



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

Spring 2017

EDSE 634 DL1: Characteristics of Students with Autism

CRN: 21121, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Heidi Graff	Meeting Dates: 01/23/17 – 05/17/17
Phone: (703) 993-8036	Meeting Day(s): Asynchronous
E-Mail: hgraff@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): Asynchronous
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 4-5pm	Meeting Location: Internet
Office Location: Krug 110	Other Phone: N/A

Note: This syllabus may change according to class needs. Teacher Candidates/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.

Schedule Type: LEC

Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3

Hours 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 teacher candidates/students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other teacher candidates/students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Advising Tip

Did you know that students in "quick admit" and non-degree status are restricted in the number of classes they can take, and later apply to a program? Students planning to complete a program should apply as soon as possible. Apply at <http://cehd.gmu.edu/admissions/steps>.

Course Delivery Method

Learning activities include the following:

1. Recorded lecture
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

This course will be delivered online 100% using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on Wednesday, January 25 at 9am.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain 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 course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week:

Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Wednesdays at 9am, and finish on Tuesdays at 6pm.

- Log-in Frequency:

Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.

Participation:

Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing 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 who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

- Technical Issues:

Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

- Workload:

Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

- Instructor Support:

Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues during office hours. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference.

Netiquette:

The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Describe the characteristics and diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders as defined by the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.
2. Discriminate between and analyze varying perspectives on the etiology and prevalence of autism.
3. Compare and contrast the characteristics of individuals with autism throughout their lifespans.
4. Describe the wide range of skills and diversity of individuals with autism across their lifespans.
5. Analyze how schools, families, and community agencies contribute to quality of life among individuals with autism across their lifespans.
6. Evaluate how the role of the family, guardian, and/or siblings changes over the lifespan of the individual with autism.
7. Describe and evaluate responsive, research-based instructional techniques for individuals with autism.
8. Distinguish between different service delivery models for school age children with autism and analyze the extent to which research-based practices are implemented in educational settings so that school age children are served in the least restrictive environment in accordance with federal educational law.

Course Relationship 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, as well as those established by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support consortium (InTASC). The standards addressed in this class include CEC Standard 2: Learning environments (InTASC 3).

Required Textbooks

Wheeler, J. J., Mayton, M. R., & Carter, S. L. (2015). *Methods for teaching students with autism spectrum disorders: Evidence-based practices*. Pearson.

Kluth, P. (2010). *You're going to love this kid! (2nd ed.)*. Baltimore: Brookes.

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to Tk20 (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to Tk20.

For EDSE 634, the required PBA Classroom Observation. Failure to submit the assignment to Tk20 will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Teacher candidates/students have until five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline to upload the required PBA in order to change the course grade. When the PBA is uploaded, the teacher candidate/student is required to notify the instructor so that the "IN" can be changed to a grade. If the required PBA is not uploaded five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline and, therefore, the grade not changed, it will become an F. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to Tk20 before the PBA due date.

Assignments

Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required)

This is your signature assignment for Tk20. 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 (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017) 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 **Educational Placement** synthesized; recent research or literature integrated (at least 2 research articles). (Two pages)
- Theme # 2 **Social Level** synthesized; recent research or literature integrated (at least 2 research articles). (Two pages)
- Theme # 3 **Behavioral Concerns** synthesized; recent research or literature integrated (at least 2 research articles). (Two pages)
- **Reflections** noted; recent research or literature integrated (1 or 2 research articles or literature). (Two pages)
- **References** (7 minimum). (One page)

College Wide Common Assessment (Tk20 submission required)

No other Tk20 submission required.

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required.)

No other Common Assignment required.

Other Assignments

All modules will begin on Wednesdays at 9am and must be concluded with work submitted by Tuesday at 6pm. **Each module will have an assignment to complete by the end of the module based upon that week's learning. The assignments noted on the schedule are more labor intensive and are designated in bold so you can manage your time wisely.**

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

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.

Grading Scale

- A = 380 - 400
- A- = 365 - 379
- B+ = 354 - 364
- B = 344 - 353
- C = 330 - 343
- F = < 329

Professional Dispositions

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

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and 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/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources























- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.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/>).
- 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 Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life

situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Weeks and Beginning Dates	Module Topic	Readings  Please be aware that there will be additional articles or reading information posted under each module. The readings noted below are only from your texts.
Week 1 Jan. 25	Module 1- Introduction	
Week 2 Feb. 1	Module 2-History and Characteristics	 Kluth Ch. 1  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 1
Week 3 Feb. 8	Module 3- Classroom	 Kluth Chs. 2 & 5  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 2
Week 4 Feb. 15	Module 3- DSM-5	 Choose Media
Week 5 Feb. 22	Module 5-Assessment	 Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 3
Week 6 March 6	Module 6- Current Perspectives	 Media Comparison and Contrast Due
Week 7 March 8	Module 7- Family	 Kluth Ch. 4  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 4  Begin Interviews
Week 8 March 15	Module 8-Collaboration	 Kluth Ch. 3  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 8
Week 9 March 22	Module 9- Communication	 Kluth Ch. 7  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 5
Week 10 March 29	Module 10- Social	 Kluth Ch. 6  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 6
Week 11 April 5	Module 11- Behaviors	 Kluth Ch. 9  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 7
Week 12 April 12	Module 12- Cognition and Evidence-Based Practices	 Kluth Chs. 10 & 11  Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 9
Week 13 April 19	Module 13- Sensory System and Self-Determination	 Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Ch. 10

Weeks and Beginning Dates	Module Topic	Readings
Week 14 April 26	Module 14- Lifespan	<p data-bbox="906 226 1490 411">✚ Please be aware that there will be additional articles or reading information posted under each module. The readings noted below are only from your texts.</p> <p data-bbox="906 411 1382 449">✚ Interview Synthesis Paper Due</p> <p data-bbox="906 449 1127 487">✚ Kluth Ch. 12</p> <p data-bbox="906 487 1490 525">✚ Wheeler, Mayton, & Carter Chs. 11 & 12</p>
Week 15 May 3	Module 15- Synthesis Sharing	<p data-bbox="906 525 1317 562">✚ Video Presentation Posted</p>

Assessment Rubric(s)

All rubrics will be posted on Blackboard under the corresponding Learning Module.