

# Introduction to Special Education Advocacy - SEAT 1.0

Instructors: Eileen Crumm, Missy Alexander, Paula Senigar

**Course Description:** This course is intended as an introduction to advocacy for education services for children/youth with disabilities. This class is intended for people new to advocacy, who want to increase their understanding of the field of special education advocacy; critical provisions of the federal laws that govern education to students with disabilities; and, increase their knowledge and skills to take the first steps to becoming a special education advocate for students and their families. This class can be taken 'stand-alone' or can be used as a pre-requisite to SEAT 2.0.

**Textbooks:**

TBA

Lawrence Siegel, The Complete IEP Guide: How to Advocate for Your Special Ed Child, Nolo Press, 9<sup>th</sup> edition.

## WEEK 1: Education is a Civil Right!

Date: August 3, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning goals:**

1. Students will become familiar with the role of the special education advocate in the IEP/504 process.
2. Students will become familiar with the history of special education in the United States and some of the laws that impact children in education.
3. Students will become familiar with the wide range of laws concerning children with disabilities in education.

Assigned Reading: Wright and Wright, Chapters 1-3; Siegel Chapter 1 and watch video "Disability law, policy, and Civil Rights movement," University of Wisconsin, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbB3Azlil38>



**Topics Covered:**

- Students will hear about the skills and tools needed to become a special education advocate.
- Students will learn about relationship of disability rights to other civil rights movements.
- Students will be introduced to laws protecting those rights: 504, ADA, IDEA, FERPA, McKinney Vento.
- Students will discuss of the role of advocate in advancing those rights.

**WEEK 2: What make Special Education Special? What is the difference between IDEA and 504 and Student Study Teams?**

Date: August 10, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 -11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning goals:**

1. Students will be introduced to the concept of special education.
2. Students will understand the differences between SST, RTI, 504 and IDEA.
3. Discuss the factors that influence the decision between 504 and

IDEA. **Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Sections 4 - 131-198;

Siegel Chapter 2, 6,7 **Class Activity:** Class discussion

**Topics Covered:**

- Specialized Instruction
- Eligibility Categories
- Placement, Services, Accommodations and Modifications
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – FAQ and comparison of differences and similarities with IDEA

**WEEK 3: Eligible Child’s entitlement to FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education) in LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)**

Date: August 17, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 -11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning Goals:**

1. Students will understand the concept of FAPE.
2. Students will be introduced to the ideas of procedural and substantive FAPE
3. Students will model the process for least restrictive environment for a

student **Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Section 2 pp. 21-57; Siegel

pages 19-22, 302-303 **Class Activity:** IEP Simulated Discussion about LRE

**Topics Covered**

- Procedural FAPE
- Substantive FAPE
- Definition of Least Restrictive Environment
- Determining LRE for a student

**WEEK 4: The IEP Process**

Date: August 24, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning Goals:**

1. Students will understand all the parts of the IEP process and the timelines
2. Students will become familiar with procedural safeguards

**Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Section 3 pg. 59-114; Siegel Chapters 13 and 14

**Class Activity:** Anatomy of a Compliance Complaint

**Topics Covered:**

- Tasks/Timelines of the IEP Process
- Prior Written Notice (PWN)

- Compensatory Education
- Compliance Complaints
- Mediation
- Resolution Session
- Due Process

## WEEK 5: The IEP Document and Special Education Services

Date: August 31, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

### **Learning Goals:**

1. Students will understand the required components of the IEP document
2. Student will comprehend the significance of the components

**Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Chapter 12; Siegel Chapters

4,8,9,12,13 **Class Activity:** Hide and Seek, finding components in

different areas IEP documents **Topics Covered:**

- Parent Concerns
- Categories of Eligibility
- Evaluations
- Present levels of performance
- Special Factors
- Extended School Year
- Accommodations and Modifications
- The importance of documentation and preserving records

**There is an online MIDTERM students are expected to complete by September 7**

## Week 6 – Tests and Measurements

Date: September 7, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

### **Learning Goals:**

1. Students will review purpose and use of evaluations—psychological, educational, neuropsychological, psychiatric neurological
2. Students will learn how to understand what these evaluations measure and how to apply results to advocacy for individual child.

**Assigned Reading: Wright and Wright, Chapters 10,11**

### WEEK 7: Basic Advocacy: Written Communications

Date: September 14, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning goals:**

1. Students will understand the rule, “if it is not written down it does not exist”
2. Students will learn to write clear, professional and persuasive letters in advocating to children

**Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Chapters 21-24

**Class Activity:** Critiquing sample letters

**Topics Covered:**

- Components of a professional letter
- Writing the ‘right’ amount
- Telling the story
- Writing good evidence letters

### WEEK 8: Basic Advocacy: Managing the IEP Conversation

Date: September 21, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning goals:**

1. Students will learn a variety of advocacy strategies to use in IEP

meetings **Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Chapters 4,5,6,25,26,

Siegel Chapters 10-11 **ClassActivity:** Simulated IEP Conversation

**Topic Covered:**

- Image and Presentation
- Agenda Control
- Preparation
- Organization
- Meaningful Parental Participation
- Informed Consent

Class Assignment: Students will be given information to create a letter documenting an event to a district on behalf of a family

WEEK 9: Spotting and researching legal Issues

Date: September 28, 2018 · 12:30 – 2:30 PM Eastern/ 9:30 - 11:30 AM Pacific

**Learning goals:**

1. Students will learn some basic ways of getting more information about legal issues
2. Students will understand the concept of unlicensed

practice of law **Assigned Reading:** Wright and Wright, Chapter 7,

Siegel Chapters 14 **ClassActivity:** Spotting legal Issues

**Topic Covered:**

- Spotting Legal Issues
- Dear Colleague Letters from OCR and OSEP
- Letters of Finding from OCR