**Auburn University**

**Course Syllabus**

**Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling**

# **Basic Course Info**

**1. Course Number:** RSED 3000, Fall 2025

**Course Title**: Diversity and Exceptionality of Learners

**Credit Hours**: 3 semester hours

**Prerequisites:** majoring in education

**Co-requisites:**  none

**Instructor:** Cecily Murphy

**Office Address:** COE Building, 345 West Samford Drive, 3rd floor SERC

**Email Address:** ccm0062@auburn.edu

**Office Hours:** Zoom by appointment only

**2. Term:** Fall 2025

**Day/Time:** Tues 5:00-7:30 p.m., COE Building Rm. 2233

**Date Syllabus Prepared**: Updated June 2025

**3. TEXTBOOK:**

*Required:* Available on ALL ACCESS through Auburn University Bookstore.

Houchins, et al. (2023). Special Education for All Teachers (8th edition). Kendall Hunt Publishing.

**4. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Exploration of philosophical, social, cultural, and individual factors that have shaped the civil rights of and education for individuals with disability; examination of educational experiences of diverse learners and teachers’ roles and responsibilities with respect to teaching all students in inclusive classrooms.

**5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1.1.1 Understand how language, culture, and family background influence the learning of individuals with exceptionalities.

1.1.2 Use understanding of development and individual differences to respond to the needs of individuals with exceptionalities.

6.1.1 Use Professional Ethical Principles and Professional Practice Standards to guide their practice.

6.1.2 Understand how foundational knowledge and current issues influence professional practice.

6.1.5 Advance the profession by engaging in activities such as advocacy and mentoring.

6.1.6 Provide guidance and direction to paraeducators, tutors, and volunteers.

# **6. TENTATIVE COURSE CONTENT & SCHEDULE**

* Students may withdraw without grade penalty until the 15th class day, and until mid-semester (although a W will appear on the student’s transcript if the student withdraws between the 16th and 36th class day).
* Students who withdraw from the course between the 6th class day and the 15th class day will pay a course drop fee of $100.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Lecture** | **Assigned Readings**  **(to be completed prior to class)** | **Learning Activities (due prior to class)**  **TBA** |
| T 8/19 | **Syllabus**  **Chapter 1 – Teaching Every Student: A Mandate for Today** | Syllabus  Chapter 1 |  |
| T 8/26 | **Chapter 2 – The Legal Foundation for Special Education** | Chapter 2  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxrS7-I_sMQ> (9:26) | **Ableism reflection due** |
| T 9/2 | **Chapter 3 – Diversity and Disability: Issues in Special Education** | Chapter 3  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydKcaIE6O1k> (14:58)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwTpfVQgkU0> (23:22)  I recommend starting your Crip Camp essay this week. | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFS8SpwioZ4> (1:46:43)  (CW: Crip Camp depicts people with disabilities in hospital settings, sexual content, discussion of drugs, nudity, curse words) |
| T 9/9 | **Chapter 4 – Multi-Tiered Systems of Support** | Chapter 4  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHCTGRw1oKo&t=2s> (9:48)  <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/iep01/cresource/q3/p06/>  Continue working on Crip Camp essay | Required viewing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmM8Ns1DOb0> (7:18)  Optional viewing – (CW: drinking alcohol): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y505KwHp4O4> (8:00) |
| T 9/16 | **Exam 1 (Ch 1 -4)** |  | **EXAM** |
| T 9/23 | **Chapter 5 – Students with Disabilities Related to Learning and Behavior** | Chapter 5  <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/asd2/cresource/q1/p01/#content>  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMpt40zNK-w> (9:09)  Who Speaks for Charlie? – (16:41) |  |
| T 9/30 | **Chapter 6 – Supporting the Academic Instruction of Students with High-Incidence Disabilities** | Chapter 6 | **Crip Camp essay due** |
| T 10/7 | **Chapter 7 – Students with Low Incidence Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities** | Chapter 7  <https://thinkcollege.net/college-search> |  |
| T 10/14 | **Chapter 8 – Supporting Academic Learning for Students with Low-Incidence Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities** | Chapter 8  <https://youtu.be/nc9aAY6-ujQ?si=DNOr3vFQVVL0MC3Q> (3:36) |  |
| T 10/21 | **Exam 2 (Ch 5-8)** |  | **EXAM** |
| T 10/28 | **Chapter 9 – Supporting the Behavioral and Social-Emotional Success of Students** | Chapter 9 | **AFIRM FBA Module due**  <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules> |
| T 11/4 | **Chapter 10 – Supporting Students with Communication Needs** | Chapter 10  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIGrxzPMVtw&list=PLvx6ao-iobdCErDjSzzxFR0ioQLSieQuz&index=8> (5:20)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-c50HNnPg0&list=PLvx6ao-iobdCErDjSzzxFR0ioQLSieQuz&index=5> (6:41) | AFFIRM module on topic of choice: visuals, Picture Exchange Communication System, scripting, augmentative and alternative communication, video modeling, social skills training, social narratives |
| T 11/11 | **Chapter 11 – Supporting Students with Sensory and Physical Disabilities**  **Chapter 12 – Supporting Students Who are Gifted and Talented** | Chapter 11  Chapter 12  <https://youtu.be/KmDGvquzn2k?si=oUtyvwOnxT_R3-Fs> (2:18)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sg48BNjUohw> (16:33)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiptJm48Ghk> (16:41) | **AFIRM Module due**  <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules> |
| T 11/18 | **Chapter 13 – Supporting and Collaborating with Families and Professionals** | Chapter 13 | **Pop Culture Inclusive School Design Project Due** |
| T 11/25 | **NO CLASS DUE TO HOLIDAY** |  |  |
| T 12/2 | **Exam 3 (Ch 9-13)** |  | **EXAM** |
|  | Finals Week 12/8-12/12 |  |  |

# **7. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

General Course Requirements (See point values in tables below.)

Students are required to: a) successfully complete all learning activities and submit to the instructor **no later than the date designated for each project**, b) take and pass all required tests, c) attend class and participate in class discussions and activities/quizzes, and d) read assigned materials prior to class sessions.

**A. Learning Activities**: Throughout the semester there will be learning activities. These activities may include small group and independent assignments (e.g., group projects, quizzes, reflections, and summary papers) and *may or may not be announced ahead of time*. The learning activities may begin in class and have follow-up assignments to be completed outside of class time. “In-class”/synchronous assignments and activities must be completed during the limited times they are available on Canvas. In case of an absence, a University-approved excuse must be presented to make up any learning activities. **(see Attendance Policy and** [**Student Policy eHandbook**](https://cas.auburn.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=6030eed59dec435abc9061fa4edc1426&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.auburn.edu%2fstudent_info%2fstudent_policies%2f)**)**. **(TOTAL 40% of final grade)**

* 1. **Ableism reflection - Due 8/26 (10 points) –** 2 pages in length and comport with APA 7th edition formatting. Answer the following:
     1. What is your personal experience with people with disabilities/disabled people (how long, type/s of disability, environment [educational or community-based], your role in the person/s’ lives)? Have you ever heard of ableism? If so, in what context? What information were you given about it? When (before or after interacting with people with disabilities)? Reflect on how ableism has affected your interactions with these people? How do you think your experience will influence your work with students with disabilities in your future positions in education? If you refer to people, give them fake names. Feel free to include any of your reactions to the readings in the syllabus.
     2. If you have no experience with people with disabilities, reflect on why you haven’t had any exposure to people with disabilities in your daily life. Have you ever heard of ableism? In what context? What did you learn about it? How do you think your lack of experience will influence your work with students with disabilities in your future positions in education? Feel free to include any of your reactions to the readings in the syllabus.
  2. **Crip Camp essay response to discussion question - Due 9/30 (10 points)** – 2 pages in length and comport with APA 7th edition formatting. Answer the following:
     1. Have you noticed parts of your community that aren’t accessible (University, Auburn/Opelika, your hometown, places you travel often, the internet)? Be specific. I’d love pictures/screenshots documenting any physical barriers, inaccessible websites, lack of special education programming, etc. Think outside the box. This is inaccessibility for any kind of disability.

1. What are the avenues to advocate for change (official and unofficial)? Be specific. Which offices can you report this to? Who can you speak with about the lack of accessibility? Are there any governing bodies that oversee these areas?
   1. **AFIRM Modules - Due 10/28 and 11/11 (5 points total) –** certificate uploaded
   2. **Inclusive School Design in a Pop Culture Universe Project - Due 11/18 (15 points**) **–** Choose a fictional or pop culture universe (e.g., Hogwarts, Barbieland, Emerald City, East High, Wakanda, Genovia, etc.) and reimagine it with inclusivity in mind. Your task is to design a school within that universe that fully includes and supports students with disabilities and exceptional learning needs. You may present this assignment as a slideshow presentation (8-12 slides), a creative poster board, illustrated booklet, or other visual format that has been approved by the instructor. You must include the following:
      1. Brief description of the universe you have selected and why it needs an inclusive school. What barriers exist in that world for students with disabilities? What systems or traditions need to be reimagined?
      2. Student profiles (2-3 fictional students based on pop culture or original characters) that include each student’s:
         * Strengths and interests
         * Area(s) of disability
         * Specific classroom accommodations and supports
      3. At least 2 teaching practices that promote meaningful participation and access (e.g., UDL, behavior supports, assistive technology, etc.).
      4. Family and IEP team collaboration practices. Describe how families are included and supported, who is on the IEP team in this universe, and how students themselves are included in decision-making.
      5. Creativity and pop culture integration can include locations from your fictional world, magical supports (e.g., hover quills that write notes for students with fine motor difficulties), adaptive superhero gear, etc.
      6. **Note:** You are encouraged to be imaginative and detailed in how you transform this universe to make it inclusive. Creativity and integration of pop culture references are expected, but every element should be purposeful and grounded in inclusive teaching principles that we have discussed throughout the semester.

**B. Examinations**: There will be three exams during the semester. The first exam will cover material from the beginning of the semester through the first exam. The second exam will cover material presented after the first exam through the last class period before the second exam is scheduled. The third exam will cover material presented after the second exam through the last class period before the third exam is scheduled and could contain material from early examination periods **(TOTAL 60% of final grade – each exam is worth 20% of your final grade)**

# **8. GRADING AND EVALUATION:**

**Requirements:**

Learning Activities 40%

Exam 1 20%

Exam 2 20%

Exam 3 20%

TOTAL 100 %

**Grading Scale:**

90-100 A

89-80 B

79-70 C

69-60 D

Below 59 F

# **9. CLASS POLICIES:**

**Communication:** Students are expected to use professional communication skills in verbal and written communication. They are also responsible for checking their email and Canvas pages regularly. Students should set up notifications in Canvas to alert them when announcements are posted, assignments are due, grades are released, etc. Follow this link for help on how to set these up: ["Getting Started with Canvas" (video and transcipt)](https://vimeo.com/74677642).

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions and activities and will be held responsible for any content covered in the event of an absence.

**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, military orders, and religious holidays. Students who wish to have an excused absence from 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](https://cas.auburn.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=6030eed59dec435abc9061fa4edc1426&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.auburn.edu%2fstudent_info%2fstudent_policies%2f) ([www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies)) for more information on excused absences.

**Make-Up Policy:** Arrangement to make up a missed major examination (e.g., hour exams, mid-term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences must be initiated by the student as soon as possible but no later than **one week** of the end of the period of the excused absences(s). 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 **one week** of the date that the student initiates arrangements for it. Except in extraordinary circumstance, no make-up exams will be arranged during the last three days before the final exam period begins. The format of the make-up exam will be online and written.

**Assignments:** Written and typed assignments are expected to be grammatically accurate and free of spelling and typographical errors. Assignments are to be of a quality that would be expected of a professional.

All assignments must be turned in the day and time they are due. Assignments must be turned in by the student completing the assignment.

**No late assignments** will be accepted unless accompanied by a university-approved excuse.

If a student misses turning in an assignment and has a university-approved excuse, they will have **one week** from the time they return to class to turn in the assignment.

**NOTE: Any assignments completed and/or submitted that do not comply with the above requirements will be returned and will not be accepted for credit.**

**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].”

**Disability Accommodations:** Students who need accommodations should submit their approved accommodations through the AIM Student Portal on AU Access and follow-up with the instructor about an appointment. It is important for the student to complete these steps as soon as possible; accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, should contact the Office of Accessibility at: [ACCESSIBILITY@auburn.edu](mailto:ACCESSIBILITY@auburn.edu) or [(334) 844-2096](tel:(334)844-2096) (V/TT). The Office of Accessibility is located in Haley Center 1228.

**Academic Honesty:** All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the [Student Policy eHandbook](https://cas.auburn.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=6030eed59dec435abc9061fa4edc1426&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.auburn.edu%2fstudent_info%2fstudent_policies%2f) ([www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](http://www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies)) will apply to university courses. 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 situation, 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

**Classroom Behavior:** The Auburn University Classroom Behavior Policy is strictly followed in the course; please refer to the [Student Policy eHandbookLinks to an external site.](https://auburnpub.cfmnetwork.com/B.aspx?BookId=12839) for details of this policy.

**Mental Health:** If you or someone you know needs support, you are encouraged to contact Auburn Cares at 334 844-1306 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 and 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/auburncares for resources and support.

**Sexual Misconduct Resources:** 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.

**Student Academic Grievance Policy:** The purpose of this university policy is to “resolve academic grievances of students, which results from actions of faculty or administration. This resolution should be achieved at the lowest level and in the most equitable way. The burden of proof rests with the complainants.” See University Policy Site for steps toward redress <https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/default.aspx>.