



VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM  
FOR TEACHER PREPARATION  
IN VISION IMPAIRMENT

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

**EDSE 512-001:Braille Code**

**CRN:80599, 3 - Credit(s)**

**Fall2012**

**80599-001, 6VI-81098**

**GMU – EDSE 412 Section 5S1/6V1 Braille Code**

**JMU – EXED 432 Braille Code**

**RU – EDSP 655 Braille Code**

**NSU – SPE 706 Braille Code**

**ODU – SPED 433 Braille Code**

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr.ChristinaSchoch	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 08/27/12 - 12/03/12
<b>Phone:</b> 1-520-490-9795	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Monday
<b>E-Mail:</b> cschoch@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Times:</b> 7:20pm - 10:00pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment before or after class	<b>Meeting Location:</b> KH 102

**Course Description:**

Provides understanding of the literary code of Braille and its implications for educational/literacy programs for students with a visual disability. Practice experiences enable students to better understand the Braille code and how to teach it to students with a visual disability.

**Prerequisite(s):** EDSE 511 (may be taken concurrently).

**Advising Contact Information:**

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. For assistance contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703)993-3145.

**Nature of Course Delivery:**

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 Blackboard

**Learner Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- demonstrate an understanding of the history of the development of braille.
- read and write uncontracted literary braille.
- read and write contracted literary braille.
- demonstrate knowledge of tactile perception skills and principles of braille reading mechanics.
- demonstrate knowledge of pre-braille and emergent literacy skills.
- identify braille reading and writing teaching methods for students with visual impairments, including students with additional disabilities.
- understand cultural and linguistic diversity related to braille literacy for students with visual impairments.
- locate specific braille materials for classroom use.
- identify methods for teaching the use of the slate and stylus.

**Required Textbooks:**

Holbrook, C. M., D'Andrea, F., & Sanford, L. (2011). *Ashcroft's Programmed Instruction in Braille* (4th ed.). Germantown, TN: Scalars. ISBN 0-9712139-4-1

Wormsley, D. P., & D'Andrea, F. (1997). *Instructional Strategies for Braille Literacy - American Foundation for the Blind*. New York N.Y.: AFB Press. ISBN: 978-0-89128-936-4.

**Recommended Textbooks:**

Koenig, A. J. & Holbrook, M. C. (1993). *Learning media assessment of students with visual impairments*. Austin, TX: Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Mangold, P. *Teaching the braille slate and stylus*. Castro Valley, CA: Exceptional Teaching Aids.

Olsen, M. (1981). *Guidelines and games for teaching efficient braille reading*. New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

Rex, E. J., Koenig, A. J., Wormsley, D. P., & Baker, R. L. (1994). *Foundations of braille literacy*. New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

Swenson, A. M. (1999). *Beginning with braille: Firsthand experiences with a balanced approach to literacy*. New York: AFB Press.

Wormsley, D. B. (2004). *Braille literacy: A functional approach*. New York: AFB Press.

### **Required Materials:**

- Standard 8.5x11 braille transcribing paper (without tractor-feed). Students may use 11 1/2 x 11 paper IF they have access to a old Perkins writer.
- 4-line 28-cell slate with stylus (eraser), available at APH (<http://www.aph.org/>), Note: aluminum slate is more durable than plastic one.

### **Additional Readings:**

All articles are posted on Blackboard under the lectures. It is expected prior to class meetings that students will have read the materials on Blackboard in addition to the chapters from the book *Instructional Strategies for Braille Literacy*. PowerPoint notes in Word format for the methods lectures will be available on Blackboard under LECTURES.

Additional handouts and resources are also posted on the Blackboard site under the lectures for each week.

Campbell, A. (2011). Sarah's Story: Using the Individualized Meaning-centered Approach to Braille Literacy Education (I-M-ABLE). *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 105(3), 138-141.

Cooper, H., & Nichols, S. (2007). Technology and Early Braille Literacy: Using the Mountbatten Pro Brailler in Primary-Grade Classrooms. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 101(1), 22-31.

Hannan, C. (2006). Review of Research: Neuroscience and the Impact of Brain Plasticity on Braille Reading. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 100(7), 397-413.

Holbrook, M. (2008). Teaching Reading and Writing to Students with Visual Impairments: Who Is Responsible?. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*. 102(4), 203-206.

Lewis, S., & Tolla, J. (2003). Creating and Using Tactile Experience Books for Young Children With Visual Impairments. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 35(3), 22.

Wright, T., Wormsley, D. P., & Kamei-Hannan, C. (2009). Hand Movements and Braille Reading Efficiency: Data from the Alphabetic Braille and Contracted Braille Study. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 103(10), 649-661.

Wormsley, D. P. (2011). A Theoretical Rationale for Using the Individualized Meaning-centered Approach to Braille Literacy Education with Students Who Have Mild to Moderate Cognitive Disabilities. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 105(3), 145-156.

### **Course's Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:**

This course is part of the Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Vision Impairment Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Visual Impairments PK-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC Standards are listed on the following website: <http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/> The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 4: Instructional Strategies. \*NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional CEC standards.

### **Policies (Attendance and Late Work Policies):**

#### *Attendance Policy:*

Attendance (**30 points**) at all sessions is very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Information, activities, and guest speakers will be presented in class that are not a part of the text and can only be experienced in the class sessions. Furthermore, as part of this course you are expected to be an active and respectful participant, which includes actively engaging in class discussions and activities. Students who miss a class will not have the opportunity to make up missed in-class assignments. Successful completion of Blackboard class activities will be tracked in the blackboard grade book. As a courtesy, please email me to let me know if you will not be in class.

#### *Late Work Policy:*

**Late Assignments:** Up to 3 points will be subtracted for each homework assignment which is turned in after the due date. No points will be awarded for a homework turned in more than 2 weeks late (i.e. 6 points will be subtracted). Points will be subtracted for late assignments as follows:

- 1 point = 1 to 72 hours late (0 to 3 days)
- 2 points = 73 to 144 hours late (3 to 6 days)
- 3 points = 145 or more days late (7 days to 14 days)
- 6 points = more than 14 days late (2 weeks)

## Grading

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>
Homework	60
Braille Drills	30
Written Exam on Lecture Content	50
Final Exam (Proficiency Test)	30
Braille Code Exam	25
Final Project	25
Class Participation	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>

## **Grading Scale:**

95 - 100% = A

90 - 94% = A-

80 - 89% = B

70 - 79% = C

<70% = F

## **Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Literary Braille Code</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Aug .27	How to use the braille writer, Chapters 1 & 2	History of Braille	W & D Ch. 1
Sept. 3 No class	Labor Day		
Sept. 10	Chapter 3	Agencies and Resources	
Sept. 17	Chapter 4	Tactile Perception	W & D Ch. 2 Wright, Wormsley & Kamei-Hannan, 2009
Sept. 24	Review Week	Pre-Braille and Emergent Literacy	W & D Ch. 3 Lewis, & Tolla, 2003
Oct. 1	Chapter 5	Beginning Braille Literacy Using a Functional Approach	W & D Ch. 5 Wormsley, 2011 Campbell, 2011
Oct. 8	Chapter 6	Beginning Braille Literacy Using a Functional Approach Braille Assessment	
Oct. 15	Chapter 7	Teaching Reading Through Braille (Methods & Curricula)	W & D Ch. 7 Holbrook, 2008
Oct. 22	Review Week	Technology Overview	W & D Ch. 8 Cooper & Nichols, 2007
Oct. 29	Chapter 8	Braille for Second Language Learners	W & D Ch. 6
Nov. 5	Chapter 9	Slate & Stylus	
Nov. 12	Chapter 10	Slate & Stylus practice Practice Braille for Adults	W & D Ch. 4 Kamei Hannan, 2006 <b>Written exam due</b>
Nov. 19	Review Week		
Nov. 26	Practice Test <b>Final Projects Presentations</b>		
Nov. 27-Dec. 2	<b>Code Test / Individually scheduled Proficiency Test</b>		
Dec. 3	<b>On-line braille code exam</b>		

## **Course Requirements:**

1. **Homework:** (60 points) Ten homework assignments valued at 6 points each are required for the course. Their schedule due dates are indicated below. Points are assigned as follows:

0, 1, 2 errors	6 points
3, 4 errors	5 points
5, 6 errors	4 points
7, 8 errors	3 points
9, 10 errors	2 points
11, 12 errors	1 point
13 or more errors	no credit for assignment

There will be no opportunities to resubmit homework. **All students must turn in all homework and earn at least 2 points on each in order to receive a passing grade in the course.**

Braille homework assignments will be transcribed using the Perkins braille writer. **Electronic braille will not be accepted.** Work transcribed using braille translation software is unacceptable and subject to academic dishonesty policies. Work must be transcribed on standard braille paper without tractor-feed holes. For an 8.5 x 11 sheet of braille paper, you should have no more than 30 braille cells per line.

In order to provide students with timely feedback, homework assignments will need to be submitted in-class or mailed to the instructor. **Assignments that are mailed must be post-marked on the Saturday before each class date** and should arrive by Monday. Late penalties will apply to assignments not received by Tuesday (that allows two days for mailing, if it is post-marked on Saturday). Send assignments to:

**Dr. Christina Schoch**

**8491 North Redstone Place**

**Tucson, Arizona 85743**

### **Due Dates for Braille Code Assignments:**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>HOMEWORK (Postmarked or Delivered to Grader)</b>	<b>Description of Homework</b>
September 10	Homework 1 (Chs. 1 & 2)	Self Test p. 10 & Self Test p. 27
September 17	Homework 2 (Ch. 3)	Exercise 3.5.5 p. 48
September 24	Homework 3 (Ch. 4)	Self-Test p. 86
October 8	Homework 4 (Ch. 5)	Self-Test p. 110
October 15	Homework 5 (Ch. 6)	TBD
October 22	Homework 6 (Ch. 7)	TBD
November 5	Homework 7 (Ch. 8)	TBD
November 12	Homework 8 (Ch. 9)	TBD
November 19	Homework 9	Selected passage from book or magazine
November 26	Homework 10 (Ch. 10)	TBD

**You must complete every homework assignment with 10 or fewer errors in order to earn a passing grade in the course. This is regardless of how many points you can earn for the assignment based on how late it is submitted.**

1. **Braille Drills:** (30 points) In addition to preparing homework assignments using the Perkins braille writer, you will also complete homework using 6-key entry on the computer. Each drill is comprised of 15 probes and generally takes no more than an hour to complete. You can start and stop a drill so you do not have to complete an entire drill in one sitting. You must get 100% on each section before moving on to another section. Drills can be accessed at:

[www.nercve.org/brailler](http://www.nercve.org/brailler)

User email: your university e-mail

Initial password: braille

- You will be prompted to customize your password on first login.
- A presentation showing how to use the online brailier can be viewed at: <http://media.umb.edu/nb>
- Use the "SDF" "JKL" keys on your computer's keyboard to braille.

**Due Dates for Drill Assignments:**

DATE	APIB Chapter	Drills
September 10	Chapters 1 & 2	Lessons 1 & 2
September 17	Chapter 3	Lesson 3
September 24	Chapter 4	Lesson 4
October 8	Chapter 5	Lesson 5
October 15	Chapter 6	Lesson 6
October 22	Chapter 7	Lesson 7
November 5	Chapter 8	Lesson 8
November 12	Chapter 9	Lesson 9
November 19	Chapter 10	Lesson 10

2. **Written Exam on Lecture Content:** (50 points) The written exam on the lecture content will be provided to you on October 22 via Blackboard. This is a take home exam and will be due on **November 12, 2012 at 4 PM**. The exam is to be submitted via the Blackboard. Five points per day will be subtracted for late exams. **NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS!**
3. **Final Exam:** (Proficiency Test): (30 points) At the end of the course, each student must put in braille one page of literary material with 10 or fewer errors using only a contraction sheet provided by the instructor and a print dictionary to check syllabication. You may schedule to take the test after November 27, 2012. You must take it for the first time (and hopefully only time) by December 3. ***All retests must be completed by December 10, 2012***

EXAMPLE: Sharon makes 4 errors the first time she takes the test. Her score is 26 out of 30. Ron makes 11 errors the first time he takes the test. He must retake it. On the second attempt,



he makes 5 errors. He receives a score of 25 on the second attempt, with one additional point subtracted because it is a second try. His score is 24 out of 30.

4. **Braille Code Exam** (25 points) Students will complete a 50 item multiple-choice test designed to test their knowledge of the literary braille code. The exam will be administered on **December 3, 2012** and be posted on Blackboard.
  
5. **Project:** (25 points) Students must complete a project related to the instruction of braille. Projects are due on **November 26, 2012**. The project may include one of the following options **OR** it may be an original project. If an original project is selected, a one page written proposal must be approved by the instructor before the project is implemented. Proposals must be turned in on or before **October 22, 2012**. Failure to get an alternative project approved may result in a low grade! Five points per day will be subtracted from the final grade for late projects.
  - a. Transcribe a children's book for a braille reader. If it is for a child at second grade level or below, include tactual materials to add meaning and motivation to the brailled text. The book should be in contracted braille.
  
  - b. Create a learning center or instructional unit for teaching the basics of braille to students who are not braille readers. The unit should contain braille materials that you will share with the students who are not braille readers.
  
  - c. Describe in writing an adult with an adventitious visual loss (e.g., age, occupation, interests, physical abilities) and develop a plan for instructing that individual in braille with an emphasis on functional application. Include sample materials in braille that you will use with the adult.
  
  - d. Interview or survey individuals who read braille regarding their concerns, challenges, and opinions related to the importance of braille in their lives and write a 3-5 page paper presenting your findings. You must include a minimum of 10 people in your survey. Include a copy of your survey with your paper.
  
  - e. Teach two braille lessons to a student and develop the appropriate lesson plans and associated materials. Be sure to include a means of evaluating whether the student has met the lesson's objectives. Videotape one lesson. **THIS MAY NOT BE DONE AS PART OF YOUR INTERNSHIP.**
  
6. **Participation:** (30 points) Up to 30 points will be earned by students for participation.

Points will be earned through the completion of in class activities, interactions with panels and with guests. Students are expected to attend class sessions, be focused and respectful of others.

7. **Extra Credit:** You have 3 options for extra credit this year, each will earn you up to 5 points. **Extra credit must be submitted by November 26, 2012**
  - a. Make a deck of braille playing cards. A quarter point will be subtracted for each error.
  - b. Select a magazine or newspaper article and transcribe it into braille. You must turn in the first **2 braille pages**. Submit the print article and your 2 pages of braille. You may not do this assignment until we have covered the material in Lesson 8. A quarter point will be subtracted for each error. Please mark on the top of the page which lessons we have covered at the time of your braille (e.g., 1-8, 1-10) so I only count off for contractions covered to that date.
  - c. Develop a set of flashcards for practicing your braille. Based on the accuracy and completeness of your flashcard set you'll earn up to 5 points.

## **CONSORTIUM COURSE POLICIES**

### **HONOR CODE**

Each university has its own honor code and it is important for you to review the honor code at your university. However, all students taking this course, regardless of the university they are enrolled in, are expected to follow this honor code and also to pledge all assignments and their exam to indicate that they have followed the honor code. A pledge means that you have not cheated or plagiarized, nor have you given or received assistance that violated the description of how assignments are to be completed for this course. The shortened version may be used: "Pledged" followed by the date and your full name (typed "signatures" will be OK for assignments/tests submitted electronically).

A complete copy of each university's Honor System document is available through

- GMU: <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>
- Radford: <http://www.radford.edu/dos-web/honorcode.html>
- NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/studentjudicial/>
- ODU: [http://hs.odu.edu/advising/honor\\_code.shtml](http://hs.odu.edu/advising/honor_code.shtml)

- JMU: <http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml#TheHonorCode>

## **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITY**

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the disability service center at their participating university and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. University specific information regarding eligibility, services and accommodations can be found at:

- GMU: <http://ods.gmu.edu/>
- Radford: <http://www.radford.edu/~dro/>
- NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html>
- ODU: <http://studentaffairs.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>
- JMU: <http://www.jmu.edu/ods/>

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If classes are cancelled at George Mason University, a message will be posted on the class Blackboard site and all class members will receive an email. Because such cancellations are often at the last minute, it may be difficult to get this message prior to leaving for class. Please note that the cancellation of classes due to inclement weather is determined by the decision of the instructing university only. If the instructing university is open and operational then you are expected to attend class.

## **CELL PHONES AND WEAPONS**

All cell phones and beepers should be deactivated while in the classroom. Also, University rules at all participating universities prohibit the possession any firearm, other weapon, or explosive.

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. For the articles (available on Blackboard), copyright laws must be followed: print only one copy per student. The PowerPoint presentations, notes, and handouts are provided on Blackboard for your convenience and to facilitate your mastery of concepts presented in this course. 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, the class, and date. If used beyond citation, permission of the instructor/author is required.

## **TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCIES AND BLACKBOARD**

All students participating in this course are expected to be proficient in several technology skills. Students are expected to be proficient in using the Internet and have reliable and consistent Internet access. Students are also expected to have an active email account and to check email regularly. This course requires students to use Blackboard, which is our online course management system located at <http://mymason.gmu.edu>

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 login to this system frequently and be proficient in using its features. Students are expected to be proficient in using the computer, which includes downloading and saving files, typing, and word processing skills. 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.

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>

## **TASKSTREAM SUBMISSION**

TaskStream ([www.taskstream.com](http://www.taskstream.com)) is an electronic portfolio and assessment management tool that the VI 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: **Written Exam on Lecture Content**

**Note: Please submit these items together as ONE pdf file into Taskstream.**

## **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 to email Holly Lawson ([hlawson2@gmu.edu](mailto:hlawson2@gmu.edu)). 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.

Key Points Blackboard. Our Blackboard server has been updated from version 8.0 to 9.1. For students this means:

- Students **MUST** access Blackboard through <http://mymason.gmu.edu> (new website) for fall courses.
- If students access Blackboard through <http://gmucommunity.blackboard.com> (old website) they will see only content from spring and summer. **DO NOT** use this website to access Blackboard.
- When accessing Blackboard through <http://mymason.gmu.edu> students will also have access to previous courses.
- Students will use the same login they have used for spring and summer courses.
- When students login to <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, select the “Organizations” tab to access their classes.
- Students will notice a slightly different look to the new Blackboard system, but everything should function the same.

## **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:**

- a.* Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- b.* Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- c.* 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.

- d.* 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/>].
- e.* 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/>].
- f.* Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g.* 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/>].

## **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. [http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/Revised 06/25/12](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/Revised%2006/25/12)

*For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].*

**Note:** *This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.*