

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Program: Special Education

EDSE 790 Internship in Special Education—Severe Disabilities (1 credit)

EDSE 534 Communication and Severe Disabilities
Fall 2008

Professor: Marie Sobers, Ed.D.

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When we do the best that we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another. —Helen Keller

Course Description

This course introduces professionals to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for individuals with severe speech and language impairments. This course will address the knowledge and skills needed to assess the potential AAC user, make team decisions, develop and implement instruction, and evaluate the effects of instruction with focus on motivating, building, and expanding communication, choice-making, and social interaction.

Practicum Description

Practicum assignments in communication have several focal points: (a) to provide students with experience in assessing the need for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), (b) to make team decisions about the design and implementation of communication programs, and (c) to evaluate students' learning of communication goals and objectives. Assignments include reporting the person's history and current communication forms and functions, assessing the individual's functional communication, designing a program for implementing AAC with the individual, implementing that program, and evaluating it based on student performance data collected. Particular attention will be given to the selection of communication tools, devices, and strategies for individual students.

EXPECTATIONS

Orientation Meeting

Practicum students **may** be required attend an orientation meeting prior to beginning their practicum experience. The orientation meeting will be facilitated by university personnel and will explain expectations and timelines

Communication

Stay in contact with the instructor. Submit periodic updates so that feedback can be given.

Very Important: Your GMU email address is the email address that will be used for communication in this course. Please make sure your GMU email is activated and checked regularly for communications from the instructor as well as university announcements. It is possible to forward your GMU email to another account.

Assignments

All practicum students are expected to plan their time such that practicum assignments will be completed and submitted to their university supervisor in a timely manner. Logs, if required, must also be submitted on a regular basis. Chronic disregard for deadlines may affect the student's final grade.

All assignments are expected to be submitted on time. If there are extenuating circumstances, be sure to contact the instructor as soon as an issue arises.

You are required to use APA guidelines (5th edition) for all course assignments. This website links to APA format guidelines.
<http://www.psywww.com/resource/apacrib.html> .

We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). Please refer to "Guidelines for Non-Handicapping Language in APA Journals"
<http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html>

BLACKBOARD:

GMU's Blackboard will be used to post important information and presentations for this course and for you to check grades and communicate with your classmates. Your email address should be entered in the **Blackboard** system.

The following is how you will access the **Blackboard-GSE Login Page:**

Enter the URL <http://blackboard.gmu.edu> into your browser location field.

Click on the **Login** button.

Enter your **Username & Password** assigned to you. Most likely it will be **your** first initial of your first name and **your** entire last name (for example –msobers).

This will serve as both your username and password. Click **Login**.

MAJOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS GRADING RUBRIC

2 Target	1 Acceptable	0 Unacceptable
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Target: (2 points)

All required elements are provided and meet the requirements of best practice as indicated on the evaluation rubric and/or as presented in class. A clear grasp of the purpose of each element of the task is demonstrated. In addition, the elements are presented coherently, creatively, thoughtfully, and professionally. Writing mechanics and composition are superior.

Acceptable (1 point)

All required elements are included, but there may be several errors in format, and one or two elements that are somewhat weak. A clear grasp of the purpose of all but one or two elements of the task is demonstrated. Quality of writing is average-corrections will be needed before this document is placed in the student's public record. Understanding of best practice is evident but inconsistent or weak.

Unacceptable (0)

Performance is below expectations. One or more required elements are missing and/or significantly weak, and there are significant errors in composition and/or mechanics.

Final Grade

A final score of at least a **1** in **each** area is required for a grade of **PASS**

Student Name:

Semester/Year _____

Grade _____

Practicum Due Date
<p>The final draft of this practicum is due By May 5, 2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are highly encouraged to communicate with the instructor, submit ideas and components periodically throughout the practicum period so that feedback may be given as assignment progresses. • <u>NO automatic grades of IP will be given.</u> Students having difficulty completing requirements MUST contact the instructor throughout the semester and IF an IP is given, arrangements MUST be made at least TWO WEEKS prior to the final due date. If arrangements have not been made, a grade of Fail will be submitted.

Required Elements and Criteria

<u>Information</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. Basic Identifying Information		
2. Sensory and Motor Skills		
3. Communication and Capabilities and Concerns		
4. Parental Permission		
5. Writing style (APA, Quality of Written Expression, "People first" language)		
Points Earned		

<u>Functional Communication History</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1 Past Modes of Communication		
2.Past Low-Tech AAC Systems or Strategies Used		
3. Past High Tech AAC Systems or Strategies Used		
4. Motor Access of Low or High Tech AAC Systems		
5. Writing style (APA, Quality of Written Expression, "People first" language)		
Points Earned		

<u>Identification of Current Communication Capabilities</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. Receptive Language		
2. Expressive Language		
3. Speech Production		
4. Literacy		
5. Writing style (APA, Quality of Written Expression, "People first" language)		
Points Earned		

<u>Symbolic Skills</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. Symbol Assessments		
2. Symbolic Skills Accessed		
3. Results of Assessment		
4. Writing style (APA, Quality of Written Expression, "People first" language)		
Points Earned		

<u>Suggestions Based on the Results of the Assessment</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1. Information		
2. Suggestions		
3. Descriptions Based on Results of Assessment		
4. Writing style (APA, Quality of Written Expression, "People first" language)		
TOTAL		