

# **SEAT 2.0**

## *Special Education Advocacy Training*

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This is a sample syllabus to provide prospective students with a feel for the class. The pages and links for the assigned readings have been removed, as they change regularly. The assignments and policies are samples and are updated annually.

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### **SEAT Cohort 8**

SEAT COURSE SYLLABUS 2019-2020

#### ***OVERVIEW:***

The Special Education Advocate Training (SEAT) is a year-long course, plus a required practicum, that provides participants with the information, training (web-based) and practical experience to become a special education advocate. The course is led by practicing advocates and attorneys. Materials are presented in various ways in an effort to make concepts as accessible as possible to multiple learning styles. Tests, assignments, reading and practicum experience are all required aspects of the course.

If you require accommodations or additional assistance, please contact [ilana@copaa.org](mailto:ilana@copaa.org) as soon as possible.

COPAA and SEAT staff have a strong commitment to helping all students succeed in becoming better informed and stronger special education advocates.

#### ***Instructors will provide:***

- Clear expectations (rubrics) for graded work which communicate standards expected for the work to be submitted or shared with peers. Graded work is pass/fail. Students who fail an assignment will have an opportunity to resubmit.
- Time/space for SEAT students to ask questions and get clarity on the material or lectures.
- Time/space for SEAT students to learn experientially through discussions, scenarios and role playing.
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction and networking through the SEAT group page and discussion groups and peer-to-peer commentary on work.

#### ***PREPARATION FOR THE COURSE:***

This course assumes that participants are familiar with special education and the IEP process; the range of disabilities and challenges addressed by IDEA; disability culture; and, working with families of children with disabilities.

## **About COPAA**

Mission <http://www.copaa.org/page=MIssion>

Diversity Statement <http://www.copaa.org/page=Diversity>

Education as a Civil Right <http://www.copaa.org/page=ThisisCivilRights>

## **COPAA Wikipedia Page**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council\\_of\\_Parent\\_Attorneys\\_and\\_Advocates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Parent_Attorneys_and_Advocates)

### **TEXTBOOKS:**

A Practical Guide to Special Education Advocate Training (SEAT Reader) (Mailed to participants as part of course fee).

Negotiating Genius, D. Malhotra and M. Bazerman, Harvard, 2007. (Participants must purchase separately)

### **GRADING POLICY:**

The SEAT course is designed to present information and to evaluate skills through assignments. Assignments will be graded as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If your Teacher Assistant grades an assignment as unsatisfactory, you will be able to resubmit the assignment no more than one time. If you find you are struggling with an assignment, you can contact your TA prior to submission for assistance.

Assignments are expected on the due date specified in the syllabus. Unless arrangements have been made with TA's ahead of time for extenuating circumstances or ADA accommodations, COPAA will not accept assignments turned in more than 7 days after the due date and the late assignments will be graded as unsatisfactory. If you have an extenuating circumstance (i.e., death in family, child in a hospital, serious illness) that is preventing you from completing an assignment on time, please contact your TA.

In order to qualify for the practicum, students must:

1. Complete 100% of the assignments;
2. Receive a satisfactory grade on 80% of assignments (the midterm and case study capstone MUST receive a satisfactory grade); and
3. Adhere to COPAA's attendance policy.

### **AUDIT POLICY:**

If you are in danger of failing the course, you will receive an email from your TA informing you of your current grade and offering the choice to audit the course or complete the necessary steps to improve your course standing.

**Expectations for SEAT Students:**

- Student will adhere to the COPAA Community Guidelines in all interactions with others.
- Student will alert program instructors/TAs about needed accommodations/modifications.
- Student will be responsible to prepare for class by reviewing the materials and completing assignments ahead of class.
- Student will ask for help when needed and actively participate in class.
- Student will participate when assigned to be discussants on scenarios, as well as, parts in role plays and to volunteer on a regular basis for class discussions.

Part of the job of an advocate requires being able to speak/react spontaneously in meetings, consequently, part of the course expectation is that students will demonstrate an ability to participate with minimal preparation as experience for that part of an advocate's job.

- Student will work toward mastery of the core competencies of Special Education Advocacy as outlined in the syllabus. Special Education Advocates have to have a command of this material to be able to practice effectively.
- Student will complete the readings/videos and webinar BEFORE class – as much of this material will be used but not necessarily reviewed in the class sessions.
- Student is invited to become an active member of the SEAT and COPAA community.
- Connecting/networking with other advocates can help build your skills and improve your practice. Volunteering to serve on COPAA committees, attending the annual conference (when possible) and being an active part of the learning community of the COPAA listservs all help to spread knowledge and expertise to advance the civil/educational rights of people with disabilities.

Welcome to the COPAA community!!!

## **Week 1: Introduction to Special Education Advocacy**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the mission of COPAA and how training advocates is an important part of that mission.
- Review the job of the special education advocate and the scope of the work.
- Review COPAA Code of Ethics
- Understand the framework of the class, grading policies, how to get help, the expectations for students/instructors and the course syllabus.
- Discuss the role expectations of students (their abilities and their futures) can have in the IEP process.

### ***Materials to Review/Download before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- Log onto SEAT Community Page, Upload a picture of yourself, check out who else is in the class!
- Complete COPAA SmarterU Self-Study Module - ‘Introduction to Special Education Advocacy’
- Read Article - “The Least Dangerous Assumption: A Challenge to Create a New Paradigm,” by Cheryl Jorgensen, Ph.D. (found on Group Page in File Library”
- Review Handout - Core Competencies of a Special Education Advocate

### ***Class Activity:***

- During the live class on Webex students will post in chat box state(s) of practice, and complete this sentence “I want to be a special education advocate because....” (try to keep it short)

### ***Class Discussion:***

- Instructors will engage students in a live discussion, questions are provided before class (the online platform allows for student engagement through chats, speaking directly to instructors and peers on a microphone)

## **Week 2: Sources of Special Education Law**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the basic structure of US federalism and how it impacts special education law

- Become familiar with statutes, regulations, case law and administrative decisions as sources of education law

Materials to Review Before Class:

\* SEAT Reader, about 30 pages assigned

- Complete SmarterU Self-Study Module –Laws and the Government
- Handout – Sources of Law Discussion Questions
- Handout - Element Chart

Class Activity/Discussion:

Lecture/Learning Game

### ***Class Assignment:***

- 1) Find and bookmark your State Code for Special education law:  
<http://fclawlib.libguides.com/specialeducation/50statesurvey>
- 2) Find and post to the SEAT Community page a link to your state procedural safeguard notice and compliance complaint form. Clearly indicate the state applicable for the form in your post.

## **Week 3: Civil/Education Rights for People with Disabilities**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the Role of a Special Education Advocate in utilizing the letter and intent of the law to support families and students in understanding and protecting their rights.
- Become familiar with the key federal law, PL 94-142/IDEA, Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA, ADA, FERPA/HIPPA
- Understand key landmark court decisions underlying special education law (Brown v. Board of Education, PARC v. Pennsylvania, Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia)
- Review Implications of Recent Supreme Court Case Endrew F.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- Review “Disability Rights: The Overlooked Civil Rights Issue,” Disabilities Studies Quarterly, Fall 2005.

**Class /Activity Discussion:**

Review scenarios and determine which law(s) contain primary source for protection of that right.

**Discussion Questions:**

- Instructors will engage students in discussion questions, questions are provided prior to class.

## **Week 4: 504 and the ADA to Advocate for Student Rights**

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**Learning Objectives:**

- Learn about protections for students in college under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Become familiar with the history and intent of 504
- Learn how 504 can be used to support students in school settings
- Review Recent Supreme Court Case Fry v. Napoleon

**Materials to Review before Class:**

- “The Power of 504,” video
- Dear Colleague Letter

Optional: Using Section 504 and the ADA in Special Education Advocacy, Catherine Merino Reisman, Esq. COPAA Recorded Webinar

**Class Activity/Discussion:**

Handout - Scenarios were handed out last week for review and preparation. Students are expected to participate in these discussions and are expected to engage.

## **Week 5: Overview Fundamentals of IDEA**

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**Learning Objectives:**

- ✓ Overview of the Scope of the IDEA: Parts A, B, C &D.
- ✓ Understand the essential components or principals of IDEA:

- Zero reject/Child Find
- Non-Discriminatory Evaluations
- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
  - Procedural and Substantive
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) including Accommodations and Modifications and Supplemental Aides and Services)
- Procedural Due Process
- Parental participation

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- *SEAT Reader*
- Parent Guide to IDEA

Optional: Turnbull, R.H. III. *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Reauthorization: Accountability and Personal Responsibility* (2005)  
REMEDIAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATION Volume 26, Number 6, Pages 320–326

***Application of Principles***

Participant discussion

Post in Group Page Forum - What is the difference between the concepts of substantive and procedural FAPE? Do both need to be present for a student to receive a FAPE?

***Class Assignment***

For next week's class (see with assignment/grading system) research the following issues for your state of practice and write no more than a 1 page memo (10 point minimum font). In bullet format, the memo should identify:

- 1) Who provides Part C services in your state of practice?
- 2) What are the eligibility requirements in your state?
- 3) What ages are covered by Part C and
- 4) What are the transition requirements for children between Part C and Part B.

## **Week 6: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C/Early Intervention**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Review the importance of early intervention for children with development delays, social emotional concerns and disabilities.

- Be familiar with the provisions of Part C in their state(s) of practice.
- Understand strategies in advocating for transition between Part C and Part B.

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- States' Part C Regulation and Policies  
(Please review information for your state(s) of practice as there will be a class role play and you will need to be familiar with state requirements for transition)

Class Activity:

Short review of Part C/ Role play for advocating for Part C to Part B Transition  
Students will be expected to know the rules for their state of practice for this exercise. Students will be given a short prep time and assigned parts for this exercise.

## **Week 7: Fundamentals of IDEA: Child Find and Evaluation**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the requirements for evaluation (and how Response to Intervention (RTI) fits into the evaluation process.
- Become familiar with the basic statistical principles underlying Evaluation

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- Review Evaluations handout for class discussion.
- Social Emotional Assessments: Meeting IDEA Requirements Presenter: Ann E. Simun, PsyD, COPAA Recorded Webinar
- Understanding Tests of Reading and Writing
- Presenter: Melissa Farrall, PhD, COPAA Recorded Webinar
- What Special Education Evaluation Testing Evaluations Mean

## **Week 8: IDEA’s FREE and Appropriate Public Education Provision**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the concept of a free and appropriate public education (both procedural and substantive).
- Learn the statutory requirements for FAPE.
- Learn key cases relevant to FAPE.
- Issue Spot difference between procedural and substantive FAPE.

### Materials to Review before Class:

- SEAT Reader
- Complete COPAA SmarterU Self-Study Module– Fundamental of IDEA: Free and Appropriate Public Education FAPE – [seat.copaa.org](http://seat.copaa.org)
- Webinar: Practical Applications and Methods for Using the Endrew F. USSC Decision in IEP Negotiations and Litigation <http://copaa.site-ym.com/page/Endrew>

### **Understood.org – Test Your Knowledge of FAPE** (link provided in syllabus)

**Class Discussion:** Instructors will engage students in discussion questions, questions are provided prior to class.

**Class Assignment:** Write a letter for a family asking for an IEP meeting and listing the items that they would like to address at the IEP meeting.

## **Week 9: Fundamentals of IDEA: LRE**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- \* Learn the statutory requirements for Least Restrictive Environment
- \* Understand the Intersection of Research and Law for LRE
- \* Learn key court cases interpreting the law.
- \* Name and describe the continuum of OPTIONS for PLACEMENT under the IDEA.

### Materials to Review before Class:

- \* COPAA Recorded Webinar – The Least Restrictive Environment – The Intersection of Research and Law

\* "Board of Education, Sacramento City School District v. Rachel Holland"

**Class Activity/Discussion:**

Lecture/Scenarios concerning LRE

## **Week 10: Issue Spotting: ADA, 504, IDEA, State Law/Regulation**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Deciding whether to pursue ADA, 504 or IDEA eligibility
- Issue Spotting – is there a violation? Under which law(s), regulation, etc.

***Materials to Review before Class:***

COPAA Recorded Webinar - Issue-Spotting for Advocates: An Overview of How to Analyze a Client's Case for Effective Advocacy

**Assignment**

Element Chart Assignment – use scenarios

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## **Week 11: IDEAs Procedural Safeguards: Meaningful Parental Participation and Informed Consent**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Learn the purpose and need for Procedural Safeguards.
- Know the obligations of the LEA to ensure meaningful parental participation  
Understand the concept of Informed Consent.
- Understand the role of the Advocate in supporting parents to be full and equal participants in the IEP Process.

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- Informed Consent and Meaningful Participation: Jon Zimring, Esq., COPAA Recorded Webinar

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture/Role playing- Using Meaningful Participation and Informed Consent in Advocacy

***Class Assignment:***

Have a copy of your state's compliance complaint form available during the class next week.

## **Week 12: IDEA Procedural Safeguards: IEE, PWN, Educational Records, And Compliance Complaints**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand PWN and when it must be provided and how to use advocacy skills effectively reviewing and responding to PWN.
- Be familiar with parental right to records.
- Understand the state complaint process for your state and effectively write a state complaint for a client.

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- PWN samples provided
- IEE " Independent Educational Evaluations: What? How? Who Pays?" Wayne Steedman, Esq.,
- IDEA Special Education Written Complaints

Optional: Sonja D. Kerr, Ten Tips About Using the State Complaint Process

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture/Experiential writing a compliance complaint

***Class Assignment:***

Using Handout -students will write a compliance complaint using the appropriate state form for their state.

## **Week 13: Procedural Safeguards: Due Process**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the steps for filing for due process.
- Understand requirements of Stay Put.
- Identify the limitations of advocacy practice for representing parents in Due Process, as determined by UPL, based on jurisdiction.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- COPAA Recorded Webinar: Do-It-Yourself Special Education Due Process, an Educational Guide, Dorene Philpot, Esq.

### ***Class Assignment:***

Using the assigned materials and Case Element Chart determine facts of a case, and what you see as the legal issues (from an advocate perspective). Write a short summary for referral of the case to an attorney.

## **Week 14: Procedural Safeguards: Discipline**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the procedural requirements for discipline under IDEA and how they differ from non-IDEA eligible students.
- Understand the Manifestation Determination Review Process.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- Complete COPAA SmarterU Self-Study Module – Procedural Safeguards and Discipline
- Review Questions and Answers on Discipline Procedures: US Department of Education

***Class Activity/Discussion:*** Lecture/scenarios

## **Week 15: Partnering with Families**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Practice how to provide appropriate expectations about your services in work with families (orally and in writing).
- Become familiar with assisting parents to prepare for an IEP meeting.
- Become careful in not displacing the parent in the IEP process.
- Be aware of the need for respectful and culturally appropriate communication with families.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- Maintaining Student Records and Meeting Confidentiality Requirements Under FERPA, HIPPA, IDEA and Section 504
- Cultural humility: People, Principles, and Practices
- COPAA “Language Matters”

### ***Class Activity/Discussion:***

An important part of an advocates’ practice is being able to explain to parents what it is, exactly, that advocates do. Share your “2-minute elevator speech” that would tell a parent what services are offered (Be sure to include that you charge for services).

### ***Class Assignment:***

Please prepare an ‘expectations’ document for families of the services you provide (or plan to provide).

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## **Midterm EXAM**

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## **Week 16: Ethics of Special Education Advocacy**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the parameters of ethical conduct in advocacy practice.
- Be familiar with the needs and process for maintaining client confidentiality.
- Appreciate how and why to limit the scope of his/her advocacy representation.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- *SEAT Reader*
- Review COPAA Voluntary Code of Ethics,

### ***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Facilitated Roundtable

### ***Class Assignment:***

Use scenarios to answer questions on SEAT Group Forum Page

## **Week 17: Anatomy of an IEP**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Competently analyze and determine whether the IEP document contains all the required elements and is a) Individualized to the child's needs, b) Contains specific, measurable, appropriate goals, and c) Services are provided within the least restrictive environment.
- Understand the Implications of the *Andrew F.* Decision on creation of IEPs.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- View Recorded Webinar “Anatomy of an IEP”
- IDEA 2004 Model form for IDEA

### ***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Students will be provided with a model or several model IEPs and be asked to analyze and discuss them. Be prepared to participate.

## **Week 18: Overview of Specially Designed Instruction, Related Services and Accommodations/Modifications**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Become aware of the range of supplementary aids and services and accommodations/modifications available to students.
- Understand the difference between modifications and accommodations
- Understand IDEA's full requirement for identifying the supplementary aids and services a child will need.
- Understand the requirements under the Assistive Technology Act to ensure that people with disabilities have access to assistive technology devices and services.
- Learn strategies to obtain assistive technology supports and services.
- Understanding the components of specially designed instruction.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- Complete COPAA Smarter U Self-Study Module - Designated Instructional Services, Accommodations/Modifications
- Securing Quality Related Services: Strategies for Effective Advocacy, Presented by: Mark Woodsmall, Esq., COPAA Recorded Webinar

Class Activity/Discussion: Lecture/scenarios

Class Assignment:

Complete Assignment re: appropriate accommodations and modifications for student.

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## **Week 19: Present Levels, Goal Writing and Measuring Progress**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

Writing a Measurable IEP

COPAA Recorded Webinar - Building IEPs to Meet the Endrew F. Standard

## **Week 20: Case Preparation**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Be able to complete an accurate case timeline/history
- Identify key players and stakeholders in a case.
- Identify the legal issues in the dispute.

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

SEAT Reader

COPAA Recorded Webinar - Organizing Data to Tell Your Story

### ***Class Activity:***

Lecture

### ***Class Assignment:***

Students will be given materials to prepare a case summary. Assignment (maximum length 3 pages).

## **Week 21: Legal Research and Writing**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- The Special Education Advocate will be able to convey the basic facts and legal issues in a case in a concise professional manner

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

\* **SEAT Reader**

\* COPAA Recorded Webinar - Research without Resources, Utilizing the TA&D Network Presenters: Susan Bruce and Mary Eaddy, COPAA Recorded Webinar

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture, Review of the rubric and sample

Class Assignment:

Complete assignment for legal research common to an advocate's practice.

## **Week 22: Managing the Conversation**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- *Learn the strategies of effective communication and advocacy*
- Discuss how to clearly represent a client's position in a meeting
- Review (and brainstorm) on strategies of dealing with common roadblocks in IEP meetings

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- SEAT Reader
- Preparation and Advocacy Strategies the IEP Meeting, Presented by: Mandy Favaloro, Esq., and Carrie Watts, D, COPAA recorded webinar

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Brainstorming

***Class Assignment:***

Post your favorite district lines and your best 'comebacks' (i.e. that's why they call it an Individual Education Program) on the SEAT group page Forum

## **Week 23: Negotiation in the IEP**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Gain a basic understanding of the factors that impact negotiation
- Learn strategies that can be used within the IEP process
- Understand ADR options in the IEP

***Materials to Review before Class:***

\* SEAT Reader

\* Getting to Yes: Effective Negotiation Strategies, Presented by: Dana Jonson, Esq.,  
COPAA Recorded Webinar

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture and discussion

***Class Assignment:***

Review the provided material and prepare a short memo to review with a client on strategy for an upcoming IEP team meeting.

## **Week 24: Race, Culture, Poverty and Special Education Advocacy**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the issues of disproportionality and effective advocacy strategies to address legal issues of discrimination
- Think about strategies for families with limited resources

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- Challenges of Cultural Congruence: What Every Advocate For Black Students Should Know
- Addressing Legal Issues of Disability and Race Discrimination, Matthew Engel, Esq., Ron Lospennato Esq, COPAA Recorded WEBINAR

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture/Scenarios (Scenario materials will be emailed at the beginning of the week)

Class Assignment:

Review the materials for role playing for next class.

## **Week 25: Advocacy for Students around Behavior and Bullying**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand key concepts, strategies, and evidence based practice for FBA/BIP, Restraint and Seclusion
- to advocate effectively for a student who displays behavioral challenges.
- Become familiar with interventions for bullying and appropriate strategies for advocacy for students' experience harassment and bullying.
- Know When and How to write a Gebser letter

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- FBA's and BIP's Practical Evaluation and Legal Aspects Presented by: Dr. Annie McLaughlin, Ph.D., BCBA-D and Cheryl Steedman, Esq., COPAA Recorded Webinar
- Dear Colleague letter concerning bullying and harassment,

### ***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture/Role Playing

## **Week 26: Post-Secondary Transition**

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### ***Learning Objectives:***

- Review the required components of Transition Planning and Services under state and federal law (i.e. IDEA 2004, NCLB).
- Become familiar with findings of current research on effective secondary education and transition planning, including schooling/training/college, career preparatory experiences, youth development and youth leadership, and family involvement.
  - \* Review of Elevator Speech Principles and Application to Advocacy

### ***Materials to Review before Class:***

- Transition Services and Best Practices Under the IDEA, Presented by: David Berney, Esq., Felicia Heurwitz, PhD., and Jennifer Sang, Esq.. COPAA Recorded Webinar

- Transition Goals Sample
- Goal Example Sheet
- Writing Transition Goals and Objectives

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Lecture/Writing Transition Goals

***Class Assignment:***

Prepare your 2 minute ‘elevator speech’ of explaining to families the services you provide. Students will be called on next week to share.

## **Week 27: The Business of Advocacy- Advocates Panel**

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***Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the need for a case management system
- Learn the parameters of appropriate interaction with attorneys and other professionals
- Become familiar with basic components of and options for fee agreements with clients
- Understand issues related to earning a living as a Special Education Advocate

***Materials to Review before Class:***

- Taking Care of Yourself
- COPAA Resource Library

***Class Activity/Discussion:***

Share a recommendation tip for practice to the COPAA Group Forum Page

***Class Assignment:***

Prepare a one-page confidentiality policy and a fee agreement (no amounts included, just the agreement). Upload to COPAA Group Forum Page. Peer-to-peer exchange/reaction.