

Course Syllabus

Course:	EDZU 9758 <u>Special Education Law for All Educators</u>
Credit Hours:	3.0 credits / 45 hours
Instructor:	Aimee Keller

Course Description

This course will focus on special education law and how it applies to all classrooms that educate students with special needs. Regular and special educators will learn how to meet the requirements of the IEP and better understand the special education process as a whole. The class will review mandates of various federal public laws that impact the educational programs and services of our students with special needs. This class is open to all grade levels and subject areas.

Course Goals

To Know

1. Requirements and changes made to special education as per the amendments made in IDEA 2004.
2. The laws and terminology designed to protect the rights of students.
3. The processes of identification and classification.

To Understand

1. How the special education process affects teachers, students, parents and administrators.
2. How Transition impacts student programming.
3. Why special education law is critical to the educational needs of special education students.

and To Be Able To

1. Identify the implications of special education law and how it affects their district, school and classroom.
2. Apply the various aspects of special education law to the educational programs and services of our students with special needs.
3. Create positive change in the services we provide for students with special needs.

Course Outline

- I. The Foundations & Basics of Special Education Law
 - i. Student Introductions, background information and expectations of course
 - ii. Landmark legislation of Public Law 94-142
 - Read and understand the rights of students with special needs under Public Law 94-142.
 - Identify the rights of parents, students and responsibilities of educators and district administrators
 - iii. The emergence of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Identify and correlate how NCLB is aligned with old and new provisions of IDEA
 - Identify and explore new reforms under “new” IDEA (i.e. identifying how new amendments changed IDEA, etc.)
 - What is IDEA?
 - Identify the rights of students, safeguards for parents, teacher/school responsibilities under IDEA.
 - iv. Chapter 408 of the Laws of 2002
 - What provisions mandated under Chapter 408?
 - Understand the importance of Chapter 408
 - Who does it protect?
 - Identify the responsibilities of educators and school administrators.
 - How mandate may vary from state to state?
 - How it is implemented from school to school? District to district? How is compliance ensured?
 - v. The Least Restrictive Environment
 - What is the LRE?
 - Identify and apply its purpose and the varying spectrum of LRE.
 - Compare and understand where the integrated/inclusive environment belongs on the LRE spectrum.
 - Discuss and identify the safeguards for students and parents under FAPE.
 - vi. Response to Intervention (RTI)
 - What is RTI? What does it mean for students? What do parents need to understand about this process?
 - Understanding and developing tiered instruction.
 - Understanding and identifying challenges faced under the RTI process
 - Implication for students with special needs under RTI.
- II. The Evolution of the Individualized Education Plan
 - i. Identification and Classification
 - Explore identification and classification process and identify crucial responsibilities of all parties involved.
 - Identifying how RTI process also plays a role in the identification and classification process.
 - Understand and identify individuals that are involved in the process.
 - Reflect on how referral process unfolds in different schools.

- ii. Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
 - What is an IEP?
 - Explore the meaning and purpose of this legal document?
 - Identify school responsibilities and parent responsibilities in the development of an IEP.
 - How to develop a great IEP and what resources are helpful.
 - Discuss the importance of compliance with all aspects outlined in an IEP.
 - iii. Section 504- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 - Identify provisions under Section 504. Who is protected and what parties are involved?
 - Understand who is eligible for it and how the education of these students is affected by this mandate.
 - Explore how a 504 Plan developed. What type of data is needed to establish a 504 Plan?
 - Understand the differences between accommodations and modifications.
 - Identify the similarities and differences between 504 Plans and IEPs.
 - Explore implications of 504 Plans and identify how schools must ensure compliance.
 - iv. Transition Planning
 - Explore student rights under a Transition Plan. What is required by law and what are students with special needs entitled to with respect to transition planning.
 - Identify what must be included in a transition plan.
 - Explore the importance of transition planning and its crucial role in student programming.
 - Discuss parent rights and responsibilities of school districts (i.e planning and timelines)
 - v. Common Core State Standards and the IEP
 - Discussion of how the CCSS implicate the programming of students with special needs.
 - Explore different viewpoints offered by experts who suggest that IEPs should be tied to the CCSS.
 - Discuss positive and negative implications of CCSS on Special Education (i.e. testing, IEP goals, etc.)
- III. Special Education Rights & Responsibilities: Students, Parents and Teachers
- i. Common Core Standards and Special Education
 - Continue discussion on implications of CCSS on students with special needs; specifically the effects on Reading and Writing goals.
 - Relate discussion to how this information must be distributed to parents in an informative manner and how educators will ensure proper and adequate support through IEPs and goals.
 - Engage in a forum with fellow educators discussing thought provoking issues that outline the main changes made and the implications (positive and negative) on students with special needs.
 - ii. Discipline and the students with disabilities
 - Explore how IDEA outlines the discipline process for students with disabilities
 - Identify the steps that must take place as the discipline process unfolds and how the rights of students and responsibilities of schools go hand in hand.
 - Explore and discuss the meaning of the terms “manifestation determination”.

- Identify what other services are mandated as a result of disciplinary actions that result in student removal from an educational setting.
- iii. Parent Rights vs. School District Rights
- Review of parent rights and school responsibilities as they apply to IDEA.
 - Explore various cases and hearings challenging aspects of the law and how parents exercise their rights with different intent and legal agendas.
 - Discuss and respond to recent legal cases. Explore and analyze the cases that establish precedents in special education and the implications they might have on the programming we can offer our students with special needs.

Methods of Instruction

Teachers enrolled in this course will evaluate various sources to reflect on the current requirements of the IEP, the special education process, and the mandates of various federal public laws that impact the educational programs/services of our students with special needs. They will evaluate various legal cases to better understand the implications of various legal mandates and how they apply in real life situations. They will reflect on current practices in schools as they relate to the expectations of the law and various amendments. They will complete article and reflective pieces to elaborate on the various implications of special education Laws. They will develop their own Reference Guide that comprehensively outlines and delineates their complete understanding of the various Special Education Laws that affect our schools today.

Students will connect with each other throughout the course within forums and various other types of online feedback options built into each class.

Methods of Assessment

All in-service students must complete all of the readings and assignments. All students working for a “B” for the course must complete all of the readings and assignments. All graduate students working for “B” for the course must also select one of the laws/regulations (or aspect of a law). They will write a comprehensive paper describing how that law is executed in the school, changes that should be made, responsibilities of all parties involved, pros and cons, who benefits most from the law, any other personal comments or reflections. Students working for an “A” in the course must complete all of the readings and assignments, the paper cited above, as well as a “Special Education Law guide” for all teachers. The reference guide should outline all of the laws, regulations, rights and responsibilities of general and special educators discussed in this course.

Instructors are online each day of the course and correspond with students through the course itself, feedback on assignments, e-mail, and by phone.

Time Validation

Assignment	Time (in hours)
Students will review resources from the Journal of Special Education for Students with Disabilities on the history of Public Law 94-142.	1.00
Students will review resources on the history of Public Law 94-142 and the significance of "civil rights" in Special Education.	1.00
Students will respond and write how school programming for students with special needs is directly affected Public Law 94-142 and identify evidence of how the regulation is implemented in these programs.	1.00
Students will review resources on how NCLB align with provisions of IDEA.	1.00
Students will review resources from the U.S. Department of Education on new reforms amended into IDEA.	1.00
Students will identify significant reforms signed into the law and identify the rights of students and school responsibilities in light of IDEA. Students will identify clear differences between IDEA 2004 and previous provisions.	1.00
Students will review and analyze documented sources outlining an amendment to the laws in New York (Chapter 408) setting in place policy that require IEPs be provided to all staff prior to implementation of programming.	1.50
Students will engage in discussion of Chapter 408 and its importance to the implementation of student programming. Reflection will also include discussion on helpful strategies to maintain compliance with this regulation.	1.50
Students will review resources discussing the importance of the Least Restrictive Environment and how it relates to a Free and Appropriate Public Education.	1.50
Students will discuss their experience with the various settings of the LRE spectrum. Discussion then evolves to the mainstreaming philosophy and the focal point of the law and how "mainstreaming" is outlined in this regulation.	1.50
Students will research and analyze resources outlining the tiered components of the RTI model and a parents guide to the response to intervention process.	1.50
Students will apply research to a discussion about the meaning of RTI and how the model is utilized in the development of programming for special needs students. Students will also explore how this model is essential to the manipulation of data and valuable information needed to evaluate the needs of our students.	1.50
Students will review documents from the U.S. Department of Education outlining the procedures for identifying and classifying students with special needs.	1.50

Students will identify and discuss the process required to identify students with special needs. Correlation will also be made to the RTI model, as how it can play a role in this process. Students will also research and explore the referral and CSE process and the responsibilities of educators and all team members involved.	1.50
Students will analyze resources discussing all aspects of the IEP, including present levels, goal development, accommodations and modifications. Students will also research how to develop a great IEP using the proper resources needed to implement an effective program for our students.	1.50
Students will identify the components of the IEP and the responsibilities of all the team members involved in the development of such a crucial document. Students will identify the main provisions outlined in IDEA 2004 regarding IEPs. Students will also explore the importance of "related services" and their role in the IEP.	1.50
Students will review documents and outline the importance of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students will also review 504 plans and how they are applied in the educational environment. Research will also include the difference between accommodations and modifications and effective implementation of 504 plans.	3.00
Students will review resources on the key provisions of IDEA regarding Transition Planning. Students will explore the essential components of the Transition Plan, as well as, the most effective resources needed to make an efficient plan. Students will research the most resourceful websites they might offer to parents, as they guide them through the transition process.	3.00
Students will read and analyze discussions by authors suggesting how to tie IEPs to Common Core. Discussion and analysis of various viewpoints will be made and students will carefully review the positive and negative effects of CCSS on the development of IEP goals, assessments, etc.	3.00
Students will view resources and respond to the main changes made to Reading and Writing in Special Education, in light of CCSS. Students will specifically research the main changes made to the goals in Reading and Writing. Students will create an Open House summary that could be used as an informative tool for parents, outlining these changes.	3.00
Students will use information from resources to discuss the positive and negative implication of the CCSS on Special Education. Students will engage in a thought-provoking discussion forum with fellow students to discuss challenges, strategies and ideas to help educators develop more effective IEPs. Students will be required to offer dialogue threads discussing the implications of CCSS on Special Education using the resources provided.	3.00
Students will view resources from the Department of Special Education discussing discipline in Special Education. Students will view the main changes made to IDEA from 1997 to 2004, regarding discipline.	1.50
Students will correlate the factors that come into play with discipline and students with special needs. Students will identify the provisions under IDEA that outline this area in special education. Students will identify and discuss "manifestation determination" and its	1.50

significance.

Students will review documents outlining parental rights and safeguards offered under IDEA. Students will also view resources discussing the role of parents before and during CSE meetings. Students will outline parental safeguards as well as the roles of educators and schools in this process. 3.00

Students will review court cases reviewed by the Supreme Court questioning issues of mainstreaming as well as a "free and public education". Students will review cases and compare and contrast details of each case. Students will offer personal reflections on the Court's final decisions and discuss the implications of these cases on special education. 3.00

Total Time 45.00
