E. student oral presentations
- F. independent study
- G. library research

## **VIII. Papers, Examinations, and other Assessment Instruments**

Assessment methods used may include:

- A. short research assignments
- B. oral presentations
- C. reflection papers
- D. class participation
- E. midterm and final examinations
- F. written & verbal analysis of case scenarios

## **IX. Grade Determinants**

In order to evaluate achievement of the goals and outcomes listed above, possible grade determinants may include:

- A. participation in class discussions
- B. preparation of a disability fact sheet (FAQ)
- C. class presentations
- D. midterm and final examinations
- E. reflection papers

## **X. Texts and Materials**

Samples of specific texts that may be used:

Smith, D.D. (2007). *Introduction to Special Education: Making a difference* (most recent edition). Boston: Pearson.

Janney, R. & Snell, M.E. (2004). *Teacher's Guide to Inclusive Education: Modifying Schoolwork* (second edition). Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.

Lerner, J. (2006). *Learning Disabilities and Related Disorders: Characteristics and teaching strategies* (tenth edition). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Mandlawitz, M. (2007). *What Every Teacher Should Know About IDEA 2004 Laws and Regulations*. Boston: Pearson.

Hallahan, D.P. & Kaufman, J. (2003). *Exceptional Learners: Introduction to Special Education* (most recent edition). Boston: Pearson.

## **XI. Resources**

- A. Library research for oral presentation and FAQ
- B. Guest speakers from various disciplines and community services
- C. CATT classroom for use of visual aids and demonstration

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