

SPEC 6367 Special Education for School Leaders

Summer 2021

Instructor: Brian Malechuk, Ed.D.

Room: Online – Zoom, MS Teams

Office Hours: Office Hours-Monday to Friday, 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM and weekends only by scheduling 24 hours in advance.

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Class Sections	Days and Times	Room	Instructional Mode
18947	n/a	n/a	Online

About Distance Education

This distance education course is offered outside the traditional classroom setting on campus. Class sessions may be offered synchronously or asynchronously. At the University of Houston, a course delivered through Distance Education is defined according to the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board definition](http://higher.ed.texas.gov) (higher.ed.texas.gov)

The formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction. Distance education can include courses and programs offered online, off-campus face-to-face, and electronic-to-groups. Coordinating Board rules recognize two categories of distance education courses: fully distance education courses and hybrid/blended courses.

A fully distance education course is defined as "A course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test."

A hybrid/blended course is defined as "A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent), of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place.

For university support information or to learn more about online programs offered, visit the [UH Distance Education](http://uh.edu/online) (uh.edu/online) website.

Course Description

In this course, we will examine and discuss the functions and underlying principles of the administration of special education services in the public school setting. The role of the administrator in the development of IEPs, student placement, student discipline, child find, fiscal management, transportation, and legal implications of decisions will be discussed. Students enrolled in this course include principal candidates, educational diagnostician candidates, and M.Ed. in Special Populations students with a background in special education.

Make Up Work

If an absence is excused, the student has an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam, or other work that contributes to the course grade, or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor. Dr. McCormick will propose a make-up work plan when communicating the decision.

Extended Absences

Students with excessive or extended absences are encouraged to consult Dr. McCormick to seek potential alternative options provided in other policies including [Dropping Courses](#), [Withdrawals](#), and temporary grades of [Incomplete](#). Through the last day to drop a course with a grade of W, an instructor may also drop students for [excessive absences](#).

Assignment Details

Assignments are expected to be turned into Blackboard by the assigned due date. Technology failures will not be accepted as reason for missed assignment due dates. Therefore, do not leave anything to the last minute. Back up files frequently and in various locations so work is not lost. It is the student's responsibility to identify alternative ways to complete or submit an assignment. For example, if the Blackboard system (<http://elearning.uh.edu>) is offline consider emailing the assignment before the due date. Students are required to follow all UH deadlines:

<http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/academic-calendar/>

All written assignments are to be typed using 12-point font (Times New Roman or very similar font), 1-inch margins, and double-spacing. For lengthier assignments, headings should be used liberally, with headings clearly identifying the parts of each assignment. All written assignments will be graded on writing mechanics, style, and content. Your style should follow APA standards (7th Edition, 2019) especially in-text citations and the reference list. Likewise, you should use professional language, with particular care taken when describing student behavior and abilities (i.e., **person first language**: "a child with a learning disability" rather than ~~a learning disabled child~~).

You will be responsible for applying content learned thus far in your education program. Below is an overview of the assignments for the semester with directions found in the Assignments tab on Bb.

IRIS Center Modules (45%)

The IRIS Center is a national center dedicated to improving education outcomes for all children, especially those with disabilities birth through age twenty-one, through the use of effective evidence-based practices and interventions (Vanderbilt University, 2016). Specific links are provided in the relevant learning module and/or assignment. The general IRIS Center link is: <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>. Specific submission instructions are provided on Bb. There will be one Activity most weeks. Activities are typically due each week on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. The following IRIS resources are used in this course:

- ▶ The IRIS Center. (2010). Creating an Inclusive School Environment: A model for School Leaders. Retrieved from <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/inc/>
- ▶ The IRIS Center. (2013). Teacher Retention: Reducing the Attrition of Special Educators. Retrieved from <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/tchr-ret/#content>
- ▶ The IRIS Center (2019). IEPs: How Administrators Can Support the Development and Implementation of High-Quality IEPs. Retrieved from <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/iep02/>

Review of Due Process Hearing (10%)

Students will be provided with a due process hearing summary of a due process hearing conducted in the state of Texas during a recent school year. Students are to review the case, identify issues, write a review, and present the information to the class. A written copy is to be provided to the instructor.

IEP Meeting Review (10%)

Students will attend an IEP meeting as a 'university graduate student' and observe only. In other words, you should not simply report on a meeting with which you would normally be involved as a participant. The student will observe the team with particular attention given the special education administrator. The student will write a report on the meeting including an overview of the issue, titles of participants, whether the meeting was routine or contentious, organization of the meeting, duration of the meeting, topic of the meeting, outcome of the meeting, how the team came to consensus, if true consensus was reached or just 'assumed,' the role of the administrator in the meeting, and a reflection of how you would handle the meeting. This paper should be five to seven pages in length. Students will discuss the meetings with the class.

Interview of a Special Education Administrator (10%)

A paper will be written containing administrator responses. Summaries of the interviews will be shared with the class. Discussion items are to include (but are not limited to):

- Child Find Procedures (including what the cooperative uses as public awareness tools, screening practices, early identification measures, etc.)
- What they find to be the most challenging part of their role and why
- The most rewarding part of their job
- Advice on supervision of staff
- How to work effectively with parents
- What advice they would give a first year supervisor
- The role of the special education supervisor and the building principal
- The role of the special education supervisor and the building in which she is assigned
- What characteristics does the administrator seek in aspiring administrators
- The student is to pose a question to the administrator regarding the area of interest they are writing about for the research paper

Critical Standards Project – Continuous Improvement Plan Review (25%)

Each student will (a) review the most recent student performance data for students with disabilities for a specific school and (b) create a list of identified problems of practice for students with disabilities directly related to teaching and learning. The student will (c) review the school's most recent school continuous improvement plan (CIP) with attention to previously developed plans to improve the performance of special populations. Students will provide a (d) review of research aligned with identified needs, students will (e) propose needed changes to the CIP with the goal of improving the performance of students with disabilities. Finally, students will (f) write specific (CIP) goals with aligned action steps to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, including measures/metrics that will be used to monitor progress for specific goals. Specific assignment requirements will be posted on Bb. See the Weekly Schedule for due dates.

Due Dates and Point Distribution

Assignments should be submitted electronically (electronically time stamped prior to 11:59 p.m.) via Blackboard on the due date (see below and the Weekly Schedule). In general, late assignments are not accepted. If, however, due to an