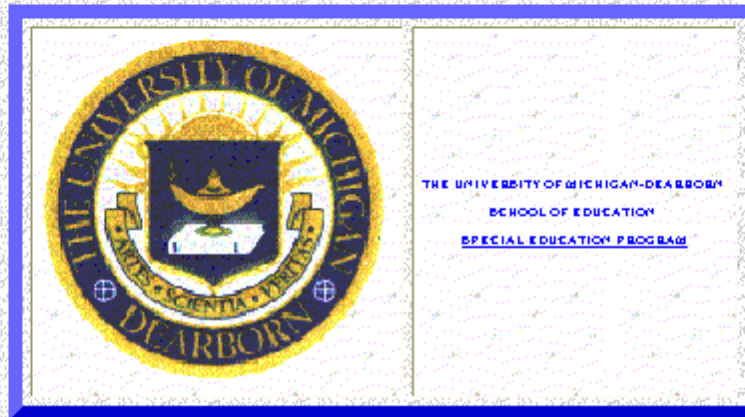


Belinda Davis Lazarus

University of Michigan-Dearborn

Education Exceptional Children: An
On-line Course



WELCOME TO
ED 440 Educating the Exceptional Child

Characteristics, identification, assessment and instruction of students with exceptionalities are addressed. Includes students with learning disabilities, behavior disorders, emotional handicaps, mental retardation, communication disorders, visual impairments, orthopedic and hearing impairments, blindness, conditions. Service delivery and clinical medical models, general curricular and instructional assessment procedures, and adaptations that help integrate students with exceptionalities into the general education classroom will also be addressed.

INSTRUCTOR	PREREQUISITES
SYLLABUS	ASSIGNMENTS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	GRADING

The Getting Started with On-line Courses Workshop enabled me to apply my skills in instructional design to the development of on-line courses. Prior to the workshop I had little experience with web page development and through the course gained the skills needed to author and manage an on-line course. I was also able to experience the triumphs and frustrations that students are likely to encounter in my on-line courses and learn from the behaviors modeled by the ALN instructors how to facilitate their learning from afar.

As the first on-line course at UM-D, it's progress has generated considerable interest among faculty who have viewed asynchronous learning with considerable skepticism. The need to offer the course also helped School of Education administration realize that we *could* run our own server, get enrollments in on-line courses, and actually serve students via the Internet. In fact, the successful completion and offering of my course has legitimized asynchronous learning for many faculty and administrators.

Educating Exceptional Children On-line debuted this semester with an enrollment of 25 students and 22 on the waitlist. The class was filled within two weeks of the beginning of our Fall, 1998 enrollment period. We also had numerous inquiries and attempts to enroll from students in 9 different countries. As a result, the course will be offered on-line during the Winter, 1999 semester.

To date, students are working at their own pace and making satisfactory progress in the course. It is interesting to note that at least half of the class had little or no prior experience with the Internet. However, they learned quickly! The on-line discussions are busy and have, for the most part, served as a forum for lively and thoughtful exchanges. Guided notes and web site visit assignments have provided a wealth of information and learning experiences for the students. In response to a midterm evaluation of the course, students cited convenience, the discussions and guided notes, immediate feedback, the instructor, and the information on the web sites as the strengths of the class. As weaknesses, students admitted that they missed the live discussions, worried about the final, and suggested a few synchronous chats. A few students mentioned that they were confused about how to get started in the class.

