

VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN SEVERE DISABILITIES

Collaborative Teamwork
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2010

- IDDS 600: Teamwork in Serving Persons with Developmental Disabilities (Home Site: Virginia Commonwealth University)**
EDIS 515: Collaborative Teamwork (University of Virginia)
EDSE 662: Consultation and Collaboration (George Mason University)
EDSP 660: Current Issues: Collaboration & Teamwork in Severe Disabilities (Radford University)
SPE 545: Collaboration, Inclusion, Transition, and Other Curricular Adjustments for Exceptional Learners (Norfolk State University)

Web Site: <http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/>

Tech Support: Marci Kinas Jerome, GMU, Project Coordinator: mkinas@gmu.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Fred P. Orelove (forelove@vcu.edu), Virginia Commonwealth University

Phone: (804) 828-3908 *Fax:* (804) 828-0042

Office: Partnership for People with Disabilities, 700 E. Franklin St., 10th floor, Richmond (Mailing Address: P.O. Box 843020; Richmond, VA 23284-3020)

Spring 2010 (January 26-May 4, 2010)

Tuesday, 7:20-10:00 p.m.

VCU Location: 3085 Oliver Hall

PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to teach strategies for building and working effectively within collaborative teams in schools. Course content addresses the following areas:

- ❑ Team organization
- ❑ Stages of team development and team building strategies
- ❑ Teamwork skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution)
- ❑ Challenges to and supports for collaborative teams
- ❑ Teams' roles in designing individualized education programs and other plans
- ❑ Understanding and supporting team's relationship with family members, students and peers, related services personnel, and paraprofessionals
- ❑ Team's role in planning and implementing individualized support and adaptations needed for meaningful participation in schoolwork and activities in general education classrooms
- ❑ Team's role in transitioning between programs, grades, and schools
- ❑ Team assessment

RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This course is part of the Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Severe Disabilities, supported through a grant from the Virginia Department of Education. Consortium members include George Mason University, Norfolk State University, Radford University, University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University. Through the completion of the SD Consortium program, students are eligible for teacher endorsement in the Commonwealth of Virginia in Severe Disabilities/Special Education—Adapted Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Virginia Department of Education. Furthermore, the SD Consortium strives to uphold the Special Education Content Standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization.

The Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel are listed on the following website: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Compliance/TeacherED/nulicvr.pdf>

The CEC Standards are listed on the following website:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_std/standards.html#standards

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS

1. Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2010). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals* (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
2. *Creating collaborative IEPs: A handbook* (Rev. Second Edition, 2009). Richmond, VA: Partnership for People with Disabilities, Virginia Commonwealth University. (Purchasable on-line: www.vcu.edu/partnership)
3. *It's about me! A step-by-step guide for creating my IEP* (2009). Richmond, VA: Partnership for People with Disabilities, Virginia Commonwealth University (Purchasable on-line: www.vcu.edu/partnership)

Readings. Additional readings will be assigned from current books and journals and are available on the course Blackboard site. Refer to the class schedule and reference list for those readings. Readings may be added throughout the semester.

OTHER RESOURCES

Students are strongly urged to secure or have access to the following reference books:

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.)
- Strunk, W., & White, E.B., *The elements of style* (variety of editions available, including 4th edition with Roger Angell as third author)

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNED READING</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</u>
Jan. 26	Course Overview Orientation to Blackboard	F/C*(Preface, Foreword)	Form class teams Student Info. Form
Feb. 2	Collaboration & Team Structure	F/C (Chs. 1,3) Briggs (1997) Rainforth & York-Barr (1997) (pp. 247-261)	
Feb. 9	Team Development & Teamwork Skills	F/C (Ch. 7) Rainforth & York-Barr (1997) (pp. 280-295)	
Feb. 16	Team Action & Problem-Solving	F/C (Ch. 2) Olson & Murphy (1999) Cloninger (2004)	Project Introduction Due
Feb. 23	Communication (Pt. 1)	F/C (Ch. 9)	Discipline Interview Due
	Communication (Pt. 2) Using Technology (Dr. Marci Kinas Jerome)	F/C (Ch. 10)	Project Rationale Due Midterm Exam Posted (March 1)
Mar. 9	SPRING BREAK**	-----	
Mar. 16	Communication (Pt. 3)	F/C (Ch. 11)	Midterm Exam Due (March 15, 8 am)
Mar. 23	Resolving Conflict (Pt. 1)	F/C (Ch. 12)	Project Method Due
Mar. 30	Resolving Conflict (Pt. 2)		
Apr. 6	Working with Families (Parent Panel) (Dr. Irene Carney)	F/C (Ch. 8) Carney & Gamel- McCormick (1996) Chen & Miles (2004)	
Apr. 13	Creating Collaborative IEPs	<i>Creating Collaborative IEPs Handbook; It's About Me!</i>	
Apr. 20	Collaborative School Consultation; Working with Paraprofessionals	F/C (Chs. 4, 6) McWilliam (1996) Giangreco, Edelman, & Broer (2001)	Final Project Papers Due (4/23, 4 pm)
Apr. 27	Mediation (Dr. Art Stewart)		Final Exam Posted (April 26)
May 4	Project Presentations	-----	Final Exam Due (May 3, 8 am)

* F/C = Friend & Cook (textbook)

** Note that this date differs from VCU's spring break week

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

A. DISCIPLINE INTERVIEW

You will identify and conduct an interview with a professional from a discipline other than your own—someone who works with and/or supports individuals with severe disabilities—and will develop a written summary and analysis of the interview, based on questions provided. (Refer to *Discipline Interview* posted on Blackboard.) The summary is due on or before February 23 and will be worth 10 points.

B. TEAMING PROJECT

Working with the team with which you have actual contact in the field this semester, you will (a) identify (with team input and approval) an area of teaming improvement, (b) plan ways to achieve those improvements (with team input and approval), and (c) implement those plans over the semester (with team input and approval). This project will range widely, depending on the involvement and responsibility you have on the team and the team itself. Your team might be composed of core members (e.g., general and special educators, paraprofessionals, family members). Other members may be added to some sessions, depending on what the topic for teaming is. Teams will vary widely and might consist of: (a) a team of one general education teacher and a special education teacher who serves the students with IEPs in that classroom; (b) a team of several general education teachers and a special education teacher who supports students with special needs in science; (c) child study teams based in schools to consider referrals for special education services; or (d) grade level teams (K-12 teachers plus the special education staff and related services personnel serving those grades).

There are many teaming project possibilities. *Examples* include (**but are not at all limited to these!**):

- ✓ Strategies to improve the efficiency of team meetings
- ✓ Better communication among team members during meetings
- ✓ A system of communication and record-keeping to supplement face-to-face meetings
- ✓ Ways to resolve conflict
- ✓ New problem-solving approaches

Your selection of a project will depend not only on team opinion but also on the intensity of your role: volunteer team participant versus actual team member. The following are sample steps you may take with the team depending on your role:

Volunteer Team Participant	Team Member
Observe team process; establish rapport with team	Conduct needs assessment with team
Conduct needs assessment with team	Select project reflecting team consensus
Select project reflecting team consensus	Active role in implementing team improvement ideas

Less active role in implementation Evaluate through assessing team opinion	Start sooner on implementation and continue longer; possibly make revisions to improve after trial & team reactions Evaluate through assessing team opinion and possibly other methods (e.g., observation of team member behavior)
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As illustrated below, the project focus will also vary depending on the stage of the team with whom you are working:

Unformed Team	Performing Team
Establishing methods of communication: needs assessment, class notebook, setting up meetings, etc. Meeting procedures: role taking, meeting agenda Involving the family in setting meeting agendas	Improving existing communication among members; learning methods for problem-solving Co-teaching, integrated therapy; planning as team, implementing, and evaluating Improved ways to handle team conflict

The project will be developed in several steps, each of which is submitted electronically on the dates indicated. Feedback will be shared via e-mail. Point values for the final paper are indicated by each section. Final paper is due no later than Friday, April 23, 4:00 pm.

PLEASE NOTE: Unless special arrangements are made with the instructor for unusual circumstances, only drafts submitted on time will be given feedback. Also, missing or late sections along the way are eligible to receive no more than 50% of the total points possible for that section. **Experience has shown that students who receive feedback along the way typically do better on the final paper.**

Proposal

Introduction. Use no heading; just repeat the title of the paper, centered. Draft due 2/16, 4 pm (3 pts.)

This section should include a brief introduction to the team and the area of team improvement:

- Briefly: Overview of the team, the student(s) it supports, and relevant teaming characteristics (members, stages of team development, etc.)
- Introduce briefly the area of team improvement (project focus) that is based on discussion with the team itself

Rationale (centered heading). Draft due 3/2, 4 pm (4 pts.)

Review literature relevant to area of team improvement and solutions:

- Provide justification/reasons for team project focus.

- Base rationale on a review of related literature; cite references and review the content that provides a justification for your project focus.
- Include at least three supportive references (not all web sites) in this section.

Method Sections (centered heading). Draft due 3/23, 4 pm (13 pts. total)

Describe team, involvement of team in identification of area of improvement, team improvement procedures, involvement of team in their design, and methods for evaluating the outcomes:

Participants (side flush heading) (3 pts.)

- Provide more detail: Describe the team and the student(s) it supports (i.e., members, staff roles, frequency of meetings—sit-down and “on-the-fly”—team stage, and objectively describe the team’s characteristics. (Do **not** specifically identify name of school, individuals, etc.)

Identification of Improvement Area (side flush heading) (2 pts.)

- Summarize the process used to identify the area for team improvement and how team members were involved (e.g., asked or surveyed team members)

Team Improvement Procedures (side flush heading) (5 pts.)

- Describe in some detail the procedures or improvement plans and how team members were involved in their development
- Indicate what parts of the procedures were implemented and what parts were not implemented or are still to be implemented
- Cite references to support the method
- Refer to sample forms used (if any) in Tables or Figures

Evaluation Procedures (side flush heading) (3 pts.)

- Describe how the success of the outcomes were assessed (e.g., team self-assessment of success of changes or satisfaction with changes via interviews, questionnaires; direct observation of team member behavior such as use of an agenda, end-of-meeting processing, number of conflicts addressed and resolved, attendance at meetings)

Results (centered heading). Due April 23, 4pm (*as part of final paper*). (5 pts.)

Summarize the results of the project objectively:

- Start with a succinct 1-2 sentence statement of the intervention(s) used to reach the project goal (first paragraph)
- Report an *objective description* of the outcomes of the project
- Provide *supportive data* (e.g., interviews with team members, questionnaire summaries)
- Quantify data and present a table or figure if appropriate

Discussion (centered heading). Due April 23 (*as part of final paper*). (5 pts.)

Discuss the major outcomes of the project:

- Summarize the findings in one sentence, being cautious not to state functional relationship between intervention and team change
- Describe team members' views of the successes of the project and analyze what went well
- Describe team members' views of the shortcomings of the project and analyze what might have been done differently
- Link findings back to the relevant literature
- End with summary statement

References (centered heading). Due April 23 (*part of final paper*). (3 pts.)

- Cite at least 5 supportive references for entire paper that are both current and relevant to project focus.

Additional Points Assigned to Overall (Final) Paper
(*But these guidelines should be adhered to in all drafts*)

Writing Style (7 pts.)

- Write in a style that flows, using accurate grammar, punctuation, spelling, voice (use third person), tense, etc.
- Use Person First language
- Use past tense throughout entire paper
- Use of APA format (see *APA Publication Manual*, 5th ed.)
 - Title page
 - Double space all text, including references
 - Use one-inch margins all around
 - Insert page numbers in upper right corner
 - Use proper headings (none are bolded or larger than 12 point font; use first 2 or all 3 classes of headings):
 1. Centered Heading (first letter of each word capitalized)
 2. *Side Flush Heading* (first letter each word capitalized, flush with left margin, italics)
 3. Indented paragraph heading. (first letter first word only capitalized, underlined, ends with period, indented with paragraph text starting right after period.)

C. EXAMS

Take-home midterm and final exams will be given. They will be applied in format and open book. (You will be permitted to use all your readings and notes from class, but will pledge the exam as your own work.) There will be a page limit. The exams will be made available on Blackboard, and they will be due by the dates and times indicated on the Course Schedule (listed earlier in the syllabus). Each exam is worth 20 points.

D. CLASS PARTICIPATION

Due to the nature of this class, it is particularly vital for students to be actively involved. Active involvement means asking thoughtful questions, volunteering relevant comments, responding to questions (from the instructor and other students), and taking an active part in class discussions and exercises. Participation in class will be worth up to 5 points.

GRADING

Course grades will be calculated by summing the points earned on all assignments and class participation. In general, a grade in the low to high 90% range is an “A,” while a grade of “B” may begin in the low 90 or high 80% range and extend through the mid-80% range. Pluses and minuses will be assigned and reported to the appropriate university site. Grades for students in universities that do not use pluses or minuses will be rounded accordingly, using the letter grade earned. (See information on the relationship between attendance and grades under “Course Policies.”)

Active participation in class = 5 points
 Discipline interview = 10 points
 Teaming project = 40 points
 Oral presentation of project = 5 points
 Midterm exam = 20 points
 Final exam = 20 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS IN COURSE = 100 points

COURSE POLICIES

Honor Code. Each university has its own honor code, and it is important for all students to review the honor code at their home university. However, all students enrolled in this course, regardless of the university, are expected to follow the honor code and also to pledge all assignments and exams to indicate that they have followed the honor code. A pledge means that the student has not cheated or plagiarized, nor has he or she given or received assistance beyond that allowed to complete specific course assignments. The shortened version may be used: The word “Pledged” followed by the date and your full name. (Typed “signatures” are acceptable for assignments/tests submitted electronically.) A complete copy of each university’s Honor System document is available as follows:

GMU: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>
 VCU: www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html.
 UVA: <http://www.virginia.edu/honor/>
 RU: http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor_Code.pdf
 NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/student_judicial/policy.html

Plagiarism. Plagiarism encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement

Students are expected to adhere strictly to the requirements outlined in the APA Publication Manual (5th edition) in citing information in all course assignments. It is strongly recommended that students obtain a copy of this manual as a reference.

Attendance. Since many of the classes involve activities, videotapes, discussion, etc., regular attendance is vital to gain maximum benefit. Anyone who misses more than two classes will lose one grade (e.g., from A- to B+) for each subsequent class missed. Significant or recurrent tardiness or early departure will count as an absence. If you know ahead of time you will not be in class, please contact me in advance. Students are responsible for all information and material missed due to absence.

Religious Holidays. It is the policy of VCU to accord students, on an individual basis, the opportunity to observe their traditional religious holidays. Students desiring to observe a religious holiday of special importance must provide advance written notification to the instructor by the end of the second week of classes.

Accommodations for Disability. At all the participating universities, accommodations can be made with the instructor if a student has a disability. Students are expected (and may be required by university policy) to identify their disability and discuss accommodations on the first night of class. Students are also expected to follow the policies and procedures outlined by the Disability Resource Center at their home university, available at:

GMU: <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/services.html>

VCU: <http://www.students.vcu.edu/dss/index.html>

UVA: <http://www.virginia.edu/vpsa/services.html>

RU: <http://www.radford.edu/~dro/>

NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html>

Inclement Weather. If classes are cancelled at Virginia Commonwealth University, then a message will be posted on the class Blackboard site and all class members will receive an e-mail if humanly possible. Because such cancellations are often at the last minute, it may be difficult to get this message prior to leaving for class. If in doubt, please check the VCU Inclement Weather Hotline, which maintains up-to-the-minute information on class closings: 804-828-6736. Do not e-mail or call! **IMPORTANT:** The decision to cancel class due to inclement weather is determined by the home (i.e., instructor's) university. If the home university is open and operational, then you are expected to attend class. Clearly, however, your personal safety is paramount.

Cell Phones and Weapons. All cell phones and beepers should be deactivated while in class. Also, policies at all participating universities prohibit the possession of any firearm, weapon, or explosive. Please consult the student handbook at your university for specific information concerning these and other policies.

Course Materials. This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. For the articles (available both on Blackboard and class CD), copyright laws must be following; print only one copy for personal use. The PowerPoint presentations, notes, and handouts are provided on Blackboard for your convenience and to facilitate your mastery of concepts presented in this course. PowerPoint presentations will be available on Blackboard by noon of the class day (often sooner). If you plan to print copies of PowerPoint slides, this must be done before class begins, using a handout (3 or more slides per page) format. (Do not print full slide pages.) All of these materials should be regarded as authored materials, which, if used or referred to, must be fully credited through reference to the author, class, and date. If used for purposes other than simple citation, permission of the instructor/author is required.

Technology Proficiencies. All students participating in this course are expected to be proficient in several technology skills. Students must be proficient in using the Internet and have reliable and consistent Internet access. Students are also expected to have an active e-mail account and to check e-mail regularly. This course requires students to use Blackboard, an online course management system, located at <http://gmucommunity.blackboard.com/>.

NON GMU Students: Your login for Blackboard Community is: *x_first name.last name*
For example, John Smith's username would be: *x_john.smith* Your password is:
bbcommunity

Students are expected to log in to this system frequently and to be proficient in using its features. Students are also expected to be proficient in using the computer, which includes downloading and saving files, typing, and word processing. Students participating in this course are expected to use Microsoft Word for all written assignments. Furthermore, students are expected to use Microsoft PowerPoint and Adobe Acrobat Reader for class documents located on the Blackboard website. Although Microsoft PowerPoint is part of the Microsoft Office Suite, students who do not have PowerPoint can download a free viewer at <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=D1649C22-B51F-4910-93FC-4CF2832D3342&displaylang=en>. Adobe Acrobat Reader is a free software program used to read PDF files and can be downloaded at <http://www.adobe.com/support/downloads/product.jsp?product-10&platform=Windows>

Students using Microsoft Office 2007 are expected to save and submit assignments in the Microsoft Office 2003 format, as all universities have not yet made the transition to Office 2007.

TaskStream Submission

TaskStream (www.taskstream.com) is an electronic portfolio and assessment management tool that the SD Consortium is utilizing in part to meet accreditation requirements for the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as well as for student portfolio evaluation purposes. EVERY student taking this course at EVERY university IS REQUIRED to upload and submit the signature assignment for this course to TaskStream for evaluation by the end of the semester. Directions for creating an account in TaskStream and submitting assignments are available on Blackboard in the *TaskStream* folder within the *Syllabus* section.

The signature assignment(s) for this class is: *Teaming Project*

Blackboard Assistance. This course requires that you be a regular email user and be able to use various features of Blackboard (sign on, download materials, hand in completed assignments electronically in the drop box). You may direct your questions about Blackboard to the facilitator at the class site as well as email Marci Kinas Jerome (mkinas@gmu.edu). She will be the best resource. Expect some snafus along the way, but please help each other out as you can. You will want to download all the required materials early in the semester or as soon as they are posted. Please note that some handouts/readings may be given to you in class that are not posted on Blackboard. Also check Blackboard for announcements. Sometimes I will place handouts for class on Blackboard and will alert you by email or in the previous class; in these cases please download and bring them to class.

Course Facilitators. Each class will have a facilitator or assistant who will assist with the class. Learn who that person is, as he or she will be taking class roll and keeping track of class participation and reporting it to me weekly. However, if you think you must miss a class, please email or call me ahead if at all possible (or after the fact, if necessary). Because of the potential confusion caused by people speaking at the same time in this multi-site course, it will be important to raise hands and to be acknowledged before asking questions or making comments. Along with the facilitators, I will try to enforce this rule and to be alert to questions from the distant sites.

Viewing Archived Classes. All Consortium courses are recorded and archived on a video-streaming server. Students and faculty are welcome to view previous classes at <http://torrent.gmu.edu> and click on the link for [Communication] in the Public Folders link. Classes are listed by date and time. Since the Consortium includes some remote site students, all consortium classes are broadcast live via the Internet at the same website. It is the policy of the consortium that students attending classes at university sites are expected to be present at those university sites during class time. However, in instances where students would otherwise miss class (in accordance to the attendance policy) students may participate in the class via the live web stream. However, students who participate in the web-stream instead of at their university site are still subject to the response cost as outlined in the attendance policy for this course. Directions for viewing the video-stream can be found in the course Blackboard site.

Students may also view the PowerPoints, communicate with the instructor, and interact with other at home students using Adobe Connect. Each consortium class has its own Adobe Connect website. To get to your Adobe Connect course site go to:

- Teaching Strategies: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/teaching/>
- Teamwork: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/teamwork/>
- Communication: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/communication/>

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

ASSIGNED READINGS

- Briggs, M.H. (1997). Developmental stages of teams. In *Building early intervention teams: Working together for children and families* (pp. 63-88). Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers.
- Carney, I.H., & Gamel-McCormick, M. (1996). Working with families. In F.P. Orelove & D. Sobsey, *Educating children with multiple disabilities* (3rd ed.) (pp. 451-476). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Chen, D., & Miles, C. (2004). Working with families of children with multiple disabilities. In F.P. Orelove, D. Sobsey, & R. Silberman (Eds.), *Educating children with multiple disabilities* (4th ed.) (pp. 31-65). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Cloninger, C.J. (2004). Designing collaborative educational services. In F.P. Orelove, D. Sobsey, & R. Silberman (Eds.), *Educating children with multiple disabilities* (4th ed.) (pp. 1-29). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Feinberg, E., & Beyer, J. (1998). Mediation in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. *ADR Report*, 2(16), 5-8.
- Giangreco, M.F., Edelman, S.W., & Broer, S.M. (2001). Respect, appreciation, and acknowledgement of paraprofessionals who support students with disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 67, 485-498.
- McWilliam, R.A. (1996). How to provide integrated therapy. In R.A. McWilliam (Ed.), *Rethinking pull-out services in early intervention* (pp. 147-184). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Olson, J., & Murphy, C.L. (1999). Self-assessment: A key process of successful team development. *Young Exceptional Children*, 2(3), 2-8.
- Rainforth, B., & York-Barr, J. (1997). *Collaborative teaming for students with severe disabilities: Integrating therapy and education services* (2nd ed.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Snell, M.E., & Janney, R. (2000). *Collaborative teaming*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.