



## **Syllabus for SPED 510: Law & Policy in Special Education (3 Credits) Online**

**Date: Fall 2018**

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### **Required Texts:**

Rothstein, L. & Johnson, S. F. (2014). *Special Education Law* (5th ed.). Sage. Thousand Oaks, CA.

### **Supplementary Texts:**

Weishaar, M. K. (2007). *Case Studies in Special Education Law*.

Wrightslaw. (2007). *Special Education Law*. 2nd edition.

Yell, M. L. *The Law and Special Education*. (2016) Pearson Publishing. ISBN# 13:9780134043395

### **Catalog Description:**

This course is designed to provide educators an in depth study-of the federal and state laws concerning provision of educational services and supports to students with disabilities in the public schools. Graduate candidates will increase their knowledge of advocacy and leadership skills in order to advance quality service provision for individuals with disabilities.

### **Course Description:**

This course explores the legal rights and responsibilities of special educators, primarily in public school settings, in their actions with students who have exceptionalities and the families of those students. The course includes study of applicable Constitutional law, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (as it pertains to special education), North Dakota Special Education Standards, and interpretive case law.

**Rationale:**

Understanding of the laws and regulations governing the education of students with exceptionalities forms an integral part of a teacher's knowledge. This understanding should go beyond a minimal level of how to protect oneself from professional malpractice claims to a higher level of how to be an effective member of the teams that help make appropriate education a reality for students with exceptionalities. This course is designed to empower teachers through knowledge, understanding, and application of the legal requirements under which they work.

**Format:**

This course will use a variety of teaching and learning strategies to enable the students to analyze their individual learning needs, learn the substantive material on special education law, and apply this knowledge to typical school situations. Strategies will include guided reflection and group discussions, application assignments, case studies, lectures, independent research, and collaborative learning.

**CEC Advanced Preparation Standards Addressed:**

CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes - Special education specialists facilitate the continuous improvement of general and special education programs, supports, and services at the classroom, school, and system levels for individuals with exceptionalities.

Key Elements

3.1 Special education specialists design and implement evaluation activities to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.2 Special education specialists use understanding of cultural, social, and economic diversity and individual learner differences to inform the development and improvement of programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.3 Special education specialists apply knowledge of theories, evidence-based practices, and relevant laws to advocate for programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 5: Leadership and Policy - Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices and create positive and productive work environments.

Key Elements

5.1 Special education specialists model respect for and ethical practice for all individuals and encourage challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.2 Special education specialists support and use linguistically and culturally responsive practices.

5.3 Special education specialists create and maintain collegial and productive work environments that respect and safeguard the rights of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

5.4 Special education specialists advocate for policies and practices that improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.5 Special education specialists advocate for the allocation of appropriate resources for the preparation and professional development of all personnel who serve individuals with exceptionalities.

CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 6: Professional and Ethical Practice - Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.

### Key Elements

6.1 A comprehensive understanding of the history of special education, legal policies, ethical standards, and emerging issues informs special education specialist leadership.

6.2 Special education specialists model high professional expectations and ethical practice, and create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights and improve outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

6.3 Special education specialists model and promote respect for all individuals and facilitate ethical professional practice.

6.4 Special education specialists actively participate in professional development and learning communities to increase professional knowledge and expertise.

6.5 Special education specialists plan, present, and evaluate professional development focusing on effective and ethical practice at all organizational levels.

6.6 Special education specialists actively facilitate and participate in the preparation and induction of prospective special educators.

6.7 Special education specialists actively promote the advancement of the profession.

### **Course Goal & Learning Objectives:**

The goal of the course is to introduce you to the federal and North Dakota State laws and regulations concerning the provision of educational services to students with disabilities. The specific objectives are that at the completion of the course you will have:

1. An understanding of the fundamentals and history of the development of special education and civil rights for students with disabilities.

2. Explored the values and principles underlying the pursuit of justice for students with disabilities and their families.

3. A basic knowledge of the fundamental principles of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the context of special education professional knowledge.

4. A basic knowledge of the fundamental principles of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

5. The ability to apply legal and legislative principles and generalizations to problems and situations found in general and special education.
6. Enhanced special education dispute resolution skills.
7. The ability to articulate the due process procedures in North Dakota and the most common mistakes teachers and school districts make which prompt these hearings.
8. Familiarity with Constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements in special education legal rights issues.
9. The ability to read and interpret legal documents including statutes, regulations, and court opinions.

### **Specific Course Requirements:**

- Complete all assignments using the criteria provided by the Professor.
- be typed, doubled spaced, 12 pt. font and have 1 inch margins on all sides
- include student's name and name of assignment
- be written in complete sentences that demonstrate appropriate grammar and sentence structure
- cite all works/sources used in the assignment in APA format
- All assignments must be turned in to the professor on the assigned due date. In some instances late work will be accepted with a penalty assigned (see late paper policy on page 6). No assignments will be accepted more than 7 days past the due date.
- Prior to submitting your assignment for grading, it is vital that the student reviews the assignment description found in this syllabus and associated rubrics/checklists to ensure not only quantity but quality of work production. Students are only entitled to good grades when they produce quality work. Simply completing assignments or meeting the quantity requirements only entitles students to earning a minimal amount of points. The professor is looking for the student to have a conceptual grasp of the course materials and the initiative to facilitate thoughtful discussions of the material for the benefit of the whole class.
- Students must submit all assignments using Microsoft Word. Remember, it is the student's responsibility to back-up all assignments on their personal computer.

### **Formal Course Assignments:**

Learning Goals (KWL): Participants will provide the professor with a brief description of what they already know about special education law. Next they will develop three (3) learning goals they have for the class that detail what they would like to learn. The goals must be written using the SMART approach to goal writing (i.e., they must be specific, measureable, attainable, realistic and tangible). Students will provide updates on how they are progressing towards their learning goals on the midterm and final exam. (30 points)

Discussion Prompts: Throughout the semester students will respond to discussion prompts posted by the Professor related to the assigned readings. Facilitating discussion is a primary teaching strategy in this course. The discussion board is a way for the class to process the concepts and weekly lesson, and an opportunity to learn from one another. Students will be expected to post reflective entries from the

assigned readings to 1) summarize essential information from the readings; and 2) apply the information to real life situations. Participants will earn 15 points per completed response up to a maximum of 120 points for the term. Students will be able to contribute to the discussion board after the due date has passed but cannot earn points for their posts. You are required to post thoughtful and substantive responses to each question, as well as respond to the post of at least one other student. Your responses must reflect depth as well as contribute new information to the discussion. As long as you do so in a respectful manner, feel free to disagree with others as well in expressing different point of views. Take some time to formulate your response to the forums before submitting it. Both the quality and quantity of your responses are being graded. The forum postings and responses are designed to be a collegial discussion among you and your classmates. Each response must be at least three (3) complete, meaningful sentences (not phrases), and each sentence must exceed three (3) words. While "I agree," "I agree with you," "I agree with this idea," "For sure," or "I've often thought the same thing" might technically be sentences, in terms of earning educational points, these phrases are worthless. I will monitor forum discussions to provide feedback and/or make occasional comments when appropriate. If contributions seem less than substantive (e.g., "oh yeah, I agree completely"), students will receive individualized feedback via email or telephone. Your initial discussion post must be entered by Thursday at midnight and your responses to colleagues will be due by Monday by midnight.

**Netiquette:**

1. Focus on one subject per message and always include a pertinent subject title for the message, that way the user can locate the message quickly.
2. Reply to others by using their name and include your signature at the bottom of messages.
3. Capitalize words only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading.  
\*Asterisks\* surrounding a word also can be used to make a stronger point.
4. Capitalizing whole words that are not titles is generally termed as SHOUTING!
5. Be professional and respect the views and opinions of others.
6. Cite all quotes, references, and sources and respect copyright and license agreements.
7. Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face to face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism.

Court Case Analyses: Participants will complete a "brief" of a special education court case. Each case is worth 25 points for a total of 100 points. You will have to summarize a legal decision (no more than 1 written page using the Analyzing a Court Decision framework from LaMorte, 1999) based on four seminal cases in the area of Special Education Law as follows:

- Brown vs. Board of Education
- Hendrick Hudson School District vs. Rowley
- T.R vs. Kingwood Township
- Honig vs. Doe

Application Assignments: Students will apply what they have learned about special education law and policy to real life classroom situations. (6 x 25 = 150 points)

Quizzes: Participants will submit quizzes on Blackboard. Quizzes cannot be submitted after the due date. (7@ variable points = 180 points)

Mid-term Case Studies: Participants will respond individually to four case studies. The case studies describe specific situations, issue(s) to be addressed (i.e., IEP process and document, Response to Intervention, discipline, eligibility, transition and FAPE), and questions to be answered. Your task is to determine the appropriate laws to apply to the facts and to answer the specific questions asked. You can use any resources you like to complete the case studies. (4 @ 25 points = 100 points)

Comprehensive Final Exam: Participants will construct written responses to an instructor-developed open- book untimed comprehensive final exam. The exam format consists of short answer, essay, multiple-choice and true and false questions. (100 points)

### **Evaluation Procedures and Grading:**

The following lists the assignments due for this course and the points possible for each assignment.

KWL Learning Goals Assignment 30

The Road to Brown Guided Notes Assignment 10

Discussion Prompts (8 @ 15) 120

Application Assignments (6 @ 25) 150

Course Case Analyses (4 @ 25) 100

Quizzes (7 @ variable points) 180

Mid-term Case Studies (4 @ 25) 100

Comprehensive Final Exam 100

Total Possible Points 790

### **Grade Scale:**

The total number of points for this course is 790. Grades will be assigned on the following distribution.

- A 92-100% Exceeds expectations. Content and technical merit is outstanding. Reflects mastery of material.
- B 84-91% Meets expectations. Content and merit are good. Reflects acceptable grasp of material.
- C 76-83% Borders expectations. Content and technical merit is adequate. Reflects familiarity of material with gaps in application.
- F 0-75% Failure.

If a student has a question or concern about grading, he or she should email the professor to request clarification or explain the concern. The professor will begin grading these assignments when they are due. All assignments are graded at one time to ensure reliability in grading. So, if you submit your assignment in advance of the date it is due, please do not be concerned if it is not graded right away.

## **Course Policies:**

### Academic Dishonesty:

It is the responsibility of participants to avoid practices that may be considered acts of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

What does this mean for this course?

In terms of written work, this means that participants have the responsibility to make it very clear in all written work what portion of the work the participant wrote and what was written by other people. For example, it is perfectly acceptable, and even encouraged, that participants use materials and ideas provided by others, such as lesson planning web sites, workshop leaders, mentor teachers, or curriculum guides. However, participants need to indicate (such as in a footnote) where they got the information that they are adapting for the assignment. In the long-term, this will be VERY helpful, as participants may not remember the source of the ideas and might need or want to go back to that source for additional copies or more ideas.

Additionally, the work participants turn in for this class must be specifically written for the assignments in this course, this semester -- participants may not turn in work (either in whole or part) that they have used for a grade in another course, or that was previously turned in by others students in this course.

So, participants must make the original source of their ideas explicit in course assignments and must complete exams independently. If participants have any concerns or questions about how to appropriately indicate what is their own work and what is derived from the work of others, please see the professor during office hours, or if that time is not convenient, call or email the professor to set an appointment time. Failure to accurately reference original sources falls under the category of academic dishonesty and will result in the following:

The first time a problem of this sort appears in an assignment, the professor will assume that it is unintentional and will ask the participant to re-write the assignment. Points may be deducted from the assignment at the instructor's discretion. The participant will be required to meet with the professor to learn how to avoid this problem in future assignments. The second time this problem is noted in an assignment, the participant will be assigned 0 points for that assignment. If the problem appears for the third time, the participant will be assigned a failing grade in the course.

### Late Paper/Assignment/Discussion/Quiz Policy:

The expectations of this course will model the expectations for professional responsibility of a special educator in the work setting. Professionals organize themselves and their time and they follow through with commitments. They communicate in advance and make alternative arrangements if problems arise. It is therefore assumed that students in this class will adhere to deadlines for course assignments. Because things, i.e., "life" can happen at the last minute, it is best to plan ahead over the course of the week so as to not unduly compromise due dates. Having said this, all assignments are due on the date indicated on this syllabus and due dates are non-negotiable. Late assignments will lose 10% of the possible points per 24 hours after the original due date, with a limit of seven days maximum. Discussion posts and quizzes will not be accepted after the due date. If assignments are not turned in within 1 week

of the assigned date, they will not be accepted, except in the case of significant illness (doctor's note required) or major family/life emergency. If your assignment will be more than 1 week late because of this type of emergency, you are responsible for contacting me as soon as possible to arrange for an extension of this deadline.

#### Re-Writes:

To be fair to all students, re-writes will not be allowed except under extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control. Given this, students are strongly encouraged to meet with the professor prior to an assignment due date to insure that they understand the criteria for each assignment. This can take the form of bringing drafts of their work to drop-in office hours or scheduled appointments no later than 5 days prior to the due date. The professor may also be able to respond to specific questions about portions of assignments sent via email, time permitting, if these are received no later than 3 days prior to the assignment due date. However, due to time constraints, it is not possible to read complete assignments sent electronically or brought to office hours or provide detailed feedback on all aspects of the draft reviewed. Therefore, the professor cannot predict what grade you will earn on your submitted assignment based on the review of your draft. To make each appointment or email exchange as beneficial as possible to you, please have specific questions ready to ask about assignments.

#### Technology Considerations:

Since this is an online class centered around technology, it is likely that the occasional technological problem will be encountered along the way. Students are advised to plan ahead and ensure adequate time to complete assignments, including the possibility that technical difficulties may occur.

#### Professor Expectations:

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning. This is an online course which requires self- initiation. The professor and the textbook are only two resources among many. If clarity on content is needed, the student is advised to employ his or her research skills by seeking other professional resources. Engage in conversation with other students in the class. The more interactive this course is, the better the experience will be for all. If confusion continues, contact the professor for clarification. Have your textbook available during this contact so that the question can be directly referenced in the materials. Finally, learning is a partnership. This class is specialized, and the enrolled students have much to bring to the proverbial "table" here. As the professor, I genuinely look forward to the opportunity to learn from the class, just as I expect students will learn from me and from colleagues in this graduate course. Let's make it a great semester!

#### Communication:

When the professor needs to communicate with students as a whole group, he will send an announcement through Blackboard, and connect this to an email message. I would recommend checking your announcements/email at least daily. When I need to communicate with students individually, I will do so through your MSU email. Be sure to check this regularly, as you are responsible for any information that is sent electronically. I check my email most business days, Monday through Friday. If you need to contact me, please do so by email. If necessary, we can arrange a time to talk by phone or via Skype. I will respond to course communications within 48 hours. Students are expected to meet the same standard.



Incompletes are strongly discouraged and are only given when the conditions of the university are met and after a conference with the professor at the initiation of the participant. From the Registrar's Office: An incomplete grade may be requested by a student who has been in attendance, has done satisfactory work (C or better) during the term, and whose work is incomplete for reasons found to be satisfactory to the instructor. A Course Completion Agreement detailing the work to be completed and expected completion date must be signed and dated by both the student and instructor. The original copy of the agreement must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the grade submission deadline. The carbon copies of the agreement should be retained by the professor and student. If a grade change is not received by the Registrar's Office prior to the 1st Monday following the assignment completion date, the "I" grade will be automatically changed to the official grade as assigned on the agreement. Extensions will not be granted.

#### PowerPoint Accessibility Statement:

The PowerPoint Presentations in this course are supplemental in nature and are not fully accessible. A reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who contact the Disability Service Office by calling 701-858-3371 or by e-mail at: [evelyn.klimpel@minotstateu.edu](mailto:evelyn.klimpel@minotstateu.edu).

#### Title IX:

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to accountability and support. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources off/on Minot State University's campus. These resources include:

Lisa Dooley Title IX Coordinator Memorial Hall, 4th floor, Room 412 701-858-3447  
[lisa.dooley@minotstateu.edu](mailto:lisa.dooley@minotstateu.edu)

MSU Counseling (Confidential) 701-858-3371

Domestic Violence Crisis Center (Confidential) 24/7 Crisis Line: 701-857-2200 24/7 Rape Crisis Line: 701-857-2500

MSU Campus Safety & Security 701-858-HELP (4357)

Minot Police Department 911/701-852-0111

Keep Us Safe Web Site

#### ADA Accommodation Statement:

In coordination with the Disability Support Service, reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified and documented students with disabilities (LD, Orthopedic, Hearing, Visual, Speech, Psychological, ADD/ADHD, Health Related & other). Contact your instructor during the first week of class to make arrangements. Accommodations and alternative format print materials are available through the Disability Support Service Office, located in the basement of Lura Manor. Contact the DSS office by calling 701-858- 3371 or by e-mail at: [evelyn.klimpel@minotstateu.edu](mailto:evelyn.klimpel@minotstateu.edu)

Minot State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, creed, national origin, race, age disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. If you believe you have been discriminated against unlawfully, please bring this matter to the attention of your instructor or the Minot State University Human Resource Office at 701-858-3352.

### Closed Captioning:

This course may contain instances of multimedia that do not provide academic quality closed captions or transcripts. If you want this service, please contact the Office of Instructional Technology at 701-858-3832 or 701-777-0750 extension 3832.

### Help Desk:

Direct your inquiries about course operations to the instructor. For issues involving your computer or software issues contact the MSU Help Desk by selecting the Help Desk link under the Web Links on the Home Page.

### Software Downloads:

Plug-ins (PDF, PowerPoint Reader, Windows Media Player, etc.) necessary for the operation of software in this course can be downloaded for free by selecting the Software Downloads link under the Web Links in your on the Home Page.

You will need speakers or a headset to listen to the audio/video components in the course. If you need closed captioning for any audio/video components in the class go to Closed Captioning Instructions web site to learn how to turn this feature on.

This course contains content that is PDF-based and will require a PDF Reader which can be downloaded for free at the Adobe web site or by going to the Web Links on the Home Page and proceeding to the Software Downloads link.

Title IX Statement:

Minot State University is committed to a safe and violence free campus. If you experience any form of violence or sexual harassment. Please don't hesitate to reach out or contact one of the resources available at <http://www.minotstateu.edu/keepusafe/> .

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to accountability and support. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources off/on Minot State University's campus. These resources include:

Lisa Dooley  
Title IX Coordinator  
Memorial Hall, 4th floor, Room 412  
701-858-3447  
[lisa.dooley@minotstateu.edu](mailto:lisa.dooley@minotstateu.edu)

Minot State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, creed, national origin, race, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. If you believe you have been discriminated against unlawfully, please bring this matter to the attention of your instructor or the MSU's Human Resource Office at 701-858-3352.

