Course Summary

Psychology 304 is a survey course in the broad field of exceptionality. This course will introduce both a psychological and educational perspective to the study of exceptionality in children, and will cover topics ranging from disabilities to giftedness. Over the course of the semester, you will be exposed to various terminology and approaches used when working with exceptional children. In addition to reviewing different disabilities, this course will emphasize evidence-based practices, school-wide prevention models, and other current issues in the field of exceptionality.

Readings

Required Text:


Additional Required Readings:

Selected articles will be placed on Blackboard.

Course Website

Many course materials (e.g., syllabus, presentation slides, readings, assignment rubrics, and additional supplemental materials) will be made available through Blackboard, an online course management system. You can access the materials by going to the following website: https://mybb.gvsu.edu/, and providing your GVSU username and password. If you have problems accessing materials through this system, you can call the IT Help Desk at 855-435-7488 or E-mail bbadmin@gvsu.edu for assistance.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you need academic accommodations because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact Disability Support Resources (DSR) at 331-2490. Although students with disabilities are held to the same academic standards as all other students, accommodations will be provided for you, as appropriate.
Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please contact the instructor so she can develop a plan to assist the student.

**Canceled Classes**

If classes are canceled at the university, any exam or activity missed due to cancellation will take place at the next class meeting.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Students will do original work and will not take or receive the efforts of another person on any test or assignment, use unauthorized resources on quizzes or tests, plagiarize, or give/sell other students papers or assignments not authorized by the instructor. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and for understanding the policies and procedures that pertain to academic integrity. To that end, be sure to familiarize yourself with the GVSU Student Code [Section 223.01] related to academic integrity. Furthermore, be sure to reference sources at all times. If you are uncertain about such an issue prior to submission of an assignment, project, or test, please see the instructor as soon as possible so we can eliminate any uncertainty.

**Attendance and Participation**

Attendance at lectures is highly recommended. Since not all material covered during lectures is in your text, your test performance is likely to improve if you attend, pay attention, take notes, and actively participate during class sessions. To encourage you to be here to maximize your learning and development as a learner and future professional, attendance will be taken at every class meeting. You may miss up to 3 class sessions (for whatever reason) without impacting your grade. However, if you miss more than 3 class sessions (for whatever reason), your overall course grade will be lowered by half a grade (e.g., from a B to a B-). Absences due to illness, family emergencies, funerals, car trouble, etc., will be counted toward the 3 absence limit. Documentation is not required---The instructor will leave it to you to decide whether you have a good reason to miss class. The instructor recommends that you save these absences for unpredictable circumstances. Coming late to a class (more than five minutes) or leaving early (anytime before class is dismissed by the instructor) may be counted as a partial absence.

Student absences due to religious holidays will be accommodated per the GVSU policies on inclusion and will not count toward the 3 absences limit. If a conflict exists between the course and a religious observance, you must request a religious accommodation from the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester or as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.

Please come to class prepared to fully attend and participate. When course grades are within one percentage point of the next higher grade, at the instructor’s discretion, the higher grade will be awarded to students who showed active participation in class (i.e., good attendance, participation in discussions, attentiveness during lectures, and engagement in group activities).
Technology Use

Students are welcome to use computers during class to take notes and to follow along with the instructor. However, the use of computers for personal reasons (e.g., checking E-mail or using Facebook) during class is highly inappropriate and disrespectful to other students and the instructor. Please silence cell-phones during class. The instructor will use her discretion in reducing grades for those students who are using computers or other technology in a disrespectful manner when class is in session.

Grading/Coursework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Issues Group Presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Summaries (2 @ 25 points each)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Assignments</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points:</td>
<td>400</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94 above</td>
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<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>83-86</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
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<td>73-76</td>
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<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>59 &amp; below</td>
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Exams (3 exams, 100 points each = 300 points)

- **Exam format** - There will be three exams for this course. The final exam will be cumulative, however the majority of material will be selected from the final five weeks of lectures. Exams will consist of a combination of multiple choice, matching, and short-essay questions drawn from the textbook, outside readings and journal articles, and from information provided during lectures. Lecture material is meant to supplement your understanding of concepts presented in the textbook; therefore some questions on the exams will be drawn specifically from lectures, even if those concepts are not covered in your text. As well, exams may include material from the textbook that has not been discussed during lectures.

- **Make-up exams** – All students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times. If you miss an exam due to illness, you must provide a doctor’s excuse within 24 hours following the scheduled exam time. If you must miss an exam for any reason other than illness, you MUST email me with a valid excuse **24 hours in advance** to schedule a make-up exam. Failure to notify me in advance will result in a zero on the exam. Please note that make-up exams must be completed outside of regular class time. Because make-up exams are difficult to schedule, and administer, at my discretion, the student’s score for the make-up exam may be reduced by up to 10%.

Critical Issues Group Presentation (30 points)

- **Description** – The critical issues assignment requires that groups of 4-5 students work together to choose a topic (from a selection of topics that the instructor provides or an alternative topic that is instructor-approved) and provide a 15-minute presentation and handout to the class. As a group, you will be required to identify and integrate two internet-based resources and two research
articles on the topic you choose and present this information to the class. You will be graded on your summary of the critical issue and arguments for either side, identification of appropriate resources, and the clarity of your presentation and handout. More information about this assignment will be made available to you in class and via Blackboard.

• **Plagiarism** – Please refer to the “Academic Integrity” section summarized previously in the syllabus.

• **Submitting Assignments** – A copy of the presentation (electronic via Blackboard) and handout (hard copy and electronic via Blackboard) is due at the start of class on the day of the presentation. One group member should be responsible for turning in the group’s materials via Blackboard to the instructor.

### Research Summaries (2 @ 25 points each = 50 points)

• **Description** – There will be two research summary assignments for this course. If you receive more than 20 out of 25 points on the first of these assignments, you do not need to complete the second research summary assignment, and the instructor will double the score you received on the first summary. These research summaries will be based on articles related to various topics in the field of exceptionality. Summaries will be approximately 2-3 pages in length, and due dates are listed in the course schedule. Further details about these assignments will be made available to you in class and via Blackboard.

• **Plagiarism** – Please refer to the “Academic Integrity and Plagiarism” section summarized previously in the syllabus.

• **Submitting Assignments** – Papers should be typed in standard 12-point font (e.g., Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins on all sides. For all assignments and papers, references and citations should follow APA style, 6th edition. Assignments are due at the start of class on the due date. Assignments should be turned in as hard copies in class AND electronically via Blackboard. Assignments turned in after the start of class will be considered late. Late assignments will be accepted up to 3 days beyond the due date with a 25% deduction in points (i.e., if the deadline is Tuesday, work will be accepted through Friday). Late assignments should also be submitted via hard copy AND Blackboard.

### In-Class Assignments (20 points)

• **Description** – Throughout the semester the instructor will offer a small number of in-class assignments to reward class attendance, stimulate class discussion, and to clarify information related to course topics. These may include brief written responses to introduce an issue or encourage critical thinking, video follow-up questions, or small group or individual assignments that will be completed during the class period. These assignments will focus on connections between course content, either across topics, or across media. There will be NO makeup points for these assignments. If you are not in class on that day, you will NOT receive credit. These points are meant to reward students who attend and participate in class activities. Even if you have a valid excuse for why you missed class, you will not be allowed to make up these points.
## Course Schedule

Readings are due the day the lecture topic begins unless otherwise noted. Additional readings will be announced and posted on Blackboard. It is possible that this schedule will change, as some weeks we will move more rapidly, and some more slowly. However, general deadlines will remain the same unless otherwise indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Week) Date</th>
<th>Seminar Topics/ Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Test/Assignment Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) 8/26</td>
<td>Topic: Syllabus; Foundations &amp; Current Issues</td>
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| (1) 8/28    | Topic: Foundations & Current Issues  
**Readings:**  
Chapters 1 & 2 |                     |
| (2) 9/2     | NO CLASS (LABOR DAY RECESS)          |                     |
| (2) 9/4     | Topic: Foundations & Current Issues  
**Readings:**  
Chapter 3 |                     |
| (3) 9/9     | Topic: Foundations & Current Issues; Evidence-Based Interventions |                     |
| (3) 9/11    | Topic: Foundations & Current Issues; Evidence-Based Interventions |                     |
| (4) 9/16    | Topic: Evidence-Based Interventions  
**Readings:**  
• Articles on Blackboard |                     |
| (4) 9/18    | Topic: Evidence-Based Interventions |                     |
| (5) 9/23    | Topic: Early Childhood Special Education  
**Readings:**  
• Chapter 14 | Research Summary 1 due |
| (5) 9/25    | Topic: Assessment  
**Readings:**  
To Be Determined |                     |
<p>| (6) 9/30    | Topic: Assessment |                     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Exam Topics</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(6) 10/2</td>
<td>Exam Topics:</td>
<td>- Foundations &amp; Current Issues; Evidence-Based Interventions; Early Childhood Special Education; Assessment</td>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7) 10/7</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>- Learning Problems</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
<td>- Chapter 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7) 10/9</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>- Learning Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) 10/14</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>- Intellectual Disabilities</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
<td>- Chapter 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) 10/16</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>(9) 10/21</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
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<td>- Introduction to Behavior Problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) 10/23</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(11) 11/4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Readings:</td>
<td>- pp. 390-394</td>
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<tr>
<td>(12) 11/11</td>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>- ADHD; Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
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<td>Research Summary 2 due</td>
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<td>- Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>(12) 11/13</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>(13) 11/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>(13) 11/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>(14) 11/25</td>
<td>Low Incidence Disabilities</td>
<td>pp. 425-427</td>
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<tr>
<td>(14) 11/27</td>
<td>NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING RECESS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(15) 12/2</td>
<td>Gifted &amp; Talented</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>(15) 12/4</td>
<td>Gifted &amp; Talented; Wrap-Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Exam Week)12/10</td>
<td>Final Exam Topics:</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM WEDNESDAY 12/10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADHD; Autism Spectrum Disorder; English Language Learners; Low Incidence Disabilities; Gifted &amp; Talented; plus some cumulative information</td>
<td>8:00-9:50 AM</td>
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