

## Syllabus

EDSE 661: Curriculum and Methods: Severe Disabilities Section 5S2

Spring 2011

Wednesday 4:30 – 7:10 PM

**Instructor:** Melissa Ainsworth, Adjunct Instructor

**Contact Information:**

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**Office Hours:** If you need to talk, you may contact me via email and we can arrange a phone or face-to-face conference. I will also be available after class every week.

**Course Text:**

**Required:** Snell, M.E., & Brown, F. (2011). Instruction of Students with Severe Disabilities (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**Recommended:** Browder, D.M., & Spooner, F. (2006). Teaching Language Arts, Math & Science to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. Baltimore, London, Sydney: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on current best practices in curriculum, and methods for students with severe disabilities, including specific strategies for teaching students with severe disabilities, general strategies for working with heterogeneous groups of students in inclusive settings, and methods for adapting the general education curriculum to include students with severe disabilities.

**Course Goals:**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the principles of learning and apply those principles to develop sound instructional plans.
2. Select appropriate instructional strategies for various learning objectives based on the desired learning outcome of the objective.
3. Embed targeted IEP/IFSP objectives into functional daily routines and activities.
4. Plan, implement and evaluate a variety of teaching strategies including, incidental teaching, system of least intrusive prompts, time delay, graduated guidance, forward

and backward chaining, shadowing, shaping, task analysis, and consequential strategies.

5. Write an instructional program that includes an instructional objective, task analysis, teaching strategy, method of reinforcement and data collection plan.
6. Collect ongoing data on student progress, interpret the results and modify instruction based on the results.
7. Understand general education teaching practices that promote inclusion of students with severe disabilities in the general education curriculum.
8. Adapt and modify general education curriculum and activities to meet the instructional needs of students with severe disabilities.
9. Discuss the role of paraprofessionals in the classroom.

### **Course Requirements:**

This course is designed to provide you with the skills needed to deliver instruction effectively to students with severe disabilities in a variety of settings. Class sessions will involve the use of lectures, discussions, demonstrations, hands-on practice and case studies. You will be expected to participate actively in class by asking and answering questions, making comments, and completing in-class activities, for which you will receive participation points. Come to class having completed the reading and assignments, and ready to participate. The assignments for this course are designed to give you a chance to demonstrate practical application of the course content. I encourage questions, comments and active discussions.

The assignments have been developed to provide you with a variety of ways to demonstrate your understanding of the course material. They will provide you with an opportunity to:

- Demonstrate effective teaching strategies for working with students with severe disabilities
- Practice organizational strategies for addressing student needs within a variety of settings
- Teach students with severe disabilities using techniques learned in class, recording data and evaluating the program
- Adapt or modify the curriculum or activities from an inclusive setting to meet the needs of a learner with severe disabilities
- Apply the concepts learned throughout the course to critically analyze and respond to case studies

### **Attendance:**

This class is designed to be interactive and rigorous. This is so your learning is optimized. Your attendance in class is important and *required*. If you are absent, your class activity grade for that date will be 0. **In class Activities may NOT be made up.** Please contact the instructor if you know ahead of time that you will not be in class on a particular day due to illness or an emergency.

### **Class Schedule:**

A class schedule of reading assignments and assignment due dates will be handed out the first night of class.

### **Inclement Weather:**

In the case of inclement weather, please check the following sources for information regarding closure of the University: University phone number (703-993-1000) or visit the university website ([www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu)). If the University is open class will be held.

### **GSE Syllabus Statements of Expectations**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:  
*Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University 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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### *Campus Resources*

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions.

### **TaskStream Submission**

TaskStream ([www.taskstream.com](http://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 IS REQUIRED to upload and submit the signature assignment for this course to TaskStream for evaluation by the end of the semester..

The signature assignment(s) for this class is: *Instructional Plan (part 1 and 2)*

### **Assignments**

#### **Assignment # 1: In-Class Activities**

During most class sessions, we will have an in-class activity or writing assignment for which you will be awarded points contributing to your final grade. There will be 11 activities. Each activity is worth 10 points and the lowest score will be dropped.

#### **Assignment # 2: Instructional Program (Signature Assignment)**

Develop and implement an instructional program for teaching a new skill to a student with a **severe disability**. This assignment has 2 Sections. *Each section will be graded individually.*

*Instructional plan approval by instructor is required* before you can begin the assignment. Instructional plan proposal due date is listed on the week-by-week syllabus.

You will need to:

Submit a 1 paragraph proposal prior to implementing the program in which you:

- Provide the student/individual information: age, school placement, identified eligibility and/or disability, level of academic ability, other pertinent information such as verbal abilities and physical or behavioral limitations. (this information may be bulleted)
- Briefly Identify the objective and provide a rationale for teaching it to this person,
- Identify the teaching strategy selected

**Section 1:** due date listed on week-by-week syllabus

- Write the instructional program plan or method:
  - Describe student/individual thoroughly
  - Describe the setting where instruction will occur

- Describe the collaborative teaming you used to plan
- Include a complete instructional objective (conditions, behavior, and criterion and develop a data collection method and data collection sheets,)
- Describe teaching procedures, including antecedents, teaching strategies and consequences

**Section 2:** due date listed on week-by-week syllabus

- Implement and record data on the program which you will present in a results section of your paper (**You must turn in your Data collection sheets with the final product**)
- Provide a discussion of the program including evaluation of the program based on student performance, and limitations/suggestions for changes in future implementation. We will discuss the details in subsequent class sessions.

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\*\* (Please note that if you do not currently teach students with severe disabilities you will need to find a student outside of your class to develop a plan for.)

### Assignment # 3: Classroom plan

This assignment will require that you submit an hour by hour classroom plan for your students with disabilities for 5 consecutive days. You will additionally include 4 complete lesson plans (one for each subject that you teach). If you do not teach in a classroom for students with severe disabilities, you will need to do one of the alternative assignments. Everyone will include a selection of 2 “time fillers” from which you might choose when you need to fill a few minutes before lunch or at the end of the day. You will need to make copies of your “time filler activities” to share with the rest of the class.

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**Note:** Spelling, grammar and writing style are important components of professional writing. Accurate, clear, concise writing is required of all professionals and will be considered in the grading of all assignments. Written assignments will be evaluated for content, clarity, format, cohesiveness, and use of person-first language. Additionally, points will be deducted for spelling, grammatical, and word processing errors.

All written papers should follow the American Psychological Association format (6<sup>th</sup> edition) <http://www.apa.org/publications/>

## ***Evaluation***

1. In class assignments
2. Case study
3. Class plan and filler activities
4. Exam

***2 points will be deducted for each day that work is submitted late.***

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE MR program. Products from this class can become part of your individual

professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards.

### ***Grading criteria***

95 – 100% = A  
90 – 94% = A-  
80 – 89% = B  
70 – 79% = C  
< 70% = F

- All assignments are due in class on the stated due dates. (Due dates will be announced the first day of class).
- Please come to class having read the assigned chapters and be prepared to discuss your thoughts on the reading.
- **Note:** If at any point during the semester, you encounter problems, or unexpected circumstances arise, please let me know how I can help you meet the requirements of this class.