

Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Vision Impairment

Medical and Educational Implications of Visual Impairment —Graduate Syllabus Fall, 2011

Thursdays 7:20pm-10:00pm

Dates: Sept. 1st-Dec. 8th

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

Participating Universities

- GMU – EDSE 513 Section 5S1/6V1 Medical and Educational Implication of Visual Impairments
- JMU – EXED 631 Medical and Educational Implication of Visual Impairments
- RU – EDSP 658 Medical and Educational Implication of Visual Impairments
- NSU – SPE 708 Medical and Educational Implication of Visual Impairments
- ODU – SPED 434/534 Medical and Educational Implication of Visual Impairments

COURSE DESCRIPTION (3:3:0): (Co/Pre-req: EDSE 511: Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments)

Provides an introduction to anatomy and physiology of the visual system and the educational implications of visual pathology. Topics include anatomy of the human eye, normal visual development, pathology of the eye, examination procedures for the identification of visual pathology, and the effects of pathology on visual learning and development. Delivered online.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

Learning activities in this class will include the following:

1. Class lecture, discussion, and participation via asynchronous on-line learning management system (Blackboard), web-conferences or videoconferences
2. Video and other relevant interactive media presentations
3. Study and independent research
4. Application activities, including regular assignments and practicum experiences with students with low vision
5. Written responses to posted discussion questions posted on Blackboard.

LEARNER OUTCOMES:

This course is designed to enable to student to be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge of the properties of the human visual system.
 - a. demonstrate knowledge of the structure, function, and typical development of the human visual system.

- b. demonstrate knowledge of basic terminology, manifestations, and educational implications of diseases and disorders of the visual system.
 - c. demonstrate knowledge of the effects of medication(s) on the function(s) of the visual system.
- demonstrate knowledge of visual disorders and their impact on learning.
 - a. demonstrate knowledge of the impact of visual impairments and deaf-blindness on development, formal and incidental learning experiences, and literacy.
 - b. explain the characteristics of visual disorders to families and to other educational service providers.
 - c. provide families and related service providers information regarding the needs of students with visual impairments in various areas of development.
 - d. recommend adaptations within instructional environments, to identify and accommodate individual sensory needs.
 - e. identify strategies to increase visual access and efficiency to and within learning environments as related to instruction in the use of print adaptations and optical and non-optical devices.
 - interpret reports, assess visual conditions, and determine visual effectiveness.
 - a. use specific assessments that measure functional vision.
 - b. conduct, interpret and apply the results of formal and informal assessments of functional vision.
 - c. interpret eye reports and other information related to visual impairments including low-vision evaluation reports for students with visual impairments, families, and educational and related service providers.
 - d. use information from functional vision evaluations to develop recommendations for the student's learning environment and educational materials.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:

Course's Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), and 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.

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 CEC Standards are located in this document. The primary CEC standard that will be addressed in this class will be Standard 2 on Development and Characteristics of Learners.

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 (ELN)^{1/}. 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 ELN. Special educators understand how the experiences of individuals with ELN can impact families, as well as the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as fulfilled contributing members of the community.

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 preparation program is preparing candidates.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Corn A.L., Erin J.N. (2010) *Foundations of Low Vision: Clinical and Functional Perspectives (2nd ed)*. New York: AFB Press

Cassin, B., Solomon, S. A., & Rubin, M. I. (1997). *Dictionary of eye terminology (3d ed., rev'd.)*. Gainesville, FL: Triad Publishing Co.

D'Andrea, F. M., & Farrenkopf, C. (2000). *Looking to learn: Promoting literacy for students with low vision*. New York: AFB Press.

REQUIRED ARTICLES AND READINGS:

Additional articles, handouts, and resources are also posted on the Blackboard site under the lectures for each week. All articles are posted on Blackboard under the lectures link. It is expected prior to class meetings that students will have read the materials on Blackboard in addition to the chapters from the books. PowerPoint notes in Word format for the methods lectures will be available on Blackboard under LECTURES.

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
Sept. 1	Overview of syllabus, requirements, beliefs about persons with low vision, definitions	C & E- Chapters 1 & 2	
Sept. 8	Anatomy and physiology of the eye, how the visual system works	C & E- Chapter 5 Additional resource readings	Eye parts presentations due
Sept. 15	Visual development	C & E- Chapter 9	Quiz 1 opens
Sept. 22	Clinical assessment of low vision, ophthalmologic, CLVE FVA: eye reports module	C & E- Chapter 8 D'A & F: Chapters 1 & 3	
Sept. 29	FVA: oculomotor & acuity modules	C & E- Chapter 10	FVA kit due
Oct. 6	FVA: color, contrast & lighting & visual fields module	C & E- Chapter 10	Eye report assignment due Quiz 2 opens
Oct. 13	Introduction to optics Learn about the characteristics of telescopes and near magnification	C & E-Chapter 7 D'A & F Chapters 4-6	
Oct. 20	Instruction in visual techniques	C & E Chapter 11	
Oct. 27	Instruction in the use of optical devices	C & E- Chapter 14 D'A & F Chapters 4-6	Functional vision assessment due
Nov. 3	Instruction in the use of optical devices continued	C & E- Chapter 14 D'A & F Chapters 4-6	Midterm opens
Nov. 10	Eye conditions and functional implications	C & E- Chapter 6	
Nov. 17	Eye conditions continued Cortical/cerebral visual impairment	C & E- Chapter 6	Quiz 3 opens
Nov. 24	NO CLASS		
Dec. 1	Class presentations and discussion on 4-week low vision plan and intervention project		
Dec. 8	Adults with low vision	C & E- Chapters 17 & 19	

Class schedule is subject to change to meet the needs of student learning.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

1. Exams and Quizzes
 - a. Midterm Exam—this exam will have short answer and matching questions, which address topics from the first half of the course. Information from lectures, Internet pages, and readings will be covered in the exam.
 - b. Quizzes—Three quizzes will be incorporated into the course. Each will cover material previously reviewed in class and online. Online material from required readings may also be covered on the quizzes. Each quiz will be allotted time according to the difficulty level of the material. The quizzes are available online for a week, but once you begin the quiz, be prepared to answer the questions in the allotted time given to you on Blackboard, e.g., 1 hour –2 hours.
2. Prepare a class presentation on a part of the eye. The presentation will last 3-5 minutes. Each student will provide a 1-2 page handout summarizing the key points of the presentation and provide graphics to illustrate points.
3. Assemble a functional vision assessment kit to utilize with students/clients. Identify potential uses of materials for a particular individual or population of individuals with low vision. You will include samples of toys, writing instruments, colored paper, etc. and describe what you will assess with the materials included. A table of contents and rationale for why you included items in the kit is required. A card catalogue with items to include in the kit will be accepted. For items that you want to include in the kit but are unable to purchase, include them on a “wish list” as a part of the kit. For ideas of things to include in your FVA kits, refer to the *Looking to Learn* text.
4. Interpret a report from an ophthalmologist, translating it into *everyday language*. Submit your interpretation as a letter to parents, with a copy to the student's classroom teacher.
5. Conduct a functional vision assessment for a student with low vision and submit a written report of the results and recommendations. Videotape the sequence so the instructors can give you feedback about what is seen on tape and on your report. Follow the format(s) discussed in class and in your textbook.
6. Develop a 4-week low vision plan and intervention project based on the results of the functional vision assessment. A detailed description of the assignment will be posted on Blackboard. Present your project to the class using PowerPoint.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance (**30 points**) at all sessions is very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Information, activities, and guest speakers 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.

Students who miss a class will not have the opportunity to make up missed in-class assignments. Successful completion of Blackboard class activities will be tracked in the blackboard grade book. As a courtesy, please email me to let me know if you will not be in class.

GRADING:

	500 Total Points Possible
1. Class Attendance & Participation	30
2. Quizzes (3)	60
3. Midterm examination	100
4. Eye part presentation	25
5. Functional vision assessment kit	50
6. Interpretation of eye report letter	25
7. Functional vision assessment	100
8. 4-week low vision plan and intervention project	100

GRADING SCALE:

- A = 95-100%
- A- = 90-94%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- F = 70% and below

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.
4. Remediation of assignments (not exams, quizzes or attendance) is not possible. If I notice that an assignment does not meet standards (e.g. incomplete), I will ask you to resubmit your work before submitting the final grade.

CONSORTIUM COURSE POLICIES

HONOR CODE

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

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

- GMU: <http://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
- 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 the disability service center at their participating university 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. 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 AND BLACKBOARD

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) 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.

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

Written FVA Report on 4-week Low Vision Plan and Intervention Project

Note: Please submit these items together as ONE pdf file into Taskstream.

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). 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.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/>].