Course Description

This course will provide an opportunity for students to study the characteristics, needs, and educational implications of the school-age population requiring special education services. Primary emphasis will focus on the areas of:

1. individuals with mental retardation
2. individuals with learning disabilities
3. individuals with emotional and behavior disorders
4. individuals with speech and language disorders
5. individuals with multiple and severe disabilities
6. individuals with attention-deficit-hyperactive-disorder
7. Individuals with autism
8. Individuals with visual and hearing impairments
Major topics will include:
1. history of exceptional child education
2. identification, evaluation and intervention procedures relative to students with exceptionalities
3. legal basis for services including IDEA and Section 504
4. the continuum of placements
5. appropriate accommodations and modifications
6. individualized education program (IEP) development and meeting least restrictive environment (LRE) requirements
7. assistive technology

National/Professional Association Standards Guiding Course

**National Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards**

a) Understand the field of special education as an evolving discipline based on philosophies, evidence-based principles, laws and policies, diverse points of view and human issues that continue to influence the field and treatment of individuals with exceptional needs.

b) Demonstrate respect for their students first as unique human beings and also understand the similarities and differences in human development among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.

c) Understand the effects that an exceptional condition can have on an individual’s learning in school and throughout life.

d) Possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies in order to differentiate instruction for individuals with exceptional needs.

e) Create learning environments for individuals with exceptional learning needs that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well-being, positive social interactions and active engagement in the general education curriculum.

f) Effectively collaborate with families, other educators and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways in order to assure that the needs of students with exceptional educational needs are addressed throughout their schooling as well as during and after their transition to their next environment(s).
**Course Objectives/Learner Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Understand the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.
2. Be familiar with the differences between formal and informal assessment procedures and how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.
3. Understand procedures for planning culturally responsive instruction for individuals with disabilities.
4. Understand procedures for managing the teaching and learning environment, including procedures related to the use of assistive technology and culturally responsive teaching.
5. Be familiar with strategies to promote students’ educational performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.
6. Understand issues & procedures for teaching appropriate student behavior & social skills.
7. Understand transition issues and procedures across the life span.
8. Understand the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.
9. Be familiar with professional roles and responsibilities and adhere to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.
10. Know how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.
11. Use technology to improve learning and classroom management.

**METHODOLOGY/TECHNOLOGY**

This is an online/faceto face course. Blackboard (BB) will be used as the course delivery and management tool. Students will be expected to utilize BB on a regular basis. Components of BB that will be used on a regular basis include the Announcement Board, Syllabus Section, Discussion Board, External Links, Grade Center, and Course Documents (for specific assignments and course materials). You are expected to be active learners and submit your assignments on time via BB when possible. You are expected to download course documents, listen to mini-lectures, and keep up with the assigned readings.

**DISCUSSION BOARDS, OTHER ASSIGNMENTS, AND 3-2-1 ASSIGNMENTS PRESENTATIONS (67% of course grade)**

You will find specific weekly discussion board, and other assignments in the Course Documents section of BB. There will also be weekly reminders for 3-2-1 assignments. These three types of assignments must be completed and submitted within the weeks that they are assigned. A description of each type of assignment follows.

**Discussion Board (DB) Assignments:** Students are expected to ‘log-on’ on a regular basis and to be active and thoughtful discussion board participants. Students are expected to ‘log-on’ at least three times a week.

Assigned readings and postings are to be completed within the specified time period so that discussions related to the assignments may occur. If for some reason you will be unable to log-on at least three times in any week, please notify your instructor, as soon as possible. Appropriate contributions should always be professional and courteous (e.g., no personal attacks).
DISCUSSION BOARD CHAPTER POSTINGS

Before doing the Discussion Board Postings for each learning module:

- Read assigned chapters and other readings (if applicable).
- (Re)view any videos, PowerPoint presentations, and other course resources listed in Blackboard’s Course Documents.

For your discussion board first postings, your thread must be at least 15 lines or 350 words in length and reference at least three course resources—readings by page number, title of Soffer video lecture, or Power Points by slide number. You must also respond (by clicking on reply) to at least three peers. Your responses to peers must be substantial. If you miss two Discussions in a row the course instructor will assume you have dropped the course, unless you have notified him/her of your absence in advance.

The total value for all postings for a particular leaning module’s discussion board forum is 2.75% of your course grade. Thus, with the 9 forums for this course, your discussion board participation represents 24.75% of your course grade. A grading rubric for discussion board assignments is in the Syllabus section of Blackboard.

Other Assignments (OA): There is an ‘other assignment’ for each assigned topic. Hopefully you will find these assignments varied, interesting, engaging, and helpful. You will submit these assignments through BB.

In every week this semester, except the last week, you will have two assigned topics/Learning Modules—thus a total of two Other Assignments per week. The course instructor will highlight the two other assignments that are due to be completed per week.

Each other assignment has a value of 2.75% towards your final course grade. A grading rubric for other assignments is in the Syllabus section of BB.

3-2-1 Assignments: A 3-2-1 assignment should be completed for each disability category studied in this course (i.e., the main disability category designated for assigned textbook chapters—learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), etc.). Here is how the 3-2-1 assignment works:

3- List three disability category related characteristics/needs that you think have important implications for school functioning. Briefly indicate why you think each is important (one sentence is sufficient here per characteristic/need). Please reference each characteristic/need by course reading by page number or video title.

2- List two interventions/accommodations/supports that you think are important for the designated disability category. Briefly indicate why you think each is important (one sentence is sufficient here). Please reference each intervention/accommodation/support by course reading by page number or video title.

1- List one ‘bottom line’ idea regarding the designated disability category that you think is most important for you to remember for your teaching. Briefly indicate why you think the idea you
selected is important (one sentence is sufficient here). Please reference your idea by course reading by page number or video title.

Each 3-2-1 assignment has a value of 2.5% towards your final course grade. Grading will be on a credit/no-credit basis with the criteria of clarity, relevance, and thoughtfulness of responses.

You will submit your 3-2-1 assignments in a ‘submission box’ in the Course Documents section of BB—where the assignment is posted.

MENU ASSIGNMENTS (15% of course grade): *this assignment folder is at the top of the “Course Documents” page.

You will need to choose one (1) of the following five (5) assignments. Although you may complete and submit your assignment anytime during the course, they will be due no later than the week that Learning Module 14 is addressed.

1. Conducting a First Person Life History: For this assignment, you will interview a school age child or adolescent with a disability who is receiving special education services. All information included in your life history should be from the student’s perspective. The goal of this assignment is for you to understand the student’s point of view—to put yourself in his or her shoes. As the listener, your role is to abandon any assumptions that you have and to work at comprehending the subjective reality of your student’s life. The one minute and thirty second or less audio visual component to this assignment will be utilized to engage and share your findings with your classmates.

Your write-up of your interview, in 4 to 7 double-spaced pages, should address the following points:

- Background information from student’s perspective—what is your difficulty in school relative to your learning or behavior? What is your earliest memory of your learning/behavior problem and how did you know there was a problem? What were your initial thoughts/feelings at this time and what were the reactions of others? *(After the completion of all sections of this assignment, the student will create a one minute and thirty second or less educational public service announcement that encapsulates their findings. Students may use YouTube, Podcast or any audio visual resource that would allow the student to share their findings with their peers and professor.)* (0.75 points)

- Background information on student’s school history, again, from student’s perspective—since first identified, what past efforts were made to help and what were the results of these efforts. *(After the completion of all sections of this assignment, the student will create a one minute and thirty second or less educational public service announcement that encapsulates their findings. Students may use YouTube, Podcast or any audio visual resource that would allow the student to share their findings with their peers and professor.)* (0.75 points)

- Participant’s view of his/her current educational program- what he/she now receives in the way of interventions, accommodations, supports, or services and what the teachers do that helps the student the most to deal with his/her learning/behavioral difficulties *(After the*
completion of all sections of this assignment, the student will create a one minute and thirty second or less educational public service announcement that encapsulates their findings. Students may use YouTube, Podcast or any audio visual resource that would allow the student to share their findings with their peers and professor. ) (.75 points)

What advise the student would give to other younger students with similar difficulties as he or she is experiencing. What advise the student would give to teachers with regard to working with students with difficulties similar to those he or she is experiencing. (After the completion of all sections of this assignment, the student will create a one minute and thirty second or less educational public service announcement that encapsulates their findings. Students may use YouTube, Podcast or any audio visual resource that would allow the student to share their findings with their peers and professor. ) (.75 points)

○ What student sees as his/her current strengths and weaknesses and what goals they have, if any, after graduating from high school as far as further schooling or career goals. (After the completion of all sections of this assignment, the student will create a one minute and thirty second or less educational public service announcement that encapsulates their findings. Students may use YouTube, Podcast or any audio visual resource that would allow the student to share their findings with their peers and professor. ) (.75 points)

○ What new insights did you gain about your interviewee or students with disabilities in general as a result of your interview? How might these insights impact your teaching? Was there anything that surprised or concerned you from your interview? (After the completion of all sections of this assignment, the student will create a one minute and thirty second or less educational public service announcement that encapsulates their findings. Students may use YouTube, Podcast or any audio visual resource that would allow the student to share their findings with their peers and professor. ) (1.25 points)

Grading will be based on the extent to which each above point is covered (50%) and how clear, organized and thoughtful a manner the information is presented (50%).

2. Conducting a Parent Interview: For this assignment you will interview a parent to obtain information regarding the parent's perspective on his/her child's disability. If you do a first person life history, you may interview the parent of the child you interview. If this is done, please interview the child/youth and parent separately. You are responsible for turning in a summary of your interview experience that includes the following: ) a) An educational brochure titled “Seeing Through the Eyes of the Parent and Student” (For a brochure, you should include inspiring photos or quotes (for motivation purposes). Listing key internet resources in your brochure for your topic should also be included (for skill purposes.)

After the creation of the educational brochure a copy of your original interview questions and notes and the parent’s responses to your questions (these may be handwritten) and b) a 2-5 page double-spaced word processed synopsis of the interview findings and a reflection on the information obtained including what you learned from the experience. Each section of the
assignment should be clearly labeled and identified. This assignment will be graded based on the depth and clarity of thought and how completely the assignment criteria are addressed. A grading rubric for this assignment can be found in the Syllabus section of BB.

3. Participating in Field Experience: For this assignment, you will spend a minimum of five (5) hours volunteering in a program for children or youth with exceptionalities. You may volunteer at a location that you select and is approved by the course instructor. While volunteering you will need to conduct an interview with someone who works within the facility chosen. Please feel free to volunteer at a combination of programs. Your volunteer experience should be with children or youth with disabilities whose needs you have not previously encountered.

Please keep a record of your volunteer experiences. A fieldwork documentation form is included in the Syllabus section of BB for this purpose. Please complete one form for each location in which you conduct your fieldwork. Your grade for this assignment will be based on the extent to which you address each question on the form (50%) and the clarity, thoughtfulness, and depth of your responses (50%).

4. Creating a Two Minute Commercial along with a Brochure and Planning a Day Long Staff Development Activity for General Education Teachers on Students with Exceptionalities: The intent of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to summarize your perspective on the essential understandings, big ideas, and key points from this course. You will do this in the form of a two minute or less commercial to publicize your educational staff development. A brochure and staff development plan targeted to general education teachers with no coursework or experience relative to students with disabilities. Your goal in creating this brochure and development activity is to increase these teachers ‘will and skill’ to work with students with disabilities. That is, their motivation to work with special needs learners and their ability to meet their needs. For example, with regard to how to meet the needs of students with disabilities, you may list specific accommodations for specific challenges these teachers may face (e.g., students with dyslexia). You may address all disabilities or just one or more individual disability categories.

For the brochure, you should include inspiring photos or quotes (for motivation purposes). Listing key internet resources in your brochure for your topic should also be included (for skill purposes).

There are separate grading criteria for the brochure and staff development activity.

Grading for the staff development commercial and brochure will be based on the quality, accuracy, and insightfulness of your brochure’s content (one-third of the grade), the extent to which the brochure addresses its intent, i.e., to increase general education teachers’ will and skill to work with special needs learners and listed requirements (one-third of grade), and the brochures attractiveness (one-third of grade).

Grading for the day long staff development activity will based on the clarity, relevance, creativity, and significance of your plan. Your plan should address your objectives for the day, an agenda of activities for the day related to your objectives, and a description and rationale for
each training activity included on your agenda.

5. **Creating an Alternative Product** - For this assignment, you will create an alternative product that demonstrates significant learning you have experienced from this course. This could be in the form of a pre-recorded special education practitioner panel (the panel must have a minimum of three people no more than seven), or some other creative endeavor. Prior approval of the course instructor of your plan for this assignment is required.

**FINAL EXAM (18% of course grade):**

The final exam, a ‘take-home/on-line’ exam, will serve as a cognitive organizer for your course experience. It will require critical and higher order thinking skills. The exam will draw on what you have learned from your course related readings/videos, your completion of the menu assignment, and your active and thoughtful participation in discussion boards and the other various assignments. Exams will consist of short essay questions and primarily address course essential understandings. You will be asked to reference your responses to course readings by page number and videos viewed by title. You will complete your final exam during Learning Module14 of the course.

### Grading Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>Numeric Range Set by Instructor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>95-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Below 65%</td>
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**Grading:**

1. Discussion Boards (2.75% X 9 topics= 24.75%), Other Assignments (2.75% X 9 topics= 24.75%), and 3-2-1 (2.5% X 7 topics = 17.5%). (67%)
2. One Menu Assignment (15%)
3. Final Exam (18%)
St. Thomas Counseling and Disability Services Office in Crocker Center. This office can be reached at (713) 525-2169 or 6953.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Standards of Behavior for Students and Faculty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Integrity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking credit for any thought, idea, or work that is not your own is merely plagiarism. Any instance of academic dishonesty will be documented and reported to the Dean of the School of Education. Students will be informed of this action and must submit a written response to the charge. The instructor has the right to fail the student for the specific project or the entire course. When writing any paper, reference your information, websites, books, etc. that is not your own. Be sure you cite properly and accordingly. Please refer to the APA manual or its website to cite accordingly.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Issues</strong></td>
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<td>In all written work, grammar, sentence structure, organization, and spelling will be of such quality as to be an outstanding model for other educators. All work should be original and prepared solely for the designated assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is the instructor’s policy that late assignments will not be accepted. Exceptions to this policy are only allowed due to individual extenuating circumstances. It will be at the discretion of the instructor to accept or not to accept late assignments and to make appropriate point deductions for lateness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All email correspondence will be through the my.stthom email system. Please check your email through your my.stthom account daily for correspondence and announcements OR have your StThom e-mail account forwarded to an e-mail account that you check regularly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The last date to drop the course with 100% refund is May 31st, and June 15th, is the last date to withdraw with a W.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Textbook Information/Options</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The ISBN Number for the text is 13:978-0-13-703327-0</td>
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Please note that you will not need to purchase the bundled My lab School version of the text.

From the UST Bookstore, you can purchase a new course textbook for $144, a used textbook for $108, and can rent a text for $70. You can purchase an eTextbook for about $59 from coursesmart.com. Other on-line sources for used/new textbooks such as ABE Books can also be used (e.g., the instructor recently found a used text for $84 on page 11 from a search on ABE Books). If you find a better price from a different source with rapid/inexpensive delivery, please let the instructor know, and he will pass this information on to others participating in the course. Thanks.

(Course Schedule on next page)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assigned Reading, Videos &amp; Menu Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introductions and Overview of Course Requirements,</td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Concepts in Special Education &amp;</td>
<td>Applicable ‘Soffer Overview’ videos</td>
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<td>Personnel and Procedures in Special Education</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Multicultural/Bilingual Perspectives &amp; Creating Partnerships Through Collaboration</td>
<td>Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td>Students with Severe and Multiple Disabilities</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
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<td>Applicable ‘Soffer Overview’ videos</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Students with Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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|            |                                                                       | Applicable ‘Soffer”}
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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Students with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disability Presentation</td>
<td>Applicable ‘Soffer Overview’ video</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EBP Presentation</td>
<td>Menu Assignment Due</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students with Orthopedic Impairments, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Other Health Impairments</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disability Presentation</td>
<td>Applicable ‘Soffer Overview’ videos</td>
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<td>EBP Presentation</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<td>Students with Deafness &amp; Hearing Loss</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Students with Visual Impairments</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td>Applicable ‘Soffer Overview’ videos</td>
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<td>EBP Presentation</td>
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PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR
Students are expected to maintain professional standards of behavior at all times when fulfilling course requirements.
The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) has designated the University of St. Thomas as a Center for Professional Development. As part of your professional development, students are expected to maintain the highest standards for scholarship and professionalism.

PLAGIARISM:
The University of St. Thomas prohibits plagiarism. All sources, including electronic sources, must be documented. If there is any question about plagiarism occurring, the paper will be checked according to the university procedures.
“All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, and is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.
When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or whatever. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.

ADA STATEMENT ON DISABILITIES
The University of St. Thomas maintains a policy for students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under these federal guidelines, the University is obligated to:
1. Protect the civil rights of students with disabilities.
2. Protect the confidentiality and privacy of students with disabilities.
3. Provide reasonable accommodations and services to students with known disabilities, who are qualified to meet the requirements of the academic program, apart from the handicapping condition.

The burden of proof is on the student to demonstrate the need for requested accommodations. If you feel you are qualified to receive accommodations, please contact the Office of Counseling and Disability Services on the Second Floor of Crocker Center or call: 713-525-3162 or 713-525-6953 between the hours of 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday.

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHINGS for UST School of Education:
Selected social justice teachings of the Catholic Church are used to inform the School of Education programs. As educators, the tenets of social justice should play a pivotal role in decision-making strategies in Catholic, private, and public schools of all levels. These tenets are listed here:

**Subsidiarity**: Educational institutions should be organized and governed as much as possible by the community being served; education should only be controlled at higher levels of society when it cannot be done effectively locally.

**Dignity and rights of children**: Children possess full human dignity and are bearers of rights which should be recognized and upheld in the educational process.

**People have a right to an education**: All people have a responsibility, for the good of society, to contribute to and foster education. While these three keystones of social justice teachings are present throughout the coursework, they are specifically addressed through scenarios, case studies, and role playing activities at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Please note that this syllabus was developed by Dr. Donald Ray Brown, Jr. building on the prior work of Dr. Richardson.