

VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN SEVERE DISABILITIES

Collaborative Teamwork
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2006

- IDDS 600: Teamwork in Serving Persons with Developmental Disabilities (Home Site: Virginia Commonwealth University)**
- EDIS 515: Collaborative Teamwork (University of Virginia)
- EDSE 662: Consultation and Collaboration (George Mason University)
- EDSP 660: Current Issues: Collaboration & Teamwork in Severe Disabilities (Radford University)
- SPE 545 Collaboration, Inclusion, Transition, and Other Curricular Adjustments for Exceptional Learners (Norfolk State University)

Web Site: <http://chd.gse.gmu.edu/sdc>

Tech Support: Marci Kinas Jerome, GMU, Project Coordinator: mkinas@gmu.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Fred P. Orelove (forelove@vcu.edu), Virginia Commonwealth University

Phone: (804) 828-3908 *Fax:* (804) 828-0042

Office: Partnership for People with Disabilities, 700 E. Franklin St., 10th floor, Richmond (Mailing Address: P.O. Box 843020; Richmond, VA 23284-3020)

Spring 2006 (January 24-May 2, 2006)

Tuesday, 7:20-10:00 p.m.

VCU Location: 3107 Oliver Hall

PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to teach strategies for building and working effectively within collaborative teams in schools. Course content addresses the following areas:

- ❑ Team organization
- ❑ Stages of team development and team building strategies
- ❑ Teamwork skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution)
- ❑ Challenges to and supports for collaborative teams
- ❑ Teams' roles in designing individualized education programs and other plans
- ❑ Understanding and supporting team's relationship with family members, students and peers, related services personnel, and paraprofessionals
- ❑ Team's role in planning and implementing individualized support and adaptations needed for meaningful participation in schoolwork and activities in general education classrooms
- ❑ Team's role in transitioning between programs, grades, and schools
- ❑ Team assessment

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RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This course is part of the Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Severe Disabilities, supported through a grant from the Virginia Department of Education. Consortium members include George Mason University, Norfolk State University, Radford University, University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University. Through the completion of the SD Consortium program, students are eligible for teacher endorsement in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 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 (CEC), 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>

The CEC Standards are listed on the following website:
http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_std/standards.html#standards

Competencies and standards specific to this class can be viewed at:
<http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/competencies.html>

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS

Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2003). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Creating collaborative IEPs: A handbook (Rev. Ed., 2001). Richmond, VA: Virginia Institute for Developmental Disabilities, Virginia Commonwealth University.
(Purchasable on-line: www.vcu.edu/partnership)

Readings. Additional readings will be assigned from current books and journals and are available on the course Blackboard site. Refer to the class schedule and reference list for those readings.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNED READING</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</u>
Jan. 24	Overview & Introductions Orientation to Blackboard		Form class teams. Student Info. Form
Jan. 31	Team Structure	Friend & Cook (Ch. 6) Briggs (1997) Rainforth & York-Barr (1997) (pp. 247-261)	
Feb. 7	Stages of Team	Rainforth & York-Barr	

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	Development & Learning Teamwork Skills	(1997) (pp. 280-295)	
Feb. 14	Traditional Teams vs. Collaborative Teams; Planning & Delivery of Special Education	Olson & Murphy (1999) Friend & Cook (Chs. 1,7) Cloninger (2005)	Project Intro.
Feb. 21	Taking Team Action & Problem Solving	Friend & Cook (Ch. 5)	Discussion Room
Feb. 28	Creating Collaborative IEPs	<i>Creating Collaborative IEP Handbook</i>	Project Rationale Discussion Room
Mar. 7	Technology Night (Marci Kinas Jerome)		
Mar. 14	SPRING BREAK		
Mar. 21	Working with Families (Parent Panel)	Carney & Gamel-McCormick (1996) Chen & Miles (2005) Friend & Cook (Ch. 10)	Project Method Discussion Room
Mar. 28	Communication	Friend & Cook (Chs. 2,3)	
Apr. 4	Communication	Friend & Cook (Ch. 4)	Discussion Room
Apr. 11	Conflict Resolution	Friend & Cook (Ch. 11) Snell & Janney (2000) (Ch. 6)	Discussion Room
Apr. 18	Mediation (Mark Rubin)	Stewart (1999) Feinberg & Beyer (1998)	Discussion Room
Apr. 25	Role-Specific Issues	Friend & Cook (Ch. 12) McWilliam (1996) Giangreco, Edelman, & Broer (2001)	Final Project (4/24)
May 2	Project Presentations		Oral Presentations Take Home Exam Due

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

A. Teaming Project

Working with the team with which you have actual contact in the field this semester, you will (a) identify (with team input and approval) an area of teaming improvement, (b) plan ways to achieve those improvements (with team input and approval), and (c) implement those plans over the semester (with team input and approval). This project will range widely, depending on the involvement and responsibility you have on the team and the team itself. Your team might be composed of core members (e.g., general and special educators, paraprofessionals, family members). Other members may be added to some sessions, depending on what the topic for teaming is. Teams will vary widely and might consist of: (a) a team of one general education teacher and a special education teacher who serves the students with IEPs in that classroom; (b) a team of several general

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education teachers and a special education teacher who supports students with special needs in science; (c) child study teams based in schools to consider referrals for special education services; or (d) grade level teams (K-1 teachers plus the special education staff and related services personnel serving those grades).

There are many teaming project possibilities. *Examples* include (but are not at all limited to these!):

- ✓ Strategies to improve the efficiency of team meeting
- ✓ Better communication among team members during meetings
- ✓ A system of communication and record-keeping to supplement face-to-face meetings
- ✓ Ways to resolve conflict
- ✓ New problem-solving approaches

Your selection of a project will depend not only on team opinion but also on the intensity of your role: volunteer team participant versus actual team member. The following are sample steps you may take with the team depending on your role:

Volunteer Team Participant	Team Member
Observe team process; establish rapport with team	Conduct needs assessment with team
Conduct needs assessment with team	Select project reflecting team consensus
Select project reflecting team consensus	Active role in implementing team improvement ideas
Less active role in implementation	Start sooner on implementation and continue longer; possibly make revisions to improve after trial & team reactions
Evaluate through assessing team opinion	Evaluate through assessing team opinion and possibly other methods (e.g., observation of team member behavior)

As illustrated below, the project focus will also vary depending on the stage of the team with whom you are working:

Unformed Team	Performing Team
Establishing methods of communication: needs assessment, class notebook, setting up meetings, etc.	Improving existing communication among members; learning methods for problem-solving
Meeting procedures: role taking, meeting agenda	Co-teaching, integrated therapy; planning as team, implementing, and evaluating
Involving the family in setting meeting agendas	Improved ways to handle team conflict

The project will be developed in several steps, each of which is submitted electronically on the dates indicated. Feedback will be shared via e-mail. Point values for the final paper are indicated by each section. Final version is due no later than April 24.

PLEASE NOTE: Unless special arrangements are made with the instructor for unusual circumstances, only drafts submitted on time will be given feedback. Experience has shown that students who receive feedback along the way typically do better on the final product.

Proposal

Introduction. Use no heading, just repeat the title of the paper, centered. Draft due 2/14. (2 pts.)

This section should include a brief introduction to the team and the area of team improvement:

- Briefly: Overview of the team, the student(s) it supports, and relevant teaming characteristics (members, stages of team development, etc.)
- Introduce briefly the area of team improvement (project focus) that is based on discussion with the team itself

Rationale (centered heading). Draft due 2/28. (6 pts.)

Review literature relevant to area of team improvement and solutions:

- Provide justification/reasons for team project focus.
- Base rationale on a review of related literature; cite references and review the content that provides a justification for your project focus.
- Include at least three supportive references (not all web sites) in this section.

Method Sections (centered heading). Draft due 3/21. (12 pts.)

Describe team, involvement of team in identification of area of improvement, team improvement procedures, involvement of team in their design, and methods for evaluating the outcomes:

Participants (side flush heading) (2 pts.)

- Provide more detail: Describe the team and the student(s) it supports (i.e., members, staff roles, frequency of meetings—sit-down and “on-the-fly”—team stage, and objectively describe the team’s characteristics. (Do **not** specifically identify name of school, individuals, etc.)

Identification of Improvement Area (side flush heading) (2 pts.)

- Summarize the process used to identify the area for team improvement and how team members were involved (e.g., asked or surveyed team members)

Team Improvement Procedures (side flush heading) (5 pts.)

- Describe in some detail the procedures or improvement plans and how team members were involved in their development
- Indicate what parts of the procedures were implemented and what parts were not implemented or are still to be implemented
- Cite references to support the method
- Refer to sample forms used (if any) in Tables or Figures

Evaluation Procedures (side flush heading) (3 pts.)

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- Describe how the success of the outcomes were assessed (e.g., team self-assessment of success of changes or satisfaction with changes via interviews, questionnaires; direct observation of team member behavior such as use of an agenda, end-of-meeting processing, number of conflicts addressed and resolved, attendance at meetings)

Results (centered heading). Due April 24 (part of final paper). (5 pts.)

Summarize the results of the project objectively:

- Start with a succinct 1-2 sentence statement of the intervention(s) used to reach the project goal (first paragraph)
- Report an *objective description* of the outcomes of the project
- Provide *supportive data* (e.g., interviews with team members, questionnaire summaries)
- Quantify data and present a table or figure if appropriate

Discussion (centered heading). Due April 24 (part of final paper). (5 pts.)

Discuss the major outcomes of the project:

- Summarize the findings in one sentence, being cautious not to state functional relationship between intervention and team change
- Describe team members' views of the successes of the project and analyze what went well
- Describe team members' views of the shortcomings of the project and analyze what might have been done differently
- Link findings back to the relevant literature
- End with summary statement

References (centered heading). Due April 24 (part of final paper). (4 pts.)

- Cite at least 5 supportive references for entire paper that are both current and relevant to project focus.

Additional Points Assigned to Overall (Final) Paper

(but should be adhered to in all drafts)

Writing Style (4 pts.)

- Write in a style that flows, using accurate grammar, punctuation, spelling, voice (use third person), tense, etc.
- Use Person First language
- Use past tense throughout entire paper

Use APA Format (4 pts.)

- Title page

- Double space all text, including references
- Use one-inch margins all around
- Insert page numbers in upper right corner
- Use proper headings (none are bolded or larger than 12 point font; use first 2 or all 3 classes of headings):
 1. Centered Heading (first letter of each word capitalized)
 2. *Side Flush Heading* (first letter each word capitalized, flush with left margin, italics)
 3. Indented paragraph heading. (first letter first word only capitalized, underlined, ends with period, indented with paragraph text starting right after period.)

B. Teaming Discussion Groups

Discussion groups of 4-5 students will be formed across university sites to participate in Blackboard discussions. Every two weeks, you will provide a project update to members of your Discussion Group. These comments will describe the progress you are making in regard to your teaming project and any challenges/issues that you face. In addition, you will respond to comments posted by members of your Discussion Group.

Making a project update. You will log on to Blackboard and click on the “Group” icon. Click on the group that you are in (you will be able to access this single group only). Next, click on the “Discussion Board” link, which will take you to your Discussion Groups. Click on the “Project Update” forum to find where you will post your comments for the current week. This forum has been created for you to make weekly comments on your teaming project.

- Rules for making project updates and commenting on others’ project updates:
- You will post at least once every other week, on the schedule described below.
 - The first two postings will let you introduce yourselves to other group members and tell about the team you will be working with:
 - Complete by February 21:
 - ❖ Introduce yourself (professional preparation, teaching experience, current position, family details, etc.) and share your initial comments and concerns on the teaming project you will do for the class.
 - Complete by February 28:
 - ❖ “Introduce” your team to the members of your discussion group. Answer the following questions: Who are the members of the core team? The whole team? Does the team focus on a single student, multiple students, in one classroom, across classrooms? Describe the students who are the focus of the team. Describe some of the common problems discussed by this team. Describe the ways this team works together (or does not). Use first names only or pseudonyms.
 - ❖ Describe the stage of development (forming, storming, norming, performing) the team is in, giving examples to support.

- During the week of March 20, early in the week, tell how your project is going, whether there are problems and what they are, and/or what you are planning to do to address the problem. If all is going as planned in your project for a given week, then just post something to that effect—perhaps commenting on what went especially well and why. (Doing nothing does not constitute having had a good week.) Read the entries of your fellow group members, which will be in the same folder. Comment, providing suggestions you have for addressing any problems raised. The instructor will also read and enter comments on any problems that arise. Read these comments, too, as they may be helpful to you. Each person will individually go into the group project update folder and post an update of his or her project that week, and can choose to read and/or comment on others. Your comments are confidential to the group.
- Continue posting updates on your project, and responses to others' updates, on the following schedule: Weeks of April 3, 10, and 17.

These group discussions will be individualized because they are a reflection of your own experiences and teaming skills. Thus, **these discussions will be kept confidential** between you, other group members, and the instructor. Each of 6 log entries will be scored between 0 and 2, as follows: 0= failure to provide required entry; 1=log on and participate minimally; 2= thoughtful and complete response (comment on project, comment on others' projects). Please keep comments professional, substantive, and relevant to the project. Do not engage in name-calling, blaming, or gossip.

C. Final Exam

A take-home final exam will be given. It will be applied in format and open book. (You will be permitted to use all your readings and notes from class, but will pledge the exam as your own work.) There will be a page limit. The exam will be made available on Blackboard on April 24 and is due no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 1.

GRADING

Course grades will be calculated by summing the points earned on all assignments and class participation. In general, a grade in the low to high 90% range is an "A," while a grade of "B" may begin in the low 90 or high 80% range and extend through the mid-80% range. Pluses and minuses will be assigned and reported to the appropriate university site. Grades for students in universities that do not use pluses or minuses will be rounded accordingly, using the letter grade earned.

Active participation in class = 10 points
Teaming discussion room groups on Blackboard (6 weeks, @ up to 2/wk) = 12 points
Teaming project = 42 points
Oral presentation of project = 5 points
Final exam = 25 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS IN COURSE = 100 points

COURSE POLICIES

Honor Code. Each university has its own honor code, and it is important for all students to review the honor code at their home university. However, all students enrolled in this course, regardless of the university, are expected to follow the honor code and also to pledge all assignments and exams to indicate that they have followed the honor code. A pledge means that the student has not cheated or plagiarized, nor has he or she given or received assistance beyond that allowed to complete specific course assignments. The shortened version may be used: The word “Pledged” followed by the date and your full name. (Typed “signatures” are acceptable for assignments/tests submitted electronically.) A complete copy of each university’s Honor System document is available as follows:

GMU: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

VCU: www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html.

UVA: <http://www.virginia.edu/honor/>

RU: http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor_Code.pdf

NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/student_judicial/code.html

Plagiarism. Plagiarism encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one’s own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement

Students are expected to adhere strictly to the requirements outlined in the APA Publication Manual (5th edition) in citing information in all course assignments. It is strongly recommended that students obtain a copy of this manual as a reference.

Attendance. Since many of the classes involve activities, videotapes, discussion, etc., regular attendance is vital to gain maximum benefit. Anyone who misses more than two classes will lose one grade (e.g., from A- to B+) for each subsequent class missed. (Classes missed due to observance of religious holidays—see below—will not be counted.) Significant or recurrent tardiness or early departure will count as an absence. If you know ahead of time you will not be in class, please contact me in advance. Students are responsible for all information and material missed due to absence.

Religious Holidays. It is the policy of VCU to accord students, on an individual basis, the opportunity to observe their traditional religious holidays. Students desiring to observe a religious holiday of special importance must provide advance written notification to the instructor by the end of the second week of classes.

Accommodations for Disability. At all the participating universities, accommodations can be made with the instructor if a student has a disability. Students are expected (and may be required by university policy) to identify their disability and discuss accommodations on the first night of class. Students are also expected to follow the policies and procedures outlines by the Disability Resource Center at their home university, available at:

GMU: <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/services.html>

VCU: <http://www.students.vcu.edu/dss/index.html>

UVA: <http://www.virginia.edu/vpsa/services.html>

RU: <http://www.radford.edu/~dro/>

NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/adastatement.html>

Inclement Weather. If classes are cancelled at Virginia Commonwealth University, then a message will be posted on the class Blackboard site and all class members will receive an e-mail if humanly possible. 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, please check the VCU Inclement Weather Hotline, which maintains up-to-the-minute information on class closings: 804-828-6736. Do not e-mail or call! IMPORTANT: The decision to cancel class due to inclement weather is determined by the home (i.e., instructor's) university. If the home university is open and operational, then you are expected to attend class. Clearly, however, your personal safety is paramount.

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

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 class CD), copyright laws must be following; print only one copy for personal use. The PowerPoint presentations, notes, and handouts are provided on Blackboard for your convenience and to facilitate your mastery of concepts presented in this course. PowerPoint presentations will be available on Blackboard by noon of the class day (often sooner). If you plan to print copies of PowerPoint slides, this must be done before class begins and using a handout (3 or more slides per page) 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, class, and date. If used for purposes other than simple 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 must be proficient in using the Internet and have reliable and consistent Internet access. Students are also expected to have an active e-mail account and to check e-mail regularly. This course requires students to use Blackboard, an online course management system, located at <http://blackboard.gmu.edu>.

Students are expected to log in to this system frequently and to be proficient in using its features. Students are also expected to be proficient in using the computer, which includes downloading and saving files, typing, and word processing. 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 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>

Blackboard Assistance. You may direct questions about Blackboard to the facilitator at the class site, and to e-mail Marci Kinan Jerome (mkinas@gmu.edu), who is the best resource. You will want to download all the required materials early in the semester or as soon as they are posted. Also check Blackboard regularly for announcements.

Course Facilitators. Each class will have a facilitator or assistant who will assist with the class. Learn who that person is, as he or she will be taking class roll and keeping track of class participation and reporting it to me weekly. Because of the potential confusion caused by people speaking at the same time in this multi-site course, it will be important to raise hands and to be acknowledged before asking questions or making comments. Along with the facilitators, I will try to enforce this rule and to be alert to questions from the distant sites.

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/> 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 sites during class time. However, in instances where students would otherwise miss class (in accordance with the attendance policy), students may participate in the class via the live web stream. However, students who participate in the web stream are still subject to the response cost as outlined in the attendance policy. Directions for viewing the video stream can be found on the course Blackboard site.

Students may also view the PowerPoint slides, communicate with the instructor, and interact with other at-home students using Breeze. Each Consortium class has its own Breeze website. To get to the Breeze site for this class, go to:

<http://webcon.gmu.edu/communication/>

You will enter as a guest. When you enter as a guest, you 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, which takes only a few seconds to install.

ASSIGNED READINGS

- Briggs, M.H. (1997). Developmental stages of teams. In *Building early intervention teams: Working together for children and families* (pp. 63-88). Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers.
- Carney, I.H., & Gamel-McCormick, M. (1996). Working with families. In F.P. Orelove & D. Sobsey, *Educating children with multiple disabilities* (3rd ed.) (pp. 451-476). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Chen, D., & Miles, C. (2005). Working with families of children with multiple disabilities. In F.P. Orelove, D. Sobsey, & R. Silberman (Eds.), *Educating children with multiple disabilities* (4th ed.) (pp. 31-65). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Cloninger, C.J. (2005). Designing collaborative educational services. In F.P. Orelove, D. Sobsey, & R. Silberman (Eds.), *Educating children with multiple disabilities* (4th ed.) (pp. 1-29). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Feinberg, E., & Beyer, J. (1998). Mediation in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. *ADR Report*, 2(16), 5-8.
- Giangreco, M.F., Edelman, S.W., & Broer, S.M. (2001). Respect, appreciation, and acknowledgement of paraprofessionals who support students with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 67, 485-498.
- McWilliam, R.A. (1996). How to provide integrated therapy. In R.A. McWilliam (Ed.), *Rethinking pull-out services in early intervention* (pp. 147-184). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Rainforth, B., & York-Barr, J. (1997). *Collaborative teaming for students with severe disabilities: Integrating therapy and education services* (2nd ed.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Snell, M.E., & Janney, R. (2000). *Collaborative teaming*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Stewart, A. (1999). *Preparing for a special education mediation in Virginia*. Richmond, VA: Virginia Board for People with Disabilities.