



Ethics Pol&Proced in Spec Ed

SPED-4709

Fall 2025 Sections E01, E02 3 Credits 08/13/2025 to 12/12/2025 Modified 10/26/2025

Description

Coverage of ethical guidelines, policies, and procedures pertinent to teachers who provide special education services, including current laws, ethical standards, federal and state regulations, individualized education programs, and transition planning. Must be taken concurrently with SPED 3713.

Requisites

Prerequisites:

Teacher Education Admission TE or SLPA Upper Level SLPA

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Course Instructor: Dr. Luke Hearn

Email: LHearn@westga.edu

My preference is that you email me using my UWG email (LHearn@westga.edu [.mailto:LHearn@westga.edu](mailto:LHearn@westga.edu)) and not the one built into the CourseDen program. I will get the message either way, but will likely see it sooner if it's sent to my university email account.

I am looking forward to this semester. My one request from each of you is that you communicate with me if any issues, problems, or other unforeseen circumstances arise. The sooner you get in touch with me, the better. There is no requirement in this course that we interact live in any way. However, do know that I am available to you just as if we were working together in a "traditional" classroom. I am flexible and am willing to work with you, but if you wait to tell me, my ability to assist may be more limited.

Meeting Times

This course meets asynchronously and is conducted 100% online. There are no required face-to-face meetings.

I will have a standing weekly open discussion/Q&A/office hour on Monday evenings from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Attendance is optional. My office hour will begin on Aug. 18. [Click here to access the meeting room.](https://westga-edu.zoom.us/j/89080186830?pwd=o4IBlQbUW0oPzmroiM5slN2vrnNn1j.1) (<https://westga-edu.zoom.us/j/89080186830?pwd=o4IBlQbUW0oPzmroiM5slN2vrnNn1j.1>).

Please note that I will always be willing to find a time that works for you to meet. Please email to set up a time if my scheduled office hours do not work for you.

Online

This course is 100% asynchronous online

Materials

There is no textbook to purchase for this course.

All learning materials used in this course will be accessed through the open access site: <https://libguides.westga.edu/spedal>

A complete list of learning materials is located at the bottom of this syllabus.

Outcomes

After completing this course, the students will be able to:

1. Articulate the major provisions of federal and state regulations, procedures, and best practices regarding the development and implementation of a legally compliant Individual Education Program (IEP) and Individualized Family Service plans (IFSP).
2. Describe federal and state requirements for the referral and identification process.
3. Identify the purpose of and the IDEA required components of an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing a legally compliant IEP that contains challenging, ambitious, and measurable goals and objectives.
5. Explain the rights and responsibilities of individuals with exceptionalities, parents, teachers, and other professionals, and schools related to exceptionalities.
6. Describe the continuum of placement and services available for students with disabilities.
7. Explain the ethical guidelines pertinent to professionals in special education and use these guidelines to identify and evaluate potential actions/activities of service providers.
8. Advocate for appropriate services for students with mild and/or moderate disabilities.

Evaluation

Criteria

A = 90 - 100%, B = 80 - 89%, C = 70 - 79%, and F = Below 70%.

Breakdown

Assignment	Points
Module Quizzes	12 @ 10pts ea= 120pts
Module Activities	12 @ 10pts ea=120 pts
Discussions	6 @ 10 pts ea= 60 pts
PLAAFP Rough Draft	5 pts
IEP Goals Rough Draft	5 pts
IEP Development Project	100 pts
Midterm & Final Exam	50 pts ea= 100 pts
Total Possible	510

Assignments

College-level writing is expected on all assignments. All written work for this course is considered as formal writing. Please proofread and edit your work. Poor grammar, including ending sentences with prepositions, using contractions, spelling mistakes, and other mechanical errors will significantly and negatively affect your grade. Any references included in your work **MUST** be in APA style based on the APA style manual, 7th edition.

If a template is provided for an assignment, you must use that template to complete your assignment. Any assignment with a template that is turned in not using the template will automatically receive a 0 and there will be no chance to redo the assignment.

Please see Generative Artificial Intelligence Course Policy below.

Module Activities

Within each module, you will complete a quiz and/or a short activity to help you gain a deeper understanding of the topic covered that week.

Discussion Board

You will be expected to actively participate in a discussion on a given topic throughout the semester. See the course information section in CourseDen for detailed instructions and grading criteria.

IEP Development Assignment:

You will develop a legally compliant IEP for a student with a disability using a case study given to you. See the course information section in CourseDen for detailed instructions and grading criteria.

PLAAFP & Goals Rough Draft

You will turn in a rough draft of the PLAAFP and Goals section of your IEP Development assignment for feedback on the dates indicated in the course calendar in CourseDen.

Midterm & Final Exam

You will have a midterm and a non-cumulative final exam. Non-cumulative means that the final exam will only cover topics that were discussed after the midterm.

Schedule

Module:	Module Opens (Always at 12:01 a.m.)	Module Closes (Always at 11:59 p.m.)	Topics:	Assignments Due:
Welcome Module	Wednesday, August 13 *Note Wednesday Start Date	Monday, August 18	-Getting Oriented -What is this course about?	- Introduction Discussion post (<i>Attendance Verification</i>)

Modules 1 & 2	Monday, August 18	Tuesday, Sept. 2 *Note Tuesday Due Date due to Labor Day Holiday	Module 1 - Professionalism - The Key Concepts of Special Education Module 2: -SPED Law: IDEA/504/ADA	- Modules 1 & 2 Quiz - Modules 1 & 2 Learning Activity
Modules 3 & 4	Monday, Sept. 1	Monday, Sept. 15	Module 3: -Referral Process & Initial Eligibility Module 4: -The IEP	- Modules 3 & 4 Quiz - Modules 3 & 4 Learning Activity
Modules 5 & 6	Monday, Sept. 15	Monday, Sept. 29	-The PLAAFP	- Modules 5 & 6 Quiz - Modules 5 & 6 Learning Activity
Modules 7 & 8	Monday, Sept. 29	Monday, Oct. 13	IEP Goals	- Modules 7 & 8 Quiz - Module 7 & 8 Learning Activity
			Midterm <i>(Covers Modules 1-6)</i>	
Modules 9 & 10	Monday, Oct. 13	Monday, Oct. 27	Module 9: - Progress Monitoring Module 10: - LRE and Supports & Services	- Modules 9 & 10 Quiz - Module 9 & 10 Learning Activity <i>- IEP Project: Rough Draft of PLAAFP Due</i>

Modules 11 & 12	Monday, Oct. 27	Monday, Nov. 10	Module 11: - Accommodations & Modifications Module 12: -Transition Planning	- Modules 11 & 12 Quiz - Modules 11 & 12 Learning Activity - IEP Project: GOALS Rough Draft Due
Modules 13 & 14 10/28-11/3	Monday, Nov. 10	Friday, Nov. 21 *Note Friday Due Date due to Thanksgiving Holiday Break Nov. 24-28	Module 13: - Section 504 Plans and IFSP Module 14: - Dispute Resolution and Discipline of SWD	- Modules 13 & 14 Quiz - Modules 13 & 14 Learning Activity
Module 15	Monday, Dec. 1	Monday, Dec. 8	IEP Development Consultation Meetings FINAL EXAM (covers modules 7-14)	- IEP Development Project - Final Exam

* Course Policies and Resources

Course Structure : This course is designed so that students will interact actively with the course material- students will need to participate frequently in the online component of the course through CourseDen. The course is broken down into weekly modules. Each module will cover a new topic with a series of learning activities to complete by a specific due date. Particular attention should be paid to the self-discipline required to fully engage in the on-line learning activities in a timely manner. Graded assignments are designed to be instructional as well as provide a means of arriving at a final grade for each student. Therefore, emphasis will be placed on graded assignments that rely on analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of course material and the development of critical thinking.

Students will be expected to participate in opportunities to read, reflect on, and respond to comments and ideas with the instructor and other students through chat, discussion boards, and other tools that will greatly enhance student learning. The following are required when these teaching and learning requirements are assigned:

- Be expected to use humanizing language at all times when referring to individuals with disability and/or diverse learning needs in discussions and teaching and learning requirements. Humanizing language is a broad requirement that includes addressing populations that are justice impacted, including the disability community. Humanizing language avoids stigmatizing terminology (e.g. “an

undocumented student” not “an illegal student”/ “general education” not “regular education”) and considers the preferences of individuals. Students may require additional resources or clarification about identifying, characterizing, or writing and talking about people and will be expected to do this research and learning on their own.

- Use “netiquette” during all interactions. Materials are available on CourseDen to support student understanding of this requirement; however, in brief, this means that students, at all times, are sensitive to and reflective about what others are saying and considerate of the use of capitalization, punctuation, and syntax to convey meaning in online forums and in communication. Other netiquette expectations are adhering to the same standards of behavior online that you allow in real life, sharing expert knowledge, controlling flame wars, respecting other people’s privacy, being forgiving of other people’s mistakes, using clear subject lines, avoiding offensive language, and keeping dialogue collegial and professional.
- Students will share ideas, listen to, and try to understand the ideas of others. They will ask each other questions, cite examples from texts or experiences in support of ideas, and make the classroom safe for different perspectives. Only respectful disagreements and effective arguments will be tolerated. During course discussions, students are expected to be respectful of other student’s preferred names and pronouns, needed accommodations, and knowledge of shared definitions and acronyms.

Late Assignments

All assignments are due by the time the module in which they are included closes. These dates and times are listed under the Schedule section of this syllabus. At times, due dates may need to be adjusted, and any changes will be communicated to you via CourseDen in the Announcements section (visible on the main page when you log into the class).

I will assess a 10% penalty on all late work. However, I understand that life happens. Please reach out to me if you have a situation that may prevent you from submitting your assignment on time. As always, the sooner the better.

Generative Artificial Intelligence Course Policy

Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) is a digital technology that creates various data types, such as images, videos, music, words, etc, which previously only humans could create. Multiple Gen AI tools are available. Examples of Gen AI tools are ChatGPT, Google Gemini, DALL-E, Microsoft Copilot, and others.

In this course, the use of Gen AI is NOT allowed. All coursework must be original and created for this course. Use of Gen AI will be treated as plagiarism. Any violations of this guideline will be subject to the academic and disciplinary policies listed in the UWG Honor Code (see: [Student Handbook \(https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/14638864/latest\)](https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/14638864/latest))

In a nutshell -- don't use AI. Please don't. Not only does it insult me as an instructor, but you're selling yourself short and diminishing your ability as a thinker. It's not worth it.

College/School Policies

College of Education Vision

The College of Education at the University of West Georgia will be recognized for *Innovation in Teaching, Leadership, and Wellness* with programs designed to transform lives and contribute to the betterment of society.

College of Education Mission

Locally connected and globally relevant, the Mission of the College of Education is to prepare graduates for professional careers in diverse settings within three dynamic areas of focus: *Teaching, Leadership, and Wellness*. With programs that range from undergraduate through doctoral study, the College of Education is committed to excellence in pedagogy, professional service, engaged partnerships, and applied research.

Institutional Policies

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at UWG assume responsibility for upholding the Honor Code. UWG students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism*, cheating*, fabrications*, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing. When a student chooses to enroll at the University of West Georgia students pledge the following:

Having read the honor code of UWG, I understand and accept my responsibility to uphold the values and beliefs described, and to conduct myself in a manner that will reflect the values of the institution in such a way as to respect the rights of all UWG community members. As a UWG student, I will represent myself truthfully and complete all academic assignments honestly.

I understand that if I violate this code, I will accept the penalties imposed, should I be found responsible for violations through the processes due to me as a University community member. These penalties may include expulsion from the University. I also recognize that my responsibility includes willingness to confront members of the University community, if I feel there has been a violation of the Honor Code.

For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please visit the [Office of Community Standards \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/ocs/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/ocs/index.php) site.

Academic Support

UWG is committed to student success, and the following resources will help you be more successful in your classes.

Center for Academic Success: The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides tutoring, academic coaching, and supplemental instruction to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented need/accommodation may work with UWG Accessibility and Testing Services to receive essential services specific to their needs. All accommodations are based on documentation and relevant statutes and regulations. If a student needs accommodations in a course, or if the student needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify their instructor and provide a copy of their Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility and Testing Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without receipt of the SAR, and retroactive accommodations are not permitted. For more information, please contact [Accessibility and Testing Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/accessibility-testing/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/accessibility-testing/index.php).

Online Course Content

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For help with your online classes, additional online tutoring and other student success services, information on [privacy and accessibility \(https://uwgonline.service-now.com/kb?sys_kb_id=47b0ef89c3c58210ab7303bdc00131bc&id=kb_article_view&sysparm_rank=1&sysparm_tsgueryId=1ef80ce3c3e982507db3b2459901318a\)](https://uwgonline.service-now.com/kb?sys_kb_id=47b0ef89c3c58210ab7303bdc00131bc&id=kb_article_view&sysparm_rank=1&sysparm_tsgueryId=1ef80ce3c3e982507db3b2459901318a), and technology requirements, visit this [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.service-now.com/kb/\)](https://uwgonline.service-now.com/kb/) Help site.

UWG's online virtual tutoring service is Tutor.com. Tutor.com provides 24/7, on-demand, 1-to-1 tutoring and homework help in more than 250 subjects. The expert tutors at Tutor.com can help students work through tough homework problems, improve their writing skills, study for a test, review difficult concepts, and so much more! Tutor.com can be accessed in CourseDen under the Resources dropdown menu and is available to all UWG students, regardless of course modality. More information can be found on UWG Online's Tutor.com: [Tutoring Service Knowledge Base article \(https://www.google.com/url?q=https://uwgonline.service-now.com/kb/?id%3Dkb_article_view%26sysparm_article%3DKB0010788&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1689091469862762&usg=AOvVaw2vhm-Y9CAGpzHoFZpHnqPF\)](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://uwgonline.service-now.com/kb/?id%3Dkb_article_view%26sysparm_article%3DKB0010788&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1689091469862762&usg=AOvVaw2vhm-Y9CAGpzHoFZpHnqPF).

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check their email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](https://www.westga.edu/uwgcares/).

[Online counseling](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the [E.L.L. resource page](https://www.westga.edu/isap/ell-resources.php) for more information.

Additional Items

Additional course materials to support instruction:

Crutchfield, M. D. (2003). What do the CEC standards mean to me? Using the CEC standards to improve my practice. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 35(6), 40–45.

deBettencourt, L. U. (2002). Understanding the differences between IDEA and section 504. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 34(3), 16.

Ennis, R. P., Blanton, K., & Katsiyannis, A. (2017). Child find activities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Recent case law. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 49(5), 301–308.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059916685063>

Goran, L., Harkins Monaco, E. A., Yell, M. L., Shriner, J., & Bateman, D. (2020). Pursuing academic and functional advancement: Goals, services, and measuring progress. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 52(5), 333–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059920919924>

IRIS Center. (2025). *IEPs: Developing high-quality individualized education programs*. Vanderbilt University. <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/iep01/>

Lignugaris/Kraft, B., Marchand-Martella, N., & Martella, R. C. (2001). Writing better goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks: Strategies for IEPs. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 34(1), 52–58.

Ohio Department of Education. (2017). *A Guide to parent rights in special education: Special education procedural safeguards notice*. <http://bit.ly/2hgiNa1>

PROGRESS Center. (n.d.). *Introduction to special education law: Understanding the sources of the law*. American Institutes for Research. <https://promotingprogress.org/resource-collections/online-learning-courses/sources-of-special-ed-law> (<https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpromotingprogress.org%2Fresource-collections%2Fonline-learning-courses%2Fsources-of-special-ed-law&data=05%7C02%7CIhearn%40westga.edu%7C81b3d7f06c10491135bb08ddd5282bd5%7C8de19331cc30459f84436a4b68734b50%7C0%7C0%7C638901090690483944%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMtIsIkFOljoITWFpbGlldUljjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ZiAz6N4mD%2Bwo5EHK2Kz%2FuU%2B1sellMMliDB6XuEwb9LM%3D&reserved=0>)

PROGRESS Center. (2025). *Introduction to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. American Institutes for Research. <https://promotingprogress.org/resource-collections/online-learning-courses/intro-IDEA> (<https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpromotingprogress.org%2Fresource-collections%2Fonline-learning-courses%2Fintro-IDEA&data=05%7C02%7CIhearn%40westga.edu%7C81b3d7f06c10491135bb08ddd5282bd5%7C8de19331cc30459f84436a4b68734b50%7C0%7C0%7C638901090690507192%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMtIsIkFOljoITWFpbGlldUljjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=zBI%2FTuu3mD77KuTho9%2FZBTAl0So%2BmciqqOoiBNJPIUk%3D&reserved=0>)

Rosas, C. & Winterman, K. (2023). *The IEP Checklist: Your Guide to Creating Meaningful and Compliant IEPs*. Brookes Publishing.

The Arc @ School. (n.d.). *Early intervention services*. <https://thearcatschool.org/supports/early-intervention-services/>

Thurlow, M. L., Ghere, G., Lazarus, S. S., & Liu, K. K. (2020, January). *MTSS for all: Including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes/TIES Center.

Whitby, P. J. S., Marx, T., McIntire, J., & Wienke, W. (2013). Advocating for students with disabilities at the school level tips for special educators. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 45(3), 32–39.