Calendar Description: This required graduate course examines the current problems and issues associated with the education of children with exceptionalities. Its focus is to examine and critique the policy, practice, research and scholarship of special education including special education reform, inclusion, assessment, instruction, programming, and implementation. By developing and refining their critical analysis skills, students will be able to present defensible and reasoned perspectives about the domain.

Aims, Goals, Objectives, Outcomes:
1. To understand the recent reforms in regular education and special education and the paradigm shift toward inclusion.
2. To understand the effect this shift has on the various aspects of special education and its implications for all educators.

Course Texts/Materials:
No required course text.
Required journal articles:


Required Ontario Ministry of Education Documents:
Education for All:

Effective educational practices for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/autismSpecDis.html

The individual education plan (IEP): A resource guide for teachers:

Special Education: A guide for teachers:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/guide.html

**Assignments and Other Course Requirements (type, due dates and weighting):**

1. Seminar (described below) – 25%
2. Portfolio Project (described below) – 50%
3. Final Question (described below) – 25%
Seminar – 25%
In pairs, students will assume the roles of seminar leaders and conduct a topical seminar lasting no more than 40 minutes, based on instructor assigned and student selected journal articles. Seminar leaders are responsible for structuring the seminar so that the relevant issues are addressed. This is not a teaching or presentation exercise, it is designed to spark discussion/debate. It is also a chance to discuss issues and questions that may be relevant to the portfolio project. On the evening of their seminar, each pair will provide a one-page maximum outline of the seminar for all participants. This outline will also include at least 3 questions that directly pertain to the Portfolio Project. All participants are to do the assigned readings for each seminar that will include at least one journal article that is selected by the presenters (see scoring rubric on course web page).

Portfolio Project – 50%
This assignment will be a 15 page report, maximum! (double spaced; Times New Roman, 12 font). The purpose of the exercise is to gain an understanding of special education issues by carefully analyzing and evaluating a school's global involvement in special education. This will require gathering and documenting some types of information and directly obtaining data via interviews with teachers and administrators. The information you are seeking will; a) be responses to the questions or issues that arise during class discussions or from the readings, b) responses to the questions and issues that emerge from the Seminars, and/or c) address the primary issues in special education which will include but is not to be restricted to the following;

1. **Introduction** - school, personnel, resources (library, gym), access, etc…
2. The **History** of the merging of regular and special education within the school.
3. The **Current State of Affairs**.
   a) Philosophy, policies and mandates currently adhered to.
   b) Specialist personnel in the school - internal and external.
   c) Professional development in special education.
4. **Attitudes** of school personnel toward inclusive education/students/policies etc...
5. The **School Based Team**: its existence, makeup and procedural functions.
6. **The Assessment/IEP** process, policies, and practices (personnel, timing, support, etc…)
7. **Types of**:
   a) **Special Education Delivery**
   b) **Inclusive Classroom Practices**
   c) **Accommodations/Adaptations/Modifications**
   d) **Evaluation of student learning/Reporting via Report Cards**
8. **Assistive Technology** availability and use
9. Level of **Teacher Preparation** to teach/manage children with special needs.

Once your compilation of this information is completed, you are to provide an analysis of the policies and practices and make recommendations for change (if needed). The project will be evaluated on its thoroughness of investigation and documentation and the application of the course readings and discussions to its analysis and recommendations. The Portfolio Project is due November 21 (see scoring rubric on course web page).
Final Question – 25%
Respond to the following essay question:
Recent reforms in regular and special education have been influenced by a paradigm shift toward inclusion. The effect of this shift toward inclusive education practices provides an interesting context for considering policy, practice, research, and the scholarship of special education. Working from an inclusive perspective, examine and critique one (or more) of the one of the categories of special education discussed in this class (autism, learning disabilities, etc.) with regard to assessment, instruction, and programming. That is, how may assessment practices be more inclusive? How can the implementation of instruction and programming efforts promote inclusion? How may teachers influence the policy, practice, research, and scholarly debate concerning inclusive practices? Responses to this question should be at least 5 pages in length (exclusive of reference page), double-spaced, and in 12-point font with 1 inch margins. Your paper is to be written in APA style and you are required to cite course readings and resource materials (see scoring rubric on course web page). Paper are due December 2nd.

Sakai OWL platform login instructions and technical support information:
Your Western University login and password is required to access the course (your Western email without the @uwo.ca and its accompanying password). Access to Sakai OWL is found here: http://owltoo.uwo.ca.

For help on Sakai or access contact the ITS Help Desk:
- Support Services Building, Room 4100
- Phone: 519-661-3800
- Webform – https://its.help.uwo.ca

Policy Statements:

Please see the “Policies” page of the Graduate Programs & Research web site for further details on course and program policies: http://www.edu.uwo.ca/graduate/policies.html

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes. In the case of absence, instructors may assign additional course work. Normally, students who are absent from one-quarter or more of their classes will be assigned a grade of "F" (Fail), (Graduate Studies Subcommittee - December 3, 1999). As an example, most onsite half courses (with the exception of some Counselling Psychology classes) meet 12 times during a term, so students in these courses cannot miss more than two classes.

For on-line courses, participation will be determined by the instructor/professor in the course outline and will reflect the same principles as attendance policy for on-site courses.

For online courses organized on a week-by-week basis, participation in each week’s discussion will be considered the equivalent of one onsite class.

For online courses which are not organized on a week-by-week basis, contributing to the discussion of each unit of work (e.g., module) will be considered the equivalent of attending and participating in, the classroom discussion of a face-to-face class.
Language Proficiency: "Each student granted admission to Western must be proficient in spoken and written English. Students must demonstrate the ability to write clearly and correctly. Work presented in English in any subject at any level, which shows a lack of proficiency in English and is, therefore, unacceptable for academic credit, will either be failed or, at the discretion of the instructor, returned to the student for revision to a literate level. To foster competence in the use of the English language within their own discipline, all instructors will take proficiency in English into account in the assignment of grades." A student who, after admission, shows an inadequate command of spoken or written English must improve his or her proficiency to the satisfaction of the graduate program or department. (http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/english.pdf)

Evaluation: Graduate students must maintain at least a "B" average in their program. Although only numeric grades are assigned by instructors in the Faculty of Education, the following alpha grade ranges are provided for your information.

A = 80% and above  
B = 70% - 79%  
C = 60% - 69%  
F = Fail - less than 60%

The following guidelines for assigning grades are in effect at the Faculty of Education.

A: Reserved for those students whose work is excellent. Their work will contain an element of originality, creativity, or thoroughness. It will be well organized and expressed, and will reflect a particularly clear command of techniques and principles, incisive judgements, sound critical evaluations, and so on.

B: Assigned for proof of good competent work. A "B" grade indicates that a student has mastered the course material and can manipulate it, can write clear prose, can demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and synthesize material, and can apply the course material to relevant situations or problems.

C: Assigned because a student does not meet one or more of the above criteria. Even though the student may be conscientious, he or she has not demonstrated a mastery of the graduate work in the course. A lack of mastery may include any number of characteristics such as an inability to write clearly, to research a topic adequately, to synthesize material, or to make basic judgements about relevance, and so on.

F: Glaring inaccuracy and confusion, little or no grasp of techniques and principles, trivial and irrelevant treatment of topics. In general, a failure to demonstrate the minimal knowledge and skills for effective work in the discipline.

INC: (Incomplete) An INC may be granted for a course where the student has not been able to complete the assigned work in the normal timeline due to exceptional circumstances. Permission to carry an INC must be sought from the Chair, Graduate Education before the end of the term. The INC must be completed by the end of the following term or a grade of F (FAIL) will be assigned. According to SGPS policy, NO exceptions will be granted to this rule.

A numerical grade submitted for an INC grade, or an F grade resulting for an INC, is final. The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will not consider a subsequent revision of either such grade except on documented medical or compassionate grounds.
Instructors shall inform students, both in class and in the course outline, as to any policies and/or penalties concerning late submission of assignments.

**IPR:** (In Progress) assigned during preparation for Thesis or Directed Research Project or a half or full course which extends over two or more terms.

**Statement on Academic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously; a student guilty of a scholastic offence may be subject to the imposition of one or more penalties, ranging from reprimand to expulsion from the university, as well as criminal proceedings where appropriate. Students are strongly encouraged to review the appropriate policy document, and specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence: [Scholastic Discipline for Graduate Students](http://www.turnitin.com).

**Plagiarism:** Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar [reproduced below]).

**Plagiarism Checking:** All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

The Academic Calendar states:

Scholastic Offences include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Plagiarism which may be defined as: 'The act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind.' Excerpted from H. C. Black, Black's Law Dictionary, West Publishing Co., 1979, 5th Ed., p. 1035. This concept applies with equal force to all assignments including laboratory reports, diagrams, and computer projects.

8. Submitting for credit in any course or program of study, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf

A student guilty of a scholastic offence may be subject to the imposition of one or more penalties, ranging from reprimand to expulsion from the university.

Accessibility: The University of Western Ontario is committed to recognizing the dignity and independence of all students and seeks to ensure that persons with disabilities have genuine, open and unhindered access to academic services. Please contact me if you require course materials in an alternative format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact the Faculty of Education Graduate Programs & Research Office at (519) 661-2099 and/or Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (519) 661-2111 X 82147 for information about requesting academic accommodation, or go to the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_disabilities_handbook.pdf