VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM
FOR TEACHER PREPARATION
IN VISION IMPAIRMENT

Host University: George Mason University,
College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research

Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
Summer 2013

- EDSE 411 A01: Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
  - CRN: 41121, 1 - Credit
- JMU – EXED 435 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
- ODU – SPED 432 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments

Instructor: Dr. Holly Lawson	**Meeting Dates**: 5/20/13-6/17/13
Phone: 703-993-5625	**Meeting Day(s):** Ashynchronous online with two synchronous meetings via Blackboard Collaborate
E-Mail: hlawson2@gmu.edu	**Meeting Times:** TBD
Office Hours: via Blackboard Collaborate Mondays and Wednesdays 10-11 am	**Meeting Location:** Internet, Blackboard Collaborate

Note: This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

Course Description
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.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-requisite(s): None

Advising Contact Information
Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. GMU M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3145 for assistance. All other

students should refer to their faculty advisor at their participating university. http://kihd.gmu.edu/teacher_prep_program/contacts

Nature of Course Delivery
Learning activities include the following:
1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

Learner Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students 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 impairment.
- demonstrate basic knowledge of basic anatomy of the eye and eye diseases.
- 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 knowledge of the basic techniques for adapting and modifying instruction for a student with a visual disability.
- become familiar with the psychosocial effects of sensory impairment on the child and adult with visual impairment.
- demonstrate knowledge of the legal rights of a person with a visual impairment.
- recognize the effects of a visual impairment when it occurs in conjunction with other disabilities.
- demonstrate knowledge of the need for specialized instruction for persons with a visual impairment, to include areas of the expanded core curriculum.
- recognize the importance of considering individual, cultural, and family characteristics in intervention.

Required Textbooks
The following 3-title set can be purchased together for $50.00 paperback or $35.00 in accessible electronic version from AFB Press.
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. (2002). *When You Have a Visually Impaired Student s in Your Classroom: A Guide for Teachers.* New York: AFB Press.
Russotti, M.S. & Shaw, R. (2004) *When You Have a Visually Impaired Student in Your Classroom: A Guide for Paraeducators.* New York: AFB Press.

Required Resources
In order to fully access this course, you are required to have several technology tools. Failure to have these tools for class, particularly during live sessions will result in a deduction in participation points.
- Personal computer
- An Internet connection
- A headset with microphone
- A webcam

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

Course Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations
This course is part of the Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Vision Impairment Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Visual Impairments PK-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC Standards are listed on the following website: http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/. The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 1: Foundations, Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners and Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURES FOR STUDENTS:
a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/].

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].

c. 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.

d. 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/].

e. 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/].

f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

g. 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/].

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS
Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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. [See http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/]

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

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

This course has both asynchronous modules and synchronous class meetings using distance education technology. Most likely, inclement weather will not impact access to asynchronous course content. In the event that bad weather does shut down the GMU Blackboard system, the instructor may need to modify the course schedule. As for synchronous meetings, classes are cancelled at the instructor's discretion based on weather conditions and available technology services. Since students are participating in the course across regions, you are responsible for contacting the instructor as soon as possible In case of major power outages.

COURSE MATERIALS

This course gives you access to 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 presentation handouts, notes, and handouts are provided on Blackboard for your convenience and to facilitate your mastery of concepts presented in this course.

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

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.
- Login
    - GMU Students: Enter your Mason NetID (the first portion of your e-mail address, before the @) then enter your Password (PatriotPass credentials).
    - NON-GMU Students:
    - Username: x_firstname.lastname
    - Password: bbcommunity
- Select the "Organizations" tab to access classes.

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

COURSE POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

Attendance.
This course is primarily offered asynchronously. Students are expected to review course content on Blackboard and participation points will be based on your accessing and engaging with the online materials. Students are expected to attend class during live Blackboard Collaborate sessions. Additional points will be assigned for participation in online discussions (both synchronous and asynchronous) and group activities.

Late Work.
Late assignments will not be accepted. *Only in the case of serious family emergency or illness with late assignment submission be considered. You must communicate via email with the instructor as soon as possible if there is an emergency circumstance.*

TaskStream Submission
Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, Response and Reflection Paper on Visual Impairments to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete(IN). Unless the IN grade is changed

upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade
95-100%	A
90-94%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
60-69%	D
<60%	F

Assignments

Assignment	Total Points Possible	Due Date
Blackboard Collaborate Technology Check	10	10 points per class
Taskstream Activation	10	Friday, May 31st
Online access of materials and recordings/participation points	30	During entire course
Online discussion board	75 (3 x 25)	Week 1 Week 3 Week 4
Participation in live Blackboard Collaborate discussion sessions <u>with</u> required technology	100 (2 x 50)	Week 2: TBD Week 5: TBD
Syllabus & Recorded lecture checks/quizzes	150 (6 x 25)	by Friday midnight each week
Eyes of Me Reflection Paper	125	Friday, June 14th

Total	500	

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. Please allow time after submitting your assignment, for grades and comments to be posted. Most grades will be posted a week after submission; however, sometimes commitments to other class or duties interfere with grading time.

NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.
> The **NCATE assignment**(s) for this class is: *RESPONSE AND REFLECTION PAPER ON STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS*
>
> **Note: Please submit these items together as <u>ONE</u> pdf file into Taskstream.**

Schedule (Subject to Change)

Date	Topic	Activities/Assignments
Week of May 20th Asynchronous only	COURSE ORIENTATION MODULE 1 - Terminology - History - Professional Roles	- Syllabus and Schedule Review Quiz - Introduction Discussion Board - Module 1 Quiz - Technology Test
Week of May 27th Asynchronous AND synchronous	MODULE 2 - Structure & Function of the Eye - Common Diseases - Implications of Visual Impairment	- Synchronous meeting via Bb Collaborate - Module 2 Quiz
Week of June 3rd Asynchronous only	MODULE 3 Legal Foundations	- Legal Foundations Discussion Board - Module 3 Quiz - Taskstream Activation Deadline
Week of June 10th Asynchronous only	MODULE 4 Instructional Strategies and Environmental Modifications	- Instructional Strategies Discussion Board - Module 4 Quiz
Week of June 17th Asynchronous AND synchronous	MODULE 5 Families, Cultural and Psychosocial Issues	- Synchronous meeting via Bb Collaborate "Eyes of Me" Reflection Paper Due - Module 5 Quiz