

**University of North Texas at Dallas  
FALL 2013  
SYLLABUS**

**EDSP 3240D.090 Family Communication and  
Professional Collaboration for Exceptional Learners – 3 Hours**

Department of	Special Education	Division of	Education and Administration
<b>Instructor Name:</b>	Dr. Paulette Walter		
<b>Office Location:</b>	UNT-Dallas		
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	Monday 5:00 to 5:30, after class or by appointment		
<b>Classroom Location:</b>	DAL1 252		
<b>Class Meeting Days &amp; Times:</b>	Mondays 05:30 pm-08:20 pm		
<b>Course Catalog Description:</b>	Analysis of collaboration and communication models and strategies used in working with families, caregivers, and professionals concerned about students with exceptionalities. Focus on the changing definition of family, community resources, advocacy groups, political forces, legal mandates, and other factors that may impact students and their families are addressed. <b>15 hours per semester in field-work arranged.</b>		
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Admission to Education Program		
<b>Required Text:</b>	<p>Smith, T. E. C., Gartin, B. C., Murdick, N. L., &amp; Hilton, A. (2006). <i>Families and children with special needs: Professional and family partnerships</i>. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.</p> <p>Overton, S. (2005). <i>A case study approach: Collaborating with families</i>. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.</p> <p>Designate assignments (*) must be submitted to  <b>TK-20: <a href="http://www.coe.int.edu/tk20">http://www.coe.int.edu/tk20</a></b> - required for students in last 15 hours and in the education department. Subscriptions are effective for 7 years <b>from date of purchase</b></p>		
<b>Access to Learning Resources:</b>	<p>UNT Dallas Library:  phone: (972) 780-3625;  web: <a href="http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm">http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm</a></p> <p>UNT Dallas Bookstore:  phone: (972) 780-3652;  e-mail: <a href="mailto:1012mgr@fheg.follett.com">1012mgr@fheg.follett.com</a></p>		
<b>Course Goals or Overview:</b>	<p>TExES Special Education Standards</p> <p><b>Standard II--</b> The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.</p> <p><b>The beginning special education teacher knows and understands:</b></p> <p>2.2k personal cultural biases and differences that may affect one's teaching;</p> <p>2.3k consumer and professional organizations, publications, and journals relevant to individuals with disabilities</p> <p>2.5k how to maintain the confidentiality of medical and academic records and respect for the privacy of individuals with disabilities.</p> <p><b>The beginning special education teacher is able to:</b></p>		

2.8s use copyrighted educational materials in an ethical manner;

2.9s safeguard confidentiality with regard to students with disabilities (e.g., by maintaining the confidentiality of electronic correspondence and records; ensuring the confidentiality of conversations; training related parties, such as parents/guardians and consultants, to maintain confidentiality);

**Standard III--** The special education teacher knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.

***The beginning special education teacher knows and understands:***

3.1k factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with individuals, parents/guardians, and school and community personnel;

3.2k typical concerns of parents/guardians of individuals with disabilities and appropriate strategies to help parents/guardians deal with these concerns;

3.3k the collaborative roles of individuals with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in planning an individualized program/

3.4k the types of information generally available from parents/guardians, school officials, the legal system, and community service agencies;

3.5k collaborative and/or consultative roles of special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and other educators in the integration of individuals with disabilities into general education settings; and

3.6k ethical practices for confidential communication about individuals with disabilities

***The beginning special education teacher is able to:***

3.1s demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication;

3.2s foster respectful and beneficial relationships between parents/guardians and professionals in the school and community;

3.3s use collaborative strategies in working with individuals with disabilities, parents/guardians, and school and community personnel in various learning environments;

3.4s communicate and collaborate effectively with paraprofessionals and other school and community personnel to deliver special education services;

3.5s encourage and assist parents/guardians to become active participants children's education;

3.6s plan and conduct collaborative conferences with parents/guardians;

3.8s serve as a resource person for parents/guardians, general education teachers, administrators, and other school personnel about the characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities.

**Standard IV--**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.

***The beginning special education teacher is able to:***

4.1s access information on various cognitive, communicative, physical, cultural, social, and emotional conditions of individuals with disabilities

**Standard V--**The special education teacher understands formal and informal assessment procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.

***The beginning special education teacher is able to:***

5.1s collaborate with parents/guardians and with other professionals involved in the assessment of individuals with disabilities;

5.4s gather background information regarding academic, medical and family history;

5.8s use information from teachers, other professionals, individuals with disabilities, and parents/guardians to make or suggest appropriate modifications to learning environments;

**Standard VI--**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction and managing the teaching and learning environment.

**The beginning special education teacher is able to:**

6.15s direct the activities of an educational setting paraprofessional, aide, volunteer, or peer tutor; 6.16s coordinate activities of related services personnel to maximize direct instruction time for individuals with disabilities;

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**Standard VII--** The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of issues and procedures for teaching appropriate student behavior and social skills.

**The beginning special education teacher is able to:**

7.7s design, implement, and evaluate instructional programs that enhance an individual's social participation in family, school, and community activities; and

**Standard IX--**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of transition issues and procedures across the life span.

**The beginning special education teacher knows and understands:**

9.1k how to plan, facilitate, and implement transition activities as documented in Individualized Family Services Plans (IFSPs);

9.3k the programs and services available at various levels and how to assist students and families in planning for transition;

**The beginning special education teacher is able to:**

9.2s collaborate with professionals to ensure successful transitions for individuals with disabilities;

9.3s communicate with families about issues related to transition and strategies for helping their children make successful transitions; and

**Standard X--**The special education teacher promotes students' academic performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.

**The beginning special education teacher knows and understands:**

10.5k varied cultural perspectives that affect the relationship among parents/guardians, schools, and communities with regard to effective instruction for individuals with disabilities;

## Course Requirements

### 1 **Demonstrate professionalism 70 Total Points**

Students show professionalism when they: (a) attend all classes and practicum observations on time and remain in class or practicum assignment for the duration; (b) are prepared for class discussions; (c) attend to class discussion and timelines for all assignments; (d) are flexible to schedule changes; (e) and respect the opinion and rights of others.

All assignments should be turned in during the class period **on the day they are due** or via email. Assignments turned in after such times are considered late. Points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. Special circumstances need to be discussed with the instructor ahead of time when possible.

Each student is expected to attend class, practicum, and/or online activities. Repeated absence from class or from practicum assignment will result in lowering of class grade or possible failure of class.

<p>2</p>	<p><b>Interest in a Career Teaching Students with Disabilities Statement (IS) *</b></p> <p>Each student will write a personal statement of professional interest in working with students with disabilities. The statement should be 3 to 5 pages in length, and will be graded according to the criteria below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content/Purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reason for choosing program</li> <li>Commitment to teaching</li> <li>Specific experiences used to discuss beliefs</li> <li>Dispositions toward diversity, all children, collaboration, lifelong learning</li> <li>Reflection on need to improve</li> </ul> </li> <li>Expression/Voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The statement is well focused with evidence of thought in composition, phrasing and structure. Audience is clear and is effectively addressed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The statement is logically organized, using an appropriate format and written structure, with effective transitions between ideas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Convention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The statement is completely free from spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>See rubric in Tk20.</p> <p><b>DUE Date: 11/11/13 30 Total Points</b></p> <p><b>* The interest statement must be turned in by due date, and once approved, submitted to Tk20.</b></p>
<p>3</p>	<p><b>Article Review (AR)</b></p> <p>Each student will review a journal article. The students will select an article from an <u>educational journal</u> <b>dealing with families of individuals with exceptionalism</b></p> <p><b>Due Date: 10/07/13 30 Total Points</b></p> <p><b>Research article must be in this format:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I.Reference (APA format) (5 pts.)</li> <li>II.Problem (stated in question form) (4 pts)</li> <li>III.Procedure (how the researcher set out to answer the question) (4 pts.)</li> <li>IV.Results (7pts)</li> <li>V.Implications (for the field) (8 pts.)</li> </ul> <p>Followed directions on format (2 pts.)</p> <p>See guidelines posted on Blackboard</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Listening to Families Conversation *</b></p> <p>Identify a family with a member who has exceptionality and arrange an opportunity to listen to their family story (using the conversation guide provided online). The purpose of listening to families is to gain a comprehensive understanding of (a) their family situation and (b) view of the perspectives of their strengths, preferences, and needs as a basis for providing personalized and relevant family support. Further details about this assignment will be</p>

	<p>provided in class. In exchange for the family's time, students are expected to offer some service or help. Turn in at class or by email.</p> <p><b>Due Date: 11/25/13    40 Total Points</b></p> <p><b>* The Listening to Families must be turned in by due date, and once approved, submitted to Tk20.</b></p>
5.	<p><b>Video Reflection</b></p> <p>Students will watch the video <b>For the Love of Julian</b> held during class and answer the questions posted on Blackboard related to this assignment. Directions will be found in the Directions folder on the homepage in Blackboard. Should you miss the class when we view the video, you will be responsible for checking it out and watching it in the UNT Dallas library. Turn in at class or by email.</p> <p><b>Due Date: 10/14/13    20 Total Points</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Reading Responses</b></p> <p>Students will answer and turn in <b>3 questions at the end of each chapter of Smith text as it is assigned.</b></p> <p>Students will select and turn in <b>3 questions to answer at the end of each chapter of Overton text as it is assigned.</b></p> <p><b>Responses turned in after each class.</b> Then added to project notebooks (see below).</p> <p><b>Responses from 9/16/13 to 10/21/13 = 45 Total Points</b></p> <p><b>Responses from 10/21/13 to 11/25/13 = 45 Total Points</b></p>
7.	<p><b>Practicum and Practicum Journal *</b></p> <p>Students will be assigned to a school in a local district where you will volunteer for a total of 15 hours throughout the semester. You will keep a journal, recording your observations each day you visit the school. An outline to follow and questions to answer will be provided on Blackboard. In addition to the journal, each student will keep a timesheet signed by the assigned school supervisor. The timesheet and the journal must be turned in by the due date.</p> <p><b>Due Date: 12/02/13    20 Total Points</b></p> <p><b>* The Practicum Journal must be turned in by due date, and once approved, submitted to Tk20.</b></p>
8.	<p><b>Mid Term and Final Project</b></p> <p>Collection of all assignments and reading responses previously graded and corrected.</p> <p><b>Due Date: 10/28/13    50 Total Points</b></p> <p><b>Due Date: 12/09/13    50 Total Points</b></p>

## Course Outline

This schedule is subject to change by the instructor. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by email.

TOPICS	Due in Class	Date
Introductions: Syllabus, Expectations, Texts		09/09/13
Discussions: Ch. 1 Smith, Part 1 Overton: Reading Response, Smith only		09/16/13*
Discussion: Ch. 2 & 3 Smith: Reading Response		09/23/13*
Discussion: Ch. 2 & 3 Overton: Reading Response		09/30/13*
Discussion: Ch. 4 & 5 Smith: Reading Response	Article Review 1	10/07/13*
Discussion: Ch. 4 & 5 Overton: Reading Response	Video Reflection	10/14/13*
Discussion: Ch. 6 & 7 Smith: Reading Response		10/21/13*
Discussion: Ch. 6 & 7 Overton: Reading Response	Mid Project Book	10/28/13*
Discussion: Ch. 8 & 9 Smith: Reading Response		11/04/13*
Discussion: Ch. 8 & 9 Overton: Reading Response	Interest Statement	11/11/13*
Discussion: Ch. 10 & 11 Smith: Reading Response		11/18/13*
Discussion: Ch. 11 & 12 Overton: Reading Response	Listening to Families	11/25/13*
Meetings for Credit	Practicum Journal	12/02/13*
Last class	Final Project Book	12/09/13*
* Reading responses are due at the end of assigned class.		

## Course Evaluation Methods

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

**Assignments** – *specific directions/rubrics/guides available to students posted on Blackboard or Tk20.*

**Projects** – *collection of assignments that have been previously graded and corrections made*

**Professionalism** – *daily attendance, practicum assignment, and participation in class discussions*

### Grading Matrix:

Instrument	Value (points or percentages)	Total
1. Professionalism	Attendance/Participation 14 x 5	70
2. Interest Statement	Review rubric posted in Tk20	30
3. Journal Article Review	Review rubric/outline and guide posted on Blackboard	30
4. Listening to Families	Assignment directions on Blackboard. Review rubric in Tk20,	40
5. Video Reflection	Series of questions and directions posted on Blackboard	20
6. Reading Response	2 Sets of responses to reading and activities at 45 points each	90
7. Practicum Journal	Review rubric in Tk20	20
8. Mid Term and Final Project	2 Collections of assignments and reading responses at 50 each	100
<b>Total:</b>		<b>400</b>

### Grade Determination:

A = 400 – 360 pts; i.e. 90% or better

B = 320 – 359 pts; i.e. 80 – 89 %

C = 280 – 319 pts; i.e. 70 – 79 %

D = 240 – 279 pts; i.e. 60 – 69 %

F = 239 pts or below; i.e. less than 60%

## 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, Suite 115 or call Laura Smith at 972-780-3632.

### Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness Policy:

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

### Assignment Policy:

All assignments must be **word processed** and in the format described in instructions. APA must be followed as indicated in the assignment instructions.

### Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct and Academic Dishonesty policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct at [http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student\\_conduct/index.html](http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html) for complete provisions of this code.

### 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.

### 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.

### Blackboard Policies:

- The Blackboard system enables the student to have access to resources and to other students and to me while on Blackboard. However, if you need to message me while I am not accessing Blackboard, it is best that you use the email given above.

### Contact Policies:

- Please text me if you are unable to be on time to class. This is very important to me as I will initiate a search for you. So if you cannot make it to class or if you are running late, you will text me so I won't have to worry.
- Please feel free to use my cell phone or personal email if you are having an emergency or need to contact me about a private matter.