

Mayville State University

SPED 598, Special Education Law and Ethics

Summer 2025

3 Credit Hours

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Carly Theis

Contact Information:

Office: Education 116B

Email: carly.theis@mayvillestate.edu

Work phone: 701-788-4821

Hours of Availability:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 9 am -4pm

Tuesday and Thursday: 9am- 4pm

Also available for meetings on other days and times by appointment.

Office Hours Meeting Link: <https://mayvillestate.zoom.us/j/6441539225>

Instructional Mode: Online asynchronous

Course Dates: May 27th 2025- July 21st 2025

Time Zone: All times indicated throughout this syllabus reflect Central Time (CT).

Final Exam Time and Location: During Finals Week Online

Course Materials and Technologies

Required

[MSU Technology Requirements](#)

Yell, M. L. (2019). *The law and special education* (5th. ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Recommended

Supplemental materials will be available and provided during the course through websites and downloadable files.

Use of Artificial Intelligence in this Course

You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor).

Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with severely under relevant Mayville State University policies.

Mayville State University

Conceptual Framework

Teacher Education courses are based upon the Conceptual Framework: Reflective Experiential Teacher. See the document 'Conceptual Framework' provided in the course shell.

Course Description

Throughout this course an in-depth study of the laws and regulations that govern special education and related areas of education law will be conducted. The course will focus on key concepts of special education law, emphasizing the relationship between legal and practical considerations. Formal statutes and regulations that govern special education will be covered, but most of the emphasis will focus on how these laws are implemented in the real world, by looking at legal decisions, case studies and practical scenarios.

Pre-/Co-requisites: No Pre-/Co-requisites are required.

Course Objectives

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objectives, as aligned to Advanced Program in Special Education Standards and Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Content Standards through North Dakota's Education Standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

1. Analyze foundational laws and regulations governing special education, including IDEA, Section 504, and ADA. (CEC2, CAEP A.1)
2. Interpret and apply legal terminology and principles relevant to special education in both theoretical and practical educational settings. (CEC 2, CAEP A.1)
3. Evaluate the impact of legal decisions and case law on the development and implementation of special education policies and practices. (CEC 3, CAEP A.1)
4. Examine the relationship between legal mandates and educational practice, identifying how compliance influences instructional and administrative decisions. (CEC 6, CAEP A.1)
5. Apply legal knowledge to real-world scenarios through the analysis of case studies and practical examples, demonstrating an understanding of how laws are implemented in schools. (CEC 4, 5, CAEP A.1)
6. Develop strategies for legal compliance and advocacy that support the rights of students with disabilities while balancing institutional responsibilities. (CEC 5, CAEP A.1)

Standards Alignment (Advanced Program in Special Education Standards and Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Content Standards-[ND ESPB](#)):

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Advanced Standards:

- **Standard 2: Curricular Content Knowledge:** Special education specialists use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to improve programs, supports, and services at classroom, school, community, and system levels.
- **Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes:** Special education specialists facilitate the continuous improvement of general and special education programs, supports, and services at the classroom, school, and system levels for individuals with exceptionalities.
- **Standard 4: Research and Inquiry:** Special education specialists conduct, evaluate, and use inquiry to guide professional practice.
- **Standard 5: Leadership and Policy:** Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices, and create positive and productive work environments.
- **Standard 6: Professional and Ethical Practice:** Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional ethical principles and practice standards to inform special education practice, engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.

Mayville State University

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Advanced Standards:

Standard RA.1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge The provider ensures that candidates for professional specialties develop an understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and facilitates candidates' reflection of their personal biases to increase their understanding and practice of equity, diversity, and inclusion. The provider is intentional in the development of their curriculum for candidates to demonstrate their ability to effectively work with diverse P-12 students and their families.

Introduces/Reinforces SLO #1: Students understand diversity in learning and developmental processes and create supportive and safe learning environments for students to thrive.

Introduces/Reinforces SLO #4: Students will take responsibility for student learning collaborative relationships, their own professional growth, and the advancement of the profession.

Course Expectations

Instructor/Student Communication

- Email is the preferred method of communication. The instructor usually responds within 24-48 hours during weekdays. If you wish to contact the instructor by telephone, please use the office number: 701-788-4821. Emails received on weekends will be responded to on Monday mornings.
- Reminder that you are able to schedule an appointment with the instructor outside of the listed office hours.
- The instructor will use Blackboard to post messages to all learners if needed. You are required to use your NDUS email address(your.name@mayvillestate.edu) as it is the only way to ensure reliable communication between students and instructors. **Students are accountable for all academic communication sent to their Mayville State University email address.**
- It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor with any questions they may have about course content in a timely manner. Contacting the instructor with questions about an assignment the day before or the day it is due is not appropriate demonstrating lack of planning and preparation.
- Feedback: You can expect to hear feedback regarding weekly assignments within 10-14 days of submission. Larger projects can take longer to review so expect feedback within 2 weeks of submission. Students are responsible for accessing the information and assignments as they are presented in Blackboard and the syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to monitor graded assignments. Checking the grade section of Blackboard is the best way to make sure that assignments have been submitted.
- Any student product such as an assignment or assessment that is emailed will NOT receive credit. All assignments or student products are to be uploaded to the appropriate spot in Blackboard in order to receive credit.
- Mayville's LMS Blackboard course site will be used to post messages to all learners as a group mailing whenever necessary.
- **It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor by email if they have a question about an assignment or exam prior to 24 hours before the exam or assignment due date.** This allows time for the instructor to respond to the question. If the communication is sent after 4 P.M. on Friday, the instructor may not respond before Monday morning.

Assignments and Assessments

- **Articles (Required Readings):** Weekly course preparation and work with assignments may require researching and reading current articles on reading instruction and assessment. Articles referenced for the course may be part of assigned readings and referenced for discussions.

Mayville State University

Articles students will be required to read for class will be listed on Blackboard.

- **Text (Required Readings):** Weekly course preparation and work with assignments require information from our text readings. Specific readings from our texts will be listed on Blackboard.
- **Weekly Discussion Posts and Responses:** Completion of weekly course discussions with responses are required as part of the reflective learning process and will be an expectation of the course. Specific instructions and due dates for each post will be outlined each week on Blackboard.
- **Assignments:** Completion of weekly course preparation and assignments are an expectation. These will be listed on Blackboard with coordinating due dates.
- **Assessments:** Completion of formative and summative assessments may be a part of this course. If an assessment is required, students will be notified by the instructor and the dates listed on Bb.

Course Lessons (360 points)

Check course outline for submission

You will be completing 12 lessons through this session which will include readings, assignments, case briefings, case studies, videos, comprehension checks, and reflective, academic writing. Detailed instructions are on Blackboard and in each *Lesson Instruction* sheet. Components of each lesson will be graded-these are noted at the bottom of each instruction sheet. Grades for lessons will be submitted as they come due (see course calendar).

1. Analyze foundational laws and regulations governing special education, including IDEA, Section 504, and ADA. (CEC2, CAEP A.1)
2. Interpret and apply legal terminology and principles relevant to special education in both theoretical and practical educational settings. (CEC 2, CAEP A.1)
3. Evaluate the impact of legal decisions and case law on the development and implementation of special education policies and practices. (CEC 3, CAEP A.1)
4. Examine the relationship between legal mandates and educational practice, identifying how compliance influences instructional and administrative decisions. (CEC 6, CAEP A.1)
5. Apply legal knowledge to real-world scenarios through the analysis of case studies and practical examples, demonstrating an understanding of how laws are implemented in schools. (CEC 4, 5, CAEP A.1)
6. Develop strategies for legal compliance and advocacy that support the rights of students with disabilities while balancing institutional responsibilities. (CEC 5, CAEP A.1)

Special Education Philosophy Paper (100 points)

Due on or before: July 13th

What is the purpose of special education? What are special education teachers supposed to do? What is the student's role in the process? How does a special educator remain current in their practice? It is important to be aware of your own philosophy of special education as it influences the decisions you make and the lessons you plan and implement. Through the writing of your own philosophy, you will see more clearly your own beliefs, values and goals about teaching students with exceptionalities. As topics around the Council for Exceptional Children Standards are addressed in class, you will evaluate and establish your philosophy on each. See detailed assignment sheet for specifics and grading. A detailed assignment sheet will be provided.

1. Analyze foundational laws and regulations governing special education, including IDEA, Section 504, and ADA. (CEC2, CAEP A.1)
2. Interpret and apply legal terminology and principles relevant to special education in both theoretical and

Mayville State University

practical educational settings. (CEC 2, CAEP A.1)

3. Evaluate the impact of legal decisions and case law on the development and implementation of special education policies and practices. (CEC 3, CAEP A.1)
4. Examine the relationship between legal mandates and educational practice, identifying how compliance influences instructional and administrative decisions. (CEC 6, CAEP A.1)
5. Apply legal knowledge to real-world scenarios through the analysis of case studies and practical examples, demonstrating an understanding of how laws are implemented in schools. (CEC 4, 5, CAEP A.1)
6. Develop strategies for legal compliance and advocacy that support the rights of students with disabilities while balancing institutional responsibilities. (CEC 5, CAEP A.1)

Final Exam (100 points)

Due: July 14th-18th

One final examination will be held for the course covering the fundamental principles, laws and procedural requirements related to special education programs. The exam will be conducted online. A detailed assignment sheet for the final exam will be provided.

1. Analyze foundational laws and regulations governing special education, including IDEA, Section 504, and ADA. (CEC2, CAEP A.1)
2. Interpret and apply legal terminology and principles relevant to special education in both theoretical and practical educational settings. (CEC 2, CAEP A.1)
3. Evaluate the impact of legal decisions and case law on the development and implementation of special education policies and practices. (CEC 3, CAEP A.1)
4. Examine the relationship between legal mandates and educational practice, identifying how compliance influences instructional and administrative decisions. (CEC 6, CAEP A.1)
5. Apply legal knowledge to real-world scenarios through the analysis of case studies and practical examples, demonstrating an understanding of how laws are implemented in schools. (CEC 4, 5, CAEP A.1)

Key Assessment:

In order to receive credit for this course, the Key Assessment must be completed and submitted. Students who do not meet acceptable targets for this key assessment cannot pass the SPED 598 course with a grade higher than C. There is an opportunity to redo the assignment if students communicate their desire to resubmit with the course instructor before finals week. Content in this course will be assessed with a key assessment entitled the Final Comprehensive Exam.

Evaluation and Grading

Grading Policies

- Evaluation in this course will consist of the components outlined below. Rubrics and checklists will be used to grade most assignments. Submit all assignments in Blackboard by designated due dates. The instructor will review assignments and due dates as class proceeds. It is the learner's responsibility to meet assignment deadline dates.
- Late work drops 1 point per day after the due date. The Blackboard Dropbox determines late work. The date assignments are submitted is highlighted on the dropbox, and is the method used to determine if an assignment is late. The dropboxes close 10 days after the due date, and the assignment will no longer be accepted.

Mayville State University

- Please do not email your work. Submit your work in Blackboard. If you have difficulty submitting, please make the instructor aware of this through email or phone.
- Please plan ahead-don't wait until the last minute to hand in assignments. Each assignment is given sufficient time for completion. It is up to you to take advantage of this allotted time.
- Students who make arrangements beforehand have one week to make up an assignment, quiz, or test. Skipped quizzes and tests cannot be made up.

Attendance/Participation Policies

Participation in all course activities, assignments, discussion posts and responses, quizzes, and exams are required to earn a grade of C or above.

Grading Scale

100-94%=A 93-87%=B 86-80%=C 79-70%=D 69-0%=F

Breakdown of Grades

A: 560-525 pts. B: 524-488 pts. C: 487-450 pts. D 449-390 pts. F < 389 pts.

Enrollment Verification

Online Course Statement

The U.S. Department of Education requires instructors of online courses to provide an activity which will validate student enrollment in this course. The only way to verify that a student has been in this course is if he, she, or they perform an action in the LMS, such as completing an assignment or taking a quiz. Logging into the LMS is **NOT** considered active course participation. Please complete the designated enrollment verification activity by the date indicated. If it is not complete your enrollment in this course will be at risk.

Proctor Notification

No proctors are required for this course.

Important Student Information

In the Announcements section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency
- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

Mayville State University

Instructional Strategies

- Critical Analysis
- Modeling
- Guided Practice
- Discussions
- Social Learning
- Problem Solving
- Skill Building
- Professional Decision Making

Course Timeline/Schedule

Course Timeline and Schedule are subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor. *Assignment due dates are listed on the “What to Expect This Week” information in each weekly lesson.*

Week	Topics
#1	Course Introduction & The American Legal System Legal Research & History of the Law
#2	IDEA Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
#3	The American with Disabilities Act The Elementary and Secondary Education Act
#4	Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) Identification, Assessment, and Evaluation
#5	The Individualized Education Program Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
#6	Procedural Safeguards Discipline & Additional Issues
#7	Philosophy Paper
#8	Final Exam

References / Bibliography

Mayville State University (2013). “Student Handbook/Student Code of Conduct”. Retrieved <http://www.mayvillestate.edu/about-msu/more-info/reports-policies/>.

Alexander, K. & Alexander, M.D. (2011). *American public school law* (8th ed.). Covington, KY: Wadsworth Publishing.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), P.L. 91-230, codified as amended at 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.

Murdick, N.L., Gartin, B.C., & Fowler, G.A. (2014). *Special education law* (3rd Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2001), majority codified in Chapter 70 of Title 20, 20 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.

Mayville State University

Turnbull, E., Huerta, N., & Stowe, M. (2006). *The individuals with disabilities education act as amended in 2004*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Wright, P.W.D., & Wright, P.D. (2007). *Special education law* (2nd ed.). Hartfield, VA: Harbor House Law Press, Inc.