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

Fall 2015
EDSE 534 DL1: Communication and Severe Disabilities
CRN: 77394, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Heidi Graff	**Meeting Dates:** 08/31/15 - 12/21/15
Phone: (703) 993-8036	**Meeting Day(s):** Asynchronous
E-Mail: hgraff@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** Asynchronous
Office Hours: By appointment	**Meeting Location:** NET

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.*

Course Description
Introduces professionals to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for individuals with severe speech and language impairments. Addresses the knowledge and skills needed to assess the potential AAC user, make team decisions, develop and implement instruction, and evaluate the effects of instruction, aimed at motivating, building, and expanding communication, choice-making, and social interaction. Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3 Hours of Lab or Studio per week: 0

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-requisite(s): None

Advising Contact Information
Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Advising Tip
Are you completing a teacher licensure or non-licensure certificate program in addition to a Masters degree? Students can submit a Graduate Secondary Certificate Application (http://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/GSCA.pdf) to their advisor when they are ready to add a certificate. Talk to your advisor if you have any questions about the program/s you are completing.

Nature of Course Delivery

Delivery method is Online using the Blackboard platform – The online course exceptions document is very important in outlining all the programs used. Additionally, there will also be **Tech Support** information under the Syllabus and Expectations tab in a document called Social Media and Open Tools summary. Tutorials to the various programs are provided in this document. Please check there first to see if your question was answered there. If you contact me directly, I will ask you what you did to try to solve the problem before contacting me. The main tools we will using are as follows: power points, discussion board, timetoast, popplet, video posts, Wikis, and PowToon.

Learning on-line activities include the following:
1. Power point lecture and written/video discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities

DELIVERY METHOD:
This course will be delivered online using an **asynchronous** format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before "@masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site modules will be available on Thursdays at 9am each week.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:
To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:
- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard;
- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course
- 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 the course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for Pcs and Macs respectively, available for free downloading by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:

- Adobe Acrobat Reader: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
- Windows Media Player: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/downloads/windows-media-player
- Apple QuickTime Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/
- A headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool

EXPECTATIONS:
- **Course Week:**
  - ➢ **Asynchronous:** Because online courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will **start** on Thursdays at 9am, and **finish** on Wednesdays at 9pm.
- **Log-in Frequency**:
  - ➢ **Asynchronous:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be 2 times per week.
- **Participation**: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of 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 are expected to seek assistance if they are struggling with technical components of the course. Contact ITU (http://itservices.gmu.edu/help.cfm) at (703) 993-8870 or support@gmu.edu.
- **Technical Issues**: Students should expect that they could experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload**: Expect to log in to this course **at least three times a week** to read announcements, participate in the discussions, and work on course materials. Remember, this course is **not** self-paced. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **CLASS SCHEDULE** section of this syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

Netiquette: Our goal is to be **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. I suggest that you always re-read your responses carefully before you post them to encourage others from taking them as personal attacks. **Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.** I will do the same. Remember, you are not competing with each other but sharing information and learning from one another as well as from the instructor.

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

• Identify characteristics of non-symbolic and symbolic communication

• Describe and discuss methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of individuals with communication impairments.

• Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology available for individuals with severe disabilities.

• Implement assessment strategies to improve students' social interaction with peers and others.

• Implement communication/AAC/AT assessment strategies to develop and implement individual educational planning and group instruction with students with disabilities in an adapted curriculum across the K-12 grade levels.

• Understand and identify behaviors associated with communication.

• Describe language development and emergent literacy skills for students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology

• Identify and implement strategies and activities that foster an appreciation of a variety of literature and independent reading for students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology

• Demonstrate knowledge of best practices and strategies in reading instruction for students with severe disabilities for students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology

Required Textbooks

Beukelman, D. R. & Mirenda, P. (2013). *Augmentative and alternative communication: Supporting children and adults with complex communication needs* (4th ed.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Digital Library

Effective summer 2015, the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research will discontinue the use of the Pearson Digital Library. No further registrations will be accepted. Students who hold current subscriptions will continue to have access to the library for the remainder of their subscription time. However, no further updates will be made to the digital library. During this time, should a textbook be revised or a new book is adopted for a class where the text is included in the digital library, Pearson will have options available to you and will provide you with an individual e-text or, if there is no e-text, a printed copy. Students, who have purchased a 3-year subscription directly through Pearson Education, will also have an option to obtain a prorated refund. However, 3-year subscription access cards purchased via the GMU bookstore will need to speak with a George Mason Bookstore Representative. Please be aware that the issuance of a refund, in this case, is at the discretion of the George Mason bookstore. Concerns or questions may be directed to Molly Haines at Molly.Haines@pearson.com.

Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations
This course is part of The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Severe Disabilities, a grant from the Virginia Department of Education that includes George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Virginia, Radford University, and Norfolk State University. Through the completion of the SD Consortium program, students are eligible for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the area of Special Education – Adapted Curriculum K-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 standard that will be addressed in this class is Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies. (Updated Fall 2014 to align with the revised CEC Standards)

GMU Policies and Resources for Students:
a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/].

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].

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. [See http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/]

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

Course Policies & Expectations

> *Attendance.*
> All course work will be online in an Asynchronous format. There will be no face-to-face meetings.
> *Late Work.*
> All modules are due as noted on the course site and below in the schedule. No late work can be submitted.

Blackboard Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, *Low Tech Case Study* to Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Grading Scale

A   = 394 - 400
A- = 390 - 393
B+ = 387 - 389
B   = 384 - 380
C   = 370 - 379
F   = < 369

Assignments

> **Performance-based Assessment (Blackboard submission required).**

1. **Low Tech Case Study.** Students will be given a case individual for whom they are expected to develop a low tech communication system. A rationale for why such a system was created is expected. You will be presenting your low tech systems and explaining their relevance via video and posted to Blackboard. This is 10% of your grade.

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Blackboard submission required).

Other Assignments.

All modules will begin on Thursdays at 9am and must be concluded with work submitted by Wednesdays at 9pm. Modules will appear as well as disappear on the designated day and time. Please plan accordingly. Best practices will have you open the module on Thursdays to review the content and check the assignments. Then, pace and participate accordingly for the rest of the week. All modules will be worth between 20-40 points and the break down will be listed on the first screen of each module.

Schedule

Module 1-Nonsymbolic	Begin, Thurs, August 27-Wed, September 2
Module 2-Symbolic	Begin, Thurs, September 3-Wed, September 9
Module 3-Assessment	Begin, Thurs, September 10-Wed, September 16
Module 4-Priorities	Begin, Thurs, September 17-Wed, September 23
Module 5-Research Critiques	Begin, Thurs, September 24-Wed, September 30
Module 6-Range of devices	Begin, Thurs, October 1-Wed, October 7
Module 7- Language development	Begin, Thurs, October 8-Wed, October 14
Module 8-Topic Board Development	Begin, Thurs, October 15-Wed, October 21
Module 9-IEP planning	Begin, Thurs, October 22-Wed, October 28
Module 10-Communication and behavior	Begin, Thurs, October 29-Wed, November 4
Module 11-Social and peer interactions	Begin, Thurs, November 5-Wed, November 11
Module 12-Low Tech Case Study	Begin, Thurs, November 12-Wed, November 18
Module 13-AAC and Literacy	Begin, Thurs, November 19-Wed, November 25
Module 14-AAC in the Educational Setting	Begin, Thurs, November 26-Wed, December 2
Module 15-Literature Unit	Begin, Thurs, December 3-Wed, December 9