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### Personal Reflection - Post

Over the course of the past five weeks, I have had the opportunity to learn quite a lot about exceptional student populations. Although I have limited first hand experiences working with students with disabilities in the classroom setting, I now have a background of information that will help me in the future. The first grade classroom where I am currently placed does not have any children with individualized education programs, and I had limited interaction last year with the two boys who have autism. Through this course, I have learned about particular characteristics of disabilities, ways to accommodate and adapt instruction for students with disabilities, and where to find information about evidence based instructional practices. Additionally, through this course I have learned about important educational and civil rights legislation focused on individuals with disabilities. I now know about the process of going through child studies, response to intervention activities, and special education evaluations.

Beyond just learning about the disabilities and legislation, this course ensured that I learned about the special education services that are provided at my placement. I am placed at Magruder Elementary School in York County. This particular school district focuses on full inclusion of students with special education needs. Although I do not have any students in my classroom currently receiving services, there are many students who do receive services in the classroom across the hallway. Within my placement, I also had the opportunity to interview the special education teacher assigned to first grade students. Beyond learning about her daily duties and her experience with teaching special education, I also learned about the process of identifying students and the way in which para-educators and special education teachers work with the general education teacher. Another requirement of this course was to view a student's IEP or 504 plan. After reviewing one student's IEP I was also offered the opportunity to look at any of the records in the office, and to attend child study and evaluation meetings. All of these meetings will ultimately help me in my first year of teaching and the experience will allow me to know what to do in preparation for meetings and what to expect from the meeting. Finally, I also was able to observe a student with behavior problems, research possible interventions, and implement a lesson that targeted his activity. This activity helped me realize how important accommodations, differentiation, and adaptations can be in the general education classroom.

This course has definitely prepared me to work with a variety of students, and I feel more confident in my ability to work in an inclusion setting. Now I know who to go to within my practicum setting in order to find out about a student's needs and how to work collaboratively with the special education teacher and school psychologist. I have definitely gained confidence in my ability to interact with students with disabilities and I am more aware of how to incorporate students with disabilities into the general education classroom. Through textbook readings, presentations, and assignments, I feel as though I will now be able to adapt instruction, lessons, and assessments to fit with the needs of students with disabilities. I still feel as though teaching will require me to remain flexible in order to fulfill the needs of all of the students in the classroom, and now I have information on how to adjust the instruction for my students. I realize that some students may require additional time to complete an assignment or test. Some may require assistance with reading, writing, or responding to questions. Others may need to have different and personalized goals and objectives for class activities and assessments. Ultimately, the Individualized Education Programs and 504 plans will help me accommodate my students with special needs and ensure that they are succeeding at their own ability level. Overall, I want to ensure that my students with special needs benefit from the general education classroom. This will happen through effective planning, and by creating a welcoming organized classroom environment.