

## SYLLABUS

**COURSE NUMBER:** SES 660

**COURSE TITLE:** Families, Schools, and Students with Special Needs

**CREDITS:** Three semester hours

**PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES:**

None

**FOR WHOM PLANNED:**

This is a required course in the major for students admitted to the M.Ed. program in specialized education services.

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:**

(can vary)

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Office hours: by Appointment

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

Relationships among school personnel, parents/families, students, and agency personnel for educating students with special needs. Skills for proactively involving parents/families in their children's education and resolving conflicts in school-family interactions.

**Teachers Academy Conceptual Framework Mission Statement**

*The mission of professional education at UNCG is to prepare and support the professional development of caring, collaborative, and competent educators who work in diverse settings. This mission is carried out in an environment that nurtures the active engagement of all participants, values individual as well as cultural diversity and recognizes the importance of reflection and integration of theory and practice. UNCG's professional education programs are guided by shared commitments to: (a) equity and excellence in teaching, research, and service; (b) professional integrity and ethical deliberation in dealing with students and colleagues (university-based, and community-based); (c) the construction of a professional knowledge base through collaboration and collegiality; and (d) the dissemination of professional knowledge, skills and dispositions through the*

*preparation and continuing professional development of teachers, principals and other school personnel.*

**COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES/STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to

1. Describe the history of and change in school-parent dynamics.
2. Outline research-based contemporary perspectives on relationships among school personnel, families, students with disabilities and other special needs, and outside agencies.
3. Explain family dynamics in families with a child with a mild or moderate disability and compare those to the dynamics in other families.
4. Review North Carolina and federal legislation that regulates parents' rights and protections related to their children with disabilities.
5. Assess parent/family strengths and needs, including a parent profile or published program (e.g., MAPS, PATHS) to facilitate communication and promote effective instructional programs.
6. Demonstrate culturally competent interactions with parents/families of students with disabilities and other special needs.
7. Identify common dilemmas related to informing parents about a student's disability and educational needs.
8. Demonstrate appropriate communication and other interaction skills for accurately informing parents regarding their child's strengths and needs and for diffusing difficult or awkward interactions during IEP and related meetings and conferences.
9. Explore legal issues related to the relationships among school staff, parents/families, students with disabilities and other special needs, and outside agency personnel (e.g., custody issues; mediation; guardian ad litem; foster parents; non-custodial caregivers such as grandparents).
10. Discuss the impact of a child's disability on siblings and outline recommended practices for supporting siblings of students with disabilities.
11. Create and implement a parent education program.
12. Educate general education teachers regarding parents/families of students with disabilities.

## **TEACHING STRATEGIES:**

Course instruction will be provided on-line through Blackboard (bb) lectures and discussion, as well as through student projects and articles posted on Bb and textbook readings.

## **EVALUATION METHODS AND GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS:**

Students will be evaluated based on the following:

1. Participation in on-line class discussions (virtual classroom). Students are expected to be present and to make contributions to “lectures” and “discussions” that occur in virtual classroom sessions.
2. Substantive participation in Bb discussion forums. Students are assigned to groups and expected to actively participate in weekly discussion forums.
3. Parent interview and analysis of strengths and needs. Students are expected to conduct an interview with the parent or caregiver of a student with a disability. The interview should lead to information that is used to generate a profile of parent/family strengths and needs and recommendations about involvement in the student’s education.
4. Special project. Student are require to complete one of the following two assignments: (a) Create and deliver a research-based parent education program on an appropriate topic (e.g., fostering independence, getting homework done without tears, helping a child with ADHD, understanding teens with LD); or (b) create and deliver a staff development for general education teachers on a topic related to working with parents/families of students with disabilities (e.g., common parent beliefs; teachers’ responsibilities to parents; making IEP meetings as friendly and productive as possible).

### Grading

Grades will be based on a point system, posted at the first class session, that weights each assignment relative to the others. The grading scale will conform to UNCG grading policies.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS/REFERENCES:**

### Textbook

Turnbull, A., & Turnbull, R. (2001). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Collaboration for empowerment* (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice-Hall.

Other Reading Assignments (sample)

deFur, S. H., Todd-Allen, M., & Getzel, E. E. (2001). Parent participation in the transition planning process. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 24* (1), 19-36.

Flett, A., & Conderman, G. (2001). Enhance the involvement of parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 37* (1), 53-55.

Hodapp, R. M. (2001). Advancing findings, theories, and methods concerning children with disabilities. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 66* (3), 115-26.

Lian, M., Gon, J., & Fontanez-Phelan, S. M. (2001). Perceptions of Latino parents regarding cultural and linguistic issues and advocacy for children with disabilities. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 26*, 189-194.

Lindstrand, P. (2001). Parents of children with disabilities evaluate the importance of the computer in child development. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 16* (2), 43-52.

Lytle, R. K., & Bordin, J. (2001). Enhancing the IEP team: Strategies for parents and professionals. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 33* (5), 40-44.

Munk, D. D., & Bursuck, W. D. (2001). What report card grades should and do communicate: Perceptions of parents of secondary students with and without disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education, 22*, 280-287.

O'Brien, J., & O'Brien, C. L. (2000). Walking toward freedom: One family's journey into self-determination.  
<http://www.edrs.com/members/sp.cfm?AN=ED456600>

Oekerman, R. (2001). Children with special needs: Helping parents through the grief. *Texas Child Care, 25* (1), 10-13.

Sheridan, S. M., Eagle, J. W., Cowan, R. J., & Mickelson, W. The effects of conjoint behavioral consultation: Results of a 4-year investigation. *Journal of School Psychology, 39*, 361-385.

Sweeting, H. & West, P. (2001). Being different: Correlates of the experience of teasing and bullying at age 11. *Research Papers in Education: Policy and Practice, 16*, 225-46.

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### **TOPICAL OUTLINE:**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	History of families and treatment of children Contemporary understandings of families and children Parent/family, agency, and school dynamics, past and present Family dynamics in families with a child with a disability and compared to other families
2	Federal and North Carolina legislation: Review related to parents/families of students with disabilities MAPS, PATHS, and other family profiling programs Analyzing family strengths and needs Cultural perspectives on disability in children Culturally competent interactions with parents/families of students with disabilities Dilemmas in working with parents/families Strategies for effectively interacting with parents/families
3	Legal issues in working with parents/families of students with disabilities Siblings of students with disabilities
4	Parent education: Purpose, goals, strategies, evaluation Staff development for other related to parents/families of students with disabilities

### **OTHER INFORMATION:**

#### **Academic Honor Code**

Students in this course are expected to abide by the UNCG academic honor code. Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity policy on all major work submitted for the course. This policy is described in the *UNCG Graduate Bulletin*.

#### **Attendance Policy**

Not applicable for an on-line course. Exception: Students are expected to participate in virtual classroom sessions.

### **Late Work**

Late work penalty: Students whose work is not submitted on the day and at the time it is due are subject to a minimum grade penalty of at least 10% of the point value per day late at the instructor's discretion. Work not submitted within three weeks of the due date, unless by instructor permission, will not receive credit.

(Need alignment with State and National Standards)