

**EDU 161**  
**INTRODUCTION TO EXCEPTIONAL CHILD**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Prerequisites: High school diploma or GED and ENG 080 and RED 080 or satisfactory score on placement test

Corequisites: None

This course covers exceptional children as learners within the context of the community, school, and family. Emphasis is on the legal, social, physical, political, and cultural issues relating to the analysis and teaching of exceptional children. Upon completion, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of identification processes, mainstreaming techniques, and professional practices and attitudes. Course Hours Per Week: Class, 3. Lab, 3. Semester Hours Credit, 4.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- a. Describe typical and atypical child development.
- b. Discuss causes and classifications of exceptional children.
- c. Explain the pros and cons of labeling.
- d. Specify social and political forces that helped to bring about federal legislation on behalf of young exceptional children.
- e. Discuss PL 99-457-IDEA in terms of its impact on the early childhood profession.
- f. Explain and list the rulings of PL 99-457-IDEA that affect and benefit infants, toddlers, young children and their families.
- g. Describe legislation designed to prevent developmental disabilities in young children.
- h. Trace society's changing attitudes toward children with handicaps/disabilities.
- i. Discuss inclusion in terms of early development, critical learning periods and teachable moments.
- j. Define inclusion and list alternate terms for inclusion.
- k. Explain how effective inclusion decisions should be made for young children and the implications for early childhood professionals.
- l. Describe the major steps in the identification of developmental problems.
- m. Discuss the role of the early childhood teacher in the identification of developmental problems and in the IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) and IEP (Individual Education Plan) process.
- n. Describe the training and knowledge needed to work with developmental disabled children in early childhood inclusive settings.
- o. Define developmentally appropriate learning experiences, and developmental principles and practices for effective inclusion and early intervention.
- p. Discuss effective strategies that foster parent/teacher/interventionist partnership to benefit young children.
- q. Discuss the importance of high quality equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor play.

**OUTLINE OF INSTRUCTION:**

- I. The exceptional child
  - A. Normal and exceptional child development
  - B. Developmental disabilities
    - 1) Causes
    - 2) Classifications
    - 3) Definition
    - 4) Characteristics
  - C. Societal attitudes toward children with handicaps
  
- II. Inclusion of young children
  - A. Inclusion and early development
  - B. Effective inclusion strategies, principles, and practices
    - 1) Implications for teachers/early childhood professionals
    - 2) Pros and cons of early inclusion
    - 3) Training and retraining of teachers/early childhood professionals
    - 4) Teachers attitudes, philosophy, and skill
  - C. Inclusion and federal legislation
    - 1) PL 99-457-IDEA
    - 2) Other early intervention legislation
    - 3) Least restrictive environment
    - 4) Prevention and related legislation
  
- III. Developmental problems and identification
  - A. Process of early identification
  - B. Teachers role in early identification
  - C. Early intervention and prevention
    - 1) Developmentally appropriate experiences
    - 2) Developmental principles and practices
    - 3) The IFSP and the IEP
  
- IV. The learning environment
  - A. Indoor and outdoor learning areas for children with disabilities/special needs
    - 1) Principles of planning early learning environments
    - 2) Scheduling
    - 3) Transitions
    - 4) Types of learning areas
  - B. Facilitation of child's overall development
  - C. Adaptations of the environment
    - 1) Adaptive equipment
    - 2) Adapting materials
    - 3) Adaptations to the classroom
  
- V. Family, caregivers, and community
  - A. Partnerships with parents
    - 1) Parent-teacher partnership
    - 2) Infant caregiver/teacher/interventionist partnership
  - B. Family patterns and expectations
    - 1) What is a family?

- 2) Families of children with disabilities
  - 3) Family adjustment
- C. Intervention program to intervention program
- 1) Transitions
  - 2) Family involvement
  - 3) Preschool staff and other therapists involvement
  - 4) Placement
  - 5) Service coordination

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS:**

Allen, Eileen K. and Ilene S. Schwartz. The Exceptional Child: Inclusion in Early Childhood Education. Albany, NY, Delmar Publishers, Inc.

### **STATEMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students who require academic accommodations due to any physical, psychological, or learning disability are encouraged to request assistance from a disability services counselor within the first two weeks of class. Likewise, students who potentially require emergency medical attention due to any chronic health condition are encouraged to disclose this information to a disability services counselor within the first two weeks of class. Counselors can be contacted by calling 686-3652 or by visiting the Student Development Office in the Phail Wynn Jr. Student Services Center, room 1309.