

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Email Etiquette Guidelines:**

1. Think three times: before you write, after you write and before you send your message. Carefully compose all responses.
2. Always use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraph structure. Careless spelling, grammar or punctuation conveys a poor impression on you. Use the spell feature that accompanies your email program.
3. Do not capitalize whole words that are not titles. Capitalizing is generally interpreted as SHOUTING to your reader.
4. Get your most important points across quickly.
5. Use the descriptive subject line to identify the message content. Emails without a descriptive subject line may be deleted without reading.
6. Avoid flaming or the expression of extreme emotion or opinion in an email message. You will alienate your reader, possibly causing ill feelings. Remember email responses are permanent. To reduce email communication problems:
  - a. Resist the temptation to "fire off" a response.
  - b. Read the original message again. You may have misinterpreted the message.
  - c. Draft a response and let it cool off for a time before sending it.
  - d. Break the cycle of message and response. A telephone call or personal conversation can do wonders in resolving difficulties.

### **Use of Electronic Devices during Seminar:**

Emailing, instant messaging or researching on the net are not relevant class related activities.

Engaging in these activities is distracting to the instructor and peers.

Basic Assumptions: Several assumptions are made regarding the students in this class. The instructor assumes that as a student in this class you:

1. Will respect an individual's diversity in the way in which you refer to people in class discussions and in written work. Please avoid phrases like "the handicapped," "EH kids," "severely retarded," "the black, or Chicano, or Hispanic, or Russian...kids" or other statements that highlight the disability or diversity rather than the individual. Instead, speak and write in a way that puts "people first," for example, "the student with a severe disability, the program for students with behavior disorders, students who are Hispanic", etc. This small change emphasizes the humanity and individuality of the person and clarifies that the person's diversity is only one of many characteristics (and not necessarily the most important!) that people can possess.
2. Are able and willing to edit written work according to rules of conventional English grammar and spelling. When in doubt, check a good, desk-version American English dictionary for both spelling and grammar rules. If in doubt please see the writing tutors in the writing center.
3. Will attend class regularly and will come to class prepared. "Prepared" means that you have read the readings sufficiently to verbally and in writing: (a) discuss definitions, ideas notions, concepts, issues, and procedures from the readings; (b) relate this information to previous information presented in class, online or in previous readings; and (c) apply the information to problems. It will be your responsibility to ask the instructor questions when information from readings or class meetings is unclear.
4. Will turn assignments in on time, and will prepare assignments in a professional manner (i.e., typed neatly and edited for spelling and grammar). Products, which, in

the judgment of the instructor, are unreadable or unprofessionally prepared, will be returned ungraded or assigned a lower evaluation. Points may be deducted for late assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior written approval from the instructor.

5. Will be aware of and adhere to the University's policies on plagiarism. To plagiarize is "to steal and pass off as one's own the ideas or words of another" (Webster, 1967, p. 646), or to not acknowledge the author of an idea. If plagiarism is evident, the student will receive a "0" or "NP" on that activity AND may be given an "NP" grade for the course AND may be suspended or expelled from the university. See the Code of Student Conduct in the Time Schedule of Classes for these policies.
6. Are aware that the assignment of INCOMPLETE OR "I" GRADES is discouraged and will be used only in cases of extreme emergencies where satisfactory progress has been demonstrated and a passing grade may be earned. Students must have completed at least two of the notebook sections (i.e. first assignment) and one half of the quizzes before the instructor will consider this option (barring extreme circumstances). Should an "I" grade be necessary, however, students should discuss this with the instructor at the time such circumstances exist to ensure that this grading option will be available. If approved, a written course completion agreement must be negotiated between the student and instructor. This agreement must be negotiated and in writing before the beginning of finals week.

## **COURSE EVALUATION METHODS**

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course. Your grade in this course will be determined based on a point system. Each activity, assignment, and exam will be worth a specific number of points. It is advised that you keep track of your points throughout the semester so that you know your grade.

### **Professionalism, Punctuality, and Participation**

**Professionalism.** Enhancing professionalism and ethical behavior is an underlying goal of all courses in UNT Dallas' Programs in Special Education, as well as a foundational topic of this course. Therefore, at all times, students are expected to conduct themselves in a highly responsible and respectful manner. In addition to those guidelines addressing student conduct established by the university and addressed in the undergraduate catalog and student handbook (e.g., cheating, plagiarism), professionalism includes the following:

- establishing and maintaining positive relationships and interactions with peers, colleagues, and instructors;
- attending respectfully to others who are sharing information (or asking questions) with the class;
- being flexible and understanding in response to unforeseen changes in the syllabus;
- maintaining attention and alertness, and refraining from engaging in any activity not directly related to this class during class hours;
- making only positive comments and gestures directed toward others in the class.

*Note: please ensure that cell phones are turned off prior to entering the classroom, as phone calls during class time are disruptive to the instructional activities of the course.*

*The use of personal computers is encouraged for those students who prefer this medium for note taking. However, professionalism dictates that students use their computers for class-related activities only during class time.*

All assignments, unless otherwise noted are expected to be completed individually. In addition, no work completed and turned in for this course should be turned in at a later time (without significant changes or additions) to fulfill requirements for other courses, or shared with other students for the purpose of completing course work in special education courses of this or other instructors.

**Student Professional Dispositions:** Professional dispositions refer to the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment. Students will demonstrate professional dispositions by exhibiting the following professional behaviors:

1. Arriving to class at the designated class start time.
2. Preparing for class by reading the assigned materials
3. Participating in class discussions in a variety of ways.
4. Turning in completed assignments on designated due dates.
5. Interacting in a professional manner (verbally and nonverbally) with other students and professor.
6. Taking responsibility for your professional learning
7. Taking responsibility for contacting the professor via email or by phone prior to an absence and taking responsibility for getting class notes/material.
8. This is not an exhaustive list. Other professional behaviors may be taken into account by the professor when grading the student at the end of the semester.

### **Participation**

You are expected to fully participate in all class activities, including lectures and discussions, demonstrations, role plays, presentations and discussions, small-group projects, collaborative learning activities, etc. Generally, it is expected that all students will make at least one contribution to the class discussion every class period.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA COMPLIANCE):** The University of North Texas Dallas faculty is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students' with documented disabilities are responsible for informing faculty of their needs for reasonable accommodations and providing written authorized documentation. For more information, you may visit the Office of Disability Accommodation/Student Development Office.

## **ASSIGNMENT POLICIES**

- All assignments must be completed individually, unless stated otherwise by the instructor. The instructor reserves the right to request that a student redo an assignment that is not satisfactory.
- In such cases a response cost of up to 10 % may be assessed. IF an assignment is accepted late, a 10% late cost will be assessed for submitting assignments late, unless the instructor has given prior approval and waived the 10% late cost.
- **No incompletes** will be given without documentation of extenuating circumstances.

**\*\*Use of Person-First Language:** You are expected to use “Person-First” language at all times when referring to individuals with a disability (e.g., “students with autism,” or “a student with behavioral problems”). Please do not use labels like “Mentally Retarded student” or “Autistic kid” or “Emotionally Handicapped class” because of the associated negative connotations. This vocabulary use will result in an automatic deduction on your assignment grade.

**Written Assignments:** All written assignments should follow APA format. Work must be typed, double-spaced and have a cover sheet that includes your name, date, and course number. Assignments must be stapled or bound. **ALL assignments must be written in people-first language and have minimum errors in grammar to receive full credit.**

**EXAM POLICY** Make-up exams are **NOT allowed** unless prior permission was received. Such permission will be given at the discretion of the instructor. Make-ups are scheduled at the instructor's convenience and may contain different questions than the original exam.

#### **BAD WEATHER POLICY**

On those days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas Campuses main voicemail number (972) 780-3600 or search postings on the campus website [www.unt.edu/dallas](http://www.unt.edu/dallas). Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information, so they will receive this information automatically.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY:** The University attendance policy is in effect for this course. Class attendance and participation is expected because the class is designed as a shared learning experience and because essential information not in the textbook will be discussed in class. The dynamic and intensive nature of this course makes it impossible for students to make-up or to receive credit for missed classes. Attendance and participation in all class meetings is essential to the integration of course material and your ability to demonstrate proficiency. Students are responsible to notify the instructor if they are missing class and for what reason. Students are also responsible to make up any work covered in class. It is recommended that each student coordinate with a student colleague to obtain a copy of the class notes, if they are absent.

**Punctuality.** Attendance and punctuality are salient indicators of one's personal commitment to professional behavior and learning. Despite challenges posed by highway gridlock and juggling personal schedules, all students are expected to attend every class meeting, and to arrive in class on time. In order for an absence or tardy to be considered excused, you must (in most cases) inform the instructor, in advance, of the reason for the expected absence.

**Important:** The University attendance policy is in effect for this course. Class attendance and participation is expected because the class is designed as a shared learning experience and because essential information not in the textbook will be discussed in class. The dynamic and intensive nature of this course makes it impossible for you to make-up or to receive credit for missed classes.

**For every two (2) class sessions missed, your final grade for the course will be lowered one letter.** Arriving late and leaving early is included in this policy so make the necessary adjustments to your schedule before the 2<sup>nd</sup> class meeting of this course. **Any student arriving 15 minutes late for class will not receive participation points for the day.**

**DIVERSITY/TOLERANCE POLICY:** Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive & inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities as the instructor deems appropriate.

**CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM POLICY:** The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline provides penalties for misconduct by students, including academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. The term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to, (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; and (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use of the published or unpublished work of another person, by paraphrase or direct quotation, without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. If a student engages in academic dishonesty related to this class, the student will receive a failing grade on the test or assignment and a failing grade in the course. In addition, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action.

**COLLECTION OF STUDENT WORK SAMPLES POLICY:** In order to monitor students’ achievement and improve its instructional programs, the Department of Teacher Education and collects random, anonymous student work samples to be analyzed by internal and external reviewers.

**COMPREHENSIVE ARTS PROGRAM POLICY:** The Elementary Education program area supports a comprehensive arts program to assist preservice and inservice teachers to design and implement curricular and instructional activities, which infuse all areas of the arts (visual, music, theater, and movement) throughout the elementary and middle school curriculum.

**JAGUARCONNECT MAIL:** All students should activate and regularly check their JaguarConnect (e-mail) account. JaguarConnect is used for official communication from the University to students. Many important announcements for the University and College are sent to students via JaguarConnect Mail. For information about JaguarConnect Mail, including how to activate an account and how to have JaguarConnect Mail forwarded to another e-mail address, visit <http://jaguarconnect.unt.edu/>

**ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AND CODE OF ETHICS:** The Teacher Education & Administration Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us)) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION**

**(NCATE):** UNT is an NCATE-accredited institution. The educator as an agent of engaged learning” summarizes the conceptual framework of UNT’s basic and advanced programs. The program of educator preparation at UNT is based on the following key concepts: (1) content and curricular knowledge, (2) knowledge of teaching and assessment, (3) promotion of equity for all learners, (4) encouragement of diversity, (5) professional communication, and (6) engaged professional learning.

**TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION POLICY:** The Elementary Education program area supports technology integration to assist pre-service and in-service teachers to design and implement curricular and instruction activities, which infuse technology throughout the elementary and middle school curriculum