



Course Prefix and Number: EEX 4058

Course Title: Instructional Methods for Special Education Across Content Areas

CRN, Section #, Credit Hours: 4

COURSE SYLLABUS

Semester: Fall 2026

Class Meeting Days:

Class Meeting Time:

Class Meeting Location:

Instructor:

Office Location:

Office Hours:

Email:

I. Welcome!

Welcome to *Instructional Methods for Special Education Across Content Areas*! In this course, you will deepen your understanding of how to create meaningful learning opportunities for students with a wide range of learning needs across core content areas. You'll develop practical skills in planning, adapting, and delivering instruction across science, math, social studies, and writing. These are skills that directly support your career readiness in areas such as critical thinking, communication, and professionalism. Throughout the semester, you'll build real, hands-on experience in designing accessible lessons, using evidence-based practices, analyzing learner needs, and communicating effectively with students and colleagues. My hope is that you leave this class feeling confident and empowered to create classrooms where all students can thrive. I'm glad you're here!

II. University Course Description

This course is designed to help students understand how Special Education can be taught across multiple content areas. Students will learn how various disciplines offer both challenges and opportunities. This course will provide the tools need to make learning accessible to all.

III. Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites

IV. Course Purpose

As a core course for students pursuing dual certification in Elementary Education (K–5) and Special Education (K–12), it offers a unified and focused approach to understanding how to plan, adapt, and deliver instruction across science, mathematics, social studies, and other content areas. The purpose of this course is to equip future educators with the tools needed to create accessible learning experiences, apply evidence-based practices, and make instructional decisions that support students with a wide range of learning needs.

V. Student Learning Outcomes

Candidates will:

- *Demonstrate an understanding of the process of developing an IFSP, IEP and ITP, the ethical practices in the development, and how it applies to specific content areas. ESE 61.1, 61.2, 61.3, 61.7,*
- *Demonstrate how to accommodate students with disabilities and the implementation of RTI across the life span including severity range and the use of technology within each content-specific area. ESE and ESOL 61.3, 61.7; RC 4.9*
- *Describe and discuss the benefits and challenges of the various special service delivery approaches including general class placement with full inclusion. ESE 61.2, 61.4, 61.6, 61.7*
- *Demonstrate an understanding of the techniques for improving the home and school partnership, including reducing cultural and linguistic barriers. FEAP 2, 3; CLO 2, 6; ESOL PS 23; RC 3, 4; IRA 1-4; ESE 61.1, 61.2*
- *Identify the characteristics and needs of exceptional children in different exceptionalities. FEAP 1; CLO 4, 8; ESE 61.1*
- *Identify the ethical practices in differentiated grouping, modifications, accommodations, and the process of RTI including the use of technology for students with disabilities within each content area. ESE 61.3*
- *Describe the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, evaluate resources and tools; and how they support engagement and motivation for varied learners in informal learning environments. ESE 61.3*
- *Develop lesson plans, which are aligned with the local, state, and national science education standards and Florida Performance Standards for Teachers of ESE and ESOL students. FEAP 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; SLO 2, 3, 4, 5, 8; ESOL PS(s) 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21; 60.18-26*
- *Apply the appropriate assessment strategies to determine the progress of children's learning of each subject area, including specific ESE and ESOL strategies for students at various levels of proficiency. FEAP 1, 4, 5, 8, 9; SLO 4, 8; ESOL PS(s) 14, 19, 21; ESOL Competencies 4, 9*
- *Demonstrate the skills related to the process of science, as they apply to the learning of science by elementary school children, including specific Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) strategies for students at various levels of proficiency. FEAP 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12; SLO 2, 3, 4, 5, 8; ESOL PS(s) 5, 6, 7, 16; ESOL Competencies 4, 6*
- *Demonstrate the ability to assess students' mathematical thinking and problem-solving process, plan, and structure learning situations in mathematics, with accommodations for a range of proficiency levels for elementary school children. 60.12; FEAP 8, SLO 4, 8*

VI. Course Objectives

By the end of this course, candidates will be able to:

1. Explain the processes and ethical considerations involved in developing IFSPs, IEPs, and ITPs, and describe how these plans inform instructional decision-making across core content areas.
2. Identify the characteristics and learning needs associated with various exceptionalities and determine appropriate accommodations, modifications, and assistive technology supports within each content area.
3. Analyze and compare special education service delivery models, including general education placement, collaborative practices, and inclusive instructional approaches.
4. Use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to design accessible instruction, evaluate tools and resources, and support learner engagement, motivation, and participation.
5. Develop differentiated lesson plans aligned with state and national standards, incorporating evidence-based strategies in science, mathematics, social studies, and writing.
6. Implement content-specific ESE and ESOL strategies that promote conceptual understanding, academic language development, and participation for students across proficiency levels.
7. Apply formative and informal assessment strategies to monitor student progress in each content area and use assessment data to adjust instruction for students with varying instructional needs.

VII. Required Texts and/or Readings and Course Materials

- No required texts for this course. Reading assignments will be assigned in Canvas and provided to students.

VIII. Communication

You may contact me at any time through Canvas Inbox or by USF email, and I encourage you to use whichever method is most convenient for you. My office location, office hours, and phone number are listed at the top of this syllabus and on our Canvas course homepage. Class announcements, reminders, and important updates will always be posted in Canvas Announcements, so please check them regularly.

When communicating with me or your peers, please use clear and professional language. I typically respond to messages within 24–48 hours on weekdays. Messages sent on weekends or holidays will be addressed on the next business day. If you have a time-sensitive concern, please note that in your subject line so I can prioritize appropriately.

My goal is to maintain open, supportive communication and to help you be successful in this course.

IX. Grading & Late Policies

The grading policy for this course is listed below:

Grading Scale (%)

90-100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
0 - 59	F

10% off per day late will apply to all work. If you have an emergency, please reach out to your instructor PRIOR to the assignment being due to determine if they can work with you on the submission. Communicating with your instructor after the assignment is due will result in late points being deducted from the assignment. A critical assignment that does not meet the prescribed standard of 80% may be revised and resubmitted with prior approval from the supervisor. The rewrite must be returned to the instructor within a week. Failure to submit a critical assignment by the prescribed time will result in a final grade of an “U”.

Assignments

Course Readings & Media:

Throughout this course, you will engage with a variety of assigned readings, videos, and instructional resources that support your understanding of instructional methods across content areas. Some readings or video clips may require brief written or discussion-based analysis to help you connect the content to course concepts and classroom practice. All required materials will be posted in Canvas, along with any guiding questions or prompts. You are expected to review these resources prior to class and be prepared to discuss or apply them during class sessions.

First-Day Reflection Assignment:

On the first day of class, you will complete a short “My Learning Story” reflection. In a brief paragraph, you will describe a time when you felt successful or challenged while learning a content area such as science, math, social studies, or writing, and identify what supported or hindered your learning in that moment. This low-stakes assignment helps us begin the course by connecting your own learning experiences to the instructional approaches we will explore throughout the semester.

Application Tasks: 10 points per task

At the end of each major section of the course (Science, Math, Social Studies/Writing, and UDL/DI), you will complete a short application task that gives you practice applying the instructional strategies discussed in class. These tasks may include analyzing a lesson for accessibility, modifying an activity, identifying appropriate accommodations, or designing a small instructional support connected to the content area. Application tasks are brief, hands-on opportunities to demonstrate your understanding before moving on to the next section of the course.

Content Area Accessibility Analysis: 25 points

For this assignment, you will select an existing lesson or activity from a curriculum resource in science, math, or social studies/writing and analyze it for accessibility. You will identify potential barriers that may impact students with a range of learning needs, and then propose specific accommodations, modifications, and UDL supports to make the activity more accessible. You will redesign one portion of the lesson to show how your changes improve access and participation. This assignment strengthens your ability to evaluate instructional materials and make informed decisions that support learner success.

Instructional Strategy Demonstration: 50 points

For this assignment, you will create a short recorded demonstration (3–5 minutes) modeling an instructional strategy from one content area covered in the course. Examples include demonstrating how to use manipulatives in math, modeling a vocabulary routine for science or social studies, or showing a writing scaffold that supports student expression. Your demonstration should be clear, practical, and focused on how the strategy supports students with special education needs. A brief written or recorded explanation should accompany your video describing when and why you would use this strategy in your classroom.

UDL and Differentiation Creative Reflection Project: 150 points

For your final assignment, you will create a creative reflection that demonstrates what you have learned about Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI) as they apply to one content area explored in this course (science, math, or social studies/writing). Instead of a traditional paper, you will choose a creative format such as a video, digital poster, illustrated story, podcast, interactive tool, or another approved medium, and use it to show your understanding of UDL, DI, and practical strategies you would use when teaching your chosen subject. Your project should include at least two examples from course activities or discussions and be accompanied by a brief written or recorded explanation that connects your creative choices to key course concepts.

X. Course Schedule.

Date	Topics to be Discussed in Class	Assignments Due
xx	Course Introduction and Overview of Exceptional Student Education	My Learning Story
xx	Characteristics of Learners and Implications for Instruction	Course Readings & Media
xx	Service Delivery Models and Roles of Special Educators	
xx	Planning and Adapting Instruction Across Content Areas	Application Tasks
xx	Evidence-Based Practices in Science Instruction	Course Readings & Media
xx	Hands-On Learning, Vocabulary, and Accessible Science Materials	
xx	Supporting Inquiry, Investigations, and Data Collection	Course Readings & Media
xx	Science Lesson Planning and Differentiation	Application Tasks
xx	High-Leverage Math Practices and the CRA Framework	
xx	Visuals, Manipulatives, and Language Supports in Math	Course Readings & Media
xx	Problem-Solving Strategies and Accessible Tasks	
xx	Math Lesson Planning and Differentiation	Application Tasks

xx	Accessible Texts, Vocabulary Supports, and Engagement Strategies	• Instructional Strategy Demonstration
xx	Communication Supports, Writing Scaffolds, and Participation Strategies	• Application Tasks • Content Area Accessibility Analysis
xx	Universal Design for Learning Principles and Tools	
xx	Differentiated Instruction, Tiered Tasks, and Final Applications	• Application Tasks • UDL & DI Project

* Note: The Schedule is subject to revision

XI. Integration of This Course into Your Academic Experience

This course fits at a key point in your BXE program. You have already built a foundation in learning, development, and content-area instruction, and this course helps you apply that knowledge to meet the instructional needs of students with a wide range of learning needs. The methods and planning skills you develop here will support your success in upcoming field experiences, Level II internship, and your final internship. This course strengthens your ability to design instruction, adapt materials, and make informed decisions that prepare you for the responsibilities you will take on as a certified teacher.

XII. USF Core Syllabus Policies

USF has a set of central policies related to student recording class sessions, academic integrity and grievances, student accessibility services, academic disruption, religious observances, academic continuity, food insecurity, pregnancy and related conditions, and sexual harassment that **apply to all courses at USF**. Be sure to review these online: usf.edu/provost/faculty-success/resources-policies-forms/core-syllabus-policy-statements.aspx

XIII. Course Policies:

Grades of "Incomplete": An "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course. For undergraduate students, this time limit may not exceed two academic semesters, whether or not the student is in residence, and/or graduation, whichever comes first. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all class sessions. This course includes frequent hands-on activities, collaborative tasks, and in-class application of instructional methods that cannot be made up outside of class. Because participation is a key component of your learning, any missed class session will result in a score of zero for the participation assigned to that day. If you must be absent due to an unavoidable circumstance, please communicate with me as soon as possible so we can discuss your options.

Campus Free Expression: *It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive.*

In the instructional setting, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. "Objective" means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research.

In this course you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and to demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding and engaging with an idea does not require you to believe it or to agree with it.

XIV. Course Policies: Technology and Media

Canvas: This course will be offered via USF's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. If you need help learning how to perform various tasks related to this course or other courses being offered in Canvas, please view the following videos or consult the Canvas help guides. You may also contact USF's IT department at (813) 974-1222 or help@usf.edu.

Recordings: *In this class, software will be used to record live class lectures and discussions. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions will be recorded. These recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the class, to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Please discuss this option with your instructor.*

XV. Course Policies: Student Expectations

Health and Wellness: Your health is a priority at the University of South Florida. We encourage members of our community to look out for each other and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or someone you know is in distress, please make a referral at www.usf.edu/sos so that the Student Outreach & Support can contact and provide helpful resources to the student in distress. A 24-hour licensed mental healthcare professional, offered through the counseling center, is available by phone at 813-974-2831, option 3. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

Title IX Policy: USF is committed to fostering a safe and respectful learning environment, free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment, in accordance with Title IX and [USF Policy 0-004](#). If a student shares an experience of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence with a USF employee (including faculty), that employee will notify the Title IX Office. This allows the Title IX Office to send the student an email with information about support resources and options—if it is safe to do so. Students are not required to respond to this email. The Title IX Office is a private resource. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis to provide students with support measures. To speak to a confidential resource, students may contact [USF Center for Victim Advocacy](#) at 813-974-5757. Confidential resources do not notify the Title IX Office unless the student requests it. For more information about Title IX, available resources, or to make a report, please visit www.usf.edu/title-ix.

Professionalism Policy: Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. **must be silenced** during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Turnitin.com: If you are using this plagiarism-detection service, it is recommended that you clearly state so on the syllabus. In order to comply with privacy laws, students are not required to include personal identifying information, such as name, in the body of the document. Turnitin provides an originality report letting the instructor know how much of the assignment is original.

Example: In this course, turnitin.com will be utilized. Turnitin is an automated system which instructors may use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in both hard copy and electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process visit <http://www.turnitin.com>. Essays are due at turnitin.com the same day as in class.

Netiquette Guidelines

1. Act professionally in the way you communicate. Treat your instructors and peers with respect, the same way you would do in a face-to-face environment. Respect other people's ideas and be constructive when explaining your views about points you may not agree with.
2. Be sensitive. Be respectful and sensitive when sharing your ideas and opinions. There will be people in your class with different linguistic backgrounds, political and religious beliefs or other general differences.
3. Proofread and check spelling. Doing this before sending an email or posting a thread on a discussion board will allow you to make sure your message is clear and thoughtful. Avoid the use of all capital letters, it can be perceived as if you are shouting, and it is more difficult to read.
4. Keep your communications focused and stay on topic. Complete your ideas before changing the subject. By keeping the message on focus you allow the readers to easily get your idea or answers they are looking for.
5. Be clear with your message. Avoid using humor or sarcasm. Since people can't see your expressions or hear your tone of voice, meaning can be misinterpreted.

End of Semester Student Evaluations: All classes at USF make use of an online system for students to provide feedback to the University regarding the course. These surveys will be made available at the end of the semester, and the University will notify you by email when the response window opens. Your participation is highly encouraged and valued.

XVI. Learning Support and Campus Offices

Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in order to receive academic accommodations. For additional information about academic accommodations and resources, you can visit the SAS website.

[SAS website for the Tampa and Sarasota-Manatee campuses.](#)

[SAS website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

Academic Support Services

The USF Office of Student Success coordinates and promotes university-wide efforts to enhance undergraduate and graduate student success. For a comprehensive list of academic support services available to all USF students, please visit the [Office of Student Success website.](#)

Canvas Technical Support

If you have technical difficulties in Canvas, you can find access to the Canvas guides and video resources in the “Canvas Help” page on the homepage of your Canvas course. You can also contact the help desk by calling 813-974-1222 in Tampa or emailing help@usf.edu.

[IT website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[IT website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[IT website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Center for Victim Advocacy

The [Center for Victim Advocacy](#) empowers survivors of crime, violence, or abuse by promoting the restoration of decision making, by advocating for their rights, and by offering support and resources. Contact information is available online.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes the wellbeing of the campus community by providing culturally sensitive counseling, consultation, prevention, and training that enhances student academic and personal success. Contact information is available online.

[Counseling Center website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Counseling Center website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)

Tutoring

The Tutoring Hub offers free tutoring in several subjects to USF undergraduates. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information, email asctampa@usf.edu.

[Tutoring website for the Tampa campus.](#)

[Tutoring website for the St. Pete campus.](#)

[Tutoring website for the Sarasota-Manatee campus.](#)