



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

Fall 2024

EDSE 511: Characteristics of Students with Blindness and Visual Impairments

Section: DL1; CRN: 83308

Section: 6V1; CRN: 84116

Section: 6Y1; CRN: 84079

3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Kim Avila	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 8/26/24 – 10/15/24
<b>Phone:</b> 703.993.5625	<b>Instructional Method:</b> Mix of online synchronous and asynchronous online instruction. See the synchronous online video meeting dates below. The synchronous online video meetings will be supplemented by asynchronous online coursework.
<b>E-Mail:</b> kavila@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Day &amp; Time:</b> Tuesday; 7:20 pm – 10 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> Before and after class or by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> N/A; Online

**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 their LMS (Learning Management System).

**Prerequisite(s):**

None

**Co-requisite(s):**

None

**Course Description**

Provides an overview of the characteristics of and services to persons with blindness and visual impairments, including the impact of blindness and visual impairment on infants' and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and

social development, and family interaction patterns. Considers the educational, conceptual, psychosocial, and physical implications of a visual impairment.

### **Course Overview**

EDSE 511 Provides an overview of the characteristics of and services to persons with blindness and visual impairments, including the impact of blindness and visual impairment on infants' and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and social development, and family interaction patterns. Considers the educational, conceptual, psychosocial, and physical implications of a visual impairment.

### **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](mailto: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**

Have you met with an advisor? All students should make an appointment to meet with an advisor to outline a plan for completing coursework and non-course requirements such as testing. To make an appointment by phone or in person, go to <http://education.gmu.edu/special-education/advising/>.

### **Course Delivery Method**

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 your LMS

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using both synchronous and asynchronous format via Mason's Learning Management system (LMS). You will log in to the course site using your Mason email name (everything before [@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:@masonlive.gmu.edu)) and email password. The course site will be available on August 27, 2024.

· To access your course in Blackboard Learn: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>

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 updated browsers.
  - [Blackboard Learn](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support) supported browsers: [https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
  - [Canvas](https://guides.instructure.com/a/720329) supported browsers: <https://guides.instructure.com/a/720329>
- Consistent and reliable access to GMU email and the course LMS, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Speakers and a microphone or a microphone-enabled headset for use with synchronous web conferencing tools.
- Note that 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.

## **Expectations**

- Course Week:  
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:  
Students must actively check the course LMS site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings, if any.
- 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. 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.

### **Learner Outcomes**

1. Upon completion of this course, teacher candidates/students will be able to:
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the education of persons with blindness and visual impairment.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the terminology used in the field of working with persons with blindness and visual impairment.
4. Demonstrate basic knowledge of essential anatomy of the eye and of eye diseases.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the educational settings that provide education of persons with blindness and visual impairment.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of local, state, and national resources for services for persons with blindness and visual impairment.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic techniques for adapting and modifying instruction for a student with a visual disability.
8. Become familiar with the psychosocial effects of sensory impairment on the child and adult with blindness and visual impairment.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of the legal rights of a person with blindness and visual impairment.
10. Recognize the effects of blindness and visual impairment when it occurs in conjunction with other disabilities.
11. Demonstrate knowledge of the need for specialized instruction for persons with blindness and visual impairment, to include areas of the expanded core curriculum.
12. Recognize the importance of considering individual, cultural, and family characteristics in intervention.

## **Professional Standards**

(Council for Exceptional Children [CEC] and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium [InTASC]). Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: CEC Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences (InTASC 1, 2); CEC Standard 2: Learning Environments (InTASC 3); CEC Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge (InTASC 4, 5).

## **Required Texts**

[Holbrook, C., McCarthy, T., & Kamei-Hannan, C. \(2017\). \*Foundations of Education Volume I: History and Theory of Teaching Children and Youths with Visual Impairments\*. New York, NY: AFB Press.](#)

## **Recommended Texts**

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

Tallent, A., Tallent, A. & Bush, F. (2012). *Little Bear Sees. How Children with Cortical Visual Impairment Can Learn to See*. Little Bear Sees Publishing, a Wyatt-MacKenzie Imprint.

## **Required Resources**

- Personal computer
- A high-speed internet connection
- A headset with microphone or high quality/reliable computer microphone
- A webcam

## **Additional Readings**

Posted on class LMS

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

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

## **VIA 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 VIA/SLL (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 VIA/SLL.

For EDSE 511, the required PBA is Response and Reflection Paper on Visual Impairments. Please check to verify your ability to upload to VIA/SLL before the PBA due date.

## **Assignments and/or Examinations**

### **Performance-based Assessment (VIA submission required)**

Current issues in the field of blindness and vision impairment paper. Complete directions and rubric are provided on Blackboard.

### **College Wide Common Assessment (VIA submission required)**

This course contains at least one Common Assessment developed by the College of Education and Human Development to assess our candidates' performance on nationally accepted standards for beginning teachers (InTASC) and our programs' performance on national accreditation standards (CAEP). The college-wide common assessment in this course is: Initial Self-Rated Dispositions.

## **Other Assignments**

### **MENU ITEMS**

Graduate students choose and complete two menu items. Papers should be double-spaced, size 12 font, include references, and follow APA style guidelines. Body of paper is specified in each option and does not include the title page or references.

### **Interview options:**

- a. Interview an individual who is blind or visually impaired OR a parent of a child/person with blindness or visual impairment. Construct an interview and conduct the interview live (phone, web-conference, or in-person if an option, do not simply send the questionnaire to the interviewee to fill out). Include questions that explore educational access, independent living, transportation, emotional aspects of blindness/vision impairment, accessibility, technology and more. Write a 4-to-5-page paper summarizing the interview responses and a reflective summary of the interview, not a transcript of the interview. Quotes are permissible from your interviewee; however, it is important to organize the information and weave together a story about the person interviewed and lived experiences.
- b. Interview a current Teacher of Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired. Develop a list of several interview questions related to the TBVIs current position. Conduct the interview live with the TBVI (phone, web-conference, in-person if an option; do not simply send the questionnaire to the TBVI to fill out). The interview questions may cover topics related to their path to licensure, job expectations, professional development, instructional practices,

building relationships with families and students, and other job-related topics. Write a 4-to-5-page paper summarizing the interview and include the developed interview questions with your paper submission. Your paper should be a reflective summary, not a transcript of the interview.

### **Book review options:**

- c. **Book Review: *Traveling Blind*** – Write a reflective 4-to-6-page paper about the book *Traveling Blind* by Laura Fogg. Pick two children that Fogg describes. For each child discuss the child’s learning needs in the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum and how Fogg addressed them in her teaching. Reflect on similarities and differences in the type of vision condition, strategies, accommodations, and experiences. Discuss the strategies Fogg used with her students and give specific examples. Finally, explain how you will apply Fogg’s work in your own work with people who are blind/visually impaired or have other disabilities.
- d. Access the list of autobiographies and biographies on individuals who are blind and visually impaired on Blackboard and select one to read in either print or alternative format (audio, electronic). Write a 4 to 5-page paper about the experiences of the person who is blind/visually impaired featured in the book, the reactions of others to the visual impairment, the adaptations the individual uses, presence of skills, accommodations, etc. Provide a reflection on any stereotypes, challenges, perceptions, and access. Do not spend more than 1 page summarizing the story of the book. Your paper should focus on the *character’s blindness/visual impairment and their experiences being blind/visually impaired*. Include an APA reference of the book you chose, and in which format you read the book.
- e. Review 3 children’s books that have characters who are blind/visually impaired or have dual sensory impairment. Write a 2-3 page review of each book you read. Your reviews should focus on the character’s blindness/vision impairment, experiences, perceptions, skills, accommodations, and other related themes. Do not spend more than 1-2 paragraphs retelling the story. You may substitute an adolescent level book (grades 6 and up) for 2 children’s books thus only reading 2 books instead of 3. *See Blackboard link for ASSIGNMENTS partial list of books*. Provide APA citations for the books you read and reviewed.

### **In-services, professional development, and research review options**

- f. Develop a 2-hour in-service for general education teachers, service providers, administrators, parents, community groups, or school-aged students about blindness and vision impairment. Your in-service should include an outline/agenda, slides/document with information that will be shared in the in-service, a description of participant activities, a list of references, materials needed, and any other items you will use in your in-service. You do not need to present the in-service, but have all materials prepared for the session.

Creativity and thoroughness will be considered in the assignment of a grade for this project.

- g. [Access the Perkins Learning webinars](#), [APH Hive](#), or [APH Access Academy](#) and select two of the free webinars/learning sessions that are of at least one hour in length. After completing each webinar, write one 4-5-page paper on the sessions. Include the following: Name and URL of the webinars you chose; a summary of content; new information you learned from the sessions; how you can apply information, suggestions, strategies from the webinar; questions you have about the topic or webinar, and resources available for further information or supports.
- h. Access the *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness (JVIB)* on Mason's electronic library system. Select two *research* articles from the past three years to review (JVIB publishes practice articles and book reviews, make certain the article you chose is research.) In a 4-5-page paper divided into two sections, one for each article you chose, provide the APA citations of the articles, discuss the purpose and describe the research questions, summarize the participants, data collection methods, and results. Then, provide your opinion on the article, any limitations, practical implications, and how the research may impact the field of blindness and vision impairment.
- i. Choose one of the three case scenarios below and locate 10 reputable websites, books, and other sources that would assist the individual specified with getting information and supports/resources. For each web site provide the (a) name of the company or organization, (b) the address (URL) and (c) 1-2 paragraphs describing what you found at the site that would specifically be of value to the individual in the scenario (write in your own words, do not copy information directly from the source). Give at least one example of information on the site and how it applies to the individual in the scenario.

(1) Gavin was born with a syndrome called CHARGE. Mrs. Toothman is going to be Gavin's 3rd grade teacher this year. She has been told that Gavin cannot see and has severe hearing loss. Gavin will have an intervener working with him. Mrs. Toothman has never had a child who is deafblind in her classroom. She wants to learn more about CHARGE, how deafblind people communicate, what exactly an intervener does, what materials and equipment Gavin might use in her classroom, and what she can do to assist the 24 other 3rd graders to get to know and accept Gavin as their peer.

(2) Shawn is the father of a 10-month-old daughter, Ashley, who has been diagnosed with cortical visual impairment and appears to have delays cognitively. Ashley is not yet sitting by herself and rarely reaches out for things. Shawn has an older son (age 7) and an older daughter (age 5). His wife is taking on the primary responsibility for Ashley's care and is the one who is home when the teacher of the visually impaired comes each week. Shawn wants to know more about his daughter's visual impairment. He wants to know what equipment and materials he will need at school as she



gets older. He is also interested in knowing what resources are out there for siblings of children who have disabilities such as Ashley's. He would like to learn about how people who have disabilities and cannot read and write communicate.

(3) Gracie is 16 and has just been diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). She cannot get her driver's license because her visual fields are so restricted. Access to the distance smart boards and screens are becoming an increasing challenge, along with detecting items over and under her current field of vision. She is unable to see at night and therefore will not go out of the house unless she is with a family member or close friend. Gracie would like to find out what resources are available to her if she goes to college, she would like to know about tools that may help her at night, she is interested in talking to others with the same condition, and most importantly she wants to see if there is a way she can drive or access transportation independently.

**Original option**

- j. Develop an individual project to increase your knowledge or understanding of blindness, visual impairment, or deafblindness. Submit a one-paragraph description of your proposed project to the instructor via e-mail at least two weeks before this assignment is due for approval. Examples of projects might include a public opinion survey, development of a videotape, or creation of instructional materials. If you do not get your project approved ahead of time it may not be accepted by the instructor, resulting in a grade of zero points.

**Assignment Summary**

Assignment	Points	Due date
Weekly module assignments, participation, and activities 12x7	84	Weekly
Menu Item 1	50	September 16, 2024
Menu Item 2	50	September 30, 2024
Current Issues Paper	70	October 8, 2024
Total	254	

**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 LMS 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

All coursework must be submitted on time in the designated location on Blackboard. A candidate who has an approved accommodation for extended time must inform the instructor in writing, in advance with documentation for this approved accommodation from the Consortium university before an assignment requiring extended time is due. In the event of an emergency, candidates must inform the instructor of the situation; it is up to the instructor to determine if a scenario may warrant a time extension. Time extensions will not be granted retroactively and late work for any reason may be penalized points.

### Other Requirements

Assignment completion and submission policies

All assignments must be original work completed during this semester. Assignments, papers, assessments or other products from other semesters or courses may not be submitted for credit in this class.

All assignments are to be posted in the designated location on Blackboard or with the specific directions provided by the instructor. Assignments that are sent via electronic mail or posted to the incorrect assignment location may not be counted as completed or submitted for credit. Please post your final products in one attempt on Blackboard (multiple submissions are permitted in one attempt). Students must confirm their assignments have submitted properly and in full. Certain assignments might require posting video(s) photo(s) and other multi-media elements. [Kaltura allows students to post video content to Blackboard, directions found on this link.](#)

### Grading

Percent	Points	Grade
93-100	236-254	A
90-92	228-235	A-
88-89	223-227	B+
83-87	210-222	B
80-82	203-209	B-
70-79	177-202	C
≤69	≤176	F

**\*Note:** George Mason University Academic Standards will be strictly enforced *through an institutional sanctioning matrix that all colleges and departments will need to adhere to if they find there are students who are engaged in academic dishonesty.* See [Academic Standards \(http://academicstandards.gmu.edu/\)](http://academicstandards.gmu.edu/) and [GMU Catalog - Academic Standards \(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/\)](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Standards. The Office of Academic Integrity “works to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution’s goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourages

continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

### Professional Dispositions

Throughout study in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of a professional. See [Student Guide \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide). Professional dispositions are an essential function of a special educator’s job, indicating that these dispositions are critical to develop and assess in special education licensure programs. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in at least three points in each student’s program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, a self-evaluation at the mid-point of their program, and a university supervisor’s evaluation during internship. In special education graduate licensure programs, the initial self-evaluation is completed in a designated course (EDSE 501), the mid-point self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 627, EDSE 661, and EDSE 616), and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 783, EDSE 784, and EDSE 785. In addition to these three designated evaluation times, instructors may complete instructor-rated disposition assessments other times throughout the program. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is rated as “not proficient,” the student takes steps to grow as an educator.

### Use of Generative AI

Generative AI tools should follow the principles of Mason’s Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

### Other AI Information

Optional resources are available to expand upon the baseline statement provided above as needed depending on your course. Please review the “Communicate Your Course Policies about Gen-AI” tab at: [AI Text Generators: Resource Page - Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning \(gmu.edu\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/teaching-learning/ai-text-generators-resource-page)

### Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<b>Week 1: Synchronous August 27, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Course overview, syllabus, web-conference orientation</li> <li>• Introduction to blindness and vision impairment</li> <li>• Terminology</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 1 Additional reading posted on Blackboard

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historical perspectives</li> <li>Demographics and data</li> <li>Introduction to professional roles</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 1:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>August 27-</b> <b>September 2,</b> <b>2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation of above topics</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 2  <i>What Do You Do When You See a Blind Person?</i>  Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard  Due: Week 1 module assignment
<b>Week 2:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>September 3,</b> <b>2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth and development of children and students who are blind/visually impaired</li> <li>Early intervention services</li> <li>Introduction to teachers of students who are blind and visually impaired: Roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 4 & 5 Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard
<b>Week 2:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>September 3-</b> <b>9, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The visual system and causes of ocular blindness and vision impairment</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 3  Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard  Due: Week 2 module assignment
<b>Week 3:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>September 10,</b> <b>2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBVI roles and responsibilities</li> <li>Eligibility, assessment, placement, and program development for students who are blind and visually impaired</li> <li>Educational services for students with blindness and vision impairment in prek-12 settings</li> <li>The collaborative team</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Guidelines For Working With Students Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired In Virginia Public Schools</a> Council for Exceptional Children <a href="#">The Role and Function of the Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (2017)</a>  FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 9

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
		Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard
<b>Week 3: Asynchronous September 10-16, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBVI roles and responsibilities, continued</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 10  Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard  Due: Week 3 module assignment  Due: Menu Item #1
<b>Week 4: Synchronous September 17, 2024</b>	Exploring services and supports for students who are blind and visually impaired, part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodations, adaptations, modifications</li> <li>• Literacy for students with blindness and visual impairment (braille overview)</li> <li>• Technology instruction and support</li> </ul>	Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard
<b>Week 4: Asynchronous September 17-23, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Expanded Core Curriculum</li> <li>• Accessibility for students with blindness and visual impairment.</li> </ul>	Materials and readings posted on Blackboard  Due: Week 4 module assignment
<b>Week 5: Synchronous September 24, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapting core curricula for students with blindness and vision impairment</li> <li>• Psychosocial needs of students who are blind and visually impaired</li> <li>• Transition and adults with visual impairments</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. I: Ch. 6 Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<b>Week 5: Asynchronous September 24-30, 2024</b>	Exploring services and supports for individuals who are blind and visually impaired, part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local, state, national, and international services and resources for students who are blind and visually impaired</li> <li>• Consumer and parent organizations in the blindness field</li> </ul>	AIMVA DBVI TTAC NLS Other resources posted on Blackboard  Due: Week 5 module assignment  Due: Menu Item #2
<b>Week 6: Synchronous October 1, 2024</b>	Characteristics of students with neurological/cortical/cerebral visual impairment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the brain and neurology</li> <li>• Demographics and data of population affected by CVI</li> <li>• Defining characteristics of CVI</li> <li>• Assessment and eligibility for students with CVI</li> </ul>	CVI Resources posted on Blackboard  Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard
<b>Week 6: Asynchronous October 1-7, 2024</b>	Accommodations, modifications, and instructional/intervention strategies for students with CVI	Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard  Due: Week 6 module assignment
<b>Week 7 Synchronous October 8, 2024</b>	Current Issues Presentations Characteristics of students with multiple disabilities, Deafblindness, and diverse languages/cultures	FoE Vol. 1 Chs. 7 & 8 Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard
<b>Week 7 Asynchronous October 8-14, 2024</b>	Students with blindness and vision impairment, multiple disabilities, and diverse learner characteristics: evaluation, instruction, and support.  Presentations on Current Issues assignment	Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard  Due: Current Issues in the Field of Blindness and Vision Impairment Paper and Presentation

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
		Due: Week 7 module assignment
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Synchronous and asynchronous</b> <b>October 15, 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course conclusion, catch-up</li> <li>• VIA Submission</li> <li>• Evaluations</li> </ul>	Materials posted on Blackboard

### CEHD Commitments

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here: [Culture](https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/>)

### GMU Policies and Resources for Students

#### Policies

- Students must adhere to Mason’s Academic Standards. See [Academic Standards](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic-standards/>).
- 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/) (<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/) (<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 should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of your LMS should be directed to:

- o [Blackboard Learn](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/): <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>
- o [Canvas](https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/): <https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/>
- For information about [student support resources](https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus) on campus, see: <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
  - o [TimelyCare](https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/): <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
  - o [Writing Center](https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/): <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

**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](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

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

**Student and Faculty Names and Pronouns**

Name and pronoun use: If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and indicate how best to address you in class and via email. I use [faculty insert your specific pronouns here] for myself and you may address me as “[YOUR NAME]”, “Dr./Prof. [NAME]” or “Mr./Ms./Mx. [NAME]” in email and verbally. I encourage students to use tools Mason provides to change your name and pronouns on Mason records, if you so choose: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/updating-chosen-name-pronouns/>

**Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

The College of Education and Human Development, an intentionally inclusive community, promotes and maintains an equitable and just work and learning environment. We welcome and value individuals and their differences including race, economic/class status, gender expression and identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and ability status, among other characteristics.

- We value our diverse student body and desire to increase the diversity of our faculty and staff.
- We commit to supporting students, faculty and staff who have been the victims of bias and discrimination.



- We promote continuous learning and improvement to create an environment that values diverse points of view and life experiences.
- We believe that faculty, staff, and students play a role in creating an environment that engages diverse points of view.
- We believe that by fostering their willingness to hear and learn from a variety of sources and viewpoints, our students will gain competence in communication, critical thinking and global understanding, and become aware of their biases and how they affect their interactions with others and the world.

### **Land Acknowledgement Statement**

Land acknowledgment engages all present in an ongoing indigenous protocol to enact meaningful, reciprocal relationships with ancestors and contemporary tribal nations. As a state university, we have a responsibility to include and support indigenous communities and sovereign tribes in our work.

At the place George Mason University occupies, we give greetings and thanksgivings to these Potomac River life sources, to the Doeg ancestors, who Virginia annihilated in violent campaigns while ripping their lands apart with the brutal system of African American enslavement, to the recognized Virginia tribes who have lovingly stewarded these lands for millennia, including the Rappahannock, Pamunkey, Upper Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Nansemond, Monacan, Mattaponi, Patawomeck, and Nottaway, past, present, and future, and to the Piscataway tribes, who have lived on both sides of the river from time immemorial.

**Appendix  
Assessment Rubric(s)**

Item	<b>3 Exceeds Standards</b>	<b>2 Meets Standards</b>	<b>1 Does Not Meet standards</b>	
<p><b>Current issues selected</b></p> <p><b>Standard 6: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice</b></p> <p>Beginning special education professionals understand how foundational knowledge and current issues influence professional practice.</p>	<p>Candidate incorporated foundational knowledge and identified, defined, and supported two timely and relevant current issues in the field of blindness and vision impairment. Candidate optimally exhibited comprehensive understanding of the challenges and varying impact on students who are blind and visually impaired.</p>	<p>Candidate incorporated foundational knowledge and chose two relevant current issues in the field of blindness and vision impairment. Candidate exhibited understanding of the challenges and varying impact on students who are blind and visually impaired.</p>	<p>Candidate chose one or two issues that are not relevant or lacked accuracy; exhibited limited understanding of the current issues and varying impact on students who are blind and visually impaired. Candidate minimally or did not incorporate basic and foundational knowledge of this field.</p>	
<p><b>Impact of Current Issues</b></p> <p><b>Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences</b></p>	<p>Candidate optimally identified, explored, and considered the unique aspects of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of chosen critical issues on individual differences associated with blindness and vision impairment.</p> <p>Candidate included analysis and description of the impact of selected current issues and the unique aspects of characteristics of students that are uniquely impacted</p>	<p>Candidate adequately identified, explored, and considered the unique aspects of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of chosen critical issues on individual differences associated with blindness and vision impairment.</p> <p>Candidate defined and supported how each current issue impacts access to learning and education.</p> <p>Candidate sufficiently demonstrated</p>	<p>Candidate did not identify, explore, or consider the unique aspects of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of the chosen current issues on individual differences associated with blindness and vision impairment</p> <p>Candidate does not or provides minimal information and supports on how each current issue impacts access to learning and education.</p> <p>Candidate demonstrated limited or inaccurate knowledge</p>	

Item	3 Exceeds Standards	2 Meets Standards	1 Does Not Meet standards	
	<p>by each current issue.</p> <p>Candidate clearly defines and supports how each current issue impacts access to learning and education.</p> <p>Candidate clearly defined and discussed the impact both current issues can have on the family.</p>	<p>knowledge of characteristics of students and the impact of each current issue has on students who are blind and visually impaired.</p> <p>Candidate discussed the impact both current issues can have on the family.</p>	<p>of characteristics of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of each current issue.</p> <p>Candidate does not or minimally defined the impact these current issues can have on the family.</p>	
<p><b>Educational Impact and Supports</b></p> <p><b>Standard 3 Curricular Content Knowledge</b></p>	<p>Candidate accurately identifies and examines the impact of the current issues on access to general and special education curricula for students who are blind and visually impaired. Multiple supports, resources, and strategies identified provide prospects to mitigate the impact on educational access for students who are blind and visually impaired. Candidate thoroughly identifies and examines accommodations, modifications, training, and other supports to promote more equitable access to address educational implications of both current issues.</p>	<p>Candidate accurately identifies the impact of the current issues on access to general and special education curricula for students who are blind and visually impaired. Supports, resources, and strategies identified provide prospects to mitigate the impact on educational access for students who are blind and visually impaired.</p> <p>Candidate identifies and discusses accommodations, modifications, training, and other supports to promote more equitable access to address educational implications of both current issues.</p>	<p>Candidate does not, inaccurately, or minimally identifies the impact of the current issues on access to general and special education curricula for students who are blind and visually impaired. Supports, resources, and strategies are omitted or minimally provided to mitigate the impact on educational access for students who are blind and visually impaired.</p> <p>Candidate provides limited, inaccurate, or no discussion on accommodations, modifications, training, and other supports to promote more equitable access to address educational implications of both current issues.</p>	

Item	3 Exceeds Standards	2 Meets Standards	1 Does Not Meet standards	
<p><b>Resources</b></p> <p><b>Standard 7: Collaboration</b></p> <p>Beginning special education professionals collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, individuals with exceptionalities, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways to address the needs of individuals with exceptionalities across a range of learning experiences.</p>	<p>Candidate supplied more than four exemplary and ideal resources for each current issue (more than eight total) and is inclusive of supports for family, educators (general and special education teachers) and the school system; Candidate also provides ideal resources and personnel support information offered by government, state, and community agencies, and private organizations and groups.</p>	<p>Candidate supplied four relevant and useful resources for each current issue (at least eight total) and is inclusive of supports for family, educators (general and special education teachers) and the school system; Candidate also provides resources and personnel support information offered by government, state, and community agencies, and private organizations and groups.</p>	<p>Candidate supplied less than four relevant and useful resources for each current issue (less than eight total) and does not or minimally provides of supports for family, educators (general and special education teachers) the school system; Candidate omits or provides partial or inaccurate resources and personnel support information offered by government, state, and community agencies, and private organizations and groups.</p>	
<p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Standard 6</b></p>	<p>Candidate presented on current issues in a 5-10-minute session. Candidate optimally outlined current issues and advocated for advancement in these areas of need with supports and resources delivered to their peer special education teacher candidates.</p>	<p>Candidate led a 5-10-minute presentation. Candidate outlined current issues and advocated for advancement in these areas of need with supports and resources delivered to their peer special education teacher candidates.</p>	<p>Candidate's presentation was under 5 minutes, had limitations in highlighting challenges and impact, did not offer suitable progress or resources and/or was poorly organized and difficult to follow.</p>	

**Additional Grading Rubric for Paper Structure and Mechanics**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectation</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Does Not Meet Expectations</b>	
<b>Mechanics</b>	Paper is free from spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors. More than 4 APA references with in-text citations and an end-of-paper reference sheet are used and formatted accurately. References include peer-reviewed and scholarly citations.	Paper contains minor grammatical, spelling, punctuation and/or APA formatting errors. At least 4 APA references were used with in-text citations and a reference sheet.	Paper contains several mechanical and APA errors or references were omitted. Limited or no in-text citations were provided; reference sheet is omitted or contains errors.	
<b>Paper length</b>	Body of paper is between 1500-1800 words	Body of paper is between 1500-1800 words	Body of paper is less than 1500 words.	
<b>Terminology, writing style, paper organization</b>	Candidate uses accurate terminology throughout the paper with respectful discussion pertaining to students who are blind and visually impaired. Candidate optimally organizes paper with clear and logical sequencing; concepts, issues, and resources are clearly introduced, defined, and supported.	Candidate uses accurate terminology throughout the paper with respectful discussion pertaining to students who are blind and visually impaired. Candidate provides a clear and logical paper that is well supported.	Candidate uses terminology that is outdated or unacceptable. Candidate provides a disorganized paper that is not clear and/or lacks supports for the overall concepts.	



## VI Consortium Syllabi Addendum

### **Disability Accommodations**

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in VI Consortium courses must be registered with their university disability services office and provide documentation of

approved accommodations privately to instructors in a timely manner each semester. No accommodations will be implemented before official notification from the student's home Consortium university is received. Accommodations will be implemented as stated in the official notification from the university.

## **Honor Code**

All students participating in BVI courses must adhere to their university honor code and will be asked to pledge adherence to the honor code. Additionally, all work submitted must be the students' own work and contain proper citations and any work submitted for a grade must be completed during the academic semester in which it is submitted for grading. Any deviations from the home university honor code will be reviewed by that university's governing body. The VI Consortium agrees to accept the actions or sanctions imposed by the home university's governing body.

## **Field Experiences**

Many VI Consortium courses require field and practical experiences in schools or other settings. Students may not arrange their own field experiences. All students must comply with their home university protocol for participation in field experiences, including:

- Immediate and timely correspondence with the home university field placement office to submit field placement request procedures by home university deadlines;
- Timely compliance with submitting applications, documentation, background checks, and credentialing by the university and participating school system and/or agency for field work within the required deadlines; and
- Compliance with provisions and protocol for engaging in field experiences with the selected school, student(s), teachers, and administration.

No field experience placements will be made until all Consortium and home university requirements have been successfully met. Students may be removed from field placement settings if deemed necessary by the Consortium or home university.

## **Identification, Course, and Resource Access**

While students apply to and register through their Consortium universities, all Consortium BVI courses operate through Mason and all VI Consortium students are given Mason credentials and a Mason G number. Students must keep record of their Mason G number, as this will serve as their identification should they ever pursue education or employment directly through Mason. All courses require Mason credentials to log on, as does access to the electronic library and other resources used in courses. All students are also given Mason electronic mail accounts. Please activate and maintain this account, as course and program information are supplied through this account.

## **Advising**

All students taking BVI courses must have current advising and a program of studies to ensure course enrollment follows the advised program for individual candidate circumstances.

### **Copyrighted Material and Intellectual Property**

Materials (e.g., case studies, technology, books, articles, videos, and other media) shared through BVI courses may contain those with copyright and/or intellectual property protections. Students may not share any materials or media outside of this course, on social media, or other means. References with proper citations may be made to refer to these materials and media in all uses, whether in class or elsewhere.

### **Live Course Sessions and Course Recordings**

Generally, synchronous courses are recorded and stored for future access should students experience a disruption to internet or power service during live sessions. Under no circumstances are these recordings to be shared with anyone. Likewise, live sessions and recordings may not be audited or accessed by individuals not currently enrolled in the specified courses. Please also do not disclose personal information about yourself or anyone else during live and recorded sessions, including messages submitted in chat functions. Any personal information needing to be relayed to the instructor must be done so privately.

### **Full Attention**

Students must give 100% of their attention during synchronous class meetings and are expected to be fully engaged. Students may not drive or supervise others during class time or engage in non-course related activities that divert their attention away from the class.