

## **Navigating the IEP Process From Start to Finish**

**EDUO 9387 3 Semester Credits/Units**

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### **Course Syllabus**

#### **Course Overview:**

Special education is not just an educational obligation—it is a legal obligation designed to ensure that students with disabilities have equitable access to the general education curriculum alongside their non-disabled peers. As an educator seeking to better serve your students or as an advocate for the parent of the student, this course will provide the tools, knowledge, and confidence you need to navigate the special education process effectively.

**Course Learning Objectives:** Participants will have the opportunity to:

#### **Understand Special Education Laws**

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of special education laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implications for educators and families.
- Learn about students' rights to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

#### **Master the Evaluation and Special Education Eligibility Process (Child Find)**

- Learn the evaluation process, including referral, assessment, and eligibility determination.
- Understand how to collaborate with evaluation teams to make informed decisions about a student's need for special education services.

#### **Navigate Eligibility Categories**

- Explore the eligibility codings under IDEA and their significance in determining a student's qualification for special education services.
- Understand the role of disability categories in supporting students' individual needs.

#### **Developing Accurate Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)**

- Understand the importance of PLAAFP statements as the foundation of the IEP.
- Learn how to use data from evaluations, assessments, and teacher observations to write meaningful PLAAFP statements that guide the development of IEP goals and accommodations.

## Implement Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)

- Explore effective methods for implementing SDI that align with the general education curriculum.
- Learn how to adapt instructional strategies and materials to meet individual student needs while promoting access to grade-level standards.

### Course Relation to CCS or other Professional Standards:

Council for Exceptional Children Standards for Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators (2020)

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/standards/initial-practice-based-professional-preparation-standards-special-educators>

CEC: 1:1. Candidates practice within ethical guidelines and legal policies and procedures.

CEC: 1:2. Candidates advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while addressing the unique needs of those with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.

CEC: 3:1. Candidates apply their understanding of academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.

CEC: 3:2. Candidates augment the general education curriculum to address skills and strategies that students with disabilities need to access the core curriculum and function successfully within a variety of contexts as well as the continuum of placement options to assure specially designed instruction is developed and implemented to achieve mastery of curricular standards and individualized goals and objectives.

CEC: 4:1. Candidates collaboratively develop, select, administer, analyze, and interpret multiple measures of student learning, behavior, and the classroom environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based systems of intervention for students with and without exceptionalities.

CEC: 4:2. Candidates develop, select, administer, and interpret multiple, formal and informal, culturally and linguistically appropriate measures and procedures that are valid and reliable to contribute to eligibility determination for special education services.

CEC: 5:1. Candidates use findings from multiple assessments, including student self-assessment, that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity and specialized as needed, to identify what students know and are able to do. They then interpret the assessment data to appropriately plan and guide instruction to meet rigorous academic and non-academic content and goals for each individual.

CEC: 5:6. Candidates plan and deliver specialized, individualized instruction that is used to meet the learning needs of each individual.

CEC: 7:2. Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the educational setting to assess, plan, and implement effective programs and services that promote progress toward measurable outcomes for individuals with and without exceptionalities and their families.

## Learning Modules / Assignments

<b>Module 1: Understand Special Education Laws</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gain a comprehensive understanding of special education laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implications for educators and families.</li> <li>● Learn about students' rights to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment</b>	<p>1. Using the following web resources, compile a resource to educate peers, parents, or the community about IDEA, FAPE, and LRE. Your resource can be in the form of a Google Slides/PowerPoint presentation, pamphlet, newsletter, or another approved method approved by the course instructor.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">About IDEA</a></li> <li><a href="#">What is the Individuals...</a></li> <li><a href="#">Understanding FAPE &amp; LRE...</a></li> <li><a href="#">Special education: Federal...</a></li> <li><a href="#">NCLD</a></li> </ol> <p>Submit your assignment via Drive doc to: <a href="mailto:arowan@dominicancaonline.com">arowan@dominicancaonline.com</a>            Label your email heading- last name/course/assignment.            Example: Rowan/EDUO9387/Assignment1</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	<p>The completed resource must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An easily understood comprehensive summary of IDEA, FAPE, and LRE in a family-friendly language.</li> <li>● IDEA, FAPE, and LRE should each be addressed independently of one another.</li> </ul> <p>Assignments will be assessed using the Course Assessment Rubric. Feedback will be provided for each completed assignment.</p>

<b>Module 2: Special Education Eligibility Process (Child Find)</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly understand the Child Find Process               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Child Find Referral/Process</li> <li>○ Child Find Time Lines</li> <li>○ Child Find Meeting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Assignment</b>	<p>1. After referencing the following resources, you will use your knowledge to demonstrate your comprehension of the special education eligibility process (Child Find) by answering questions on the following <a href="#">Google Form- Click Here!</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">IDEA- Child Find Process</a></li> <li><a href="#">What is Child Find?</a></li> <li><a href="#">Code of Federal Regulations</a></li> <li><a href="#">LDA</a></li> <li><a href="#">RTI</a></li> <li><a href="#">NIH</a></li> <li><a href="#">IDEA- Parent Consent</a></li> <li><a href="#">IDEA Timelines</a></li> </ol>

	<p>2. Submit a 2-page reflection (single-spaced) that explains the Child Find (CF) process in your respective state. Some questions to address: *</p> <p>Summarize the CF process in your school district/state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* What is the CF timeline, does the timeline include holidays?</li> <li>* How does your state differ from the timeline suggestions of IDEA?</li> <li>* How many Child Finds were there in your state in the last fiscal school year? Is the number increasing?</li> <li>* What is your experience with the CF process?</li> <li>* Who runs Child Find meetings in your school district?</li> </ul> <p>If you reference additional resources, please cite them in your paper.</p> <p>Submit your assignment via Drive doc to: <a href="mailto:arowan@dominicancaonline.com">arowan@dominicancaonline.com</a></p> <p>Label your email heading- last name/course/assignment. Example: Rowan/EDUO9387/Assignment2</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	<p>Google Form assessment results will be combined with the reflection and follow the course rubric guidelines.</p> <p>90-100%- A 80-89%- B 70-79%- C</p>

<b>Module 3: Eligibility Categories for Special Education Services</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore the eligibility codings under IDEA and their significance in determining a student’s qualification for special education services.</li> <li>● Understand the role of disability categories in supporting students’ individual needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials</b>	<p>1. Using the following web resources, compile a resource to educate peers, parents, or the community about the 13 disability categories in the form of a Google Slides/PowerPoint presentation. If your state or LEA recognizes the coding of Development Delay (DD), then include DD in your presentation. The people accessing your presentation should walk away with a clear understanding of the disability. You must cite all sources. You may use additional resources as long as you cite those resources.</p> <p>Each disability slide should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The disability</li> <li>● IDEA’s definition of the disability or your state’s definition</li> <li>● Common signs of each disability that is backed by research</li> </ul> <p>a. <a href="#">LDA</a> b. <a href="#">Understood.org</a> c. <a href="#">NICHCY</a> d. <a href="#">IDEA</a></p>

	<p>2. Access your state's IEP data for the most recent fiscal year and present the following information in a clear and easily readable table.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List the total number of students who qualify for special education services in the state.</li> <li>List the # and % of students identified in each disability category.</li> <li>Beside each disability category reference whether the number increased or decreased from the previous fiscal year.</li> <li>Create 3 other categories that are of interest to you (examples: race, LRE, ESY).</li> </ol> <p>This is what <a href="#">Maryland IEP Census Data</a> looks like so you know what to look for. Submit your assignment via Drive doc to: <a href="mailto:arowan@dominicancaonline.com">arowan@dominicancaonline.com</a> Label your email heading- last name/course/assignment. Example: Rowan/EDUO9387/Assignment3</p>
	<p>Assignments will be assessed using the Course Assessment Rubric. Feedback will be provided for each completed assignment.</p>

<b>Module 4: Evaluation Process</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Determining Appropriate Assessments</li> <li>● Assessment Timelines</li> <li>● Eligibility Meeting</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reference and read the following resources for information regarding appropriate assessments to determine eligibility for special education services. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Parent Center Hub</a></li> <li><a href="#">IDEA</a></li> <li><a href="#">NIH</a></li> </ol> <small>Author(s), last name first (2018). <i>Learning Disabilities Screening and Evaluation Guide for Low- and Middle-Income Countries</i>. RTI Press Publication No. OP-0052-1804. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI Press. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3768/rtipress.2018.op.0052.1804">https://doi.org/10.3768/rtipress.2018.op.0052.1804</a></small> </li> <li>You will review documentation and data for a student referred to Child Find. <a href="#">Click Here for Document</a>  In a 2-page reflection (single-spaced), you will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine if you would or would not recommend to the team to go forth with assessments and explain your rationale.</li> <li>If applicable, share which disability or disabilities you are suspecting.</li> <li>As the educator, if applicable, which academic assessments do you advise (reading, math, writing) and why?</li> <li>Mention any concerns you notice in the student’s data, issues with who made the referral, and any other information you feel is pertinent to examine.</li> <li>Describe a student you work with who you believe should be referred for a Child Find meeting. What RTI strategies are currently being implemented for the student? Provide data that highlights the student's struggles in accessing the grade-level curriculum.</li> </ol> </li> <li>After reading another CF scenario where a child qualifies for special education services under a specific disability category, you will recommend and justify which goal areas you feel are appropriate for the child based on the disability coding, present levels, and assessment scores. You will also recommend and justify supplementary aids and accommodations based on all of the data. Use the document that you accessed in step 2.</li> </ol>

	<p>For this part, you will compose the information in paragraph form with bullet points for the goals and supplementary aids/accommodations.</p> <p>Submit your assignment via Drive doc to: <a href="mailto:arowan@dominicancaonline.com">arowan@dominicancaonline.com</a>  Label your email heading- last name/course/assignment.  Example: Rowan/EDUO9387/Assignment4</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignments will be assessed using the Course Assessment Rubric. Feedback will be provided for each completed assignment.

**Module 5: Develop Accurate Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)**

<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the importance of Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) or Present Levels of Performance (PLOP) statements as the foundation of the IEP.</li> <li>• Learn how to use data from evaluations, assessments, and teacher observations to write meaningful PLAAFP/PLOP statements that guide the development of IEP goals and accommodations.</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reference and read the resources listed below for information regarding PLAAFPs/PLOPs.</li> </ol> <p>Students will write three comprehensive PLAAFPs/PLOPs in different goal areas for a student in your class. For example (phonics, written expression, behavior), (speech, fluency, reading comprehension), or (math calculation, math problem solving, written expression). It is up to you to select the goal areas. You can use this <a href="#">document</a> as a sample and as a planning tool. You do not have to use this, but it will help you to include all pertinent information.</p> <p>***If you do not have student data, then you can ask the special education teacher in your school or the course instructor will provide you with data.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <a href="#">IDEA</a></li> <li>b. <a href="#">PACER</a></li> <li>c. <a href="#">IRIS Center</a></li> <li>d. <a href="#">Parent Hub</a></li> </ol> <p>Submit your assignment via Drive doc to: <a href="mailto:arowan@dominicancaonline.com">arowan@dominicancaonline.com</a>  Label your email heading- last name/course/assignment.  Example: Rowan/EDUO9387/Assignment5</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignments will be assessed using the Course Assessment Rubric. Feedback will be provided for each completed assignment.

<b>Module 6: Implement Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore effective methods for implementing SDI that align with the general education curriculum.</li> <li>● Learn how to adapt instructional strategies and materials to meet individual student needs while promoting access to grade-level standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please refer to and read the <a href="#">SDI presentation</a>. Using your knowledge from Module 5, you will find five present-level samples beginning on slide 17. You will list which information is missing and which information is useful. Use this <a href="#">document</a>.</li> <li>2. Using the three present levels outlined in Module 5, you will recommend Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for the student. Refer to the document provided above for guidance. The SDI planning tool, available in the linked Google Doc, can be tailored to meet your specific needs.</li> </ol> <p>Submit your assignment via Drive doc to: <a href="mailto:arowan@dominicancaonline.com">arowan@dominicancaonline.com</a></p> <p>Label your email heading- last name/course/assignment. Example: Rowan/EDUO9387/Assignment6</p>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignments will be assessed using the Course Assessment Rubric. Feedback will be provided for each completed assignment.

**Course Assessment Rubric:**

<p><b>EXCELLENT</b></p> <p>Meets or Exceeds Course Objectives: <b>A to A-</b></p>	<p><b>ACCEPTABLE</b></p> <p>Majority of Work Meets Course Objectives; <b>B+ to B-</b></p>	<p><b>NOT ACCEPTABLE</b></p> <p>Needs Considerable Improvement: Resubmit Work Suggested: <b>C or below</b></p>
<p>All work submitted reflects an in-depth understanding of course objectives.</p>	<p>Most work submitted reflects an in-depth understanding of course objectives.</p>	<p>Work shows little or no in-depth understanding of course objectives.</p>
<p>Assignment responses show evidence of new knowledge evidenced by thoughtful, detailed, and accurate assignment responses.</p>	<p>Most assignment responses show evidence of new knowledge evidenced by thoughtful, detailed, and accurate assignment responses.</p>	<p>Responses show little to no evidence of new knowledge as evidenced by a lack of thoughtful, detailed, and accurate assignment responses.</p>
<p>Work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor did not have to provide continual assignment clarification or request revisions.</p>	<p>Most work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor had to provide continual assignment clarification or ask for revisions.</p>	<p>The work submitted was not organized or not clearly articulated. The instructor had to provide constant clarification and ask for continued revisions.</p>
<p>Assignment content and required projects were original.</p>	<p>Assignment content and required projects were original.</p>	<p>Evidence that not all assignment content and required projects were original.</p>
<p>Work is free of spelling and/or grammatical errors.</p>	<p>Work has few spelling and/or grammatical errors.</p>	<p>Work has numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.</p>