



**College of Education and Human Development  
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Spring 2015

EDSE 634 DL1: Characteristics of Students with Autism  
CRN: 17209, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Heidi Graff	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 1/20/2015 - 5/13/2015
<b>Phone:</b> 703 993-8036	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Asynchronous
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<b>Office Hours:</b> By appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> NET

***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**

Describes varying characteristics of students labeled with a type of autism who receive special education services. Examines definitions, eligibility criteria, incidence rates, and etiology. Perspectives from students, families, educational, community, and career personnel are described. Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3Hours of Lab or Studio per week: 0

**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. 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**

Delivery method is Online using the Blackboard platform – The online course exceptions document is very important in outlining all the programs used. Additionally, there will also be

**Tech Support** information under the Syllabus and Expectations tab in a document called Social Media and Open Tools summary. Tutorials to the various programs are provided in this document. Please check there first to see if your question was answered there. If you contact me directly, I will ask you what you did to try to solve the problem before contacting me. The main tools we will be using are as follows: power points, discussion board, timetoast, popplet, video posts, Wikis, and PowToon.

Learning on-line activities include the following:

1. Power point lecture and written/video discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities

### **Learner Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe the evolution of autism as a disability category.
- Examine varying perspectives on the etiology of autism.
- Analyze individual as well as clusters of student behaviors to identify the label associated with the behaviors.
- Examine the diversity of definitions that apply to the wide range of skills associated with students who are labeled with autism.
- Describe how schools, families, and community agencies may collaborate in determining eligibility for students with autism as a primary disability label.
- Given specific student behaviors targeted for specialized services via special education, identify corresponding responsive instructional techniques and the research that supports those techniques.
- Describe the range of service delivery models for students with autism, and analyze the extent to which research-based practices are implemented in educational settings so that students are served in the least restrictive environment.

### **Required Textbooks**

Hall, L. J. (2013). *Autism spectrum disorders: From theory to practice*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Pearson.  
Kluth, P. (2010). *You're going to love this kid!* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Baltimore: Brookes.

### **Digital Library Option**

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course **may be** available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. Please note that not all textbooks are available through this option. Visit the links below before

purchasing the digital library to ensure that your course(s) text(s) are available in this format. The division and Pearson have partnered to bring you the Digital Library; a convenient, digital solution that can save you money on your course materials. The Digital Library offers you access to a complete digital library of **all Pearson textbooks** and MyEducationLabs used across the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research curriculum at a low 1-year or 3-year subscription price. Access codes are available in the school bookstore. Please visit <http://gmu.bncollege.com> and search the ISBN. To register your access code or purchase the Digital Library, visit:

<http://www.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

- 1 year subscription \$200 ISBN-13: 9781269541411
- 3 years subscription \$525 ISBN-13: 9781269541381
- Individual e-book(s) also available at the bookstore link above or at <http://www.pearsoncustom.com/va/gmu/digitallibrary/education/index.html>

### **Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for the Teaching Students with Autism Graduate Certificate. 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 standard that will be addressed in this class is Standard 2: Characteristics of Learners.

### **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/the-mason-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/>]

## **Course Policies & Expectations**

Attendance.

All course work will be online in an Asynchronous format. There will be no face-to-face meetings.

Late Work.

All modules are due as noted on the course site and below in the schedule. No late work can be submitted.

## **TaskStream Submission**

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, *Classroom Observation* 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**

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

### **Assignments**

#### **Performance-based Assessment (TaskStream submission required).**

#### **Interview Synthesis == 20 points**

This is your signature assignment for TaskStream. Conduct in-person interviews with three people, one of which must be the parent/guardian of a student with autism. When appropriate, the individual with autism may be one of the three people interviewed. At least one school professional (i.e., general education teacher, special education teacher, speech-language therapist, principal) must be interviewed. Depending on who you choose to interview, it may also be appropriate to select a professional from a community agency. All individuals interviewed should know or work with the SAME person with ASD. The purpose of these interviews is to gather information from different sources to determine their views and experiences about educational programming for this student with autism. Questions asked during the interview *must be approved in advance*, and you should definitely follow-up on individual's responses to questions as appropriate during the interview. Synthesize the information you elicited from the interviews (be sure you do not simply identify the responses; synthesis must be evident), and connect information you elicited from a minimum of TWO recent (2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014) per theme of research (or literature) from peer-reviewed professional journal articles. Use pseudonyms for school personnel, schools, or towns. Emphasize with interviewees that (a) interviews are a course assignment and (b) confidentiality of responses is assured.

- Cover sheet. (One page)
- Method identified: Insert a one-page that tells how you explained the interview to people (including your welcome), terms defined prior to the interview, the specific questions asked, and pseudonyms for each interviewee with their position title after the name. (One page)
- Theme # 1 synthesized; recent research or literature integrated (at least 2 research articles). (Three pages)
- Theme # 2 synthesized; recent research or literature integrated (at least 2 research articles). (Three pages)

- Theme # 3 synthesized; recent research or literature integrated (at least 2 research articles). (Three pages)
- Reflections noted; recent research or literature integrated. (Three pages)
- References (**6 minimum**). (One page)

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

**Other Assignments.**

All modules will begin on Tuesday and must be concluded with work submitted by Monday at midnight.

**Schedule**

Module 1- Characteristics	Begin, Tuesday, January 20-Monday, January 26
Module 2- DSM	Begin, Tuesday, January 27-Monday, February 2
Module 3- History	Begin, Tuesday, February 3-Monday, February 9
Module 4- Current Perspectives	Begin, Tuesday, February 10-Monday, February 16
Module 5- Assessments	Begin, Tuesday, February 17-Monday, February 23
Module 6- Behaviors	Begin, Tuesday, February 24-Monday, March 2
Module 7- Classroom	Begin, Tuesday, March 3-Monday, March 9
Module 8- Communication	Begin, Tuesday, March 10-Monday, March 16
Module 9- Play	Begin, Tuesday, March 17-Monday, March 23
Module 10- Social-Emotional	Begin, Tuesday, March 24-Monday, March 30
Module 11- Cognition	Begin, Tuesday, March 31-Monday, April 6
Module 12- Family	Begin, Tuesday, April 7-Monday, April 13
Module 13- Sensory System	Begin, Tuesday, April 14-Monday, April 20
Module 14- Lifespan	Begin, Tuesday, April 21-Monday, April 27
Module 15- Synthesis Sharing	Begin, Tuesday, April 28-Monday, May 4