![George Mason University logo]

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

Spring 2023
EDAT 421 DL1: Augmentative Communication
CRN: 14689, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Yoosun Chung	**Meeting Dates:** 1/23/23 – 5/17/23
Phone: (703) 988-3486 (text-relay-service)	Meeting Day(s): N/A
E-Mail: ychung3@gmu.edu	Meeting Time(s): N/A
Office Hours: by appointment	Meeting Location: N/A; Asynchronous Online
Office Location: Finley Building, 203B	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.**

Prerequisite(s):
None

Co-requisite(s):
None

Course Description
Provides an overview of augmentative and alternative communication tools for use by individuals with speech and communication disabilities. Enables students to locate, use and train others on the range of AAC technologies available. Field experience may be required.

Advising Contact Information
Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

Advising Tip
Would you like the opportunity to work on campus with students with special needs? The LIFE Program (http://masonlife.gmu.edu/) is an innovative post-secondary program at Mason for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire a university experience in a supportive academic environment. A variety of employment opportunities are available.

Course Instructional Method
EDAT 421 is an asynchronous online course. Using Blackboard, students are expected to complete assignments weekly and be engaged in course activities throughout the semester.

Course Delivery Method
Learning activities include the following:

1. Learning module lectures, discussion, and participation
2. Software and hardware demonstrations
3. Group and independent laboratory exploration activities
4. Direct AT service interactions
5. Class presentations

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an **asynchronous** format via the 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 the posted start date of the course.

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 standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: Browser support (https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)

  To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: Tested devices and operating systems (https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

- <mark>Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.</mark>
- 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://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-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 Tuesday, and finish on the coming Monday.

- 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 two 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:
  <mark>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.</mark>
- Instructor Support:
  Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- 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 ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Service.

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.
3. Compare and contrast the range of AAC devices and systems available for individuals with communication disabilities.
4. Understand and describe the theoretical and research basis for AAC selection and implementation for individuals with disabilities.
5. Conduct a customized training of how to use AAC technology for an individual with a disability, their family, or a professional who works with individuals.

Professional Standards

This course is part of the George Mason University, School of Education, Assistive Technology Program. The Assistive Technology Program has developed program specific standards in accordance with NCATE requirements. The Assistive Technology Program Standards incorporate several elements within the professional standards from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), while also expanding upon them to meet the specific needs related to assistive technology. The primary AT Program standards that will be addressed in this class include the following: Standard 2: Knowledge and Skills and Standard 4: Practical Experience. *NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional AT Program standards.

Required Texts

Beukelman, D. R. & Light, J.C. (2020). *Augmentative and alternative communication: Supporting children and adults with complex communication needs* (5th ed.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000

Required Resources

<mark>Students are required to have consistent and reliable access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection. **Students are also expected to have 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.</mark>

Course Performance Evaluation

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

VIA/SLL Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

No required upload.

Assignments and/or Examinations

1. **Weekly Online Modules** (50 points)

Students must access online class on Blackboard weekly and complete posted activities for all classes. Posted activities will include PowerPoint presentations of content, Internet search/research assignments, video exploration and viewing, community exploration, response tasks and construction activities.

2. **AAC Device Comparison** (20 points)

Students will select 5-7 AAC devices from a specific device category to develop a detailed device comparison. Students will develop a PowerPoint outlining the overall features of the device category, the characteristics and prerequisite skills of potential AAC uses, and on overview of each specific AAC device including salient features, pricing, and vendor information. In addition, students will provide recommendations for at least two of the specific AAC devices based on the needs of a real client or an invented scenario. Students will also create a comparison chart handout that will be made available to their classmates in Blackboard.

3. **AAC Device Instruction Project** (30 points)

Students are required to create an instruction project for training the use of an AAC device. The purpose of the plan is to introduce the use of the AAC device to a potential user (i.e., individual with disability, their parent or other family member, or a professional working with an individual with a disability). The designated AAC device may be either approved through a selection process or specifically assigned by the instructor. This plan itself should be submitted as a text document and include the following:

a. Device Overview

Candidate provides a description of the AAC device. The description should include the purpose of the AAC device, its features, and its vendor/contact information.

b. User Characteristics & Needs

Candidate provides a rationale for selecting the user/individual(s) for which they are designing the training. A listing of the user's prerequisite skills as well as the needs they have for potentially using the AT will be outlined. Consideration of diverse needs of both the user in training as well as those that may be affected by the training should be addressed.

c. Customized Training

Candidate designs a training plan customized specifically for the user that is to be trained. The plan should include: goal(s) of the 1 hour training, objectives for each section or topic being trained and allocated timeframe for each, a listing of training materials, procedural steps for the training that integrate evidence-based strategies and data collection, and additional resources for the user to take with them following the training.

d. Demonstration

Candidate records a 2-3 minute video documenting a portion of the training that shows the candidate demonstrating the use of the AAC device. The video will accompany the Instructional Plan write-up as evidence the candidate has proficiency in AT use.

e. Reflection

Candidate provides a reflection on the implementation of the AAC device training from both the candidate/instructor and the user/student perspective. The reflection will also include of a listing of what would be done differently if the training were repeated, what steps should be taken if additional training was needed and what potential professional development the candidate/trainer needs might require to provide additional training.

f. Community Impact

Candidate discusses the potential impact their AAC device training could have on individuals with disabilities, their families, and communities across environments, settings and life span.

Online Discussions

The Online Discussion is the heartbeat of this course. We will be sharing experiences, opinions, questions, etc. on the Discussions Board. To get the maximum point, not only you submit your original posting, but also you need to interact with at least one classmate during that week's assigned assignment. Posted messages should be significant - helping the discussion move forward. There are a variety of ways to do this, including:

• Providing concrete examples, perhaps from your own experience
• Describing possible consequences or implications

- Posing a clarifying question
- Suggesting a different perspective or interpretation
- Pulling in related information from other sources – books, articles, websites, other courses, etc.

The original posting should be posted by Monday, 11:59pm. The responses to other classmates should be posted by Wednesday, 11:59pm of that week. Your participation score for a given week will be based on the timelessness, the quality of your postings to that discussion, and interactivity. You will find a detailed rubric on Blackboard.

Assignment Summary
Evaluation will be based upon a point system. The point value for each assignment is as follows:

Weekly Online Modules	50 points
AAC Device Comparison	20 points
AAC Device Instruction Project	30 points
Total Points:	100 points

Student Evaluations of Teaching:
The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and Blackboard notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/

Course Policies and Expectations
Attendance/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.

Late Work
> In fairness to students who make the effort to submit assignments on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late assignments. (For example, a 10 point assignment will lose 1 point per day while a 40 point assignment will lose 4 points per day). At the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit and a response cost of 10 percent will be assessed. Please note that assignments worth 1

point that are submitted late will receive a score of 0.

Other Requirements
- It is expected that students have continual access to a high-speed Internet connection and an active GMU email account for the duration of this course.
- Students are expected to be familiar with Blackboard features including downloading materials and submitting assignments. Students are expected to know their Blackboard username and password and to actively monitor the email account that is currently registered in Blackboard. Students who are experiencing problems using the Blackboard system must contact the instructor prior to the date an assignment is due for assistance.
- Please type ALL assignments unless otherwise noted. Please contact the instructor if you are using a word processing program other than Microsoft Word.
- All assignments must be posted to the Discussion Board or submitted through the "Assignment" session in Blackboard by 11:59 pm on the day the assignment is due (unless otherwise noted by the instructor) to be considered for full credit. Please note that Blackboard places a timestamp on all submitted material. If Blackboard is down for any reason at the time an assignment is due, you should email a copy of your assignment to the instructor. However, you should only email the instructor your assignment if Blackboard is down. If you not available on the day an assignment is due, you are expected to submit that assignment early to be considered for full credit.
- All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar and will be graded accordingly. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with the GMU Writing Center during this course to improve your skills.
- All references including Online references must be cited in proper APA format to avoid plagiarism (cut&paste is easy to do from the Internet).

Instructor – Student Communication

The easiest and best way to contact me is through email. I will respond to your emails within 48 hours, if not sooner, on weekdays. If I will be away from email for more than two days, I will post an announcement on Blackboard.

Grading
The following grading scale will be used at the undergraduate level:
- 95-100 = A
- 90-94 = A-
- 86-89 = B+
- 83-85 = B
- 80-82 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = C-
- 60-69 = D

$< 60 \quad = F$

*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See Academic Integrity Site (https://oai.gmu.edu/) and Honor Code and System (https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See Policies and Procedures (https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/).

Class Schedule

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

Modules	Topic	Reading and Assignments Due
Module 1 (Jan 24 – Jan 30)	AAC Introduction	Reading: Chapter 1 & Additional readings provided on Bb Assignment: Module 1 Assignment
Module 2 (Jan 31- Feb 6)	Message and Vocabulary Selection	Reading: Chapter 5 & Additional readings provided on Bb Assignment: Module 2 Assignment
Module 3 (Feb 7 - Feb 13)	Symbol Systems	Reading: Chapter 6 & Additional readings provided on Bb Assignment: Module 3 Assignment
Module 4 (Feb 14 - Feb 20)	Alternative Access	Reading: Chapter 7 & Additional readings provided on Bb Assignment: Module 4 Assignment
Module 5 (Feb 21 – Feb 27)	Low & Mid Tech Tools	Reading: Provided on Bb Assignment: Module 5 Assignment
Module 6 (Feb 28 - Mar 6)	High Tech Tools (symbol-based & Text based system)	Reading: Provided on Bb No Assignment due:

Module 7 (Mar 7 - Mar 13)	High Tech Tools (mobile system)	<u>Reading</u>: Provided on Bb <u>Assignment</u>: Combined Module 6 & 7 Assignment
Spring Break (Mar 13 – Mar 19)	Spring Break	DUE: AAC Device Comparison (20 points) - **Due March 20**
Module 8 (Mar 21 - Mar 27)	Software Systems - Boardmaker (Basic)	<u>Reading</u>: Provided on Bb <u>Assignment</u>: Module 8 Assignment
Module 9 (Mar 28 – Apr 3)	Software Systems - Boardmaker (Advanced)	<u>Reading</u>: Provided on Bb <u>Assignment</u>: Module 9 Assignment
Module 10 (Apr 4 - Apr 10)	AAC Assessment	<u>Reading</u>: Chapter 2 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment</u>: Module 10 Assignment
Module 11 (Apr 11 - Apr 17)	AAC Decision Making, Intervention & Evaluation	<u>Reading</u>: Chapters 3, 4 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment</u>: • Module 11 Assignment • Start brainstorming for your final project
Module 12 (Apr 18 - Apr 24)	AAC Strategies for Beginning & Advanced Communicators	<u>Reading</u>: Chapters 10, 11, 12 <u>No Assignment Due.</u> Complete brainstorming and start implementing your final project.
Module 13 (Apr 25 – May 1)	AAC Funding	<u>Reading</u>: Provided on Bb <u>Assignment</u>: • Module 13 Assignment • Continue to implement your final project
Module 14 (May 2 – May 8)	Final Project Implementation	<u>DUE: AAC Device Instructional Plan Project</u> **– Due May 8**

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: See Core Values (http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/).

GMU Policies and Resources for Students
Policies
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See Honor Code and System (https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See Responsible Use of Computing (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 Disability Services (https://ds.gmu.edu/).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources
- Support for submission of assignments to VIA/SLL should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments.

- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students (https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/).

- Learning Services (learningservices@gmu.edu) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as the Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website College of Education and Human Development (http://cehd.gmu.edu/).