

EDUT 6201
Legal Aspects & Program Design of Special Education

Instructor: Jaci Urbani, Ph.D.

Associate Professor & Director
Early Childhood Special Education
School of Education, Room 212

Email: j.urbani@northeastern.edu

Cell phone: 415-690-9570

Advising Hours: Tuesday, 2:30-4:00
Thursday, 1:00-2:30
& [by appointment](#)

Class Meeting: TBD

Credit Hours: 3

Room: TBD

Canvas

[Connect via Zoom](#)



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides historical and current analysis of the social, legal, and ethical practices of special education. Students develop competencies in developing individualized programs for children with disabilities (IEPs and IFSPs) and in designing curriculum that supports learning in the least restrictive environment, including accommodations and modifications.

MISSION GOALS

This course introduces students and allows students to practice the following Mission Goals as set forth by the School of Education. By the end of this course, students should be able to demonstrate their achievement toward the goals through a set of Measurable Criteria as listed following each goal:



Goal #1: Students will learn to think critically:

- a. Students will recognize different points of view and value assumptions, and will assess their effects on the interpretation and nature of the information collected.
- b. Students will extract complex data from various sources, present data in summary form, and make appropriate connections and inferences consistent with the data while relating it to a larger context.



Goal #2: Students will develop as leaders and innovators in their chosen endeavors:

- a. Students will demonstrate confidence in their knowledge and engage in professional dialogues.
- b. Students will recognize the importance of advocacy work and engage in public policies.



Goal #3: Students will learn to push the traditional boundaries of their disciplines:

- a. Students will embrace new ideas and changes.
- b. Students will examine multiple perspectives on a range of issues.
- c. Students will combine acquired knowledge with personal and cultural perspectives to illuminate and deepen their analysis of the data gathered.

CA Teaching Performance Expectations

The Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) comprise the body of knowledge, skills, and abilities that beginning educators learn in their teacher preparation program (and can be found in detail [here](#) (TPEs 1-6) and [here](#) (TPE 7). These are:

TPE 1: Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning

TPE 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning

TPE 3: Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning

TPE 4: Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students

TPE 5: Assessing Student Learning

TPE 6: Developing as a Professional Educator

TPE 7: Effective Literacy Instruction

This course addresses the following TPEs

Introduced: [1.1](#); [1.2](#); [1.3](#); [1.4](#); [1.5](#); [2.4](#); [2.6](#); [3.1](#); [3.4](#); [3.5](#); [3.7](#); [3.8](#); [3.9](#); [4.2](#); [4.5](#); [4.6](#); [4.8](#); [4.10](#); [4.11](#); [4.13](#); [5.6](#); [5.8](#); [6.1](#); [6.2](#); [6.3](#); [6.4](#); [6.5](#); [6.6](#); [6.8](#); [6.10](#); [6.11](#); [7.2](#); [7.10](#); [7.11](#); [7.12](#); [7.13](#)

Practiced: [1.1](#)

POLICIES

Please demonstrate respect, honesty, inclusiveness, and compassion through your words and actions, both during class time and in online activities. Disagreements are expected to occur, and are also expected to be addressed professionally and politely, to further all of our learning.

The content, pedagogy, assessment, and design of this course enable active consideration of **diversity issues** in conceptual, theoretical, and applied contexts. Central to the course is an inclusive curriculum, which addresses issues of diversity—and dis/ability in particular—as a primary construct for analysis and learning. Students are expected to learn and demonstrate cross-cultural skills and competencies throughout the course through discussions, online posts, and assignments.



DIVERSITY

Mills College is committed to providing an environment where all students have the opportunity to participate equally in the academic experience.

All class members are asked to consider the lived experiences of others in discussions and activities. Student success in this course is a **collective responsibility**.

This requires active support of each other's learning efforts and full engagement in making this a positive environment and experience.

Mills College is an environment where students are offered the safety and support to explore their gender and sexuality. Students are asked to identify their **personal gender pronouns** in class and to the instructor. Students are asked to be responsive and respectful with regard to others' personal pronoun and name preferences.

Reasonable accommodation is the legal right of people with disabilities, and as a professor of special education, I am fully committed to supporting students who need accommodations. Every effort will be provided to make this class universally accessible, regardless of disability or other individual categorization. In addition to informing the instructor of your needs, students should contact the Division of Student Life/Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in the Cowell building in order for access to be arranged adequately and promptly (X2130 or ssd@mills.edu).

***For students who are parents, for the unexpected times when regular childcare falls through, please bring your children and we will attempt to make it work. While this is not a permanent fix, it will allow you participate in class. If possible, bring toys/books. For breastfeeding mothers, bring your infant to class as necessary.*

ENGAGEMENT

Class **preparation** is essential for student success. Students are expected to come prepared for every class by having read all assigned materials, responded via Canvas, and completed assignments due.



Active class **participation** is expected through discussion, small group work, and other activities, both online and in person.

All discussions about observations, assessments, and instruction with specific children are **confidential** and for educational purpose only. Information shall not be shared with anyone outside of the classroom.

Class **attendance** is crucial to your successful completion of the course. More than 2 absences will result in a lower grade; any additional absences may necessitate a withdrawal from the course. If you must be absent, please inform me as soon as possible; you are accountable for any absence from class. The instructor reserves the right to determine what constitutes an excused absence. Late **arrivals** are disruptive to the class, particularly because we will often be working collaboratively in small groups.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

A commitment to the principles of academic integrity is essential to the mission of Northeastern University. The promotion of independent and original scholarship ensures that students derive the most from their educational experience and their pursuit of knowledge. Academic dishonesty violates the most fundamental values of an intellectual community and undermines the achievements of the entire University.

As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their rights and responsibilities. In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, examinations of whatever kind, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Students are responsible for learning the conventions of documentation and acknowledgment of sources in their fields. Northeastern University expects students to complete all examinations, tests, papers, creative projects, and assignments of any kind according to the highest ethical standards, as set forth either explicitly or implicitly in this Code or by the direction of instructors. Go to <http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academic-integrity-policy/> to access the full academic integrity policy.

Diversity and Inclusion

Northeastern University is committed to equal opportunity, affirmative action, diversity and social justice while building a climate of inclusion on and beyond campus. In the classroom, member of the University community work to cultivate an inclusive environment that denounces discrimination through innovation, collaboration and an awareness of global perspectives on social justice. Please visit <http://www.northeastern.edu/oidi/> for complete information on Diversity and Inclusion

TITLE IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from sex or gender-based discrimination, including discrimination based on gender-identity, in

educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Northeastern's Title IX Policy prohibits Prohibited Offenses, which are defined as sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship or domestic violence, and stalking. The Title IX Policy applies to the entire community, including male, female, transgender students, faculty and staff.

Please visit www.northeastern.edu/titleix for a complete list of reporting options and resources both on- and off-campus.

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COURSE MATERIALS

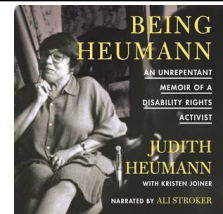


Canvas Access: This course will require students to access and respond to materials on Canvas. Please tour the site to familiarize yourself with the organization of materials.

Materials posted to Canvas are for class use and may not be duplicated, sold, or distributed. Students may download and print information for personal use as a student in the class. This is consistent with Fair Use under intellectual property protection.

You need to purchase the following texts for this course:

Heumann, J. (2020). *Being Heumann: An unrepentant memoir of a disability rights activist*. Beacon Press.



Shelton, C. & Pollingue, A. (2009). *The exceptional teacher's handbook: The first year special education teacher's guide to success*. Corwin Press. **(ECSE students are encouraged to buy this text as it will be used across courses).**

Murawski & Scott/ (2019). *What really worlds with universal design for learning*. Corwin. **(ECSE students are encouraged to buy this text as it will be used across courses).** (Intro & Ch. 12 UDL for Advancement).

Yell, M. L. (2019). *The law and special education* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Additional Readings:

[CA Dyslexia Guidelines](#) (2017)

- Ch. 10 SPED and 504 Plans
- Appendix C: Legal Citations

[CA Practitioner's Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities](#) (2019).

- Ch. 1 ID of ELs, MTSS
- Ch. 2 Supports for EL, MTSS
- Ch. 3. SPED Referral Process
- Ch. 5 IEP for ELs
- Ch. 8 Exit from SPED

California Department of Education. (2001). [Handbook on Family Service in Early Childhood Plans and Individualized Education Programs Special Education](#).

Recommended Readings:

Baglieri, S. (2017). *Disability studies and the inclusive classroom: Critical practices for Embracing diversity in education*. Routledge.

Baglieri, S. & Lalvani, P. (2019). *Undoing ableism: Teaching about disability in K-12 classrooms*. Routledge.

Beals, M. P. (1994). *Warriors don't cry*. New York: Simon Pulse.

Davis, L. J. (2017). *The disability studies reader*. Routledge.

Hall, T. E., Meyer, A., & Rose, D. H. (Eds.) (2012). *Universal design for learning: Practical applications*. New York: Guilford Press.

Hallahan, D., Kauffman, J., & Pullen, P. (2019). *Exceptional learners: An introduction to special education* (14th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Hulett, K. E. (2009). *Legal aspects of special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall.

Pelka, F. (2012). *What we have done: An oral history of the disability rights movement*. Univ. of Massachusetts Press.

Twachtman-Cullen, D., & Twachtman-Bassett, J. (2011). *The IEP from A to Z: How to create meaningful and measurable goals and objectives*. John Wiley & Sons.

Campus Support Services

Below is an overview of the broad range of support services available to students at Mills College at Northeastern University to ensure your successful university journey.

Learner Experience, Support, and Resources:

- [Office for University Equity and Compliance](#)
- [University Health and Counseling Services](#)
- [Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)
- [Center for Leadership, Equity, and Excellence](#)
- [Career Design](#)
- [Library Services](#)
- [Student Access and Support Services Office](#) | Accommodations, Writing and Tutoring Center
- [Connect To Tech: Information Technology Services](#)
- [Student Financial Services](#) | Financial Aid and Accounts

Safety & Transportation: *Campus security provides escorts to car or residence halls after dark.*

P: 510.430.5555

CPM, Room 113

If you feel anxious about your work, *talk to me immediately.*

Do not struggle alone in this class (or others).

You will do much better—mentally & academically—if you let yourself talk about what's hard and let people help you identify strategies for success.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Reading Responses & Jigsaw Presentation of Readings: (ongoing) —25 points

Each student will participate with in-class and on-line forums related to current theory, research, and practice. You will respond to prompts and add your own insights in response to the readings. Written responses will be posted in Canvas by **midnight** the night before class (these responses are in place of mid-term and final exams).

Not every student will read each assigned reading. Groups will be designed so that students can discuss the text with others who also read the same text to collaboratively develop a list of critical information, ongoing questions, and various perspectives. Students will share this information to students who have not read the chapter/article. *As you will be sharing in the teaching to your peers, it is critical that you do the readings.*

2. Critical Analysis: Movie, Video, or Book—20 points

Choose **1** of the learning venues listed below. Share how your understanding of disability studies, intersectionality, special education, and specific disabilities were informed, changed, and/or challenged by your learning.

Movie/Video	Book
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crip Camp (Netflix) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reason I Jump (Amazon) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Reason I Jump</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyes on the Prize Episode (PBS, KQED Passport) & NPR Radio Interview “Remembering the Terror of School Integration” with Melba Patillo Beals <p>**trigger warning: racial violence**</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Warriors Don't Cry</i> by Melba Patillo Beals <p>**trigger warning: racial violence**</p>

3. Critical Analysis: Learning from the Classroom—20 points

Choose **1** of the following activities:

(You may choose to present your thoughts and learning in a manner of your choosing, such as essay, audio-recording/podcast, cartoon, interview, etc.)

A. Educator Interview	Interview a special education teacher. Ask about their main responsibilities, their teaching philosophy, and the academic expectations of the classroom. What are their experiences and thoughts on inclusive practices and Universal Design for Learning? What has been successful and challenging in their work? What evidence do you see/hear about the medical model vs. the social model of disability?
B. Classroom Observation	Observe in a classroom with students with disabilities. Look/listen for evidence of the teaching philosophy, academic expectations, inclusive education, and Universal Design for Learning for the classroom. What successes and challenges do you see the teacher and students experiencing? What evidence do you see/hear about the medical model vs. the social model of disability?
C. IFSP/IEP Meeting Observation	Observe during an IFSP/IEP meeting. How collaborative is the meeting? What is the level of parental involvement in the meeting, and why do you think that is so? What evidence do you see/hear of teaching philosophy, academic expectations, inclusive education, and Universal Design for Learning? What evidence do you see/hear about the medical model vs. the social model of disability?

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4. Group IFSP/IEP & Activity/Lesson Plans—20 points

Collaboratively complete an IFSP/IEP based on a Case Study, including the critical elements of IDEA. Create activity/lesson plans to address the needs of the student in your Group IEP. Incorporate the principles of Universal Design for Learning to ensure accessibility by all students. Time will be provided in class for this work.

5. Book Club Participation—15 points

Students will read the book *Being Heumann* by Judy Heumann and discuss their reactions, responses, and connections to current and future work with their small group. Consider Ms. Heumann's experience as a student and advocate and her influence in the Disability Rights movement. How has she informed your learning? How has she influenced your current/future career? (This is *not* a written assignment; time will be provided during class hours for this activity).

Digital ECSE Portfolio

Throughout the course sequence of the ECSE program, students will compile a [digital portfolio](#), which will include course assignments such as reflection pieces, presentations, and papers. The portfolio provides evidence of varied experiences, depth of knowledge, and critical reflection around instruction gained during the program. Specifically, candidates are expected to document their own learning, how they supported the learning and development of young children, and their development as educators. *For this course, students are required to upload a critical analysis and the IFSP/IEP Project (with no identifiable information for child and family).*

GRADING

Grading in this course will be determined using a point system for required assignments, described above. Suggestions from the professor and peers may be added to assignments in order to demonstrate new knowledge. Please note that a course grade of "Incomplete" will only be considered and/or accommodated in the event of a dire medical emergency or condition suffered by the student.

Grades	Assignment	Points
97-100 A	Assignment #1: Reading Responses & Jigsaw Participation	25
93-96 A-	Assignment #2: Critical Analysis: Movie, Video, or Book	20
88-92 B+	Assignment #3: Critical Reflection: Learning from Classroom	20
83-87 B	Assignment #4: IFSP/IEP & Activity/Lesson Plans	20
79-82 B-	Assignment #5: Book Club Participation	15
76-78 C+		
73-75 C		
70-72 C-		

COURSE SCHEDULE

This is a *tentative* schedule.

It is possible the schedule will change, due to life or course events; if so, a new schedule will be shared in class and on Canvas. You are responsible for managing new due dates, information, & assignments. Have your notes accessible in each class for discussion.

IRIS MODULE: [IEPs: Developing High-Quality Individualized Education Programs](#)



This module details the process of developing high-quality individualized education programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities. The module discusses the requirements for IEPs as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with implications of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* (est. completion time: 3 hours).

IRIS MODULE: [Related Services: Common Supports for Students with Disabilities](#)

This module offers a description of related services and an overview of the benefits they provide to students with disabilities in the general education classroom. It highlights five commonly used related services (Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology Services, Social Work Services, and Psychological Services) and briefly highlights many of the other related services as identified through IDEA '04 (est. completion time: 1 hour).

CONNECT MODULE: [Transition](#)

This module was developed and is hosted by CONNECT: The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge. Learn about practices to help support children and families as they transition among programs in the early care and education system.

<i>Week # Date</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>In-Class Topics & Activities</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>
<i>Meet</i>	<i>Have completed these readings</i> 	<i>Because we're gonna do this</i> 	<i>Turn this in by the start of class.</i>
#1	Ø	Introductions Course Overview	Ø
#2	Read Syllabus & Tour Canvas Pelka: • Intro (all)	History & Legal Foundations of Special Education Historical Timeline	Reading Response

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 2 Institutions OR Ch. 3 Discrimination 	Reading Jigsaws	
#3	Yell, Ch. 1, 2, & 3 Articles: 13 Categories of Disability Lesh: IEPs 101	History & Legal Foundations of Special Education 13 Categories of Disability	Reading Response
#4	Yell, Ch. 5 & 6 Section 504, ADA UDL Guidelines Dyslexia Guidelines: Ch. 10 Advocacy & Action: Pelka (choice of chapters)	Accommodations per Disability & Sample 504 Plans Universal Design for Learning https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usuQAYE2ASo	Reading Response
Week # Date	Readings	In-Class Topics & Activities	Assignments Due
#5	Yell, Ch. 4 IDEA Read: <i>Undoing Ableism</i> , Ch. 1 & 2 Stella Young: I'm Not Your Inspiration OR Paul Longmore: Ch. 5 Making of Poster Children	Medical & Social Models of Disability IDEA MTSS, RtI CA MTSS Guide Reading Jigsaws	Reading Response
#6	Yell, Ch. 8 FAPE Article: Yell, Define Ed Benefit Current Trends in Special Education	Reading Jigsaws Review of Legal Cases: FAPE Book Club	Reading Response Critical Reflection: Movie, Video, or Book Book Club

	(choice of readings on Canvas) Book Club: p. ix-Ch. 3		
#7	Yell, Ch. 11: LRE Shelton & Pollingue, Ch. 3 LRE Articles: Yell: Placement, LRE Skiba: Equity in SPED CA Guide for ELLs w/Disabilities: -Ch. 2 Supports MTSS -Ch. 3 Referral for ELLs	LRE Review of Legal Cases: LRE Cultural and Racial Bias in Education Mock Student Study Team Meeting Reading Jigsaws	Reading Response
Week # Date	Readings	In-Class Topics & Activities	Assignments Due
#8	Yell, Ch. 9 & 10 Identification, Assessment, IEPs Shelton & Pollingue, Ch. 6 Parent Conf. & 8 (IEPs) CA Guide for ELLs w/Disabilities: Ch. 5 IEPs Book Club: Ch. 4-6	Guest Speaker: Dr. Colleen Arnold, Special Education Advocate Legal components of IDEA in IFSPs/IEPs Data-based Decision Making Acronym Quiz	Reading Response Book Club
#9	Yell, Ch. 13 Discipline Article: Harmon: PLAAFP Over-representation of Students of Color in SPED (choice of readings on Canvas)	Discipline Issues in Special Education; Manifestation Determination Hearings Mock Manifestation Determination Meeting Review PBIS Website: behaviormarinselfpa.org/ Reading Jigsaws	Reading Response Critical Reflection: Classroom Learning

#10	Yell, Ch. 12 Proc Safeguards Article: Yell, Proc & Sub Requirements SEIS training Modules https://charterselpa.org/dlu-training/ Book Club: Ch. 7-9	IFSP/IEP Meetings, Agendas, Collaboration, Communicating w/Families Mock IEP Meeting Workshop: IFSP/IEP Development	Reading Response Book Club
#11	Yell, Avoiding Mistakes in IEPs Components of Goals Goran: Goals & Services	Workshop: IFSP/IEP Development	Reading Response
<i>Week # Date</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>In-Class Topics & Activities</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>
#12	Yell, Ch. 7 & Appendix A Baglieri, Ch. 9 Instructional Design for Inclusive Education Shelton & Pollingue, Ch. 9 Transition	IFSP/IEP Development Workshop: IFSP/IEP Development Book Club	Reading Response
#13	Hall: Ch. 2 UDL Guidelines Hall: Ch. 3 Reading Ch. 4 Writing	UDL, Differentiating Instruction using data-based decision making Workshop: Lesson/Activity Plan Development	Reading Response IFSP/IEP
#14	Current Trends in Special Education (choice of readings on Canvas) Book Club: Ch. 10-12	Workshop: Lesson/Activity Plan Development Book Club	Reading Response Book Club

#15	Choose 1 chapter from Davis, <i>The disability studies reader</i> .	Guest Lecture: Judy Heumann Download Resources Course Evaluations	Lesson- Activity Plans
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