University of St. Thomas  
Fall 2016  
SPED 4329

PRACTICUM: STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL and/or BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS and MILD DISABILITIES

INSTRUCTOR:    Dr. Tera Torres  
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REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS: None

OPTIONAL TEXTBOOK (from EDUC 4322):  

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
The purpose of this course is to provide students with firsthand experience in working with students with emotional and/or behavioral disorders. Case studies, observation and direct field experience are required.

All students will observe at The Briarwood School and in an additional school setting. You will also be required to keep a journal and write a research paper as detailed below.

STUDENT COMPETENCIES:  
Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following (TExES Competencies):

- Know how to use instructional time efficiently and effectively for individuals with disabilities
- Know how to use local, state and federal resources to assist in programming for individuals with disabilities
- Apply procedures for ensuring a safe, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued, and knows how to address common environmental and personal barriers that hinder accessibility for and acceptance of individuals with disabilities.
- Know how to design, structure, and manage daily routines, including transition time, for students in a variety of educational settings, and apply procedures for monitoring behavior changes across activities and settings
- Apply knowledge of basic classroom management theories, methods, and techniques for individuals with disabilities, research-based best practices for effective management of teaching and learning and management procedures that are appropriate to individual needs
- Identify ways in which technology can assist in managing the teaching and learning environment to meet the needs of individual students
- Apply knowledge of techniques for motivating students, including the effects of high teacher expectations on student motivation
- Apply knowledge of how culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds of students impact behavior management and social skills instruction
- Recognize ways in which teacher attitudes and behaviors and personal cultural biases influence the behavior of students
• Apply knowledge of ethics, laws, rules and procedural safeguards related to planning and implementing behavior management and discipline for individuals with and without disabilities
• Know theories relating to student problem behavior (e.g., noncompliance, self-stimulation, self-injury, withdrawal, aggression, defiance) and the theoretical basis of behavior management techniques (e.g., positive behavioral support, reinforcement, proactive strategies, reductive strategies that decrease negative behaviors)
• Develop and/or select social skills and behavioral curricula and strategies that promote socially appropriate behavior, and prepares individuals to live cooperatively and productively in society
• Incorporate social skills instruction across settings and curricula and know how to design, implement and evaluate instructional programs that enhance an individual’s social participation in family, school and community activities
• Identify realistic expectations for personal and social behavior in various settings, and apply procedures for increasing an individual’s self-awareness, self-control, self-management, self-reliance and self-confidence
• Know strategies for modifying learning environments (e.g., schedule, physical and instructional arrangements) to promote appropriate behaviors
• Know the impact of language on an individual’s behavior and learning and know how the communication skills of nonspeaking/nonverbal individuals affect their behavior
• Understand functional behavior assessments and evaluations and their role in developing behavior intervention plans
• Know strategies for crisis prevention, intervention, and postvention; apply procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating individual behavior crisis-management plans in educational settings; and implement the least intensive intervention consistent with individual needs.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
1. Observe in assigned classes at a school of your choosing from August 22 – December 2, 2016. Schedule will be set by student in conjunction with instructor and school. (50 percent of course grade)
2. Keep a journal with a one-page entry for each day of observation. Each entry should contain at least one paragraph detailing your observations. A second paragraph should be your reflections of the observations. A third paragraph (or woven into the first two paragraphs) should address the TExES competencies on behavior (see above) and whether or not they were observed, along with your reflections on the observations. (20 percent of course grade)
3. Meet with the instructor at least three times throughout the observation/course period following the observation period to discuss the observations, reflections and your questions. Dates and times will be set by instructor and student. (10 percent of course grade)
4. Write a research paper on students with emotional disorders or on students with mild disabilities from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. The paper must be at least five pages, double spaced, in APA style and turned in by December 9, 2016. You must use at least five peer reviewed journal articles that were published within the last five years. (20 percent of course grade)

ATTENDANCE/APPROPRIATE PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to be on time to the observation sites. Please call Dr. Torres at 713-899-0690 if you are going to be late or unable to attend on a given day.