EPSY 6393: Practicum
Section 01312 Fall 2006
Arranged Wednesdays 4:00 – 5:30
421 Farish Hall

Instructor – Gay Goodman
Office Hours - Mondays 1:00 - 4:00, or by appointment
Office - 421 Farish Hall (713) 743-9821
E-mail – ggoodman@uh.edu
Mailbox - Dept. of Educational Psychology, 491 Farish Hall

ADA Statement:

When possible, and in accordance with 504/ADA guidelines, we will attempt to provide reasonable academic accommodations to students who request and require them. Please call the Center for Students with Disabilities at ext. 3-5400 for more assistance.

Additional Course Policies and Procedures:

The following information is designed to help the class run smoothly. The instructor reserves the right to make additions and adjustments as necessary.

Statement on Course Materials: Some of the writings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

Course Description:

EPSY 6393 is designed to be taken at the beginning of a teacher candidate’s instruction program. It is recommended that the course is taken in conjunction with EPSY 6360, Introduction to the Education of Exceptional Learners. It is a practicum course that is activity, observation, and discussion oriented.

Class meetings will be held periodically for reacting, sharing, and discussing the field based component of the course. The main thrust of the course, however, will require teacher candidates to observe a number of facilities and to write a reaction paper that addresses personal observations and reactions (CC:1.S1.) to the clientele as well as the service delivery model observed.
Field Component:

Students in EPSY 6393 are required to make a minimum of eight observational visits to educational and/or community resources that offer services to individuals with disabilities. These experiences cover each of the eight areas of exceptionality. Students will, therefore, observe characteristics of persons with disabilities that include the learning disabled, the gifted and talented, the emotionally disturbed, the physically impaired, the mentally retarded, the blind and visually impaired, the deaf and auditorally impaired, and the multiply handicapped.

The range of observational experiences will encompass the various levels of Deno’s cascade (CC:2.K7.) beginning with inclusive settings and ranging through increasingly restricted placements to state funded institutional placements. At times, participants will observe students who meet the criteria for several handicapping conditions in one educational and/or vocational setting. A variety of age levels will also be included in the observational experiences. Community and public school facilities servicing infant populations will be included as will agencies that serve adult populations in educational as well as vocational capacities. Seminar debriefing of observational experiences will focus on service delivery in the least restrictive educational, social, and vocational environments. (CC:8.S1., S3., S4., S7.)

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, teacher candidates in this class will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the full continuum of special education services that are available for meeting the needs of exceptional students in the least restrictive educational alternative.

Teacher candidates in EPSY 6393 attend an introductory class session during which all course requirements are detailed for. Anyone anticipating difficulty meeting the course requirements because of other work exigencies is invited to meet individually with the instructor to formulate a reasonable plan for meeting course objectives. During the second class meeting, the teacher candidates are asked to present to the instructor a schedule of observations and a rationale for why each was selected. Approval of the schedule of observations serves as a contract to guide the student in satisfying course requirements.

Teacher candidates completing EPSY 6393 will:

- Describe the process and purpose of infant stimulation and other early childhood special education programs.
- Discuss the relationship between high risk infants and mental retardation.
- Describe the processes involved in the rehabilitation of adults and older teenagers. (CC:2.K4.)
• Observe and identify the characteristics of mental retardation, autism, and multi-handicapping conditions as they appear in educational and/or vocational settings. (CC:2.K2.)

• Observe and identify the characteristics spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, head injuries, and physical rehabilitation in educational and/or vocational settings. (CC:2.K2.)

• Observe and identify the characteristics of persons with sensory deficits as they appear in educational and/or vocational settings. (CC:2.K2.)

• Observe and identify the characteristics of students with behavior disorders as they appear in educational and/or penal institutions. Identify the relationship between behavior disorders and delinquency, depression and suicide. (CC:2.K2.)

• Observe and identify the characteristics of students with gifts and talents. Relate their profiles to those of other categories of exceptionality. (CC:2.K1.)

• Observe and identify the characteristics of students with learning disabilities as they appear in educational settings. Identify the relationship between learning disabilities and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorders. (LD:2.K4.)

• Observe and identify the characteristics of students with speech disorders. Relate the profiles of speech disordered persons to those with hearing disorders. (CC:2.K3.)

• Observe the full range of educational/vocational alternatives for persons with disabilities along with appropriate technological and prosthetic devices used to facilitate the education and employment of special populations. (CC:4.S10., CC:5.K3., CC:6.S3.)

• Identify the full spectrum of community and governmental resources available to provide ancillary support for persons with disabilities. (LD:7.K1., LD:8.K1.)

• Identify the full spectrum of community support services, professional organizations, and advocacy groups available in the Houston metropolitan area that serve as informational sources and support groups for persons with disabilities and their families. (CC:8.S6., LD:1.K1., LD:7.K1., LD:8.K1.)

• Discuss the importance of developing individual student programs as a collaborative effort on the part of team members. (C:7.K3.)

Course Requirements/Assessments and Evaluation
1) **Individual Meetings with University Instructor to Design and Schedule Observational Experiences (10%).**

2) **Observations (10% each)**

Over the course of the semester, students will attend each of the school observations approved in the initial schedule. Documentation of each visit will be signed off on by personnel in each of the educational settings.

3) **Journal (80%)**

Students will write a paper that will be due the class prior to the last exam. The paper will examine an issue that might affect development at any point during the life span and some interventions that have been effective in treating that issue. The paper should include at least three (3) references from peer reviewed journals. Examples of topics that might be covered in the paper include death of a parent during childhood, birth of a sibling, effects of drug use, effects of trauma, effects of socioeconomic status. The list could go on for days, but the idea is that there are many factors that affect development in life, and students should explore one factor and current treatment for that particular factor. Students are asked to submit their idea for the paper in writing for approval from the instructor before beginning work on the paper. See the schedule for deadlines.  

**Note:** Late submissions of papers will result in a drop in grade for the assignment.

**Some Final Notes:**

Students will not be allowed to take an Incomplete in this course due to poor planning. Please discuss with the instructor any possible need to receive an Incomplete as possible and identify the documentation that will be required to support your request. Under this circumstance review the University of Houston catalog to review conditions under which an incomplete may be granted.

Please turn off your cell phone or place it on silent mode/vibrate during class meetings and when on the campus of educational settings.

Students are expected to abide by the university’s academic honesty policy in all matters concerning this course. ([http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html](http://www.uh.edu/dos/hdbk/acad/achonpol.html)). In particular, plagiarism, “Representing as one’s own work the work of another without acknowledging the source,” whether intentional or unintentional, will not be tolerated.

**Course Agenda:**

- **Week 1** Introductory Class Meeting
- **Week 2** Schedule Presentation and Approval Meeting
- **Week 3-14** Observational Visits
Week 15
Final Class Meeting
Submit Observational Documentation
Submit Observational Journal

*Please note the following important dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last day to drop a course or withdraw without receiving a grade.</td>
<td>September 18, 2006 Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to drop a course or withdraw. Q grade eligibility period ends.</td>
<td>November 1, 2006 Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make up days for class days officially cancelled by the university (if necessary) or Reading Period.</td>
<td>December 4-5, 2006 Monday-Tuesday</td>
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**Course Materials:**

See attached.
September 19, 2006

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Beth Cullum  
    Ann Dixon-Reed  
    Melissa Gamble  
    Geeta Gupta

The above named student is a graduate student at the University of Houston in the Educational Psychology Department. The student is preparing to be a special education teacher and is currently enrolled in our Master’s Degree Program with Special Education Certification. This program has a two phase field based component. The first phase of the program involves a series of observation experiences that cover the full spectrum of services offered special education students in the public school system. They are structured to provide observation experiences across age and grade levels and to cover a variety of disabilities.

It is in this interest that we are asking you to share your expertise and offer him/her an opportunity to observe in your classroom. Each observation should include a minimum three hour time block, but can certainly be more extensive if time permits. During this time, we are requesting that you allow the student to observe and interact with the student in ways that you might deem appropriate for a pre service teacher. Also, we would appreciate your sharing information related to how you organize your school day, interact with fellow professionals, and base educational decisions made on behalf of the students in your room.

Attached to this memo is a sign off sheet. I would appreciate your signing off on the sheet in this student’s behalf. Thank you in advance for your willingness to have a student in your classroom. If you need additional information, do not hesitate to call on me (713-743-9821; ggoodman@uh.edu).

Sincerely,

Gay Goodman, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Department of Educational Psychology

GG:jln
OBSERVATION FORM

School: ________________________________

Age Level: ________________________________

Disability Labels: ________________________________

Service Delivery Model: ________________________________

Degree of Inclusion: ________________________________

Teacher Sign Off: ________________________________
Journal Outline

Each student in EPSY 6393 will complete a journal based on the observations completed during the semester. Each journal entry will include a rationale, a summary and a reflection of the observational visit.

A. Rationale. The rationale will be a statement regarding why a particular observational experience was selected. From the range of possibilities why does the student believe that this experience is best suited to meet his/her educational needs and/or career ambitions?

B. Summary.

1. The student should then summarize the observational experience temporally. How did the schedule of the observation unfold?

2. Describe the environmental setting for the observation:

   a. Placement Type

   b. Age of learners

   c. Disability Labels of Learners

   d. Rating of placement alternative with regard to the Least Restrictive Educational Environment (i.e. See Attached Deno’s Cascade of educational services)

   e. Degree of inclusion/interaction with regular education students

C. Reflections

1. How you as a future teacher reacted to the observation

2. Positive aspects of learning outcomes from this observation.