

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments  
Summer, 2011**

**Mondays, 4:30pm-7:10pm  
Dates: 5/23-6/27/11**

**(only meets for 5 weeks; class will not meet for Memorial day 5/30/11)  
GRADUATE SYLLABUS**

**Host University**

George Mason University  
**Instructor:** Holly Lawson  
**Office phone:** 703.993.5625  
**Office hours:** by appointment,  
before and after class  
**Email address:**  
[hlawson2@gmu.edu](mailto:hlawson2@gmu.edu)

**Participating Universities**

- GMU – EDSE 511 5S1 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
- JMU – EXED 635 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
- RU – EDSP 650 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
- NSU – SPE 700 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
- ODU – SPED 532 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments

**Click on the link below to go directly to the section of the syllabus:**

<a href="#"><u>LEARNER OUTCOMES</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>PROPOSED SCHEDULE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>ASSIGNMENTS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>GRADING</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u>SIMULATION PAPER</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MENU ITEMS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>EYES OF ME PAPER</u></a>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** (1:1:0) No prerequisites

Provides an overview of the characteristics of and services to persons with visual impairments; including the impact of visual impairment on infants' and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and social development, and family interaction patterns. Considers the educational, conceptual, psychosocial, and physical implications of a visual impairment.

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:**

Learning activities in this class will include the following:

1. Class lecture, discussion, and participation via synchronous face to face, web-conferences or videoconferences
2. Video and other relevant interactive media presentations
3. Study and independent research
4. Application activities, including regular assignments

### **LEARNER OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the education of persons with a visual impairment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the terminology used in the field of working with persons with a visual disability.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the current trends in education of persons with a visual impairment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the educational settings, which provide education of persons with a visual impairment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of local, state, and national resources for services to persons with a visual impairment.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of basic anatomy of the eye and eye diseases.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of a visual impairment on a person's physical, conceptual, academic, vocational and social development.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the legal rights of a person with a visual impairment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic techniques for adapting and modifying instruction for a student with a visual disability.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the need for specialized instruction for certain persons with a visual disability, to include orientation and mobility, low vision aids, and technology.

### **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:**

#### **CEC Special Education Content Standard #2: Development and Characteristics of Learners**

Special educators know and **demonstrate respect** for their students first as unique human beings. Special educators understand the **similarities and differences in human development** and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs.

Moreover, special educators understand how **exceptional conditions** can **interact** with the domains of human development and they **use this knowledge to respond to the varying abilities and behaviors of individuals** with exceptional learning needs. Special educators understand how the experiences of individuals with exceptional learning needs can impact families, as well as the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as fulfilled contributing members of the community.

### **CEC Special Education Content Standard #3: Initial Content Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences**

Special educators understand the **effects that an exceptional condition** can have on **an individual's learning** in school and throughout life. Special educators understand that the beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures can affect relationships among and between students, their families, and the school community. Moreover, special educators are **active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the individual's exceptional condition** to impact the individual's academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. The understanding of these learning differences and their possible interactions **provides the foundation** upon which **special educators individualize instruction** to provide meaningful and challenging learning for individuals with exceptional learning needs. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Erin, J. N. & Spungin S. (2004). When you have a visually impaired student with multiple disabilities in your classroom: A guide for teachers. New York: AFB Press.

McNear, D. & Torres, I. (2004). When You Have a Visually Impaired Student s in Your Classroom: A Guide for Teachers. New York: AFB Press.

*Articles will be posted on Blackboard and students are expected to read articles as assigned.*

#### **PROPOSED SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON STUDENT NEEDS)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading and Assignments</b>
May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Review syllabus</li> <li>• Terminology &amp; History</li> <li>▪ Professional Roles</li> </ul>	*McNear & Torres, Ch. 1 Hong, Rosenblum, Petrevay & Erin
May 30	MEMORIAL DAY—NO Class	<b>Simulation Activity Summary Due 6/1/11</b>
June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Structure &amp; Function of the Eye, Common Diseases</li> <li>▪ Implications of Visual Impairment</li> <li>▪ Families and Multicultural Issues</li> </ul>	Bishop; Barton; Topor & Richards, Brown & Forde
June 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literacy &amp; Technology</li> <li>▪ Modifying Instruction &amp; the Learning Environment</li> <li>▪ Expanded Core Curriculum</li> </ul>	*McNear & Torres, Ch. 2-6; Cox & Dykes <b>"Eyes of Me" Reflection Paper Due</b>
June 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legal Rights</li> <li>▪ Psychosocial Issues</li> </ul>	Barclay; Correa-Torres <b>Menu Item Due</b>
June 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple Disabilities &amp; Deafblindness</li> <li>▪ Placement Options</li> </ul>	*Erin & Spungin; Tomasik; Griffin-Shirley & Matlock;

		MacFarland; Griffin, Davis & Williams
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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

Assignment	500 Total Points Possible	% of grade	Due Date
Class Attendance & Participation	100	=10%	20 points/class
Simulation Paper	125	=20%	6/1/2011
“Eyes of Me” Reflection Paper (Signature Assignment)	125	=25%	6/13/2011
Menu Assignment	100	=20%	6/20/2011
Total	350		

**GRADUATE GRADING SCALE:**

- A – 350- 315 points
- B – 314– 280 points
- C – 279 – 245 points
- F – below 244 points

**CLASS AND GRADING POLICIES:**

As indicated above, each requirement has a point value allocated toward the final grade. All requirements must be completed and received by the instructor by the date (see class schedule). At the end of the semester, you will be given a grade based on the total number of points you have accumulated.

1. Unless otherwise indicated, all formal written work must be word-processed. All assignments must be typed and free of grammatical and spelling errors.
2. Acceptance of late assignments is at the discretion of the instructor and 5 points will be deducted for each day late.
3. Please allow time after submitting your assignment, for grades and comments to be posted. Most grades will be posted as soon as possible; however, sometimes commitments to other class or duties interfere with grading time.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Students are expected to attend class. Only in emergency circumstances will one absence be excused if the student submits a 200-word summary of the required reading and topics discussed in class for the missed session. In the event more than one absence is necessary, students are asked to withdraw from the course and register for this class next semester. Significant tardiness or early departure may result in the loss of some or all weekly participation points.

## **SIMULATION PAPER RUBRIC (125 points)**

**Assignment:** Spend at least 2 hours in conditions simulating a visual impairment (very low vision or blindness). Prior to the simulation you should show the person who will be with you how to act as a human guide. This person should be instructed to monitor for your safety and provide information when requested, but to allow you to do things for yourself. You can borrow a sleepshade or low vision simulator from the instructor; you can purchase your own sleepshade; or you can create a blindfold from fabric.

Select a 2-hour **continuous period of time** when you will be in your home or apartment. Arrange for the human guide to be with you for the entire 2 hours. Part of the time should be spent in your home doing typical activities (e.g., laundry, preparing and eating a meal, cleaning). Part of the time should be spent in your home doing an activity that is not as familiar to you (e.g., preparing a meal you've never made before, planting plants in your garden you've never planted before, trying a new craft project, playing a new card game with someone).

Directions: Following your simulation, write a 4 to 6 page paper describing the experience emphasizing the following: (a) adaptations you used, (b) feelings you experienced, (c) interactions with others including your guide, and (d) what knowledge you gained about visual impairment and how you will apply this to your own career. Discuss things the guide did to help you, things that the guide did that made you uncomfortable, and things you learned from working with your guide.

**Grading Rubric:** I will assign points to your paper using the following rubric.

# Points	Item
____/5	Paper is double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, 4-6 pages in length.
____/5	Introductory paragraph provides an accurate overview of the content of the paper.
____/20	Adaptations used by the writer are described.
____/20	Feelings experienced by the writer are described.
____/15	Social interactions, including those with the human guide, are described.
____/20	Knowledge the writer gained about visual impairment and how the writer will apply this in the future are described.
____/5	Closing paragraph provides a summary of key points the writer made in the paper.
____/10	Grammar – Writer may use the word “I” in this paper. The writer uses consistent verb tenses, accurate spelling, no run on sentences, etc.

**DOCUMENTARY FILM “THE EYES OF ME” REFLECTION PAPER  
(SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT) (125 points)**

Watch the film, *The Eyes of Me*, that features four high school students, Chas, Denise, Isaac, and Meagan, with a visual impairment. After watching the film, write a 4 to 5 page paper in which you discuss the unique learning needs of students with visual impairments. Provide a 1-2 *paragraph overview* of the film and use the rest of the paper to discuss in-depth the individual with visual impairment. Topics to discuss in the paper include:

- a) knowledge you gained about students with visual impairment;
- b) techniques used by the students with a visual impairment to complete tasks (e.g., cooking, traveling);
- c) how the experiences of persons with visual impairment impact family and social interactions;
- d) how the unique background of the individual (e.g. race, culture, and/or economic status) plays a role in student experiences;
- e) how the film changed any stereotypes you may have had about persons with visual impairment, and;
- f) how you will apply information gained from this film to your own work to respond to individual needs of those with students with visual impairments.

**Grading Rubric:** I will assign points to your paper using the following rubric.

# Points	Item
____/5	Paper is double spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, 4 to 5 pages in length.
____/5	Introductory paragraph provides an accurate overview of the content of the paper.
____/15	Description of knowledge you gained about the student’s visual impairment, both medical and functional implications. ( <b>Understanding of exceptional conditions</b> )
____/15	Techniques (both “typical” and compensatory) used by the student with a visual impairment to complete tasks (e.g. cooking, traveling).
____/15	Description of how the experiences of person with visual impairment impact family and social interactions.
____/15	Description of how the unique background of a person is a factor in individual learning and experiences.
____/20	Description of how the film has changed any stereotypes you had about persons with visual impairments and how you developed more <b>respect</b> for individuals with this disability as unique human beings.
____/20	Description of how you will apply information gained from this film to your own work <b>to respond to individual needs</b> of those with students with visual impairments.
____/5	Closing paragraph provides a summary of key points the writer made in the paper.
____/10	Grammar – Writer may use the word “I” in this paper. The writer uses consistent verb tenses, accurate spelling, no run on sentences, etc.

## MENU ITEMS (100 points)

**Graduate Students must complete one menu item.**

- a. Observe in an educational or rehabilitation setting and write a 3 to 5 page paper detailing your observation. **Do not use real names!** Describe the setting, activities that were occurring, information about the visual abilities of the individuals, materials that were used, social interactions between the individuals with visual impairments and others, and any other relevant information that ties to the expanded core curriculum. You may not observe in a setting in which you have worked or volunteered in the past. This needs to be a new experience. **Please speak with Dr. Lawson by May 30<sup>th</sup> if you'd like to do this assignment and she will help you locate an observation site.**
- b. Spend three days without the use of your personal car and write a 3 to 5 page paper describing the impact this had on your activities during the time period you were car-free. Discuss your feelings related to independence/dependence, asking for assistance, the methods you used for travel and why you selected them, and how you will apply the information you learned to your future work. Do not provide a time diary; rather synthesize the experience when writing your paper. (You may do this only if you regularly drive your own car in Virginia). The assignment must be completed during the fall semester.)
- c. Develop a 2 hour in-service about visual impairment or deafblindness for a school or adult agency in which a child or adult is to be included. Include a brief description of the child/adult including visual condition, functioning level, and classes/work the student is involved with at the setting. Your in-service should include an outline of the key points you will make, a description of any activities you will have participants do, samples of unique handouts (not simply a Xerox of things off of the course web site or what the instructor has provided in class), a list of references, an agenda etc. Creativity and thoroughness will be considered in the assignment of a grade for this project.
- d. Interview an individual with a visual impairment OR the parent of a person with a visual impairment. This individual should not be someone whose history you know in regards to his/her visual impairment or child's visual impairment. Gather information about ways in which his/her life is affected by blindness/low vision and about how others respond to the visual impairment. Write a 3 to 5 page paper summarizing the interview. Your paper should be a reflective summary, not a transcript of the interview! It is fine to use quotes in the paper, however, it is important to organize the information and weave together a story about the person interviewed. Please speak with Dr. Lawson by Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> if you'd like to do this assignment and she will help you locate someone to interview.
- e. Read an **adult level** autobiography or a biography of an individual with a visual impairment. Write a 3 to 5 page paper about the experiences of the person as

they relate to the visual impairment, the reactions of others to the visual impairment, the adaptations the individual uses, etc. Do not spend more than 1 page telling the story of the book! Your paper should focus on the **character's visual impairment and his/her experiences** as an individual with visual impairment. *See Blackboard link for ASSIGNMENTS partial list of books*

- f. Review 3 children's books that have characters with visual impairment or dual sensory impairment. Write a review of each book you read. Your reviews should focus on the **character's visual impairment or dual sensory loss**, do not spend more than 1-2 paragraphs retelling the story. Read at least one of the books to a child. For the one(s) you read to a child, tell about the child's reaction to the book and any material presented. You may substitute an adolescent level book (grades 6 and up) for 2 children's books thus only reading 2 books instead of 3. *See course lecture notes for a link to a list of books. See Blackboard link for ASSIGNMENTS partial list of books*
- g. Pick a topic covered in the course. Design a public relations promotional project (e.g., a Power Point, a collage, a role play script, a brochure, a video) that educates the general public about the positive abilities of visually impaired children and/or adults in this area. This project will be graded based on your creativity, clarity with which information is conveyed, and the message given about people with visual impairment. Provide a paragraph of information explaining the purpose or goals of the project as well as characteristics of the intended audience.
- h. Pick one of the 3 scenarios below. For the individual in the scenario locate 10 web sites that would assist the individual in getting information specific to his/her needs at this time. For each web site provide the (a) name of the company or organization, (b) the address (URL) and (c) 1-2 paragraphs describing what you found at the site that would **specifically** be of value to the individual in the scenario. Give at least one example of something on the site and how it applies to the individual in the scenario. Your opinion of the site and a description in your own words is what is being sought here – please do not “cut and paste” the site's description into your paper! **You will lose points if you “cut and paste” directly from the site or if you don't give examples of what specifically on the site would be relevant to the individual in the scenario.**

(1) Lyle was born with a syndrome called CHARGE. Mrs. Hines is going to be Lyle's 3rd grade teacher this year. She has been told that Lyle cannot see and has a severe hearing loss. Lyle will have an intervener working with him. Mrs. Hines has never had a child who is deafblind in her classroom. She wants to learn more about CHARGE, how deafblind people communicate, what exactly an intervener does, what materials and equipment Lyle might use in her classroom, and what she can do to assist the 24 other 3rd graders to get to know and accept Lyle as their peer.



(2) Shawn is the father of a 10 month old daughter, Ashley, who has been diagnosed with cortical visual impairment and appears to have delays cognitively. Ashley is not yet sitting by herself and rarely reaches out for things. Shawn has an older son (age 7) and an older daughter (age 5). His wife is taking on the primary responsibility for Ashley's care and is the one who is home when the teacher of the visually impaired comes each week. Shawn wants to know more about his daughter's visual impairment. He wants to know what equipment and materials she'll need at school as she gets older. He's also interested in knowing what resources are out there for siblings of children who have disabilities such as Ashley's. He'd like to learn about how people who have disabilities and can't read and write communicate.

(3) Marla is 16 and has just been diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). She has failed the eye exam to get her driver's license because her visual fields are so restricted. She is really having a lot of trouble seeing the white board and overheads in school. When walking she often has branches hit her in the head because she does not see them. She is unable to see at night and therefore won't go out of the house unless she is with a family member or close friend. Marla would like to find out what resources are available to her if she goes to college, she'd like to know about tools that may help her at night, she is very anxious to talk to other's with the same condition, and most importantly she wants to see if there is a way she can drive.

- i. Go to the public library and find out what services are available for patrons with visual impairments. Develop a handout for families of children with visual impairments to familiarize them with the services available for their child who has a visual impairment. Make your handout attractive, informative, and jargon free. This should be your own work, not a handout from the library. In developing your handout consider how to present material about the services to parents of children with low vision and to parents of children who are blind. Also give consideration to the age of the child and the presence of additional disabilities.
- j. Develop an individual project to increase your knowledge or understanding of visual impairment or deafblindness. Submit a one-paragraph description of your proposed project to the instructor via e-mail by **May 30<sup>th</sup>** for approval. Examples of projects might include a public opinion survey, development of a videotape, or creation of instructional materials. **If you don't get your project approved ahead of time it may not be accepted by the instructor, resulting in a grade of zero points.**

## **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://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>
- Radford: <http://www.radford.edu/dos-web/honorcode.html>
- NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/studentjudicial/>
- ODU: [http://orgs.odu.edu/hc/pages/Honor\\_Code.shtml](http://orgs.odu.edu/hc/pages/Honor_Code.shtml)
- JMU: <http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml#TheHonorCode>

## **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITY**

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with their university disability services office and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. University specific information regarding eligibility, services and accommodations can be found at:

- GMU: <http://ods.gmu.edu/>
- Radford: <http://www.radford.edu/~dro/>
- NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html>
- ODU: <http://studentaffairs.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>
- JMU: <http://www.jmu.edu/ods/>

## **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. Please note that 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.

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. For the articles (available on Blackboard), 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://mymason.gmu.edu>

NON GMU Students: Your login for Blackboard Community is: x\_first name.last name  
For example John Smith's username would be: x\_john.smith Your password is:  
bbcommunity

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. 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>

## **TASKSTREAM SUBMISSION**

TaskStream ([www.taskstream.com](http://www.taskstream.com)) is an electronic portfolio and assessment management tool that the VI Consortium is utilizing in part to meet accreditation requirements for the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as well as for student portfolio evaluation purposes. EVERY student taking this course at EVERY university IS REQUIRED to upload and submit the signature assignment for this course to TaskStream for evaluation by the end of the semester. Directions for creating an account in TaskStream and submitting assignments are available on Blackboard in the TaskStream folder within the Syllabus section.

For student evaluation, program evaluation, and accreditation purposes, students will be required to submit a signature assignment from each of their Special Education courses to TaskStream, an electronic portfolio system. In addition, students completing Midpoint and Final Portfolio courses will use TaskStream to create a full portfolio of their work based on assignments completed throughout their program. For this reason, students will need to retain electronic copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE Special Education program. In addition to the signature assignment,

products from this class can become part of your individual program portfolio used in your portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards. Grades will not be submitted at the end of the semester unless TaskStream requirement has been fulfilled.

The **signature assignment(s)** for this class is: **Media Portrayal Paper**

#### 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 drop box). You may direct your questions about Blackboard to the facilitator at the class site as well as to email Holly Lawson ([hlawson2@gmu.edu](mailto:hlawson2@gmu.edu)). 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.

Key Points Blackboard. Our Blackboard server has been updated from version 8.0 to 9.1. For students this means:

- Students **MUST** access Blackboard through <http://mymason.gmu.edu> (new website) for fall courses.
- If students access Blackboard through <http://gmucommunity.blackboard.com> (old website) they will see only content from spring and summer. **DO NOT** use this website to access Blackboard.
- When accessing Blackboard through <http://mymason.gmu.edu> students will also have access to previous courses.
- Students will use the same login they have used for spring and summer courses.
- When students login to <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, select the "Organizations" tab to access their classes.
- Students will notice a slightly different look to the new Blackboard system, but everything should function the same.

## **GMU STUDENTS ONLY: COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

### **Student Expectations**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.htm>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Campus Resources**

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].