

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

**EDSE 534 6M7 Section (3 credits)
Communication and Severe Disabilities
Autism Cohort Summer 2011
Tuesdays, May 24 – July 19, 4:30-9:00 PM
LCPS Administration Building, 420/421**

INSTRUCTOR

Rosemarie McGuinness, M.Ed., CCC-SLP
Work phone: 571-252-1028
Office hours: By appointment
Email address: rosemarie.mcguinness@lcps.org

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduces professionals to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for individuals with severe speech and language impairments. Addresses the knowledge and skills needed to assess the potential AAC user, make team decisions, develop and implement instruction, and evaluate the effects of instruction, aimed at motivating, building, and expanding communication, choice-making, and social interaction.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course will be taught using lectures, discussions, small and large group activities, and video analysis. Students will be informed on the first day of class whether or not GSE Blackboard will be used to post important information for this course. If so, plan to access the Bb site several times per week; announcements and resources are posted on the Bb site in between class sessions (e.g., in response to queries or information requested by students). There may also be materials and Web sites on the Bb site for supplemental resources (choices for these resources may vary from student to student, depending on interest and focus during the semester).

If using Blackboard, students login at <http://courses.gmu.edu>. The User Name is the first part of your Mason email address and the same password that you use to access your Mason email account. How-To Guides are available at: <http://irc.gmu.edu/CE6Transition/index.html>. If you cannot log in or are having technical difficulties, please direct any technical problems to the ITU Support Center at 703-993-8870 or support@gmu.edu.

LEARNER OUTCOMES

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

- Identify characteristics of non-symbolic and symbolic communication
- Describe pragmatic intents as they relate to social communication
- Describe and discuss methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of individuals with communication disorders
- Implement assessment strategies to improve student's social interaction with peers and others

- Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication systems available for individuals with communication disorders
- Describe the relationship between behavior and communication

REQUIRED TEXTS

Bondy, A. & Frost, L. (2001). *A picture's worth: PECS and other visual communication strategies in autism*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

Cafiero, J.M. (2005) *Meaningful exchanges for people with autism: An introduction to augmentative and alternative communication*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Barbera, M. & Rasmussen, T. (2007). *The verbal behavior approach: How to teach children with autism and related disorders*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley.

Sundberg, M. L. & Partington, J. W. (1998). *Teaching language to children with autism or other developmental disabilities*. Pleasant Hill, CA: Behavior Analysts, Inc.

Winokur, S. (1976). *A primer of verbal behavior: An operant view*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This course is part of the George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development (CEHD). This program complies with the standards for special educators established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization.

The CEC Standards are listed on the following web site: <http://www.cec.sped.org> . Look in the second column on the left, and click on "Professional Standards." On this page, to the right, there is a red book pdf document titled "What Every Special Educator Must Know."

The program goals are consistent with the following Professional Development Standards outlined by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)\

- Standard 2: Development and characteristics of learners
- Standard 3: Individual learning differences
- Standard 4: Instructional strategies
- Standard 6: Language
- Standard 7: Instructional planning
- Standard 10: Collaboration

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.html>].
- 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/>].

GSE faculty may add at the conclusion:

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

RHT faculty may add at the conclusion:

- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu/>].

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://www.gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html#code> 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, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703.993.2474 to access the DRC.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Absences:
Understanding you are individuals with full and active lives, who have made the intellectual and financial commitment to regularly attend class, there may be an instance when you are not able to attend. If this unlikely event should occur, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to obtain notes, handouts, and lecture details from another student (it is recommended that you have two colleagues in the course for this). Students who are absent are held responsible for the material covered and assignments due as if in attendance. Please be sure to notify the classmate(s) in sufficient time for them to be of assistance for you. It is expected that you notify the instructor about absences in advance or within 24 hours after an absence. Be aware any points earned for participation in class activities, during a time of absence, will not be earned and cannot be made up. If you need to miss, for any reason, more than two class sessions, contact the Instructor immediately to discuss options for withdrawing and completing the course during another semester.
- Assignments, Readings, and Due Dates:
For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, be prepared for class, demonstrate professional behavior (see Professional Disposition Criteria at <http://www.gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions), and complete all assignments with professional quality in a timely manner. To successfully complete this course, students need to adhere to the due dates for specific readings and assignments to be completed. **Unexcused late assignments are subject to a 10% grade loss for that assignment.** If you feel you cannot adhere to the schedule noted in the syllabus, please contact the Instructor immediately to discuss options for withdrawing and completing the course during another semester.
- Course requirements include readings (e.g., texts, online resources, professional journal articles that are independently accessed by students) and activities (both during and between course sessions) that prepare the student to acquire and/or increase their knowledge and skills in supporting language and communication development to students with disabilities. A major requirement is implementation of a comprehensive instructional technique with a student with a disability (see the Case Study). Both formative (ungraded) and summative (graded) performance-based assessments (e.g., evaluations, projects, assignments) are used in this course. The final course grade is based on the quantity of points students earn through timely submission of high-quality summative performance-based evaluations.
- Each student is expected to:
 - Read assigned materials for the course before coming to class.
 - Present/discuss assigned chapters/articles in class.
 - Participate in classroom activities that reflect critical reading of materials.
 - Complete class assignments and activities.
 - Attend each class session, arrive on time, and stay for the duration of the class time.

- Turn off cell phones.
- Computers are only to be used for class-related activities.
- 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).
- Paper Format

Papers not following this format may be automatically reduced by 10% of the possible points.

 - 1 inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font.
 - Separate title page including the following: title, name, date, professor, course number.
 - All papers should be proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity errors.
 - 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 in your writing. <http://www.collegeboard.com/article/0,3868,2-10-0-10314,00.html>.
 - We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). Please refer to “Guidelines for Non-Handicapping Language in APA Journals” <http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html>
- Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream. TaskStream information is available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/sped/> Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed, upon completion of the required submission, the IN will convert to a F nine weeks into the following semester.
- 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 ASSESSMENTS

1. *Class Participation (10 points)*

Attendance during 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. Information, activities, and role plays will be presented in class that are not a part of the text and can only be experienced in the class sessions. Furthermore, as part of this course you are expected to be an active and respectful participant, which includes actively engaging in class discussions and activities. Completion of in-class activities includes both active participation in the activity and submission of a permanent product (i.e., form, summary statement, reflection, etc.). Students who miss a class will not have the opportunity to make up missed in-class assignments.

(Due: weekly)

2. *Written Responses (20 Points)*

Four writing prompts will be presented throughout the course. Students are required to respond to these prompts by the class period indicated in order to participate in class discussion. All responses will be turned in together on the 7th class day. Responses must reflect analytic thought

and demonstrate relevance by incorporating topics discussed in the course. All responses should be 1 page in length. Students will receive 5 points for each of the required reflections. **(Discussed classes 2, 4, 5, 7 and turned in stapled together on class 7)**

3. ***Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection (20 points)***

Using the strategies and procedures reviewed in class, students will create a topic board for use with an individual(s) in a classroom activity and will write a 2 page reflection on his or her experiences and impressions of this activity. **(Due: class 3)**

4. ***Communication Sample Analysis (20 points)***

Students will complete a communication sample analysis of pragmatic language on an individual using the information received in class and from class readings. The analysis should be taken on one student in two different situations. The communication sample analysis should be accompanied by a one page written description of the communication strengths and weakness of the student observed as it relates to pragmatic language. Information from this exercise will be shared in class.

(Due: class 5)

5. ***Case Study: Implementing a Low Tech AAC System or Strategy into a Literacy Unit or Functional Activity (30 points) (Task Stream Assignment)***

Students will develop a case study of an individual that includes a low tech communication system or strategy. This system or strategy should be incorporated into a literacy unit or activity.

The unit must be centered around a piece of literature whether a published children's book, a personally authored story, or a functional activity. If choosing an activity, it should be one that has meaning and relevance for the individual. Students will adapt the story or activity for individuals with communication difficulties using communication/literacy tools and strategies discussed in class. Furthermore, students will include at least 3 additional supplemental resources related to the story or activity that also incorporate communication theory and strategies discussed in class. These resources could include song boards, worksheets, games, crafts, etc. Students will also design a communication board or support communication support strategy for use during the implementation of the unit/activity. Students will present their units/activities during a class presentation. They should also submit a five-page paper that includes the following:

1. Description of the student(s), the unit/activity and the rationale for selecting this unit/activity	/4
2. Description of the communication system or strategy selected and the rationale for selecting this communication system or strategy	/4
3. Goal(s) selected are meaningful and relevant for the students	/4
4. Procedures are clearly described for implementing the unit/activity	/4
5. Materials and resources used in the development of the unit/activity are clearly described; at least two references are cited from texts or course readings	/4
6. Outcome/effect of the unit or activity including a sample of the data collection method used	/4
7. Reflection and recommendations	/4
8. Written language are without errors and technical aspects of APA are accurate throughout	/2
TOTAL	/30

(Due: class 8 & 9)

COURSE EVALUATION

The requirements for this course will be weighted in the following manner:

Attendance and Participation	10%	Due: Weekly
Reflections	20%	Due: class 2, 4, 6, 7
Topic board	20%	Due: class 3
Communication Sample Analysis	20%	Due: class 5
Case Study/Unit plan/Presentation	30%	Due: class 8 & 9

GRADING SCALE

95-100% = A
90-94% = A-
85-89% = B+
80-84% = B
70-79% = C
< 70% = F

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE

CLASS	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
1	Paperwork Introductions Communication Skills Assessment	Heflin, Chapter 8, pp. 233-242 Bondy & Frost, Chapter 1 Calfiero, Introduction	
2	Communication Characteristics: Typical and Atypical Development	Prelock, Chapter 4 Bondy & Frost, Chapter 2	Written Response #1 due
3	Speech Production	Kluth, Chapter 7 pp. 109-113 Bondy & Frost, Chapter 3	Topic board due
4	Functions of Language/Pragmatics	Prelock, Chapter 4 Calfiero, Chapter 1 & 2	Written Response #2 due
5	Communication and Behavior	Heflin, Chapter 7 Bondy & Frost, Chapter 4	Written Response #3 due Communication Sample Analysis due
6	Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Kluth, Chapter 7 pp. 113-134 Heflin, Chapter 4, pp. 245- 261 Bondy & Frost, Chapter 5 Calfiero, Chapter 3	Prepare Case Study
7	Verbal Operants	Readings from Verbal Behavior Approach	Written Response #4 due
8	Strategies to Support Receptive and Expressive Language	Bondy & Frost, Chapter 8 Kluth, Chapter 8 and 11 Prelock, Chapter 9 Heflin, Chapter 8, pp. 242-244	Case Study: Communication/Literacy presentations due
9	Summary		Case Study: Communication/Literacy presentations due