George Mason University

Internet as an Assistive Technology Tool
(EDSE/EDIT 529) (2 Credit Hours)

**SCHEDULE**

All of the classes meet online from June 23rd to August 18th

**INSTRUCTOR**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will provide an overview of the World Wide Web / Internet as an educational tool for students with disabilities. Primary focus of this course will be presenting strategies, accommodations, assistive technology, and Internet resources for educators to use the Internet with students with disabilities. Students will review and evaluate web sites, develop a Internet resources list, and develop an accessible Internet lesson plan or accessible education website.

**REQUIRED READING**

- The instructor will provide reading materials and Internet sites in Blackboard.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define the issues related to the accessibility of the Internet by individuals with disabilities.
- Identify appropriate accommodations and technology for Internet access.
- Select online disability and assistive technology related resources.
- Evaluate and select appropriate web-based activities for individuals with disabilities.
- Develop and design an accessible Internet lesson plan or accessible education website.
RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education, and Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of emotional Disturbance and Learning Disabilities. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization. As such the learning objectives for this course cover many of the competencies for curriculum and methods for teaching individuals with emotional disturbances and learning disabilities kindergarten through grade 12.

COURSE OUTLINE

June 23rd to June 29th  Introduction
• How individuals with disabilities use the web
• Introduction to web accessibility

June 30th to July 6th  Using the Internet with students with ED/LD/MR
• Learner characteristics/areas of need
• How the Internet can use helpful
• Educational activities/online resources
• Internet Barriers
• Available assistive technology

July 7th to July 13th  Using the Internet with Students with Physical and/or Severe Disabilities
• Learner characteristics/areas of need
• How the Internet can use helpful
• Educational activities/online resources
• Internet Barriers
• Available assistive technology

July 14th to July 20th  Using the Internet in Early Childhood and with students with Sensory Impairments
• Learner characteristics/areas of need
• How the Internet can use helpful
• Educational activities/online resources
• Internet Barriers
• Available assistive technology
July 21st to July 27th  
**Developing Internet Lesson Plans/Website Evaluation**
- Planning and Designing
- Criteria for selecting appropriate sites for students
- Accessibility Evaluation

July 28th to Aug 17th  
**Student Implementation Final Project**

Aug 18th  
**Submit Final Project**

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**ASSIGNMENTS**

- Please type ALL assignments unless otherwise noted.
- Weekly assignments should be posted to the discussion board in Blackboard.
- Other assignments must be submitted to the Digital Drop Box in Blackboard by 9:00pm on the day that the assignments are due unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

**Weekly Assignments (50 points)  Due: Sunday 9:00 pm of that week**

In **Assignments** menu on Blackboard, weekly assignments will be posted each week during the course period (total of 5 weekly assignments). All weekly assignments are to be posted in **Discussion Board until Sunday, 9 o'clock of that week**.

**Online Resources Handout (20 points)  Due: July 18th**

Students will develop an Internet resources handout/brochure based on information learned in class. The handout may be developed for a specific audience (parents, teachers, co-workers) that provides both an overview/introduction and lists of important and helpful Internet resources. The overview should identify the purpose of the handout and explanation of its contents. Resources may include links to specific disability/professional organizations, parent/teacher resources, educational activities/games, technology vendors, accessibility information/guidelines, etc.
Final Project: Assistive Technology and the Internet Implementation Project
(30 points)  
Due: August 18th

For the final project, students will apply their knowledge of Internet as an assistive technology tool. Since students’ professional interests and technical knowledge may vary, students will choose to complete one of three possible final project options that best meet their interests.

**Option 1: Accessible Internet-Based Lesson**
Students will plan and develop an accessible lesson plan using the Internet. The goal of this project is to enhance access to information on the Internet for designated students. If you choose to complete a lesson plan, it needs to include all of the components necessary to carry out a lesson via the Internet for your chosen students. This may require using other software and/or plug-ins for your Internet browser. The lesson will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- Description of Rationale and Identification of Target Audience 5 pts.
- Goals and Objectives 5 pts.
- Accessibility Plan and Features 5 pts.
- Complete description of software features and components aligned with specific disability issues 5 pts.
- Description of Materials and Procedures 5 pts.
- Evaluation criteria and/or rubric for assessment 5 pts.

**TOTAL** 30 pts.

**Option 2: Accessible Education Website Development**
Students will plan and develop an accessible education website. This site should include at least 4 pages centered on an identified theme. The website can be designed as either an information site for a specific audience (parents, teachers, co-workers) or as an educational activity for students. The website will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Description of Rationale, Identification of Target Audience 5 pts.
- Accessibility Plan (need to submit separate word document) 5 pts.
- Contents in the website 5 pts.
- Accessibility Features (e.g. alt tag, table, etc.) in the website 5 pts.
- Layout and Navigation (e.g. consistency, easiness, etc.) in the website 5 pts.
- Error Free (e.g. link error, broken images, etc.) in the website 5 pts.

**TOTAL** 30 pts.

**Option 3: WebQuest Development**
Students will plan and develop a WebQuest. The goal of this project is to create a web activity that you can assist students with disabilities to complete a certain task. You can create it either in html file with any html editor (Dreamweaver, Netscape Composer, etc) or in Word document file (include link). The WebQuest will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
Grading Criteria

Evaluation will be based upon a point system. The point value for each assignment is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Assignments</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Resources Handout</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weekly Assignments Evaluation Rubric

Weekly assignments will be posted each week for discussion during the course period [total of 5 discussions]. All responses are to be submitted within 7 days of posting, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. The following rubric will be used to evaluate your discussion participation.

- **Timeliness**: two (2) points. Students post their weekly assignment in a timely manner (that is, within 7 days of question posting, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor) that allows for others to interact and respond to the ideas/subject. If students post their assignment late, they will get 0 points on this.

- **Interactivity**: two (2) points. Students interact with other students during that week’s assigned assignment. (may post a question, provide a suggestion, make a comment, etc.) In order to get full points (2 points), students interact with at least a couple of classmates.

- **Response Content**: three or six points. Content of the weekly assignment indicates that the students have an understanding of the questions and reflects knowledge of information
  - **3 pts** = content of response is on topic.
  - **6 pts** = content of response is on topic and supports our readings and other class materials

- The participant will receive zero (0) points for a weekly assignment if 1) participant fails to participate in online discussion or 2) submits discussion question response as a email or print copy instead of using the discussion board.
The instructor reserves the right to request that a student recycle a product that is not satisfactory. In such cases a response cost of 10 percent may be assessed.

Grades for late assignments will reflect a 10% response cost.

**All assignments must be completed to receive a final grade.**