CONSORTIUM TITLEES
George Mason University: EDSE 534 Communication and Severe Disabilities * University of Virginia: EDIS 711 Vocal and Nonvocal Communication * Virginia Commonwealth University: MNRT 500 Language/Communication Intervention for Young Children and Individuals with Severe Disabilities * Radford University: EDSP 660C Current Issues: Communication and Severe Disabilities * Norfolk State University: SPE 643 Communication Development for Individuals with Severe Disabilities

PROFESSOR
Marci Kinas Jerome, M.Ed.
Office phone: (703) 993-3670
Office location: Krug 110A
Office hours: Wednesdays from 5-6 and by appointment
Email address: mkinas@gmu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces professionals to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for individuals with severe speech and language impairments. This course will address the knowledge and skills needed to assess the potential AAC user, make team decisions, develop and implement instruction, and evaluate the effects of instruction with focus on motivating, building, and expanding communication, choice-making, and social interaction.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
Learning activities in this class will include the following:

1. Class lecture, discussion, and participation
2. Software and hardware presentations
3. Group and independent class activities
4. Class presentations
5. Written papers using the American Psychological Association format (5th edition)

STUDENT OUTCOMES
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify characteristics of non-symbolic and symbolic communication
2. Describe and discuss methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of individuals with communication impairments.
3. Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems available for individuals with severe disabilities
4. Implement assessment strategies to improve student’s social interaction with peers and others
5. Understand and identify behaviors associated with communication

**Relationship of Courses to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

This course is part of The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Severe Disabilities, a grant from the Virginia Department of Education that includes George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, The University of Virginia, Radford University, and Norfolk State University. Through the completion of the SD consortium program, students are eligible for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education area of severe disabilities. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Virginia Department of Education. Furthermore, the SD Consortium strives to uphold the Special Education Content Standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization.

The Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel are listed on the following website: [http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/compliance/teachered/nulicvr.pdf](http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/compliance/teachered/nulicvr.pdf)

The CEC Standards are listed on the following website: [http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/standards.html#standards](http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/standards.html#standards)

Course specific competencies and standards are listed on the following website: [http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/competencies.html](http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/competencies.html)

**Required Texts**


Additional readings will be assigned according to topic and will be made available by the instructor.

**Assessment of Course Requirements**

All assignments should be word-processed and are due at the start of class (7:20pm) on the dates indicated including assignments submitted through Blackboard. Consult with the instructor in advance if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late papers. (For example, a 20 point assignment will lose 2 points per day while a 50 point assignment will lose 5 points per day.) Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit. All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with your university’s Writing Center.
during this course to improve your skills. At the instructor’s discretion, students may be given
the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full
credit.

GMU Students: It is recommended that students retain ELECTRONIC copies of all course
products to document their progress through the GSE ED/LD/MR and/or SD licensure program.
Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your
portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the
CEC performance based standards.
NOTE: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have
emergency medical information to share with me or need special arrangements, please call
and/or make an appointment with me the first week of class.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

• Students are expected to (a) attend all classes during the session, (b) arrive on time, (c) stay
  for the duration of the class time and (d) complete Blackboard discussion boards and other
  assignments.
• During class time, computers and peripherals are to be used only for work related to the
class. Students found using the computer (whether personal laptop or lab computer) for
purposes other than the assigned in class activity will be asked to turn off their equipment
and will not receive participation points for that class session.
• In-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements require outside class time.
  Students are expected to allot approximately three hours for class study and preparation for
each credit hour weekly (a three credit hour course would require nine hours of work weekly
in a 45-hour, semester course).
• Use APA guidelines for all course assignments. This website links to APA format guidelines.
  http://www.psywww.com/resource/apacrib.htm. In particular, it is expected that you know
  how to paraphrase and cite information appropriately to meet both APA guidelines and to
  avoid plagiarism. This website provides some useful information on how to avoid plagiarism
• We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideallky in our professional practice). Please refer to “Guidelines for Non-Handicapping Language in APA Journals” http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation (15 points) Attendance at all sessions is very important because many
   of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated
   outside of the class session. Students will be awarded 1 point each class session for
   successful completion of in class activities. Students who miss a class will not have the
   opportunity to make up missed in-class assignments, and therefore, will not earn class
   participation points for that missed class session. As a courtesy, please email me to let me
   know if you will not be in class.

2. Introduction Email (5 points) Sometime during the first week of class (before our second
class), send me an email through Blackboard. In the email, please tell me a little bit about
yourself. Additionally, please include any specific topic areas that you hope to have covered in this course. Feel free to share any past experiences with augmentative and alternative communication that you have had. See assignment rubric for further details. (Due Feb. 1 by 7pm)

3. **Blackboard Question/Response (30 Points)** Each week, a different question or series of questions will be posted on Blackboard. Over the course of the semester, you must respond to at least 4 of these prompts directly (each worth up to 4 pts.) and make at least 4 responses to your classmates (each worth up to 3.5 points). Your responses must reflect analytic thought and demonstrate relevance by incorporating topics discussed (or to be discussed) in the course. All responses should be at least 1 paragraph. See assignment rubric for further details.

4. **Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection (30 points)** Using the strategies and procedures reviewed in class, students will create a topic board for their own use in a specific situation. Students will actually use the topic board for conversation for a minimum of one hour (in an identified setting) and will then write a reflection on his or her experiences and impressions. See assignment rubric for further details. (Due March 1)

5. **Case Study and Low Tech AAC system development (30 points)** Students will be given a case individual for whom they are expected to develop a low tech communication system. A rationale for why such a system was created is expected. You will be presenting your low tech systems and explaining their relevance in class. See assignment rubric for further details. (Due March 29)

6. **Observation of a Student in Need of or Using an AAC System (20 points)** Students will observe an individual currently utilizing an AAC system or in need of a communication system. Students will write up an observation of what they witnessed. See assignment rubric for further details. (Due April 12)

7. **Exploration of an AAC device/system and development of tutorial (20 points)** Students will select an AAC device/system or piece of software and will create a tutorial for an individual who is unfamiliar with such a device/system. See assignment rubric for further details. (Due May 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation (one point for every class)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction Email</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard question/responses</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study and Low Tech AAC system development</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation of a Student in Need of or Using an AAC System</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration of an AAC device/system and development of tutorial</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL POINT VALUE FOR ALL</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSIGNMENTS

GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100% (141-150)</td>
<td>80-84% (120-126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93% (135-140)</td>
<td>70-79% (105-119)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-89% (127-134)</td>
<td>&lt; 70% (below 105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONSORTIUM COURSE POLICIES

Honor Code
Each university has its own honor code and it is important for you to review the honor code at your university. However, all students taking this course, regardless of the university they are enrolled in, are expected to follow this honor code and also to pledge all assignments and their exam to indicate that they have followed the honor code. A pledge means that you have not cheated or plagiarized, nor have you given or received assistance that violated the description of how assignments are to be completed for this course. The shortened version may be used: “Pledged” followed by the date and your full name (typed “signatures” will be OK for assignments/tests submitted electronically).

A complete copy of each university’s Honor System document is available through

GMU: http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm
VCU: www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html
UVA: http://www.virginia.edu/honor/
Radford: http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor_Code.pdf
NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/student_judicial/policy.html

Accommodations for Disability
At all the participating universities, accommodations can be made with the instructor if a student has a disability. If this is relevant to you, please contact me on the first night of class (can be through email) and indicate both what the disability is and how your university has made accommodations for you in the past. I will discuss (via email) this further with you until we reach consensus. University specific information regarding eligibility, services and accommodations can be found at:

GMU: http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/
VCU: http://www.students.vcu.edu/dss/index.html
UVA: http://www.virginia.edu/vpsa/services.html
Radford: http://www.radford.edu/~dro/
NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html

Inclement Weather
If classes are cancelled at George Mason University, a message will be posted on the class Blackboard site and all class members will receive an email. Because such cancellations are often at the last minute, it may be difficult to get this message prior to leaving for class. If in doubt, dial the University phone number (703-993-1000) or visit the university website (www.gmu.edu). Do not email us; I will email you regarding weather as soon as it is announced. Please note, the cancellation of classes due to inclement weather is determined by the decision of
the instructing university only. If the instructing university is open and operational then you are expected to attend class.

Cell Phones and Weapons
All cell phones and beepers should be deactivated while in the classroom. Also, University rules at all participating universities prohibit the possession any firearm, other weapon, or explosive. Please consult the student handbook and your university for specific information concerning this policy at your university.

Course Materials
This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. For the articles (available both on Blackboard and on a class CD), copyright laws must be followed: print only one copy per student. The PowerPoint presentations, notes, and handouts are provided on Blackboard for your convenience and to facilitate your mastery of concepts presented in this course; PowerPoints will be available on Blackboard by noon of the class day or sooner. If you plan to print copies of PowerPoint slides, this must be done before class begins (before 4 pm or 7:20 pm) and using a 3 or more slides per page handout format (do not print full slide pages). All of these materials should be regarded as authored materials, which if used or referred to must be fully credited through reference to the author, the class, and date. If used beyond citation, permission of the instructor/author is required.

Technology Proficiencies
All students participating in this course are expected to be proficient in several technology skills. Students are expected to be proficient in using the Internet and have reliable and consistent Internet access. Students are also expected to have an active email account and to check email regularly. This course requires students to use Blackboard, which is our online course management system located at http://blackboard.gmu.edu. Students are expected to login to this system frequently and be proficient in using its features. Students are expected to be proficient in using the computer, which includes downloading and saving files, typing, and word processing skills. Students participating in this course are expected to use Microsoft Word for all written assignments. Furthermore, students are expected to use Microsoft PowerPoint and Adobe Acrobat Reader for class documents located on the Blackboard website. Although Microsoft PowerPoint is part of the Microsoft Office Suite, students who do not have PowerPoint can download a free viewer that will allow at http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=D1649C22-B51F-4910-93FC-4CF2832D3342&displaylang=en Adobe Acrobat Reader is a free software program used to read PDF files and can be downloaded at http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/product.jsp?product=10&platform=Windows

Course Facilitators
Each class will have a facilitator or assistant who will assist with the class. Learn who that person is as they will be taking role and keeping track of class participation and reporting it to me weekly. However, if you think you must miss a class, please email me ahead if at all possible (or later if need be). Because of the potential of confusion caused by people speaking at the same time in this multi-site course, it will be important to raise hands before asking questions or making comments. Along with the facilitators, I will try hard to enforce this rule and to be alert
to questions from the distance sites. Facilitators will also FAX in-class written tasks following class or early the next day to me. When in class assignment forms or handouts are send the day of the class, facilitators will need to download and copy them for class members.

**Blackboard Assistance**
This course requires that you be a regular email user and be able to use various features of Blackboard (sign on, download materials, hand in completed assignments electronically in the upload assignment link). You may direct your questions about Blackboard to the facilitator at the class site as well as to email Marci Kinas Jerome (mkinas@gmu.edu). She will be the best resource. We are all learning this system together and some of us will be faster than others. Expect some snafus along the way, but please help each other out as you can. You will want to download all the required materials early in the semester or as soon as they are posted. Please note, that some handouts/readings may be given to you in class that are not posted on blackboard. Also check Blackboard for announcements. Sometimes I will place handouts for class on Blackboard and will alert you by email or in the previous class; in these cases please download and bring them to class.

**Remote Site Viewing**
All Consortium courses are recorded and archived on a video-streaming server. Students and faculty are welcome to view previous classes at [http://129.174.36.100/SDC/](http://129.174.36.100/SDC/) and clicking on Recorded Calls button. Since the Consortium includes some remote site students, all consortium classes are broadcast live via the Internet at the same website. It is the policy of the consortium that students attending classes at university sites are expected to be present at those university sites during class time. However, in instances where students would otherwise miss class (in accordance to the attendance policy) students may participate in the class via the live web stream. However, students who participate in the web-stream instead of at their university site are still subject to the response cost as outlined in the attendance policy for this course. Directions for viewing the video-stream can be found in the course Blackboard site.

Student may also view the powerpoints, communicate with the instructor, and interact with other at home students using Breeze. Each consortium class has their own Breeze website. To get to your Breeze course site go to:

- Teaching Strategies: [http://webcon.gmu.edu/teaching/](http://webcon.gmu.edu/teaching/)
- Teamwork: [http://webcon.gmu.edu/teamwork/](http://webcon.gmu.edu/teamwork/)
- Communication: [http://webcon.gmu.edu/communication/](http://webcon.gmu.edu/communication/)

You will enter as a guest. When you enter as a guess will have to wait to be accepted into the class. A tech person or the instructor will accept you. The first time you use Breeze you may be prompted to download a plug in, it only takes a few seconds to install.

**College of Education and Human Development Statement of Expectations (GMU)**
All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [http://gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.
• Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See http://mail.gmu.edu and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
• Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, the first week of class. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.
# Proposed Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Lecture</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>• Overview of Course&lt;br&gt;• Review Syllabus&lt;br&gt;• Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication&lt;br&gt;• Definitions and Terminology</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>• Messaging, symbols, alternative access</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapters 2-4</td>
<td>• Introduction Email due by 7pm on 2/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>• Assessment&lt;br&gt;• Cases will be Distributed in Case Study Assignment</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapters 6-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>• Assessment</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapters 6-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>• General AAC issues&lt;br&gt;• AAC Strategies&lt;br&gt;• Symbolic versus nonsymbolic strategies</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapters 10-11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>• Language learning and development</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapter 12</td>
<td>• Topic Board Assignment Due&lt;br&gt;• Make sure your final AAC tutorial project is approved by Feb. 28th!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>• AAC and Literacy</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapter 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>• No Class Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Completed Midterm Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/22</td>
<td>• AAC and Literacy&lt;br&gt;• AAC in the Educational Setting</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapter 13 &amp; 14, p. 407-431 ASOL/VAAP materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>• Presentations of Cases and Low Tech Solutions&lt;br&gt;• AAC in the Educational Setting</td>
<td>Beukelman &amp; Mirenda Chapter 14, p. 407-431 ASOL/VAAP materials</td>
<td>• Case Study Rationale Due to blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>• Guest Speaker: AAC User Dr. Yoosun Chung</td>
<td>Refer to Blackboard for readings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>• At Home Boardmaker Activity <em>(No Class)</em></td>
<td>Instructor will provide assignment description and materials</td>
<td>• Observation assignment due&lt;br&gt;• Boardmaker activity due by Friday April 14 via Blackboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>• AAC and Autism</td>
<td>Refer to Blackboard for readings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>• AAC in the Family and in the Home</td>
<td>Refer to Blackboard for readings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>• Legal Issues and AAC&lt;br&gt;• Wrap up of AAC</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tutorial due&lt;br&gt;• Completed Final Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>