

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

**EDSE 422/622 Section XT1 (2 credits)  
Augmentative Communication  
Summer 2011**

**SCHEDULE**

This course meets from 6/10 – 7/22 via the Internet &  
Face to Face on 7/9 from 1-5 in Aquia Building Room 219

**PROFESSOR**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Focuses on alternative language, literacy, and communication techniques for children with severe language and speech impairments.

**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 laboratory activities
4. Class presentations

**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
3. Discuss and evaluate the range of AAC devices and systems available for individuals with communication disabilities
4. Implement assessment strategies to improve student's social interaction with peers and others
5. Understand and identify behaviors associated with communication
6. Understand and describe the theoretical and research basis for AAC selection and implementation for individuals with disabilities.

## REQUIRED READING

There is no required textbook. The instructor will provide handouts and Internet sites. All course materials are available on Blackboard.

This semester we will be using Blackboard 9.1. Students login to 9.1 at <http://mymason.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. 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](mailto:support@gmu.edu).

## DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

Module	Dates	Topic/Learning Activities	Assignment Due
1	(F) June 10 - (F) June 17	Topic: Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Overview</li> <li>• Introduction to AAC</li> </ul>	Please refer to the document "Module One Learning Activities" located on Blackboard. The Getting to Know You assignment is due June 12; all others are due June 17
2	(Sat) June 18 - (F) June 24	Topic: AAC Tools Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Message Selection / Device Feature Match</li> <li>• Low Tech Tools</li> <li>• High Tech Tools</li> <li>• Software Applications</li> </ul>	Please refer to the document "Module Two Learning Activities" located on Blackboard. All assignments are due June 24
3	(Sat) June 25 - (F) July 1	Topic: Symbols and Vocabulary Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Vocabulary</li> <li>• Topic Boards / Boardmaker</li> </ul>	Please refer to the document "Module Three Learning Activities" located on Blackboard. All assignments are due July 1
4	(Sat) July 2 - (F) July 8	Topic: Low & Mid Tech AAC Devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Device Features</li> <li>• Device Comparison</li> </ul>	Please refer to the document "Module Four Learning Activities" located on Blackboard. All assignments are due July 8
	(Sat) July 9 Face to Face Meeting Aquia 219	Topic: AAC Tools Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Message Selection / Device Feature Match</li> <li>• Low Tech Tools</li> <li>• High Tech Tools</li> <li>Software Applications</li> </ul>	Please refer to the document "July 11 Class Activities" located on Blackboard. All assignments are due July 9.
5	(Sat) July 9 - (F) July 15	Topic: High Tech Devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamic display</li> <li>• Text based systems</li> </ul>	Please refer to the document "Module Five Learning Activities" located on Blackboard. All assignments are due July 15
	(Sat) July 16 – (F) July 22	Final Project Development	Independent work on final project
	(F) July 22	Final Projects	Final Projects due to Blackboard on July 22

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Assignment Expectations

- It is expected that students have continual access to a high-speed Internet connection and an active GMU email account for the duration of this course (June 10 - July 22).
- All course materials are available on the course Blackboard site, <http://mymason.gmu.edu>.
- Students are expected to be familiar with Blackboard features including downloading materials and submitting assignments. Students are expected to know their Blackboard username and password and to actively monitor the email account that is currently registered in Blackboard. Students who are experiencing problems using the Blackboard system must contact the instructor prior to the date an assignment is due for assistance.
- Please type ALL assignments unless otherwise noted. Please contact the instructor if you are using a word processing program other than Microsoft Word.
- All assignments must be posted to the Discussion Board or submitted through the "Assignment" session in Blackboard by 11:59 pm on the day the assignment is due (unless otherwise noted by the instructor) to be considered for full credit. Please note that Blackboard places a timestamp on all submitted material. If Blackboard is down for any reason at the time an assignment is due, you should email a copy of your assignment to the instructor. However, you should only email the instructor your assignment if Blackboard is down. If you not available on the day an assignment is due, you are expected to submit that assignment early to be considered for full credit.
- In fairness to students who make the effort to submit assignments on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late assignments. (For example, a 10 point assignment will lose 1 point per day while a 40 point assignment will lose 4 points per day). At the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit and a response cost of 10 percent will be assessed. Please note, assignments worth 1 point that are submitted late will receive a score of 0.
- All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar and will be graded accordingly. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with the GMU Writing Center during this course to improve your skills.
- All references including Online references must be cited in proper APA format to avoid plagiarism (cut&paste is easy to do from the Internet).

### **Assignment 1: Module Learning Activities (50 points)      Due: End of Each Learning Module**

The course is divided into 5 learning modules. Each module lasts for 7 days. Within Module One through Five, students will complete a set of learning activities. These activities include course readings, website reviews, software explorations, and personal reflections. Students are expected to summarize, analyze, evaluate, and reflect on the presented course material. Assignments include posting reflections to various forums on

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the Discussion Board as well as submitting written assignments through the “Assignment” section on Blackboard. You can get 10 points per each Module Learning Activity and thus with a total of 5 Module Learning Activities, you will get up to 50 points. The number and type of assignments vary within each module. A complete description of the Module Learning Activities including expectations and the point scale of the graded assignments for that module is posted within each Module section on the Blackboard course site. Please note, the Module Learning Activities description and assignments will be made available at least two days prior to the start of the module. At the start of the class Module One is available. Module Two will be available June 16 on Blackboard. Module Three will be available by June 23, Module Four by June 30, and Module Five by July 7.

**Assignment 2: Face to Face Class Meeting (15 points)      Due: July 9**

Students will meet face to face on Saturday July 9 from 1pm-5pm in Aquia Building 219. *Attendance* at this session 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. During this time, students will engage in several hands-on activities including presentations/product demonstrations by AAC vendors that will earn them participation points. Students who miss this 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. Significant tardiness or early departure will affect a student's participation grade. Students who miss an in-class activity or do not complete it in its entirety during the allotted time will not receive credit for that activity.

**Assignment 3: Implementation Project (35 points)      Due: July 23**

Each student must complete an implementation project based on a case study given in class or a person who uses an AAC system known to the student. For the case study, the student must determine, based on the description of the person and their situation, what type of high and or low-tech AAC devices and strategies could be used to help the individual be successful in reaching his or her goals. Students that would like to complete this project on a real person known to them will develop and implement a plan to teach the individual how to better use a specific AAC device. Please refer to the assignment rubric posted on Blackboard for further details.

- Background information on the client      5 points
- Device Selection and Rationale      15 points
- Device Customization      10 points
- Written Presentation      5 points
- Total      35 points**

**GRADING CRITERIA**

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

- Assignment 1: Module Learning Activities      50 points

- Assignment 2: Face to Face Class 15 points
  - Assignment 3: Implementation Project 35 points
- Total Possible Points 100 points**

Grading Scale

95-100 = A                      80-82 = B-  
 90-94 = A-                      70-79 = C  
 86-89 = B+                      < 70 = F  
 83-85 = B

**RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PRGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program. This program complies with the standards for special educators established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization.

**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.

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

### **TASKSTREAM SUBMISSION**

TaskStream ([www.taskstream.com](http://www.taskstream.com)) is an electronic portfolio and assessment management tool that the Assistive Technology program 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 IS REQUIRED to upload and submit the signature assignment to TaskStream for evaluation by the end of the semester. Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Directions for creating an account in TaskStream and submitting assignments are available on Blackboard.

The signature assignment(s) for this class is: Implementation Project