

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**  
**PROGRAM – SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**Syllabus for EDSE 635, 5S1: Interventions for Students with Autism (3 credits)**

Semester and Year: Spring 2012  
Course day/time: Wednesday at 4:30-7:10  
Course location: Kellar Annex II

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Research-based interventions that promote progress in the areas of communication, social, academic, behavior, and sensory motor skills for students with autism are described. Methods for monitoring the impact of interventions are identified in a variety of service delivery models are described.

Prerequisites\*: There are no *required* prerequisites for this course, but it is strongly recommended that students completing the Certificate in Autism complete courses in a specific order. In particular, students completing this course should have already completed the “Characteristics of Students with Autism” course. Please refer to your Program of Studies for the recommended sequence of courses if you are completing the Certificate in Autism.

**Objectives/Competencies**

This course is designed to enable students to:

- 1) Target appropriate interventions for students with autism.
- 2) Design learning environments that promote gains in the areas of communication, social, academic, behavior, and sensory motor skills for students with autism.
- 3) Given the heterogeneity of students with autism, demonstrate competencies in distinguishing behaviors and “labels,” and selecting corresponding interventions to be implemented in the least restrictive environment appropriate for individual students with autism.
- 4) Identify how to teach self-determination skills to students with autism.
- 5) Describe career- and life-long goals and their corresponding skills, including daily living and leisure areas, to teach students with autism during their school-age years.
- 6) Implement an intervention that has a research-base for students with autism, and monitor the impact of the intervention on the student’s performance.
- 7) Describe ways for teams to collaborate so that students with autism receive services in the least restrictive environment.
- 8) Compare and contrast the variety of intervention approaches that can be used with students with autism, particularly related to matching the student’s characteristics.

\*Advising contact information:

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. You may wish to contact Jancy Templeton, GMU Special Education Advisor, at [jtemple1@gmu.edu](mailto:jtemple1@gmu.edu) or (703) 993-2387. Please be prepared with your G number when you contact her.

## COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS

### Required Texts:

- \* American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual* (6<sup>th</sup> ed., second printing). Washington, DC: Author.
- Heflin, L. J., & Alaimo, D. F. (2007). *Students with autism spectrum disorders: Effective instructional practices*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- \* Kluth, P. (2010). *You're going to love this kid!* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Baltimore: Brookes.
- \* Prelock, P. A. (2006). *Autism spectrum disorders: Issues in assessment and intervention*. Austin: Pro-Ed.

\* Note that these three texts were required in the course that precedes this course (EDSE 634 Characteristics of Students with Autism). For students completing the autism course in the recommended sequence, there is only one new text for this course on interventions.

If you are taking this course out-of-sequence, you should read chapters 1 and 2 from the Prelock, (2006) text so that you have some information on characteristics of students with autism.

**Required Recent** (2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011) **Peer-Reviewed Journal Readings:** To be determined and selected by students throughout the semester and for the Case Study Part II.

**Required Access to Course Blackboard Site:** Blackboard <http://courses.gmu.edu> will be used to post important information for this course. Plan to access the Bb site for announcements and resources are posted on the Bb site in between class sessions. Additionally, there will also be materials and web sites on the Bb site for supplemental resources.

## 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), 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.

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.

The primary CEC standards that will be addressed in this class will be Standard 3 on Individual Learning Differences and Standard 4 on Instructional Strategies:

**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.

**Standard #4: Instructional Strategies**

Special educators possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction for individuals with Exceptional learning needs. Special educators select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote positive learning results in general and special curricula and to modify learning environments appropriately for individuals with exceptional learning needs. They enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem-solving, and performance skills of individuals with exceptional learning needs, and increase their self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem. Moreover, special educators emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the life span.

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

**Learning activities include the following:**

- Instructor lecture, to include explicit instruction using demonstration and modeling, and implicit instruction by setting up learning experiences that build on students' background knowledge and skills.
- Student participation (e.g., discussion, demonstration, inquiry) in small group and cooperative learning activities, including analysis of students with language, reading, and writing deficits as depicted in scenarios (e.g., review of cases).
- Review and expansion of material read in preparation for course sessions.
- Access and analyze materials and resources using a variety of medium, including Blackboard, web-based resources, and professional peer-reviewed journal articles.
- Observe and analyze student learning deficits, patterns, and strategies (such as observations at school sites, viewing video scenarios).
- Instructor-student dialogue and interactions during and outside of class sessions that bring relevance and heightened skills, knowledge, and insights to the students and Instructor, with a focus on strengthening pedagogical skills for acquiring information about the characteristics of students with autism.

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

### *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/>].

### *Core Values Commitment*

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

***Keep Products from This Course for Future Use in Your Professional Portfolio!***

The signature assignment required for this course must be submitted electronically to Mason's NCATE management system, TaskStream: (<https://www.taskstream.com>).

\*Note: Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Fall 2007 semester is required to submit signature assignments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one time course or part of an undergraduate minor). 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.

*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. You are required to 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.

*Late assignments:*

There are absolutely no "redo" and/or "retake" on assignments. Full earned credit given for assignments turned in on time (class start time for the due date, unless otherwise stated in this syllabus). Five points of the total assignment points are deducted for each 24-hour period that passes after the class start time for the due date. All assignments must be typed. The APA format for clear and excellent written language and technical aspects for citations and formatting must be used. Refer to the APA Publication Manual 6<sup>th</sup> edition. A final grade of Incomplete will be considered only due to extreme extenuating circumstances; please contact the Instructor.

- A = 94 - 100
- A- = 90 - 93
- B+ = 87 - 89
- B = 84 - 86
- B- = 80 - 83
- C = 70 - 79
- F = < 69

**Performance-Based Evaluations:**

1. Intervention Summary	15 points
2. Case Study Part I: Describe Student with Autism*	20 points
3. Case Study Part II: Implement Intervention*	50 points
4. <u>Activities During Class</u>	<u>15 points</u>

\* Your Case Study is your signature assignment

**TOTAL 100 points**

**Performance-Based Evaluations**

**#1 Intervention Summary == 15 points**

Use a PowerPoint modality to discuss selected intervention by focusing on the following points (3 points each):

- a) Describe intervention. Use visuals if helpful.
- b) What is the history?
- c) What population is the intended target
- d) What key strategies would be needed to implement this intervention?
- e) Discuss a research study where this intervention was employed.

The PowerPoint should include references. Presentation of the PowerPoint should be 15-20 minutes. Students may but are not required to work in pairs.

**Case Study**

The Case Study in APA format requires selection of a student with autism with whom you implement a comprehensive sequence of tasks representing excellent practices in informal assessment (the focus for Case Study Part I) and intervention (the focus for Case Study Part II). You must be able to work with this student over a period of time (e.g., three sessions per week for about 4 weeks). People who are not currently working with students with autism may network with colleagues in the course or other personal/professional contacts to ensure they have an individual to work with during the semester for this assignment. A brief overview follows:

**# 2 Case Study Part I == 20 points**

Part I:

- Prior to working directly with the student, gather sufficient background information so that you are better able to target academic and/or affective assessments / levels with the student and provide motivating and meaningful instruction via the intervention you select.
- Conduct initial informal assessments (e.g., informal inventories located in your textbooks, curriculum-based assessments) to determine appropriate instructional levels and interventions. Data representing specific strengths and areas of concern are identified at this stage. Some of these data represent the student’s baseline data. Gather enough preliminary information about the student and the student’s skill levels so that you’re ready to examine the results, analyze the student’s learning, and target a specific skill area that you will teach to the student for Part II.

- Paper (approximately 3-5 pages) should contain student pseudonym (1pt), demographic information (2pts), background of student’s educational placement (4pts), description of informal inventory (3pts), results of that assessment (5pts), and preliminary interventions being considered (5pts).

**# 3 Case Study Part II == 50 points**

Part II:

- Using information from this course and at least two recent (2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011) peer-reviewed journal articles, design an intervention.
- Implement the intervention three sessions per weeks for 4 weeks.
- Continue to collect data to monitor the student’s performance during the intervention.
- Your paper should summarize the impact of the intervention, including your reflection and recommendations. Make sure to include your data and graph as an appendix.
- Prepare a one-page description of the intervention (to include citations for the source), and make photocopies to distribute to peers in the course.
- On the due date for Part II, briefly describe the intervention (with your handout) and the impact of the intervention (including sharing a graph indicating student performance) with peers in the course.

**Case Study/Summative Evaluation Rubric—Part II  
Signature Assignment**

Total: 50 possible	Does Not meet	Meets	Exceeds
<b>Background—10 pts.</b> Relevance of assignment to course content-- Why chosen? Link to Autism Intervention			
<b>Quality—13 pts.</b> Assignment reflects all requirements in syllabus description and quality reflects graduate-level status			
<b>Reflection---20 pts.</b> Summarizes thoughts about articles read, data collected, graph, and includes rationales for the statements made. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depth of reflection &amp; depth of linkages to other course readings, teaching, and learning in general.</li> </ul>			
<b>Format—3pts.</b> Research sources are referenced so sources can be easily located. Are from peer –reviewed journals?			
<b>Writing—4pts.</b> Paper is written to graduate-level standards and there are <u>very few</u> writing or printing errors.			

**# 4 Participation, Attendance, & In-Class Activities == 15 points (.5-2.0 per class)**

Students are expected to attend class and actively participate in all assignments, group activities, and class discussions. Active participation includes the asking of questions and the presentation of one’s own understanding with regard to the readings and lectures as well as interactive

discussion and participation in activities with other class members. This will require all students to complete the required readings, activities, and assignments for that specific class meeting. **If you are not in attendance, thus not able to participate and contribute to class when these activities occur, assigned points will not be earned and cannot be made up at another time.** Occasionally, during an in- class activity, there will be the option to accumulate bonus points. These points may be used to offset any points deducted on an assignment.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

\* Additional required readings, typically internet resources, will be announced either via Bb and/or during class sessions. These resources supplement the text(s) and facilitate your completion of activities during the semester. If a topic is not covered due to time limitations of a class session, that topic will be carried over to the next class. **Assignment due dates never change.**

Session / Date	Topics	Preparation* and Assignments Due
1. Jan 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate introductions</li> <li>• Overview the syllabus</li> <li>• Summarize the heterogeneity of students with autism</li> <li>• Discuss commercially-available programs and research-based interventions for students with autism</li> </ul>	Read or Review Prelock Chapers 1 and 2
2. Feb 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe how to arrange the environment so that students with autism are more likely to experience success</li> </ul>	Ch. 4 from H & A Ch. 5 from H & A
3. Feb 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways to informally assess and teach academic skills</li> <li>• Discuss Case Study Part I</li> </ul>	Ch. 10 from H & A Ch. 8 from Kluth
4. Feb 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the role of language and communication related to interventions</li> <li>• Identify ways to informally assess and teach language and communication skills</li> </ul>	Ch. 9 from Prelock Ch. 8 from H & A  Begin work with your Case Study student
5. Feb 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss methods for informally assessing, teaching, and monitoring improvements for social skills</li> </ul>	<b>DUE: Intervention Summary-1/3 Students</b> Ch. 9 from H & A Ch. 5 from Kluth
6. Feb 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze scenarios about service delivery models, and identify ways for students with autism to receive services in the least restrictive environment</li> <li>• Discuss information learned from the journal summary assignment</li> </ul>	<b>DUE: Intervention Summary-1/3 Students</b>
7. March 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe ways to teach students with autism to interact appropriately in social situations with others</li> </ul>	<b>DUE: Intervention Summary-1/3 Students</b> Ch. 9 from Kluth



<b>8. March 14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Class/Spring Break</li> </ul>	<b><i>DUE: Case Study Part I</i></b>
<b>9. March 21</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare and contrast the most popular programs used to teach students with autism</li> <li>Discuss results from Case Study Part I</li> <li>Describe interventions that can be used to include students with autism in general education settings</li> </ul>	Ch. 11 from H & A Ch. 13 from Prelock
<b>10. March 28</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify ways that students with autism may process social-emotional feelings and interactive situations</li> </ul>	Ch. 10 from Prelock
<b>11. April 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe interventions that may enable the students, their peers, and other adults to develop more authentic relationships</li> </ul>	Ch. 11 from Prelock
<b>12. April 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guest Speaker: Service delivery models and identify ways for students with autism to receive services in the least restrictive environment</li> </ul>	
<b>13. April 18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss ways to prioritize the skills for intervention</li> <li>Describe the importance of teamwork for intervention implementation</li> </ul>	Ch. 8 from Prelock Ch. 3 from H & A
<b>14. April 25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Review Drafts of Case Study Part II</li> <li>Review standards and graphing</li> </ul>	<b><i>DUE: Case Study Part II Draft</i></b>
<b>15. May 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share interventions and the impact of the interventions on the student with autism you worked with for Case Study Part II</li> </ul>	<b><i>DUE: Case Study Part II and presentation with handout as well as graph</i></b>