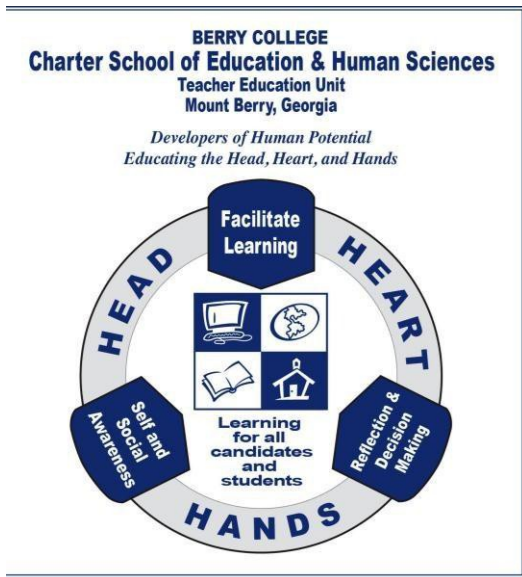


**Syllabus for PSY 434 I
Fall 2014**

Introduction to Exceptional Children and Youth

Meeting times/days:
Email:
Office Hours:

Location:
Office:
Phone:



Course Description: Introduction to assessment procedures and strategies for identifying and addressing the needs of students with exceptionalities within the context of school. Field-based practica occurs through student teaching or community resources.

Required Text:

Harry, B. (2010). *Melanie: Bird with a broken wing. A Mother's Story*. Brooks Publishing.

Heward, W. (2013). *Exceptional Children. An Introduction to Special Education*. Pearson.

Background check:

All students taking this class are required to have a background check before they will be approved to begin their field experiences. If you have a background check that is less than one year old, you may bring a copy of that to the professor. All other students should follow the procedure attached to the syllabus, to obtain a background check through the Charter School's contracted organization, PSI (Professional Screening & Information). Please follow the directions on the attached sheet about obtaining the screening. **The cost is \$10.00.** If you do not have a credit card, you can pay by money order. Professional Screening & Information, Inc. is a local business and can be reached by phone at 706-235-7574. The office is located at 316 Broad Street in Rome (PO Box 644, Rome GA 30162).

Purpose of Course: The purpose of this course is to introduce teachers and others who may work with children, to the history of special education, relevant laws and legal/ethical issues, as well as the characteristics, etiology, and special needs associated with a variety of exceptionalities. As teachers are often the first professionals to identify a variety of learning and behavioral

needs of children and given the importance of early identification and intervention for later success, it is critical that teachers be familiar with a wide range of childhood exceptionalities. Candidates will also be presented with information as to how to assist and support families of exceptional children in order to work as a team to enhance learning. Additionally, candidates will be introduced to a range of assessments and strategies for meeting the needs of students with exceptional needs. Although this class will emphasize characteristics of different exceptionalities, it is hoped that candidates will learn to see the wide spectrum of functioning within each are of exceptionality, and to recognize that each child is a unique individual that often requires an individual approach to teaching.

Course Objectives: The course objectives are consistent with the Berry College Model of Teacher Education, which emphasizes teachers as developers of human potential. This model involves “educating the head, the heart, and the hands”. The specific objectives for this course include the following:

Identification of Learning, Behavioral, and Psycho-social needs to support students with exceptional needs (Head)

Identify characteristics of various exceptionalities in children and adolescents and their impact on learning and school functioning (INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 3 *Learning Environments*, 4 *Content Knowledge*)

Identify the etiology, course, and teaching strategies to address various exceptionalities identified in childhood or adolescence. (INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 3 *Learning Environments*, 4 *Content Knowledge*, 7 *Planning for Instruction*)

Understand the significance of early identification in providing students with optimal chance to reach potential (INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 3 *Learning Environments*)

Understand and appreciating the complexity of issues surrounding identification and diagnosis of children from diverse language backgrounds who appear to also have exceptional learning, behavioral, and/or psychosocial needs. INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 3 *Learning Environments*, 6 *Assessment*)

Enhancing Self and Social Awareness-(Heart)

-Develop empathy and sensitivity for the unique challenges that are faced by individuals with exceptional needs (INTASC Principle 2 *Learning Differences*, 9 *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*) -Reflect upon field experiences involving observing and interacting with children with special needs in a variety of school activities. This objective involves consideration of the many ways in which the child is an individual with his/her own unique profile of strengths and weaknesses (INTASC Principles 2 *Learning Differences*, 9 *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*)

-Reflect upon and evaluate one’s own feelings and concerns regarding working with children with exceptionalities and one’s comfort level with making accommodations to meet the needs of such children within the regular classroom setting (INTASC Principles 2 *Learning Differences*, 3 *Learning Environments*, 9 *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*)

-Identify resources and strategies for supporting and collaborating with families of children that have exceptional needs (INTASC Principles 3 *Learning Environments*, 4 *Content Knowledge*, 7 *Planning for Instruction*, 8 *Instructional Strategies*)

-Articulating an individual philosophy for providing appropriate education for children with special needs, including children with special needs from cultural and/or language backgrounds different from the majority culture. (INTASC Principles 2 *Learning Differences*, 9 *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*)

Application of knowledge to identify, address, and assess outcomes of students with exceptional needs (Hands) -

Apply knowledge of individual differences in learning to promoting cognitive/academic development of a student via a case study (INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 4 *Content Knowledge*, 5 *Application of Content*, 7 *Planning for Instruction*)

-Apply knowledge of individual differences in psycho-social functioning and the manner in which this impacts learning by identifying and developing a strategy to promote goals to facilitate these skills for a student via a case study differences (INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 4 *Content Knowledge*, 5 *Application of Content*, 7 *Planning for Instruction*)

-Evaluate and reflect upon experiences observing and working with children with special needs in both the home and school settings. Consider the role collaboration (particularly understanding both child functioning in home and school settings) might play to enhance educational planning and goal setting to meet need of child (INTASC Principles 1 *Learner Development*, 2 *Learning Differences*, 3 *Learning Environment*, 6 *Assessment*, 9 *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*)

-Share the results from these experiences with classmates through a class presentation of case studies while protecting the confidentiality of the student (INTASC Principle 9 *Professional Learning and Ethical Practice*)

Candidate Learning Outcomes: It is expected that upon successful completion of this course candidates will be able to demonstrate that the objectives described above have been met through active participation in class, field experience projects, exams, and other course assignments described below (under Course Assignments). More specifically, candidates should be able to:

- Understand characteristics and unique learning profiles of children and youth with a variety of exceptional needs.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the complexity and multiple roles that families play in supporting children with special needs, and how schools and other community support systems might collaborate to help children with special needs reach their potential
- Apply knowledge of evidence based practices that promote cognitive, academic, social, and emotional development of children with special needs to cases of real children and/or youth
- Reflect upon the outcomes of these case studies, evaluating effectiveness of strategy and recommending future strategies that may support or better address learning or behavioral goals
- Discuss pertinent issues associated with transitioning to ensure opportunities for inclusion within school, community, residential, and employment settings.

Conceptual Framework

We believe that teachers are “Developers of Human Potential.” Like Martha Berry, we believe the role of excellent teachers is to help our candidates and the students they teach to reach their full potential by developing their head, heart and hands. Our philosophy and purposes are based on three dimensions to develop teachers and educational leaders who 1) Promote Reflection and Decision Making (head), 2) Facilitate Learning (hands), and (3) Enhance Self and Social Awareness (heart). Each of these dimensions is tied to one or more of the 10 program principals and is demonstrated by our candidates in the coursework, field and clinical experiences.

Evaluation Components and Grading Scale:

- An average of 75% or above on the Quizzes indicates an understanding of the characteristics, learning profiles, and teaching strategies for children and youth with a range of special needs (4 quizzes/ 10 points each).
- A score of 33 or above (out of 40 points) on the Field Experience Notebook demonstrates an awareness of the complexity and multiple roles that families play in supporting children with special needs, how schools and other community support systems might collaborate to help children with special needs reach their potential, an understanding of how to provide most appropriate educational support for children with exceptional needs, and the interplay of social, emotional, cognitive, and academic factors.
- A score of 11 or above (out of 15 points) on the Case Presentation demonstrate adequate reflection upon the outcomes of the case studies, evaluating effectiveness of strategy and recommending future strategies that may support or better address learning or behavioral goals, an awareness of complexity and strategies of providing most appropriate educational support for children with exceptional needs, and the interplay of social, emotional, cognitive, and academic factors.
- A score of 8 or above (out of 10) on the Melanie Project demonstrates adequate understanding of the IEP process and working with children and families from minority backgrounds.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>points</u>	<u>%grade</u>
Tests from assigned readings and class discussions	40	40%
Field experience notebook and case presentation	40	40%
Melanie IEP Project	10	10%
Attendance, class participation in group activities discussions, and in-class class assignments	10	10%
	100	100%

Field Experience

This class includes a field experience to be completed in a setting confirmed by Dr ____ and the Office of Field Experiences and Student Teaching. Completion of the field experience is documented by the timesheet that records the date/time of attendance and is initialed and signed by the cooperating teacher for candidates of the teacher education program. Successful completion of this field experience is necessary to obtain a grade of C or better in this course.

The goal of these field experiences is to compliment class readings and discussions with real world experiences that enable students to better understand how to support people with exceptional needs and their families. These field experiences were designed to provide knowledge about laws and regulations that govern special and regular education (as they relate to supporting children at risk or identified with special needs), provide knowledge and valuable experience about the role of schools in educating and supporting individuals with special needs (through classroom observations, direct interactions, and parent interviews), learn about transitioning people with special needs into the community, and provide a first hand experience to learn about individuals with special needs in the educational setting and the community.

A significant and very hot topic in the field of special education today is the concept of “transitioning” from high school to the community. How can educators and other professionals work with families and community members to help provide supports and guidance that allow all people to have self-determination, independence, and the highest quality of life possible? This idea of “plan forward” is not unique to Berry College. Our local group, DIGS (Developing Independence, Growth, and Security) is an excellent example of an organization that promotes and builds bridges to such opportunities for life long recreation, skill growth and learning, and independence for adults with developmental disabilities. One reason we collaborate and spend time with this adult population is to consider how to prepare our special education students for a life of inclusion in their communities and maximum independence.

How to get your 15 hours of field experience for PSY 434

- Plan ahead and don't wait until the last minute to accumulate hours. Every student is required to do at least 5 of the 15 hours with community field experience activities (will discuss in class, primarily activities with DIGS and Parent2Parent). These are nonprofit organizations that provide social and learning experiences for children and adults (and their families) within the community.
- If you are an EDU major or minor, you will need (unless you already have) a school placement. At least 10 of your field experience hours must take place in the classroom. Five of your field experience should involve community activities (Parent 2 Parent, DIGS, challenger sports, other approved by Dr. ____). Minimum of 15 total hours, more is fine if you want the experience.
- If you are interested in OT, PT, or Speech/Language pathology graduate programs- you need to put together a portfolio of experiences with different aged populations of people with special needs. Consider what experiences you have already had, and we can decide if you would like a school placement in addition to community based field experiences. You will fill out an application for placement in a school if you would like a school placement (through the office of field experience). If you choose a school placement I require a minimum of 5 (of the 15) hours in the classroom to which you are assigned.
- Other students taking the class (Psychology majors, Exercise Science, Nursing, Biology, etc.), you are welcome to do all of your field experience hours in the community with the P2P and DIGS organizations. However, if you would like a school placement you will need to commit to at least 5 (of the 15) hours in the classroom in which you are placed. You will fill out an application for placement in a school if you would like a school placement (through the office of field experience).

Guidelines for Field Experience Notebook (30 points)

Cover page listing the 15 hours of field experience including dates, brief description of field experience, observations, location, time (when you arrived and when you left). (5 points)

Write 5 entries in field experience journal. Each journal entry includes a reflection responding to a head, heart, or hand reflection questions. In your reflection, be sure to include observations,

theories/research from text, content from class discussion to support your reflection. Choose from the following reflection questions for the 5 reflection journal entries (15 points). You only have to respond to *one* of the prompts for each journal (for instance, may choose to respond to a “head” reflection prompt for the first entry, and a “heart” reflection prompt for the second, etc).

Head

Is there a theory of psychology or early past experience of yours that you are associating with the event?
How did you feel about the task/experience? Was it what you had expected, if not how so?
Did the experience challenge any previous held beliefs you had, or reinforce previous held beliefs?

Heart

What insights into your knowledge base, experience, or values have been gained?
What spiritual, moral, or ethical issue does this episode bring to light for you?

Hands

How will this experience and reflection possibly translate into changes in the way you interact with students?
How might this experience translate into practices or activities you would like to be involved with in the community to advocate for or support people with disabilities within families and the community?

Case analysis- Choose one individual with special needs have observed and worked with/spent time with more than once during the field experience. Based on your observations, information from teachers, parents, or others in the community involved with this individual, and any experiences you may have had interacting with the individual respond with the information presented in the case analysis rubric below. In a 2-5 paged paper (typed and double-spaced) respond to the questions in the rubric below. You will also share this with the class during a scheduled time (15 points).

Scoring for Case Analysis and class presentation (rubric-15 points)

Describe this individual based on available information. What types of disabilities does he/she appear to have? How old does he/she appear to be? Consider ethnicity, physical or sensory difficulties, socio-economic status, primary language (2)_____

Describe the environment(s)/setting(s) (i.e., school, community, family, recreational, etc.) in which you observed and or interacted with this individual. What was he/she doing? How was he/she accessing the social, learning, or other opportunities available? How might the environment be improved to improve independence, learning an academic skill, or vocational skill development? (2)_____

Discuss this individuals strengths, which may also include their interests and preferences (to the best of your knowledge, you may also interview the individual, parent, and/or teacher). Describe a strategy or activity that could be used to build on their strengths and interests to allow them greater access to these opportunities, increase learning and social interactions? (3)_____

What appear to be the greatest weaknesses that may serve as barriers to learning or taking advantage of community and social opportunities? How might these be addressed in a particular setting (such as school, a party, a club meeting, etc.) (3)_____

Where might this individual transition to next (i.e., middle school, high school, into the community from high school, to an independent living setting, a new job, etc.)? What types of supports and experiences are needed to help him/her make a successful transition? (3)

Share this case analysis with class at your scheduled time. Class presentation covers topics from this rubric. You may use a power point presentation or other media to support your 5-10 minute presentation (2) _____

Field Experience Grade Scoring Rubric (40 points- which includes Case study analysis and presentation)

_____ 1) Candidate has completed and documented in field experience/service notebook minimum of **15 hours** of approved field experience and service activities. This includes the date, location, activity, and hours spent at the activity (5 points).

_____ 2) Candidate has completed at least 5 of the 15 field experience hours in the community (5 points).

_____ 3) Quality of head, heart, *or* hand reflection for at least **5 entries** documented in the notebook. Extent to which student reflects upon observations (i.e., relating observation to other experiences, raising questions about what has been observed, drawing conclusions, suggesting implications for teaching practice based on activity, commenting upon the observations. *Each reflection should be at least one page in length- typed and double-spaced* (15 points).

_____ 4) Candidate's case study analysis (15 points-scoring rubric above)—refer to rubric above for details about what to include in both your written case study analysis and class presentation.

Melanie IEP Project (10 points)

Candidates should read *Melanie, Bird with a Broken Wing, A Mother's Story*, by Beth Harry, in preparation for this assignment. You will be given a role associated with this reading. For instance, you may be a teacher who is preparing to work with Melanie, a school administrator, psychologist, a family member, a neighbor or other social support, representative of a local advocacy agency, a speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, etc. You will be given specific instructions for preparing material for a "mock meeting" to plan and discuss Melanie's progress, goals, and concerns. You will submit to the professor your written comments and/or information in preparation for this mock meeting. In addition, you will participate in the meeting depending on your role. Although this beautiful and touching book has a sad ending (spoiler alert!), the author is a professor of special education at the University of Miami and has done extensive research about special education and minority children. She has contributed significantly to helping special educators work with families of children with special needs from diverse backgrounds.

-You will take part in a class-wide mock IEP meeting based on Melanie and her family, tentatively scheduled for 9/23. You will need to come prepared to participate in the IEP meeting based on your assigned role (i.e., parent, teacher, psychologist, family member, etc.) You will need to prepare an outline of what information you might contribute to the meeting based on your role. You will also need to write 3 different goals for Melanie based on your assigned role perspective. These goals might deal with social development, cognitive development, educational development, physical development, or independent living skills.

After the class mock IEP meeting (tentatively scheduled for 9/23), you will write up a summary of the meeting from your assigned role perspective (i.e., parent, teacher, medical personnel, psychologist, etc.), along with your 3 IEP goals as noted above. This 1-3 page summary should be typed and doublespaced and is due the class period after the mock IEP (9/25). Be sure to address the following questions in your Mock IEP summary:

- Describe your role at the mock IEP.
- List your 3 IEP goals.
- What were some of the main issues discussed at the IEP.
- What should the next step be to support Melanie's transition?

Please see youtube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oprU4qtgG1U>

In which Dr. Harry gives the keynote address to the Visions of Community 2010 conference.

Themes of the book (also supported by textbook readings and class discussions) *Melanie: Bird with a broken wing* include:

- Reactions of parents to having a child with a disability
- Importance of professionals working with families and children with special needs

- Importance of intensive early intervention
- Importance of family
- The physical, social, cognitive, and communicative needs of young children with multiple disabilities

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic/Chapter
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August	26 Ch. 1 /Introduction 28 Ch 1 Special education laws and history of perspectives about disability
September	02 Ch 2 Inclusion & Universal Design for Learning/ <i>Including Samuel film</i> 04 chapter 2- planning and providing special education services 09 Pizza and Meeting with DIGS friends 11 chapter 3- collaborating with families in a culturally/linguistically diverse society, assign class role and discuss upcoming mock IEP activity

- 16 Chapter 14- Early Childhood Special Education, *Begin Melanie book discussion ch 1-14 (they are short!)*
 18 Sandra Humphries from Parent to Parent Navigator Team
 23 **Mock IEP in Class-Melanie Project**
 25 **Melanie IEP write up due**, Chapter 4- Intellectual Disabilities
 30 Chapter 4- Intellectual Disabilities
- October 02 **Test #1** chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 14
 07 Chapter 5- Learning Disabilities, View “FAT [*Frustration, Anxiety, Tension*] City”
 09 Chapter 5- Learning Disabilities and ADHD (ch. 11)
 16 Chapter 6- EBD
 21 In class film and take home activity
 23 Addressing challenging behaviors using FBA/ABA
 28 **Test #2 4, 5, 6, addressing challenging behaviors and other material shared in class**
 30 Chapter 11- Physical Disabilities, Chapter 12- Severe Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injuries *Melanie book ch. 15-27*
- November 04 Chapter 8-Communication Disorders, *Melanie Ch. 27-28*
 06 Chapter 7- Autism Spectrum Disorders,
 11 view *Autism the Musical*
 13 **Test #3 11, 12, 7, 8**
 18 Ch. 9 Deafness and Hearing Loss, Ch. 10 Blindness and Low Vision
 20 Ch. 13 Gifted and Talented
 25 **All Field Experience Notebooks and case studies due**, Case Presentations begin
- December 02 Case Presentations
 04 Case Presentations/Discuss and Receive Take home Final (Test #4) **08 @ 2:00 - Turn in Final Exam, finish case presentations**

(Additional readings and assignments may be distributed in class)

Ongoing Weekly Field Experience Opportunities: for updates visit digsrome.org

First Thursday of each month is Art Club (Heyman Care on 2nd Ave in Rome) 6:30-8pm
 Second Thursday of each month –One Step at a Time Dance Club, Senior Center Kingston Rd. 6:30-8pm
 Snap Happy Camera Cub is 7-8 location of photo shoot changes so check calendar, third Friday of each month
 Swimming is on most Fridays from 3-4 at the YMCA in Rome
 Monthly calendar can be found on website at <http://dev.digsrome.org/>

Optional Readings Related to This Course:

Alberto, P.A., & Troutman, A.C. (1999). *Applied Behavior Analysis for Teachers* (5th

- Ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Barkley, R.A. (1995). *Taking Charge of ADHD*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Brooks-Gunn & Klebanov, P.K. (1996). Ethnic Differences in Children's Intelligence Test Scores: Role of Economic Deprivation, Home Environment, and Maternal Characteristics. *Child Development*, 67, 396-408.
- Caldwell, J. (2010). Leadership development of individuals with developmental disabilities in the self-advocacy movement. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 54(11), 1004-1014.
- Chandler, L. K., Dalhquist, C. M. (2002). *Functional Assessment. Strategies to Prevent and Remediate Challenging Behavior in School Settings*. Upper Saddle River, NY: Merrill Prentice Hall
- Cramer, S. C. & Ellis, W. (1996). *Learning Disabilities: Lifelong issues.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks Pub. Co.
- Fagan, T. K. (1992). Compulsory Schooling, Child Study, Clinical Psychology, and Special Education: Origins of School Psychology. *American Psychologist*, 47 (2), 236-243.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Grandin, T. & Scariano, M. (1986). *Emergence-Labeled Autistic*. Novato, Ca: Arena Press.
- Gallagher, J.J. & Gallagher, S.A. (1994). *Teaching the gifted child (4th Ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Hafner, D., Moffatt, C., Nutullah, K. (2012). Cutting-Edge: Integrating Students with Intellectual Disabilities Into a 4-Year Liberal Arts College. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*, 34, 18-30.
- Hallowell, E.M. & Ratey, J.J. (1994). *Driven to Distraction*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Hart, D., Grigal, M., & Weir, C. (2010). Think College: A Snapshot of Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities Across the United States. *Think College Fast Facts, Issue No. 2*, Boston, MA: Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston. Kingsley, J. & Levits, M. (1994). *Count Us In, Growing Up with Down Syndrome*. Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Kluth, P. (2006). "You're Going to Love This Kid!" *Teaching Students with Autism in the Inclusive Classroom*. Baltimore: Brooks Publishing Company.
- Lee, C. & Jackson, R. (1992). *Faking It. A look into the mind of a creative learner*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.
- McCarthy, A M., Richman, & L.C., Yarbrough, D. (1995). Memory, Attention, and School Problems in Children with Seizure Disorder. *Developmental Neuropsychology*, 11 (1), 71-86.
- Migliore, A., Butterworth, J., & Hart, D., (2009). Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities. *Think College Fast Facts, Issue No. 1*, Boston, MA: Institute for Community Inclusion, UMass Boston.
- National Research Council. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. (1998). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Patton, J. R., Pollwoay, E. A., & Smith, T. E. (2000). Educating Students with Mild Mental Retardation. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 15(2), 80-89. Reid, R., Trout, Al, Schartz, M. (2005). Self-Regulation Interventions for Children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. *Council for Exceptional Children*, 71, 361-377.

Williams, V. (2011). *Disability and discourse: Analysing inclusive conversation with people with developmental disabilities*. United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell.

Zentall, S. S. (2006). *ADHD and Education. Foundations, Characteristics, Methods, and Collaboration*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

www.disabilityresources.org/GEORGIA.html www.nichcy.org/state/she.ga.htm

Extra Assistance or help: If at any time you feel that you might need assistance with the material in this course, please see me or my Teaching Assistant Morgan Truett morgan.truett@vikings.berry.edu. If you cannot meet with me during my listed office hours, I will do my very best to make an appointment with you that works for the both of us. Please keep in mind that the earlier in the semester that we address any potential issues, the better the chances are that your performance in this class is to your satisfaction.

Students with Disabilities:

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the college of special needs. If you have a diagnosed disability that may require some accommodations for success in this class, please set up an appointment to discuss this with this professor. In addition, it is important that you contact the Academic Support Center (located at the Memorial Library on the 1st floor, extension 4080) as soon as possible to ensure that any accommodations needed are implemented in a timely manner. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. The Academic Support Center's website is <http://www.berry.edu/academics/ASC/> The director is Ms. Wilma Maynard, phone 706-233-4080, wmaynard@berry.edu

Extra help for any student:

Students who believe they may need tutoring in this class are encouraged to contact the instructor as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made with the Academic Support Center to provide a free tutor in a timely manner. In addition, the Writing Center is an excellent resource for this class. Students concerned about their performance in a writing intensive class are strongly encouraged to initiate contact with the Writing Center early in the semester!

Information about DIGS digsrome.org

Developing Independence, Growth, and Security for adults with Developmental Challenges. A nonprofit local organization founded by parents of adults with developmental disabilities, local advocates, and local educators.

Their Mission: "To provide safe housing, work, and leisure opportunities for adults with developmental challenges. DIGS leisure opportunities are for our adults and older teens 18+ years in age. Support from our community partners and volunteers provide our adults with activities to promote social interaction, creativity, relationship and life skills building among their peers."

The purpose of the social events are to provide enjoyable leisure interests for adults living with developmental disabilities and/or other challenges the options to enjoy themselves in our community just as any other person with non-developmental challenges. This in turn creates a

venue for a more enhanced quality of life while bringing out the extraordinary abilities in talent our adults are gifted, whether it be through art, music, photography, dance, or creative design in our unique one of a kind pieces in garden art, they all have something of significance to contribute to their community and our lives.

Monthly activities for DIGS are approved for Field Experience. You can find the monthly calendar on their website (address above). There are several activities we will be scheduling just for our class to have an opportunity to spend time with members of DIGS. Other activities are ongoing such as Art Club, 1 Step at a time Dance Club, Just As I Am Choir, and Snap Happy Camera Club.

You will also be given information about monthly activities through the Parent2parent organization. For instance, Challenger Sports are modified sports programs that allow access to all people with disabilities. Soccer practice begins 9/7/13 (on Saturdays for 6 weeks) at Garden Lakes Soccer Fields.

The Challenger Sports League is designed to help special needs children and adults have the opportunity to experience the excitement of playing sports regardless of their disability. The program is designed for developmentally disabled persons.

Challenger Sports & Seasons

Soccer: Sept 6 – Oct 11@ 10 am North Floyd Park Soccer Fields Miracle

League Fall Baseball Saturdays 1:00, Rome Braves Miracle Field

Questions: Tammy Bryant 706.234.0383, tbryant@rfpra.com

Challenger Sports depends on our volunteers. Volunteers are needed for coaches, buddies, refreshments, special events, and other positions. Please contact us for more information on becoming a volunteer. Web site <http://www.rfpra.com/Programs.html>