

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE
Feinstein School of Education and Human Development
Department of Special Education

Course: Special Education 520
Orientation to the Education of Youth and Young Adults with Severe/Profound
Disabilities in Non-School Settings

Course Description:

This course provides students with a description of the population, with an integrated model for organizing a comprehensive community (or school) program, and with strategies for developing adaptive behavior in a variety of community, residential, vocational and leisure settings. Research pertinent to the organization and operation of community programs is analyzed. Three semester hours.

Extended Description:

Special Education 520 has two primary purposes in the graduate teaching concentration in Severe Disabilities. First, this course devotes a significant amount of time to reviewing the literature that describes the nature and learning characteristics of persons with severe disabilities. Effective program structures for individuals with severe disabilities must be based on these characteristics. Similar content (in a summative format) is included in several other courses (435, 436, 525, 526); however, this course presents several studies that are intended to give each student the foundation knowledge needed to develop a conceptual framework for designing and implementing quality programs for individuals with severe disabilities. Second, Special Education 520 provides an extensive look at the non-school services and supports available for adults with significant developmental disabilities. A variety of program models and structures will be discussed. The history and conceptual basis of each model will be discussed. Students will visit at least two different programs and will hear presentations from the Directors of other programs. Data (Rhode Island and national) describing adults with developmental disabilities will be presented and discussed. Students will develop a set of operating principles for evaluating the quality and efficacy of non-school and adult programs.

Relationship to Professional Program:

Special Education 520 is a required course in the graduate program.

Relationship to the Knowledge Base:

Special Education provides the student with a foundation for designing effective programs for persons with severe disabilities. Knowledge about the nature and learning characteristics of persons with severe disabilities provides the core foundation for planning and implementing effective programs. Knowledge about the range and intended outcomes of non-school and adult services that exist in Rhode Island influences the planning and implementation of both transition

programs and adult services. The set of operating principles that the student will develop from the knowledge gained in this course will serve as a framework for reflecting on program quality. Thus, this course provides knowledge and a set of operating principles on which planning, action and reflection can be based.

Prerequisites: Special Education 300.

Relationship to CEC Individualized Independence Curriculum Referenced Standards:

IC1	Foundations
IC2	Characteristics of Learners
IC4	Instructional Content and Practice
IC5	Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment
IC6	Managing Student Behavior and Social Interaction Skills
IC7	Communication and Collaborative Partnerships
IC8	Professional and Ethical Practices

Course Outcomes:

As a result of this course, the student will:

1. Understand current terminology, definitions, classification systems, incidence figures, demographics, and regulations that affect the development of programs for individuals with severe disabilities. RIPTS 11-Professional Ethics; *KNOWLEDGE: Professional Awareness*; **IC1 K1; IC2 K1-3 S1**
2. Review historical and current literature in the field of severe disabilities to develop an understanding of the historical, philosophical and social context in which the field has evolved. RIPTS 1: General Knowledge; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC1 K2,3,4 S1,2; IC8 K1**
3. Review professional literature that describes the nature and learning characteristics of individuals with severe disabilities. RIPTS 3-Learning; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC1 K1; IC2 K1-3 S1; IC8 K1**
4. Understand the relationship typical developmental and learning patterns in the areas of sensory, motor, cognitive and affective responses and the learning characteristics of individuals with severe disabilities. RIPTS 3: Learning; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC2 K1-3 S1**
5. Develop the ability to observe, analyze, and describe the learning and behavioral characteristics of individuals with severe disabilities. RIPTS 3: Learning; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC2 K1-3 S1**
6. Review current literature that examines the relationship between learning characteristics, placement and program design; RIPTS 1: General Knowledge; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC1 K4 S1,2; IC2 K1-3 S1; IC5 K2,5 S3**

7. Understanding the impact that environment and ecological context has on the learning and competence demonstrated by individuals with severe disabilities. RIPTS 6: Learning Environment, 3-Learning; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge* **IC1 K4 S1,2; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
8. Understand the impact of family and community culture on the learning and competence demonstrated by individuals with severe disabilities. RIPTS 4-Diversity, 7-Collaboration; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge* **IC1 K4 S1,2; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
9. Develop a set of operating principles to use as the basis for designing programs. RIPTS 2-Discipline; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC2 S1; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
10. Use these principles to reflect on the quality and efficacy of services. RIPTS 2- Discipline, 10-Reflection, 9-Assessment; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge* **IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC2 S1; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
11. Understand the organization and array of non-school and adult services, with particular focus on the areas of community, residential, vocational and leisure supports and services. RIPTS 2- Discipline; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge* **IC1 K4; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
12. Reflect on the quality and efficacy of these services using the principles referenced in outcomes 9 and 10. RIPTS 2- Discipline, 10-Reflection; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge*; **IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC2 S1; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
13. Understand the resources (including assistive technology) available in Rhode Island to support individuals with severe disabilities in community, residential, vocational and leisure settings. RIPTS 8-Communication; *KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge* **IC1 K4; IC5 K1 S3; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**

Course Requirements:

1. Readings as assigned.
2. Develop a set of operating principles to use as the basis for designing effective programs for individuals with severe disabilities. For each principle, provide a rationale based on professional literature. Also provide two examples that illustrate the application of each principle. **IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC2 S1; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC6 K2; IC7 K1 S1; IC8 K1**
3. Observe and describe the learning and behavioral characteristics of two individuals with severe and/or multiple disabilities – one child and one adult. Description will include: sensory responses, motor responses, cognitive and affective organizational patterns. Student will use the information gathered from this observation and reflect on the type of program objectives and instructional strategies that are most likely to be effective with the individual. The attached protocol will be used to complete the assignment. **IC1 K1; IC2 K1-3 S1**
4. Visit to two model non-school or adult services. **IC5 K2,5 S3; IC6 K2; IC7 K1,3 S1; IC8 K1**
5. Reflection and analysis of the quality and probable effectiveness of the two non-school programs using the operating principles (requirement 2) and the program criteria discussed in class. **IC1 K4 S1,2; IC2 S1; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC7 K1,3 S1; IC8 K1**

STANDARDS:

Assignment	RI Professional Teacher Standards	CEC Standards	Conceptual Framework
Operating Principles	RIPTS #2 Discipline RIPTS #10 Reflection	#9: Professional and Ethical Practice	<i>KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge</i> <i>PRACTICE: Technology</i>
Observation and Description	RIPTS 3- Learning RIPTS 2- Discipline	#3: Individual Learning Differences	<i>KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge</i>
Program Analysis 1	RIPTS 2-Discipline RIPTS 10-Reflection RIPTS 9-Assessment	#4-Instructional Planning #8-Assessment	<i>KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge</i>
Program Analysis 2	RIPTS 2-Discipline RIPTS 10-Reflection RIPTS 9-Assessment	#4 Instructional Planning #8-Assessment	<i>KNOWLEDGE: Domain-Specific Knowledge</i>

Operating Principles	20%
Observation and Description	40%
Program Analysis 1	20%
Program Analysis 2	20%.

Course Schedule, Topics, Readings:

This course is typically taught during the Summer session as a six week workshop. The topical outline that follows is by week, rather than by class.

Week 1

Definitions, Demographics, Historical and Social Context, Program Model, Values and Philosophical Base

Definition of Severe Disabilities
Definitions of Disability Categories pertinent to Severe Disabilities
Mental Retardation
Dual Sensory Impairments
Autism Spectrum Disorders
Physical Disabilities
Technology Dependent
Incidence and Demographic Data
Applicable federal and state regulations.
IC1 K1,2; IC8 K1

Philosophical Bases for Program Design
Cultural Views of Disability
Society's Changing View of Persons with Severe Disabilities
History of Services for Persons with Severe Disabilities
IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC8 K1

Analysis and Critique of Programmatic Models:
The Custodial Model
The Developmental Model
The Specialist Model
The Self Contained Model
The "As Much As Possible" Model
Normalization and Social Role Valorization
Least Restrictive Environment
The Inclusive Model
The Competence Model
The Lifestyle Model
IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC7 K1,3,5; IC8 K1

Development of Operating Principles.
IC1 K3,4 S1,2; IC7 K1; IC8 K1

Week 2

Nature and Learning Characteristics

An operational model for observing, analyzing and describing the nature and learning characteristics of individuals with severe disabilities.

Observation and description of sensory motor responses.
Overview of the sensori-neural process.
Relationship between sensory integration and movement.
Relationship between voluntary movement and adaptive behavior.
Use of assistive technology to facilitate motor functioning.
IC1 K1,2; IC2 K1-3 S1; IC8 K1

Refining the Operating Principles

Week 3

Cognition as process versus cognition as skill.
Affect and motivation.
Representative cognitive and affective patterns demonstrated
by individuals with severe disabilities.
Cognitive Organization – methods and strategies.
Relationship between cognitive organization and program design.
Self Organization and its relationship to self initiated learning and
self direction in persons with severe disabilities.
IC1 K1,2; IC2 K1-3 S1; IC5 S3; IC8 K1

Continued refinement of the Operating Principles.

Week 4

**Role of the Environment
Overview of Adult Services**

Analysis of the relationship between environment, program model, and
functional competence in individuals with severe disabilities.
IC1 K4 S1,2; IC4 S12; IC6 K2; IC7 K1,3,5 S1; IC8 K1

Overview of ecological inventory strategies for determining requisite
situation-based skills which will increase the functional competence and
participation of persons with severe disabilities in community, residential,
vocational and leisure settings.
IC1 K4 S1,2; IC4 S12; IC6 K2; IC7 K1,3 S1; IC8 K1

Continued refinement of Operating Principles.

Overview of the Adult Service System
Mary Madden, Executive Director, Ocean State Association of Residential
Resources (OSARR)

Week 5

**Analysis and Reflection on the Quality and Efficacy
Of Non-School and Adult Services**

Community Functioning.
Components and Considerations.

Examples of high quality and low quality programs.
Application of the Operating Principles.

Residential Living Opportunities.
Components and Considerations.
Examples of high quality and low quality programs.
Application of the Operating Principles.

Presentation by Executive Director of a Community Residential Program.

Visit to a Community Residential Program.

**IC1 K4 S1,2; IC4 S12; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC6 K2;
IC7 K1,3 S1; IC8 K1**

Week 6

Employment and Leisure Opportunities

Employment Opportunities.
Components and Considerations.
Examples of high quality and low quality programs.
Application of the Operating Principles.

Leisure Opportunities.
Components and Considerations.
Examples of high quality and low quality programs.
Application of the Operating Principles.

Presentation by Executive Director of a Community Employment Program.

Visit to a Community Employment Program.

**IC1 K4 S1,2; IC4 S12; IC5 K2,5 S3; IC6 K2;
IC7 K1,3 S1; IC8 K1**

Schedule

May 14	Introduction, Course Explanation, etc.
May 16	The Connection between Operating Principles, Individual Strengths, and Program Structures – A model for observing and analyzing
May 21	Sensory Components
May 28	Memorial Day – No Class
May 29	Motor Components
May 30	Cognitive Components
June 4	Applications and Program Structures
June 5	Intro to Adult Services
June 6	Continued – Guest Speaker
June 11	Residential Options (Guest Speaker)
June 12	No Class – Visit
June 13	Analysis of What You Saw
June 18	Employment Options (Guest Speaker)
June 19	No Class – Visit
June 20	Analysis of What You Saw
June 25	Community Membership
June 26	Transition Practices
June 27	More Transition

Due Dates:

Operating Principles	June 4
Person Observation 1	June 11
Person Observation 2	June 18
Program Observation 1	June 20
Program Observation 2	June 25

**Special Education 520
Observation Protocol**

1. Person’s age, very brief description of disability, where person lives, where person spends their day.

2. **Sensory Responses.** Using “natural” observations, describe the efficiency of response to each of the following sensory inputs. Possible gradation of responses – no response, reflex response, minimal response or activation, approach/avoidance, functional discrimination, academic discrimination, efficient use.

Sense	Efficiency of Response	Example
Hearing		
Vision		
Light Touch		
Taste		
Smell		
Deep Touch		
Vestibular – slow rhythmic		
Vestibular – fast		
Proprioceptive – general		
Proprioceptive – specific		

3. **Sensory Preferences.** Describe the person's sensory likes and dislikes.

4. **Motor Disassociation.** Describe the voluntary movement you observed associated with each of the following body segments.

Segment	Voluntary Movement(s)	Example
Neck[Head		
Shoulders		
Trunk		
Elbow		
Wrist		
Fingers		
Hip		
Knees		
Ankles		
Toes		

5. If progressing developmentally, what two voluntary movements would you expect to develop next?

6. Name two voluntary movements that currently exist that could be used for life functions. Identify both the movement and the function.

7. Describe the “general efficiency” of the person’s voluntary movements – this could include muscle tone, strength, speed, endurance, accuracy, etc.

8. Give two examples of movements that you could make “more efficient” through application of a sensory intervention or a position.

9. Describe the **primary cognitive characteristics** of the person you observed. Remember, cognition is about (a) how the person discriminates situations, (b) how much structure the person needs to act meaningfully and completely, (c) what motivates the person to act or reinforces his/her actions, etc.

10. Describes the steps and/or strategies the person uses to “**organize him/herself**” in ONE **familiar situation**. Describe the sensory/motor base for each strategy.

Situation:

Steps or Strategies

Sensory or Motor Base

11. Describes the steps and/or strategies the person uses to “**organize him/herself**” in ONE **unfamiliar situation**. Describe the sensory/motor base for each strategy.

Situation:

Steps or Strategies

Sensory or Motor Base

12. Describe the strategy(ies) the person most commonly uses to (a) **initiate social contact**, (b) **maintain social contact**, (c) **terminate social contact**. Describe the sensory/motor base for each strategy.

Strategies:

Sensory or Motor Base

Initiate

Maintain

Terminate

13. Describe the steps/strategies the person uses to **explore an unfamiliar situation or object**. Describe the sensory/motor base for each of those strategies.

Steps or Strategies

Sensory or Motor Base

14. Summary #1 – What are the major **strengths** that characterize this person’s nature or learning style (phrases not paragraphs, please). Give one example of how you would use these strengths to improve the “efficiency” of the person’s actions.

Strengths

Use

15. Summary #2. List **three functions** you would teach this person. For each function describe (a) how that function **matches the person's strengths**, (b) how the person **discriminates where and when to perform** that function, and (c) how the function will increase the person's ability to have **increased control or participation** in his/her life.

Functions	Match Strength
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