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| **RSED 2000**  **Disability Awareness and Mentorship**  ***Fall 2025***  **- - - - - - - - - -**  **Department of Special Education,**  **Rehabilitation, and Counseling**  **College of Education**  Instructor Information  **Elizabeth Danson, Ed.S.**  Emd0009@auburn.edu |  |

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, REHABILITATION, AND COUNSELING**

**Course Syllabus**

**Course Number : RSED 2000**

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| **Course Title** | **Disability Awareness and Mentorship** |
| **Credit Hours** | 3 |
| **Course Meetings** | **Asynchronous** |
| **Prerequisites** | n/a |
| **Corequisites** | n/a |
| **Professor** | Elizabeth Danson |
| **Office Location** |  |
| **Phone/E-mail** | Emd0009@auburn.edu |
| **Office Hours** | By appointment (Please email)! |

1. **Date Syllabus Prepared:** August 2025
2. **Textbooks or Major Resources -** There are no required textbooks for this course. All students need reliable internet access to use libraries, learning centers, and/or laboratories that will facilitate their successful completion of the course. Students are required to complete a series of trainings to become certified peer mentors.
3. **Course Description-**This course will introduce students to an overview of disability disparities and address those disparities in society through awareness, advocacy, and mentorship. This course will prepare students to be inclusive future employers and supervisors by teaching universal design strategies, disability awareness, and etiquette. This course will also prepare students to be certified peer mentors through completing a series of online trainings and discussions to engage with people who have disabilities on Auburn's campus. This course is required for all WINGS peer mentors with the EAGLES program and for those who apply to work as a counselor with the EAGLES Summer Program. ***Students who complete the course and become a WINGS peer mentor with the EAGLES Program and complete at least 25 hours as a mentor have the opportunity to receive their Level 1 International Peer Educator Training Program Certification IPTPC (Formerly known as IMTPC) from the College of Reading and Learning Association (CRLA).***

* CRLA has three purposes in establishing a certification process for peer educator training programs:
  + Certification sets standards and guidelines for the minimum skills and training peer educators need to be successful.
  + Certification also inspires peer educator trainers to go beyond minimum standards to create training programs that challenge peer educators to the highest level of expertise they can achieve.
  + Certified training programs offer campus recognition and rewards for peer educators’ successful work by certifying peer educators trained to the standards of CRLA’s International Peer Educator Training Program Certification.

Certification communicates validity to critics, prestige among colleagues, and credibility to administrators and other institutional stakeholders.  The certification criteria provided by CRLA’s IPTPC can be used to develop a new program of peer educator training, revise an existing program, or expand a program into new areas of perceived need.  As with tutor certification, IPTPC is a "living" program: criteria are reviewed annually in light of professional input and new learning in the field.

1. **General Requirements:**

**There are four main requirements that all peer educator training programs must demonstrate:**

1. **Selection/Hiring** - Sound hiring and selection practices, ensuring you have content-knowledgeable trainees ready to take on the responsibility of peer educators.
2. **Training** - Planned training experience, which includes a minimum of 10 hours per level and uses a minimum number of our required training topics.
3. **Experience** - Peer educators experience directly with students for a minimum of 25 hours per level.
4. **Evaluation** - Regular evaluation by a knowledgeable and experienced evaluator.

**Selection:** GPA minimum, Recommendation on file, Interview. ***This requirement will be completed after the course as a part of the WINGS peer mentor application process.***

**Training:** A minimum of 10 hours (at least 5 TIS), and 10 topics (selected from the chart below).

**Experience:** At least 25 hours of direct service to students that focus on exclusively job responsibilities for this specific role. ***These hours can be completed during the course (current WINGS) or after the course as a part of the WINGS peer mentor program with EAGLES. If hours are completed after the course, they must be completed the semester immediately following this course in order to count towards certification. Students aspiring for the CRLA certificate must volunteer 25 hours as a peer mentor to the EAGLES program and request their Level 1 Peer Educator Certificate through the designated email*** [***eagles@auburn.edu***](mailto:eagles@auburn.edu) ***with the subject line CRLA Certificate. They must include their name and semester they took the course in the body of the email.***

**Evaluation:** At least one evaluation during the Level 1 training period.

**Documentation:**

* Detailed overview or complete syllabus for the entire Level 1 training curriculum.
* All materials from two sample training sessions (selected by the applicant).
* A log that documents peer educators’ completion of training hours and topics (last names and ID numbers redacted).
* A log that documents at least 25 hours of direct service per peer educator (last names and ID numbers redacted).
* At least one sample trainee evaluation (last names and ID numbers redacted).

1. **Student Learning Outcomes:**
2. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the history of the disability rights movement and applicable advocacy efforts.
3. Gain an understanding of the prevalence rates of those with disabilities, specifically intellectual disabilities in America and the global society.
4. Understand legislative mandates and applicable laws that prevent discrimination of those with disabilities and facilitate inclusion of people with disabilities in education, the workforce, and community
5. Understand strategies for including people with intellectual disabilities in the community, workforce, and independent living.

**Course Schedule:**

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| **DATE** | **CLASS** | **ASSIGNMENT Assigned** | |
| 08/20 | Course Overview and Historical Perspective, Timeline, and Disability Rights Movement | | * Pre-Test on Canvas Due by August 26 at 11:59 p.m. * Syllabus Agreement Quiz on Canvas Due by August 26 at 11:59 p.m. * Getting to Know You Discussion Due by August 26 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 08/27 | Peer Mentorship and Advocacy  *CRLA Topics Covered: Role of a Peer Mentor and Peer mentor Do’s and Dont’s* | | * Reflection 1 Assignment on Canvas Due by September 2 at 11:59 p.m. * Role of a Peer Mentor Discussion Post Due by September 2 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 09/03 | Ableism  Guest Presenter: Dr. Christine Drew | | * Reflection 2 Assignment on Canvas Due by September 9 at 11:59. |
| 09/10 | FERPA, Abuse Prevention, and Difference in High School and College, Mentoring Strategies  *CRLA Topics Covered: Compliance with Privacy Act (FERPA)*  *Modeling Problem Solving* | | * FERPA and Abuse Prevention Quiz on Canvas Due by September 16 at 11:59 p.m. * “What would you say?” Discussion Post Due by September 16 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 09/17 | Disability Etiquette and Awareness  *CRLA Topics Covered: Communication Styles and Educator Conversations* | | * Disability Etiquette and Awareness Quiz on Canvas Due by September 23 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 09/24 | Academic Support with the EAGLES Program | | * EAGLES Academic Support Discussion Post Due by September 30 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 10/01 | Inclusive Higher Education Programs | | * Think College Discussion Post Due by October 7 at 11:59 p.m. * Abuse Prevention and Safety: Research and Reflect Due by October 7 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 10/08 | Accommodations vs. Modifications (Education and Workforce) and  Office of Accessibility  *CRLA Topics Covered: Learning Theories in Academic Support Services* | | * Reflection 3 Assignment on Canvas Due by October 14 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 10/15 | Overview of the EAGLES Program and WINGS Peer Mentors  *CRLA Topics Covered: Administrative Policies, Record Keeping, and Reporting* | | * Peer Mentor Engagement Activity Due by October 21 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 10/22 | Rounds Table with EAGLES and WINGS | | * EAGLES/WINGS Round Table Discussion Post Due by October 28 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 10/29 | Round Table with Occupations in the field of serving Individuals with  Disabilities | | * Reflection 4 Assignment on Canvas Due by November 4 at 11:59 p.m. * *Optional for WINGS Peer mentor: Statement of Interest on Canvas and WINGS Application Due* |
| 11/05 | Barriers and Facilitators to Inclusion | | * Barriers and Facilitators Discussion Post Due by November 11 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 11/12 | *CRLA Topics Covered: Goal Setting and Planning* | | * Goal Planning Discussion Post Due by November 18 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 11/19 | Be the Difference | | * Be the Difference Scenario reflection and Resume Upload to Canvas Due by December 2 at 11:59 p.m. |
| 12/03 | Next Steps for Getting Involved as a Peer Mentor On-Campus  *CRLA Topics Covered: Conducting a Successful Session*  *Optional: WINGS Interviews* | | * Peer Mentor Philosophy by December 9 at 11:59 p.m. * Post Test on Canvas Due by December 9 at 11:59 p.m. * Mock Peer Mentor Video Due by December 9 at 11:59 p.m. |

1. **Course Requirements/Evaluation:**

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| **Assignment** | **Points** |
| **Pre and Post-Test (2)** | **50 points each =100 points** |
| **Reflections (5)** | **5 pts each = 25 points** |
| **Syllabus Agreement and Quiz** | **10 points** |
| **Resume** | **15 points** |
| **Peer Mentor Philosophy** | **20 points** |
| **Trainings/ Quizzes (4)** | **50 points each = 200 points** |
| **Peer Mentor Engagement Activity** | **25 points** |
| **Participation (watching lectures)** | **65 points** |
| **Mock Peer Mentor Session** | **40 points** |
| **Total Points:** | **500 points** |
| **A = 450-500 points**  **B = 400-449 points**  **C = 350-399 points**  **D = 300-349 points**  **F = 299 and below** | |

**Assignments:**

**Pre-Test:** The pretest is a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay responses and will assess the student’s knowledge of content prior to learning the content in the course. The pre-test will also demonstrate to students what they will learn because of taking this course

**Syllabus Agreement Quiz:** This is a quiz that assesses the student’s understanding of the course syllabus and requires the student to sign a statement that states they agree to the policies and expectations outlined by the syllabus. The student and instructor will honor the policies and create a learning environment that is respectful and inclusive.

**Reflection Assignments:**See Canvas assignments for details of the assignments and how you will be graded for each.Students may use AI for reflection assignments only, following the guidelines in this syllabus. If AI is used and not properly disclosed, students will receive a minimum of 10 points deducted from their score

**Reflection Assignment #1:** This reflection assignment calls for students to reflect on the role of a peer mentor and state what they hope to instill in others a peer mentor. In addition, students will reflect on ableism and unpack their own biases when working with individuals with disabilities.

**Reflection Assignment #2:** This reflection assignment calls for students to reflect on the topic of ableism.

**Reflection Assignment #3:** This reflection assignment calls for students to reflect on accommodations and modifications in education and the workforce.

**Reflection Assignment #4:** This reflection assignment calls for students to reflect on the occupation and career fields presented in class and which one best relates to their career interests.

**Reflection Assignment #5:** This reflection assignment calls for students to explore Think College and watch a recorded webinar and then **c**reate an engaging activity to implement as a peer mentor that covers one of the four transition domains and provide an overview of an overview of an opportunity for you to implement some of the Peer Mentor strategies you have learned so far in this class. Type out the activity and strategies you would use**.**

**Discussion Posts:** These discussion posts will give students the opportunity to discuss what they observed during specific classes and/or experiences during the course.

* + Getting to Know You
  + EAGLES Academic Support Observation
  + EAGLES and WING Round Table
  + Goal Planning

**Disability Etiquette and Awareness Quiz:** Disability Etiquette Training helps individuals use more inclusive and appropriate language and behavior when interacting with individuals with disabilities. Disability Etiquette Training aims to teach individuals how to use language that avoids reducing individuals with disabilities to a series of labels, symptoms, or medical terms. Students learn how to become better aware of how their language regarding individuals with disabilities can make a difference.

**FERPA and Abuse Prevention Quiz** Auburn University is committed to providing a safe environment for learning, living, and working for all members of the community. Auburn University prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, sexual harassment, and complicity. As such, employees and students must be committed to eliminating, preventing, and addressing these acts. This involves mandatory reporting of any harassment or abuse of Auburn University affiliates or community members. Peer mentors receive training to increase their knowledge of campus resources as well as to discuss the best course of action should harassment or abuse be disclosed to the peer mentor. In addition, peer mentors will learn about FERPA and how this relates to their role as peer mentors. Peer mentors will learn how to respond to questions regarding students’ work in an appropriate manner.

**Be the Difference:** The bystander intervention campaign aims to educate, empower, and influence the Auburn Family to take action in harmful and dangerous situations. Through presentations, and continuing education, Auburn University will Be the Difference.

The program goals are:

* To be proactive in recognizing and responding to helping others in a difficult situation.
* Increase awareness of helping behavior
* Increase motivation to help.
* Develop skills and strategies to empower individuals when responding to concerns.

**Resume:** Each Resume should contain the following elements in a preferred format: education; related professional experience including, but not limited to volunteer experience, internships, and/or employment; membership in professional organizations; honors, awards, or recognitions; research experience; and professional certifications and/or licenses.

**Mock Peer Mentor Session:** Students will participate in a mock peer mentor session to demonstrate an understanding of interacting with students in a peer mentor role. Students will be given a scenario and have to model techniques learned in class to best support individuals with disabilities.

**Peer Mentor Philosophy:** Students will submit a statement that includes their peer mentor philosophy and understanding of the peer mentor role. The purpose of this assignment is to provide each student with “an elevator pitch” to advocate for peer mentorship and individuals with disabilities.

**Post-Test** The post-test is a mixture of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay responses and will assess the student’s knowledge of content after learning the content in the course. The post-test will also demonstrate to students what they learned because of taking this course and serve as a tool for the instructors to evaluate the content covered in the course

**Class Policy Statements:**

**Participation**: Students are expected to participate in all class activities. Assignments are due on announced dates. Unexcused late assignments are unacceptable. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor if assignment deadlines are not met. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work. Students must satisfy all course objectives to pass the course.

**Assignments:** Written assignments are expected to be typed and are to be of high a quality. Assignments must be turned in the day the assignment is due and during the regularly scheduled class time on Canvas. All assignments should be posted on Canvas under the corresponding assignment link. Please do not email assignments. No late assignments will be accepted unless accompanied by an excuse approved by the university.

**Excused** **Absences**: Students are granted excused absences from class for the following reasons: Illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family, the death of a member of the student’s immediate family, trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for University classes, trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoena for a court appearance, and religious holidays. Students who wish to have an excused absence from this class for any other reason must contact the instructor in advance of the absence to request permission. The instructor will weigh the merits of the request and render a decision. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to the occurrence of any excused absences, but in no case shall such notification occur more than one week after the absence. Appropriate documentation for all excused absences is required. Please see the [Student Policy eHandbook](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/) for more information on excused absences (<http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/>).

**Make-Up Policy**: Arrangements to make up missed major examinations (e.g., hour exams, mid-term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences must be initiated by the student within one week from the end of the period of the excused absences. Except in unusual circumstances, such as the continued absence of the student or the advent of University holidays, a make-up exam will take place within two weeks from the time that the student initiates arrangements for it. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no make-up exams will be arranged during the last three days before the final exam period begins. The format of the makeup exam will be online via Canvas.

**Written Assignments** are expected to be prepared using word processing software (or other assignment-appropriate software e.g., PowerPoint for poster project), grammatically accurate, and free of spelling and typographical errors. Written assignments should be prepared in accordance with the latest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. To set up the meeting, please contact the instructor by e-mail. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

**AI Policy: Permitted when Assigned in this Course with Attribution**

In this course, students are permitted to use Generative AI Tools such as ChatGPT or Copilot for specific assignments, as designated by the instructor. **To maintain academic integrity, students must disclose any use of AI-generated material.** As always, students must properly use attributions, including in-text citations, quotations, and references. Students should exercise caution and avoid sharing any sensitive or private information when using these tools. Examples of such information include personally identifiable information (PII), protected health information (PHI), financial data, intellectual property (IP), and any other data that might be legally protected.

A student should include the following statement in assignments to indicate use of a Generative AI Tool: “The author(s) would like to acknowledge the use of [Generative AI Tool Name], a language model developed by [Generative AI Tool Provider], in the preparation of this assignment. The [Generative AI Tool Name] was used in the following way(s) in this assignment [e.g., brainstorming, grammatical correction, citation, which portion of the assignment].”

**Honesty Code:**  All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the [Student Policy eHandbook](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/) will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

**Course Contingency:** If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situations, the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.

**Professionalism:** As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

* Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
* Contribute to collaborative learning communities
* Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
* Model and nurture intellectual vitality

**Mental Health:** If you or someone you know needs support, you are encouraged to contact Auburn Cares at 334-844-1305 or auburn.edu/auburncares. Auburn Cares will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

Student Counseling & Psychological Services provides confidential, no-cost mental health counseling and psychiatric services to Auburn Students. You can speak with a counselor 24/7/365 by calling 334-844-5123. Learn more about mental health information on campus at auburn.edu/scps.

**Basic Needs:** Any student experiencing food insecurity or an unexpected financial crisis is encouraged to contact Auburn Cares at 334-844-1305 or [auburn.edu/auburncaresLinks to an external site.](https://auburn.edu/auburncares) for resources and support.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Auburn University faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Please be aware that if you choose to confide in a faculty member regarding an issue of sexual misconduct, dating violence, or stalking, we are obligated to inform the Title IX Office, who can assist you with filing a formal complaint, No-Contact Directives, and obtaining supportive measures. Find more information at auburn.edu/titleix.

If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, Safe Harbor (334-844-7233) and Student Counseling & Psychological Services (334-844-5123) are both confidential resources. Safe Harbor provides support to students who have experienced sexual or relationship violence by connecting them with academic, medical, mental health, and safety resources. For additional information, visit auburn.edu/safeharbor.