



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

Spring 2014
3 - Credits

- GMU – EDSE 518 001: Curriculum and Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments
 - CRN: 17398
- JMU – EXED 534 Curriculum & Assessment for Students w/ Visual Impairments
- RU – EDSP 657 Curriculum & Assessment for Students w/ Visual Impairments
- NSU – SPE 702 Curriculum & Assessment for Students w/ Visual Impairments
- ODU – SPED 536 Curriculum & Assessment for Students w/ Visual Impairments

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| Instructor: Dr. Holly Lawson | Meeting Dates: 01/21/14 - 04/30/14 |
| Phone: 703-993-5625 | Meeting Day(s): Monday |
| E-Mail: hlawson2@gmu.edu | Meeting Time(s): 4:00 pm-6:40 pm |
| Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:00 am-10:00 am and Thursdays 4:00-5:00 pm via Blackboard Collaborate | Meeting Location: GMU students: KA 101; non-GMU students: video conferencing sites at participating universities |

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 students with knowledge and understanding of the educational assessment of students with visual impairments and additional disabilities including deaf-blindness. Students practice assessing and planning educational programs for students with visual impairments. Addresses assessment of technology for students with visual impairments. Examines determination of learning needs and appropriate learning media, relationship of assessment, IEP development, and placement.

Prerequisite(s): EDSE 511 (may be taken concurrently)

Co-requisites: 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. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

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 ethical considerations, legal provisions, and guidelines as related to the valid and relevant assessment of students with visual impairments.
- demonstrate an understanding of accommodations and modifications commonly used by students with visual impairment on standardized and non-standardized assessments.
- recognize the similarities between regular education curricula and the curricular needs of students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- gather background and family information relevant to the individual student's visual and educational needs.
- complete assessments, including the learning media assessment (LMA), specific to students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- use assessment information to recommend literacy interventions for students with visual impairments.
- use assessment data to develop specific recommendations for modifications and accommodations for learning environments and educational materials.

- identify assessment strategies and tools for assessing areas of the expanded core curriculum.
- identify participation criteria for alternate and alternative assessment programs for students with visual impairments.

Required Textbooks

- Goodman, S., & Wittenstein, S. (2003). *Collaborative assessment: working with students who are blind or visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities*. New York, NY: AFB Press.
- Koenig, A., & Holbrook, C. (1995). *Learning media assessment of students with visual impairments: a resource guide for teachers (2nd ed.)*. Austin, TX: Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Recommended Textbooks

- Gense, J., & Gense, M. (2005). *Autism spectrum disorders and visual impairment meeting students' learning needs*. New York, NY: AFB Press.
- Loftin, Marnee. (2005). *Making Evaluation Meaningful: Determining Additional Eligibilities and Appropriate Instructional Strategies for Blind and Visually Impaired Students*. Austin: Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- Roman-Lantzy, C. (2007). *Cortical visual impairment: an approach to assessment and intervention*. New York: AFB Press.
- Presley, I., & D'Andrea, F. M. (2008). *Assistive technology for students who are blind or visually impaired : a guide to assessment*. New York: AFB Press.
- Sacks, S. Z. Wolffe, K. E. (Eds). (2006). *Teaching social skills to students with visual impairments: From theory to practice*. New York: AFB Press.
- Sanford, L., & Burnett, R. (2008). *Functional Vision and Learning Media Assessment for Students Who are Pre-academic or Academic and Visually Impaired in Grades K-12*. Louisville, KY: American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.
- Smith, M. & Levack, N. (1996). *Teaching students with visual and multiple impairments: A resource guide*. Austin, TX: Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- Wolffe, K. (1998). *Skills for success: A career education handbook for children and adolescents with visual impairment*. NY: AFB Press.

Required Resources

- Personal computer
- An Internet connection
- A headset with microphone (home streamers only)
- A webcam (home streamers only)

Additional Readings

Additional *required* readings are posted on Blackboard.

- Celeste, M. (2006). Play behaviors and social interactions of a child who is blind: In theory and practice. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (JVIB)*, (02).
- Erin, J. N., Hong, S., Schoch, C., & Kuo, Y. (2006). Relationships among testing medium, test performance, and testing time of high school students who are visually impaired. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 100(9), 523-532.
- Holbrook, M. C., & Spungin, S. J. (2009). Supporting Students' Literacy Through Data-Driven Decision-Making and Ongoing Assessment of Achievement. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 103(3), 133-136.
- Kamei-Hannan, C., Holbrook, M., & Ricci, L. A. (2012). Applying a Response-to-Intervention Model to Literacy Instruction for Students Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 106(2), 69-80.
- Kamei-Hannan, C. (2008). Examining the accessibility of a computerized adapted test using assistive technology. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 102(5), 261-271.
- Knowlton, M., Seeling, S., Martin, J., & Archer, M. (2003). Assessment review process for addressing visual impairment bias in the state of Minnesota's standardized tests. *Re:View*, 35(1), 7.
- Lohmeier, K. L. (2009). Aligning state standards and the expanded core curriculum: Balancing the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 103(1), 44-47.
- Lusk, K. E., & Corn, A. L. (2006a). Learning and using print and braille: A study of dual-media learners, Part 1. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 100(10), 606-619.
- Lusk, K. E., & Corn, A. L. (2006b). Learning and using print and braille: A study of dual-media learners, Part 2. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 100(11), 653-665.
- McKenzie, A. R. (2007). The use of learning media assessments with students who are deaf-blind. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 101(10), 587-600.
- Smith, D. W., & Amato, S. (2012). Synthesis of Available Accommodations for Students with Visual Impairments on Standardized Assessments. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 106(5), 299-304.
- Towles-Reeves, E., Kleinert, H., & Muhomba, M. (2009). Alternate assessment: Have we learned anything new? *Exceptional Children*, 75(2), 233-52.
- Zebehazy, K., Hartmann, E., & Durando, J. (2006). High-stakes testing and Implications for students with visual impairments and other disabilities. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 100(10), 598-601.
- Zebehazy, K. T., Zigmond, N., & Zimmerman, G. J. (2012). *Performance Measurement and Accommodation: Students with Visual Impairments on Pennsylvania's Alternate Assessment*. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 106(1), 17-30.

Course Relationships 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 that will be addressed in this class include Standard 2: Characteristics of Learners, Standard 3: Individual Learning Differences, Standard 4: Instructional Strategies, Standard 5: Learning Environments and Social Interactions, Standard 6: Language, Standard 7: Instructional Planning, Standard 8: Assessment and Standard 9: Professional and Ethical Practice.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES 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

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. 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.

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; Outlines of PowerPoints will be available on Blackboard by noon of the class day or sooner.

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.

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 will complete an in-class activity each week. Students who successfully complete 9-10 in-class activities will earn 30 points, students who successfully complete 8 in-class activities will earn 15 points, while students who complete between 0-7 in-class activities will receive 0 points. 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.

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, *Learning Media and Informal Reading Assessments* 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.

If you have never used TaskStream before, you **MUST** use the login and password information that has been created for you. This information is distributed to students through GMU email, so it is very important that you set up your GMU email. For more TaskStream information, go to <http://cehd.gmu.edu/api/taskstream>

Grading Scale

Grades will be assigned, using a point system, of a total of 480 available points:

| | Total Points Possible |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. In-Class Participation And Attendance | 30 |
| 2. Assessment History Report | 50 |
| 3. Curriculum Review & Class Presentation | 50 |
| 4. Quizzes | 5 x 10 = 50 |
| 5. Response to Readings | 2 x 25 =50 |
| 6. Learning Media and Informal Reading Assessments | 150 |
| 7. Menu Item | 100 |

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. 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.

Assignments

Scoring Rubrics for all assignments are posted on the blackboard site.

Performance-based Assessment (TaskStream submission required).

The NCATE assignment(s) for this class is: **Learning Media and Informal Reading Assessments**

- ⇒ **Learning Media and Informal Reading Assessments:** All students will be required to complete a LMA report on a student in their classroom. You will be provided the child's records and age appropriate materials from the *Johns Reading Inventory*. You will review the student's records and include information from the assessment history report, conduct observations of the student's use of sensory channels, administer part of the *Johns Reading Inventory* and interview at least one individual (student, teacher, parent) about the child's literacy skills and needs. Based on the information you gather you will write a LMA report. Please Review the Rubric on Blackboard for specifics. **(150 points)**

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

Performance-based Common Assignments (No TaskStream submission required).

- ⇒ **Assessment History Report:** All students will use a process of thorough record review and interviews with family members and past teachers/support persons to create an assessment history on a student with a visual impairment. This will provide an easy-to-read all-in-one place record of all assessment information that has been gathered about this child and played a role in shaping his/her educational history. There will be four major tasks involved in this assignment:
1. Research and synthesis of major reports and records
 2. Creation of assessment history document
 3. Interview of family member or legal guardian, in addition to information from the history document
 4. Critical analysis of child's assessment history and write-up **(50 points)**

Other Assignments

- ⇒ **Curriculum Review & Class Presentation:** All students will select and review a curriculum that has not been used previously. The curriculum should address the academic or ECC needs of the student and be age/grade level appropriate. The materials may be designed for a student with *or* without a visual impairment. Please Review the Rubric on Blackboard for specifics. **(50 points)**
- ⇒ **Quizzes:** There will be five announced quizzes on the readings throughout the course. Each quiz will be worth 10 points. In order to be prepared for these short quizzes, you are encouraged to keep up with the reading and email the instructor with any questions prior to class. The quizzes will be available online through Blackboard. **(50 points)**
- ⇒ **Response to Readings:** One goal of this course is to develop your critical analysis skills. One way to do this is to ask you to read literature from the special education field about assessment and discuss it critically with colleagues. To this end, you will

be asked to complete two reading response activities throughout the course. **(50 points)**

⇒ **Menu Item:** See the list of menu items below. **(100 points)**

MENU ITEMS

Graduate students must select one menu item.

- a. **Social Skills Assessment:** Conduct a social skills assessment for a student with a visual impairment following the assessment protocol in the book, *Teaching Social Skills to Students with Visual Impairments*, published by AFB Press. You may also use the checklists from the Assessment Kit published by TSBVI. Based on the assessment results, write a 3-4 page summary of the results and include recommendations for instructional goals.
- b. **Expanded Core Curriculum Screening:** Conduct an ECC screening using the tool, *Functional Vision and Learning Media Assessment for Students Who are Pre-academic or Academic and Visually Impaired in Grades K-12*. Based on the results of the screening, write a 3-4 page summary of the strengths and needs of the student, areas that need more in-depth assessment, and recommendations for instructional goals.
- c. **Portfolio Assessment:** Create an assessment portfolio for a student with a visual impairment using performance-based measures. You should 1) identify the assessment area (e.g. money management skills) 2) describe the activities involved in the assessment process (e.g. shopping to grocery store, learning to write checks) 3) write how the student was actively engaged in the learning and assessment routines and 4) submit at least 5 items with the portfolio (e.g. receipts from grocery store with accompanying worksheets, etc.). You are encouraged to have students monitor their own progress. For example, students may use a large print or tactile chart to collect data.
- d. **Collaborative Observation:** Conduct a collaborative observation of a student with visual impairment. Schedule and complete at least two 15-minute observations with another colleague(s) on the student's IEP team (e.g. occupational therapist, speech therapist, classroom teacher, etc.). You will need to include the following: 1) a description of the purpose of the observation, 2) summary of observation notes, 3) how the team observation enhanced your understanding of the student's abilities, 4) the next steps you will take for on-going assessment.

Schedule (subject to change):

| Date | Topic | Presenter | Readings & Assignments |
|--------|---|-----------|---|
| Jan 27 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard, Review of Syllabus & Course Requirements • Legal & Ethical Considerations • Terminology, Policies, Procedures | | Chapter 1 & 2 (Goodman) Appendix A (Goodman) Kamei-Hannan et. al. (2012) Quiz 1 |
| Feb 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration & the Assessment Team • Gathering Background Information | | Chapters 3, 10 & 11 (Goodman) |
| Feb 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Media Assessment <p><u>In Class Activity: Project SLATE</u></p> | | Chapters 1, 2, & 3 (Koenig & Holbrook) Holbrook & Spungin (2009) |

| | | Quiz 2 | |
|----------|---|----------------|---|
| Feb 17 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Media Assessment <p><u>In Class Activity: Project SLATE</u></p> | | Chapters 4 & 5 (Koenig & Holbrook) Erin et. al. (2006) |
| Feb 24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Media Assessment Dual Media Learners <p><u>In Class Activity: Project SLATE</u></p> | Dr. Kelly Lusk | Chapter 6 (Koenig & Holbrook) Lusk & Corn (2006a &b) Assessment History Report Due |
| Mar 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Media Assessment Students with Additional Disabilities & Alternative Assessments <p><u>In Class Activity: Project SLATE</u></p> | | McKenzie (2007) Zebehazy et. al. (2012) Towles-Reeves et. al. (2009) Reading Response-pick one article |
| Mar 10 | Spring Break | | |
| Mar 17 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodations & Modifications in Assessment Interpreting data & Applying Recommendations | | Smith & Amato (2012) Quiz 3 |
| Mar 24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardized Testing Psychological Assessment for Students with Visual Impairments | Dr. Lynn Jaffe | Chapter 6 (Goodman) Zebehazy et. al. (2006) Quiz 4 |
| Mar 31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curricular Decisions & Classroom Assessments Accessibility & Testing Bias | | Kamei-Hannan (2008) Knowlton et. al. (2003) Reading Response-pick one article Final LMA Report Due |
| Apr 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative Concepts I | | |
| April 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative Concepts II | | |
| April 21 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant and Early Childhood Curriculum & Assessment | | Celeste (2006) Curriculum Review Due |
| April 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social, Recreational & Self Determination Skills Curriculum & Assessment | | Chapter 5 Goodman Lohmeier (2009) Quiz 5 |
| May 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily Living, Career, and Transition Skills Curriculum & Assessment | | Menu Item Due |