

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENTAL COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Department of Special Education  
EEX 5752: Working with Families: A Pluralistic Perspective**

The following are the required elements of a departmental syllabus in the College of Education. **This syllabus should be representative of EVERY section of the course offered in the department.**

*The College of Education CAREs*

The College of Education is dedicated to the ideals of **C**ollaboration, **A**cademic **E**xcellence, **R**esearch, and **E**thics/Diversity. These are key tenets in the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education. Competence in these ideals will provide candidates in educator preparation programs with skills, knowledge, and dispositions to be successful in the schools of today and tomorrow. For more information on the Conceptual Framework, visit:

[www.coedu.usf.edu/main/qualityassurance/ncate\\_visit\\_info\\_materials.html](http://www.coedu.usf.edu/main/qualityassurance/ncate_visit_info_materials.html)

1. **Course Prefix and Number:** EEX 5752
2. **Course Title:** Working with Families: A Pluralistic Perspective
3. **Regular Instructors:** Dr. Daphne Thomas  
Dr. Phyllis Jones
4. **Course Prerequisites (if any):** Graduate standing or consent of the instructor
5. **Course Description:** This course is primarily concerned with an examination of the changing nature of American families and the impact of family variability on home-school collaboration. Emphasis is placed on understandings of socio-cultural variables that distinguish family functioning. Effective methods of collaborating with families of children with disabilities are explored. Students are expected to apply knowledge of family variability in the development of family involvement strategies reflective of the pluralistic nature of family life.
6. **Course Goals:**
  1. Reflect critically on the influence of their personal constructions of family and the ethical implications for working with parents and families of children with disabilities.
  2. Develop a historical and theoretical understanding of cultural pluralism and the interconnectedness of schools and communities as related to effective instruction for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
  3. Develop an understanding of basic family systems theory, research, and practices.

4. Develop an understanding of the challenges faced by families of children with disabilities.
5. Develop an understanding of families in crisis and the impact of crisis environments on the educational experience of children with disabilities.
6. Expand their knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding culturally sensitive strategies for working with families of children with disabilities or who are considered “at-risk.”
7. Increase their knowledge and skills in effectively communicating with families of students with disabilities.

**7. Course Objectives &/or Content Outline:**

1. Reflect critically on the influence of their personal constructions of family and the ethical implications for working with parents and families of children with disabilities.
  - 1.1 Alternate family structures: single parent families; multi-generational families; merged/reconstructed families, fictive kinship groups, foster care families.
2. Develop a historical and theoretical understanding of cultural pluralism and the interconnectedness of schools and communities as related to effective instruction for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
  - 2.1 The changing nature of American families: assumptions, images, and myths.
3. Develop an understanding of basic family systems theory, research, and practices.
  - 3.1 Cultural pluralism and family involvement in schools: theory and practice; ethnicity, class, gender, disability.
4. Develop an understanding of the challenges faced by families of children with disabilities.
5. Develop an understanding of families in crisis and the impact of crisis environments on the educational experience of children with disabilities.
6. Expand their knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding culturally sensitive strategies for working with families of children with disabilities or who are considered “at-risk.”
7. Increase their knowledge and skills in effectively communicating with families of students with disabilities.

## **8. Evaluation of Student Outcomes:**

***[Note to instructor—Each instructor will determine and insert the appropriate strategies to assess student achievement in this course (e.g., see possible examples below). See Program Key Assessment and Rubric for this course.]***

The following assessment strategies may be used to evaluate student achievement of course goals and objectives:

- Completion of weekly reflections on readings and class discussions
- Thoughtful participation in class activities and discussions
- Submission of a magazine critique in which students analyze images and values regarding families the media portray
- A family interview where the student interviews a family with a disability to understand the family's unique characteristics, strengths, and critical need(s).
- A research paper, where a critical need as identified by the family in the family interview is researched to identify empirically-based strategies and approaches to help meet the need of the family
- A family strategy, which is a product to present to the family to assist with their critical need.
- Completion of *The Family Project* (3 Parts)

### **Program Key Assessment: *The Family Project***

*The Family Project* is a Program Key Assessment for Department of Special Education MA Program. This assessment is aligned with the USF College of Education Conceptual Framework Outcomes and the National Board Professional Teaching Standards – Exceptional Needs. The Department of Special Education has identified a series of Program Key Assessments throughout the program of study that will be assessed by faculty to determine if the MA student is progressing toward competency in the standards listed above. Students must demonstrate competency by performing satisfactorily on all standards associated with each Program Key Assessment. Satisfactory performance constitutes a score of 3 or above on each of the components in the Program Key Assessment Rubric. If the MA student does not achieve competency on the first attempt, the Program Key Assessment must be re-submitted until competency is achieved. At the discretion of the department, the grade on subsequent attempts might not be used in the computation of the final grade for the course. Competency on the Program Key Assessment must be achieved by the date designated in the course syllabus.

## **9. Grading System:**

Grades will be determined based on the following scale:

- A = 90% - 100%
- B = 80% - 89%
- C = 70% - 79%
- D = 65% - 69%
- F = below 65%

Assignment of plus or minus grades may be implemented per university guidelines.

***No grade below “C” will be accepted toward a graduate degree. This includes***

**C- grades.**

**Grading Criteria:**

**10. Recommended Texts and/or Readings:**

Turnbull, A. P., & Turnbull, H. R. (2001). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Collaborating for empowerment*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice

**11. Attendance and Other Class Policies, if applicable:**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes (no cut policy).

**Expectations for Course Participation:** Your involvement in the class sessions will add to your learning and the learning of those around you. Each student is expected to attend class sessions, complete in-class activities/assignments according to the evaluation criteria, and participate in class discussions and activities in a professional courteous manner.

**12. ADA Statement:**

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with the Office of Student Disabilities Services in order to receive special accommodations and services. Please notify the instructor during the first week of classes if a reasonable accommodation for a disability is needed for this course. A letter from the USF Disability Services Office must accompany this request.

**13. USF Policy on Religious Observances:**

Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second class meeting.

**14. Web Portal Information:**

Why are the NetID and USF mail account important to students? Every newly enrolled USF student receives an official USF e-mail account that ends with "mail.acomp.usf.edu." Every official USF correspondence to students will be sent to that account. Students should go to the Academic Computing website (<http://www.acomp.usf.edu>) and select the link "Activating a Student E-mail Account" for detailed information. Information about the USF Web Portal can be found at: <http://www.acomp.usf.edu/portal.html>

**15. Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating) is defined as any behavior that results in the misrepresentation of your skills, knowledge, or work as they relate to the course. This includes using other student's ideas and/or help when completing an individual

assignment, as well as plagiarism.

Plagiarism is defined as “literary theft” and consists of the unattributed quotation of the exact words of a published text, or the unattributed borrowing of original ideas by paraphrase from a published text. On written papers for which the student employs information gathered from books, articles, web sites, or oral sources, each direct quotation, as well as ideas and facts that are not generally known to the public at large, or the form, structure, or style of a secondary source must be attributed to its author by means of the appropriate citation procedure. Only widely known facts and first-hand thoughts and observations original to the student do not require citations. Citations may be made in footnotes or within the body of the text. Plagiarism also consists of passing off as one’s own segments or the total of another person’s work.

Punishments for academic dishonesty will depend on the seriousness of the offense and may include assignment of an “F” or a numerical value of zero on the subject paper, lab report, etc., an “F” or an “FF” grade (the latter indicating academic dishonesty) in the course, suspension, or expulsion from the University. A student who receives an “FF” grade may not use the university’s Grade Forgiveness Policy if the course is subsequently repeated. An “FF” grade assigned to indicate academic dishonesty is reflected only on internal records and prevents the student from repeating the course using the Grade Forgiveness Policy. If a student who has been accused of academic dishonesty drops the course, the student’s registration in the course will be reinstated until the issue is resolved. Notice that a student has been dismissed for reasons of academic dishonesty may be reflected on the student’s transcript with the formal notation: Dismissed for Academic Dishonesty.

**Detection of Plagiarism:** The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service, which allows instructors to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. As the instructor of this course, I reserve the right to (1) request that assignments be submitted to me as electronic files and (2) electronically submit assignments to *SafeAssignment.com*, or (3) ask students to submit their assignments to *SafeAssignment.com* through *myUSF*. Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. Through this service, the instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student’s paper was plagiarized. For more information about *SafeAssignment* and plagiarism, go to <http://www.c21te.usf.edu> and click on Plagiarism Resources. For information about plagiarism in the USF undergraduate catalogue, go to: <http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0304/adadap.htm#plagiarism>.

#### 16. **Academic Disruption:**

Disruption of academic process is defined as the act or words of a student in a classroom or teaching environment which in the reasonable estimation of a faculty member: (a) directs attention from the academic matters at hand, such as noisy distractions; persistent, disrespectful or abusive interruptions of lecture, exam or academic discussions, or (b) presents a danger to the health, safety or well being of the faculty member or students.

Punishments for disruption of academic process will depend on the seriousness of

the disruption and will range from a private verbal reprimand to dismissal from class with a final grade of "W," if the student is passing the course, shown on the student record. If the student is not passing, a grade of "F" will be shown on the student record. Particularly serious instances of disruption or the academic process may result in suspension or permanent expulsion from the University.

University of South Florida

DEPARTMENTAL COURSE SYLLABUS

Attachment I  
MATRIX

Course Objectives and Topics	Evidence of Achievement	Competencies and Guidelines National Board of Professional Teaching Standards – Exceptional Needs [NBPTS] and USF College of Education Conceptual Framework [COE]
<p>1. The student will clarify and extend her/his personal conceptions of “family.”</p> <p>1.1. Alternate family structures: single parent families; multi-generational families; merged/reconstructed families, fictive kinship groups, foster care families</p>	<p>Reflections Magazine Critique Case Study</p>	<p>NBPTS IV COE 4</p>
<p>2. The student will critically evaluate the impact of personal conceptualizations of family on home-school partnerships.</p> <p>2.1 The changing nature of American families: assumptions, images, and myths.</p>	<p>Reflections Class Discussion Case Study</p>	<p>NBPTS IV, XIII COE 4</p>
<p>3. The student will understand the interconnection of race, class, and gender in family functioning.</p> <p>3.1 Cultural pluralism and family involvement in schools: theory and practice; ethnicity, class, gender, disability.</p>	<p>Research Paper Reflections Class Discussion</p>	<p>NBPTS V COE 5</p>
<p>4. The student will demonstrate her/his knowledge of the history and legal foundations of family involvement in special education.</p> <p>4.1 The history of family involvement in the education of children with disabilities.</p>	<p>Research Paper Reflections</p>	<p>NBPTS V COE 2</p>

<b>Course Objectives and Topics</b>	<b>Evidence of Achievement</b>	<b>Competencies and Guidelines National Board of Professional Teaching Standards – Exceptional Needs [NBPTS] and USF College of Education Conceptual Framework [COE]</b>
4.2 Legislation and litigation family involvement and special education.		
5. The student will demonstrate her/his knowledge of families as social systems. 5.1 Family characteristics 5.2 Family interactions 5.3 Family functioning 5.4 Family life cycle	Family Interview Reflections Class Discussion	NBPTS V COE 2
6. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of poverty, violence, homelessness, substance abuse (and other challenges families face) on the establishment of effective home-school partnerships. 6.1 Families in crisis: Implications for schools; prolonged poverty; family violence; homeless families; substance abuse	Family Interview Reflections Class Discussion	NBPTS IV, V COE 2
7. The student will demonstrate her/his understandings of resiliency and other protective factors that influence family functioning. 7.1 Resiliency and adaptations: examining individual differences	Research Paper Reflections Class Discussion	COE 2
8. The student will demonstrate her/his knowledge of the current research findings on characteristics of and interventions with families of children with disabilities. 8.1 Stress 8.2 Coping 8.3 Support	Research Paper Family Strategy Reflections Class Discussion	NBPTS V COE 2
9. The student will demonstrate knowledge of current	Family Interview	NBPTS III

<b>Course Objectives and Topics</b>	<b>Evidence of Achievement</b>	<b>Competencies and Guidelines National Board of Professional Teaching Standards – Exceptional Needs [NBPTS] and USF College of Education Conceptual Framework [COE]</b>
<p>methods of communicating with and involving families of children with disabilities in special education process.</p> <p>9.1 Developing and maintaining relationships with families: communicating effectively; interviewing; problem solving</p>	<p>Research Paper Family Strategy Reflections Class Discussion</p>	<p>COE 1</p>
<p>10. The student will apply her/his knowledge of family systems theory in a critical analysis of traditional approaches to building home-school partnerships with families of children with disabilities.</p> <p>10.1 family involvement models: effective methods and strategies</p>	<p>Family Interview Family Strategy Reflections Class Discussion</p>	<p>COE 1</p>
<p>11. The student will be able to devise effective strategies for working with families of children with disabilities based on knowledge of family systems theory and cultural pluralistic perspective.</p> <p>11.1 student strategies</p>	<p>Family Interview Family Strategy Reflections Class Discussion</p>	<p>NBPTS I, IV, V COE 1</p>