VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION ADAPTED CURRICULUM

Fall 2016
Communication and Severe Disabilities, 3 Credits

Consortium Titles

- George Mason University: EDSE 534 Communication and Severe Disabilities
    - EDSE 434 DL1: CRN: 77967
    - EDSE 534 DL1: CRN: 74651; EDSE 534 6U1: CRN: 82422; EDSE 534 6Y1: CRN: 82423
- Virginia Commonwealth University: SEDP 600 Communication for Students with Severe Disabilities
- Radford University: EDSP 667 Communication & Severe Disabilities
- Norfolk State University: SPE 643 Communication Development for Individuals with Severe Disabilities
- Old Dominion University: SPED 673 Communication and Severe Disabilities
- James Madison University: EXED 602: Communication, Language and Sensory issues in ASD

Instructor: Dr. Marci Jerome	**Meeting Dates:** 08/29/16 - 12/08/16
Phone: 703-993-8295	**Meeting Day(s):** Asynchronous
E-Mail: mkinas@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** Asynchronous
Office Hours: By Appointment	**Instructing University:** GMU

> **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
Introduces professionals to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for individuals with severe speech and language impairments. Addresses the knowledge and skills needed to assess the potential AAC user, make team decisions, develop and implement instruction, and evaluate the effects of instruction, aimed at motivating, building, and expanding communication, choice-making, and social interaction.

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
Learning activities include the following:
1. Learning module lectures, discussion, activities, and participation
2. Software and hardware demonstrations
3. Video and other media supports
4. Group and independent laboratory exploration activities
5. Class presentations

DELIVERY METHOD:
This course will be delivered online using an **asynchronous** format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before "@masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available by Monday, August 29.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:
To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:
- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;
- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of the course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for Pcs and Macs respectively, available for free downloading by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Windows Media Player: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player
  - Apple QuickTime Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/
- Computer microphone (preferably a headset mic) and may benefit from a computer webcam (but webcam is not required).

EXPECTATIONS:
- **Course Week:** Our class week will generally **start** on **Monday** and work will be **due** on the **following Tuesday** (8 days).
- **Log-in Frequency**: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email (or forwarded to their university email) for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be 2 times per week.
- **Participation**: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence**: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course. Contact ITU (http://itservices.gmu.edu/help.cfm) at (703) 993-8870 or support@gmu.edu.

- **Technical Issues**: Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload**: Expect to log in to this course **at least two to three times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. Remember, this course is **not** self-paced. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Students will use APA 6th Edition guidelines for all course assignments.
- We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice).

Netiquette: Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.

Learner Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify characteristics of non-symbolic and symbolic communication
2. Describe and discuss methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of individuals with communication impairments.
3. Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology available for individuals with severe disabilities.
4. Implement assessment strategies to improve students' social interaction with peers and others.
5. Implement communication/AAC/AT assessment strategies to develop and implement individual educational planning and group instruction with students with disabilities in an adapted curriculum across the K-12 grade levels.
6. Understand and identify behaviors associated with communication.
7. Describe language development and emergent literacy skills for students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology
8. Identify and implement strategies and activities that foster an appreciation of a variety of literature and independent reading for students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology
9. Demonstrate knowledge of best practices and strategies in reading instruction for students with severe disabilities for students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology

Required Textbooks

Beukelman, D. R. & Mirenda, P. (2013). *Augmentative and alternative communication: Supporting children and adults with complex communication needs* (4th ed.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Additional readings will be assigned according to topic and will be made available by the instructor.

Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations
This course is part of The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Special Education Adapted Curriculum, a grant from the Virginia Department of Education that includes George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Radford University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, and James Madison University. Through the completion of the Adapted Curriculum Consortium program, students are eligible for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the area of Special Education – Adapted Curriculum K-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 standard that will be addressed in this class is Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies. (Updated Fall 2014 to align with the revised CEC Standards)

Course Policies & Expectations
　　Attendance.

　　Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions. Grading for work completed in *Learning Modules* is specifically outlined in Weekly *Learning Modules* within the Other Assignments section of the syllabus. Please note that while only certain learning elements are assessed through "grades", the instructor can still assess student involvement and engagement using other measures. Blackboard enables the instructor to view such data as login dates, duration of time spent online, access to specific content elements, and more. The instructor will use this data along with course grades to ensure that students are actively engaged in the course. Students struggling to complete work on time or who appear to not be engaging fully with course content will be asked to conference with the instructor.

　　Late Work.

　　All activities and assignments should be submitted through Blackboard by 11:59pm on the dates indicated.

　　Weekly Learning Modules

　　In fairness to students who make the effort to submit assignments on time, there will be progressive cost reduction per day for late work within each learning module. Work that

is submitted one day late will receive a 20% cost reduction, work that is submitted two days late will receive a 30% cost reduction, and work that is submitted 3 days late will receive a 50% cost reduction. After three days past due, students will receive a 0 for any missing work within that learning module.

One-time Extension: he instructor recognizes that unexpected challenges may arise during the semester and, therefore, will allow students to request a one-time extension that they can apply to one Weekly Learning Module (Modules 1-13 only). Students must request the extension by emailing the instructor (mkinas@gmu.edu) prior to the original due date; requests made after 11:59pm on the specified due date will not be honored. Students do not need to receive confirmation from the instructor to assume they have received the extension; it will be automatic as long as it is the first request. The deadline for extended work will be Saturday at 10:00am instead of specified Tuesday at 11:59pm for the specific learning module. All extensions will be tracked in the Blackboard gradebook.

Course Assignments (Topic Board, Low Tech Case Study, AAC Unit Plan)

In fairness to students who make the effort to submit assignments on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late papers for up to 5 days. (For example, a 200 point assignment will lose 20 points per day) After 5 days, students will earn a 0 for the missed assignment. All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with your university Writing Center during this course to improve your skills. At the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit.

Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement
Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit the (*NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE*) to Tk20 through Blackboard (regardless of whether the student is taking the course as an elective, a onetime course or as part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Tk20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Tk20 (through Blackboard) will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Tk20 submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Grading Scale

Graduate

95-100% = A	80-82% = B-
91-94% = A-	70-79% = C
87-90% = B+	< 70% = F
83-86% = B	

Undergraduate

95-100% = A	77-79% = C+
91-94% = A-	74-76% = C
87-90% = B+	70-73% = C-
83-86% = B	60-69% = D
80-82% = B-	< 60% = F

Assignments

    Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required).

    None

    Other Assignments.

1. **Learning Modules (14 Modules @ 30 points each)** All modules will open on the specified Monday at 9:00am and all work must be submitted by the following Tuesday by 11:59 pm. Within any learning module, students will be presented with a series of activities. Some activities such as viewing a video or reading a chapter in the textbook are categorized as "Read/View". Other activities such as taking a quiz are categorized as "Complete". All activities identified as "Complete" must be submitted on-time and be of satisfactory quality to receive full credit. Please note that while "Read/View" activities are not "graded", access to them is being tracked through Blackboard and the content is assessed through additional course assignments.

   Please plan accordingly. Best practices will have you open the module on Monday to review the content and check the assignments. Then, pace and participate accordingly for the rest of the week. All modules will be worth 30 points and the tasks will be listed on the first screen of each module.
   a. <u>Undergraduate differentiation</u>: When specified within a particular module, undergraduates may be directed to complete a different or modified assignment. In particular, undergraduates will not be expected to complete research activities at the same level as graduate students.

2. **Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection (170 points)** Using the strategies and procedures reviewed in class, students will create a topic board for their own use in a specific situation. Students will actually use the topic board for conversation for a minimum of one hour (in an identified setting) and will then write a reflection on his or her experiences and impressions. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Due October 11)**

3. **Case Study and Low Tech AAC System Development (170 points)** Students will be assigned a case individual for whom they are expected to develop a low tech communication system. A rationale for why such a system was created is expected as well as the development of the actual, physical system. You will be presenting your low tech systems and explaining their as part of a weekly learning module activity. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Due November 8)**

4. **Literacy Unit Plan (240 points)** Students will choose and design a unit on a specific topic of their choice. The unit must be centered around a piece of literature, whether a published children's book or personally authored story. Students will adapt the story for students with significant disabilities using communication/literacy tools and strategies discussed in class. Furthermore, students will develop at least 3 additional supplemental resources related to the story that also incorporate communication theory and strategies discussed in class. These resources could include songboards, worksheets, games, crafts, etc. Students will also design a communication board for use during the unit. Students will present their rationale for the unit development and physically show the 5 curriculum materials during a video presentation. Students will submit a 3-4 page rationale describing the topic and target population for the unit plan, description of the 5 developed resources, and discussion of the communication/literacy theory, tools and strategies considered in the unit plan development. Unit development must incorporate (and reference) at least two research-based AAC interventions/strategies. Students will also submit electronic copies of the 5 curriculum materials to Blackboard. In addition students will engage in a Peer Presentation review activity. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Proposal Due November 15; Narrative and Materials Due December 3; Student Presentations Due December 7)**
   a. <u>Undergraduate differentiation</u>: Undergraduate students will be expected to only develop 2 supplemental activities and incorporate at least 1 research-based AAC interventions/strategy. See undergraduate assignment rubric for further details.

Assignment	Due Date	Point Value
Learning Modules*	Each week	420 (14 modules @ 30 points each)
Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection	10/11	170
Case Study and Low Tech AAC system development	11/8	170
Literacy Unit Plan*	• 11/15 proposal • 12/3 Narrative and Materials • Presentations 12/7	240
TOTAL POINT VALUE		1000

*indicates undergraduate content differentiation

Proposed Schedule (topics are subject to change based on instructor/student need)

Module Week	Module Available*	Module Topic	Module Due**	Additional Assignments Due**
1	8/29	• Course Overview • Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication	9/6	
2	9/5	• Messaging and Symbols	9/13	
3	9/12	• Alternative Access • Assessment Part 1	9/20	
4	9/19	• Assessment Part 2	9/27	
5	9/26	• Emergent AAC Strategies	10/4	
6	10/3	• Advanced AAC Strategies • (Case Study Preference)	10/11	(10/11) Topic Board Assignment Due
7	10/10	• Language Learning and Development • Core Vocabulary	10/18	(10/18) Course Midterm Evaluation
8	10/17	• AAC and Literacy Part 1	10/25	
9	10/24	• Boardmaker Online	11/1	
10	10/31	• AAC and Literacy Part 2 • AAC in the Educational Setting	11/8	(11/8) Low Tech Case Study Assignment
11	11/7	• AAC Device Exploration	11/15	(11/15) Literacy Unit Plan Topic Proposal
12	11/14	• AAC and Autism • (AAC Unit Topic Approval)	11/22	
13	11/21	• Low Tech Case Study Responses • AAC Research	11/29	
14	11/28	• AAC User Experience	12/6	
		Literacy Unit Plan Narrative and Materials	12/3	(12/3) Literacy Unit Plan and Adaptation Narrative and Materials
	Starting 12/4	Student Presentations: AAC Unit Plan	12/7	(12/7) Student Presentations: Literacy Unit Plan
		Please note: You will receive a notification to your GMU email when the official course evaluation is available for this course. You will have 5 days to complete the evaluation.	12/8	(By 12/8) GMU Course Final Evaluation Instructor Developed Course Evaluation

*   Modules will be made available by 9:00am on the scheduled availability date (Mondays)

**   All module activities and course assignments are due by 11:59pm on the scheduled due date (Tuesdays)

ADAPTED CONSORTIUM SYLLABUS STATEMENTS AND 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 may be asked 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://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm
VCU: www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html.
Radford: http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor_Code.pdf
NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/student_judicial/policy.html
JMU: http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml
ODU: https://www.odu.edu/about/monarchcitizenship/student-conduct

Accommodations for Disability
At all the participating universities, accommodations can be made with the instructor if a student has a documented disability. University specific information regarding eligibility, services and accommodations can be found at:
GMU: http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/
VCU: http://www.students.vcu.edu/dss/index.html
Radford: http://www.radford.edu/~dro/
NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html
JMU: https://www.jmu.edu/ods/
ODU: https://www.odu.edu/life/diversity/accessibility

Inclement Weather
If classes are cancelled at the teaching 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. If in doubt, visit the teaching university's website. Do not email us; I will email you regarding weather as soon as it is announced. Please note 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. Please consult the student handbook and your university for specific information concerning this policy at your university.

Course Materials
This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. 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
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 expected to have an active university 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 under the **COURSES** tab.

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.

Blackboard Access and Non-Mason Students

Beginning in Fall 2016 NON GMU students will be required to activate and utilize their GMU login credentials to access Blackboard. Students should have received an email with activation directions from either the GMU registrar's office or Marci Kinas Jerome. Any questions please contact Marci Kinas Jerome, mkinas@gmu.edu.

GMU Email and Non-Mason Students

Beginning in Fall 2016, NON GMU students will be required to activate their GMU email account and either check the account regularly or forward their mail to their home university account. By default all accounts in the Blackboard system are GMU accounts. Directions for activating your GMU email account can be found at: http://masonlive2.gmu.edu/instructions.cfm and directions for forwarding your mail are located at: http://masonlive2.gmu.edu/tutorials/forwardemail.cfm

Remote Site Student
It is the policy of the consortium that students attending classes at university sites are expected to be present at those university sites during class time. However, there are situations in which students are unable to attend classes at the university sites and may be permitted to take a course as a "remote site" student. To be considered, students must meet the **requirement of more than 90 minutes of one-way travel time to the closest participating university (under normal circumstance). OR have a documented medical need.** In addition, **t**here are several technology and procedural requirements that are detailed on the Consortium website: http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/ and posted on Blackboard. Students must obtain permission from both

the course instructor and the consortium coordinator to be considered a remote site student. Students' continued participation as a remote site will be re-assessed each semester.

In *special* circumstances where students would otherwise miss class (in accordance to the attendance policy) students may request to participate as a remote site if they (a) have met all of technical and procedural requirements, (b) have received permission from the instructor at least *one week* prior to class, and (c) have had a successful test session with GMU tech support personnel.

Course Facilitators
Each site will have a facilitator or assistant who will assist with the class. Learn who that person is as they will be taking role and keeping track of class participation and reporting it to me weekly. However, if you think you must miss a class, please email me ahead if at all possible (or later if need be).

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 through the assignment submission link). You may direct your questions about Blackboard to Marci Kinas Jerome (mkinas@gmu.edu). She will be the best resource.

Remote Site Viewing
All Consortium courses are recorded and archived on a video-streaming server. Students and faculty are welcome to view previous classes at http://torrent.gmu.edu and click on the link for specific class.

Student may also view the PowerPoints, communicate with the instructor, and interact with other at home students using Adobe Connect. Each consortium class has their own Adobe Connect website. To get to your Adobe Connect course site go to:
- Transition: http://webcon.gmu.edu/transition/
- Reading: http://webcon.gmu.edu/reading/
- Characteristics: http://webcon.gmu.edu/characteristics/
- Teaching Strategies: http://webcon.gmu.edu/teaching/
- Positioning and Handling: http://webcon.gmu.edu/positioning
- Communication: https://webcon.gmu.edu/communication
- Collaborative Teamwork: https://webcon.gmu.edu/teamwork
- Positive Behavior Supports: http://webcon.gmu.edu/pbs
- Curriculum and Assessment: http://webcon.gmu.edu/assessment

You will login with the guest username (sdcguest@gmu.edu) and password (sdcsite).
The first time you use Adobe Connect you may be prompted to download a plug in, it only takes a few seconds to install.

Policies and Resources for GMU 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 George Mason University Disability Services and inform their instructor, in writing, as soon as possible. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. [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/]