



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

Spring 2016

EDAT 421 DL1: Augmentative Communication

CRN: 13620, 3 - Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Yoosun Chung	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/19/16 - 05/11/16
<b>Phone:</b> (703) 988-3486 (text-relay-service)	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Asynchronous
<b>E-Mail:</b> ychung3@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> Asynchronous
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Internet. All course materials are available through Blackboard Courses at <a href="http://mymason.gmu.edu">mymason.gmu.edu</a> .

**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.

**Instructional Method**

EDAT 421 is an asynchronous course. Using Blackboard, students are expected to complete assignments weekly and be engaged in course activities throughout the semester.

**Course Description**

Provides an overview of augmentative and alternative communication tools for use by individuals with speech and communication disabilities. Exploration experiences enable students to locate, use and train others on the range of AAC technologies available. Field experience may be required.

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.

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

Learning activities include the following:

1. Learning module lectures, discussion, and participation
2. Software and hardware demonstrations
3. Group and independent laboratory exploration activities
4. Direct AT service interactions
5. Class presentations

### **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 will be available on the posted start date of the course.

### **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/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)
- A headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

- **Course Week:** Refer to the **asynchronous** bullet below if your course is asynchronous or the synchronous bullet if your course is synchronous.

- **Asynchronous:** Because online courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will **start** on **Tuesday**, and **finish** on the following **Monday**.
- **Log-in Frequency:** Refer to the asynchronous bullet below if your course is asynchronous or the synchronous bullet if your course is synchronous.
  - **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](mailto: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 two 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.

### **Field Experience Requirement**

A Field Experience may be a part of this course. A field experience is a variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, tutor, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings, such as schools (NCATE, 2008). Below are REQUIRED PROCEDURES FOR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS COURSE

1. Prior to representing George Mason in off-campus settings, visit this site: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/internships-field-experience>. The site has a comprehensive PowerPoint on the registration process and tips for a successful field experience. This is called the Field Experience Presentation. View this.

2. Complete the online field experience registration form [<http://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>] at the beginning of the semester (if not before) and complete the information requested REGARDLESS if you need assistance in 'finding' an individual for the project/assignment or not. This information is required by the state. It is important that you do this within the first two classes so that the Clinical Practice Office has sufficient time to find a placement for you.

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Please indicate how your placement will be arranged.\*

- I will need George Mason (Clinical Practice Specialist) to arrange a placement for my field experiences (including observations and/or case studies).
- I have been assigned a placement by my program for my field experiences (including observations and/or case studies).
- I will arrange my own field experience (observations and/or case studies) because I am a full-time contracted school system employee and will complete field experience at my workplace.
- I will arrange my own field experiences (observations and/or case studies) because I am conducting a case study or individualized child portfolio with an individual outside of the school system (Special Education, Early Childhood Education PK-3, Dual Licensure Early Childhood Education PD-3 and Early Childhood Special Education only).
- I will arrange my own placement for my field experiences (including observations and/or case studies) because my instructor has offered access to a student(s) inside of a school system.

Fields marked with \* are required. Your preferences may not be guaranteed.

NOTE: When selecting options of “I will arrange my own...” you will be asked to specify further, and/or identify the region and/or school of your arrangement. You will also be asked to obtain permission from a school principal or school administrator. Students should keep this documentation.

- I understand that I must obtain permission from my principal/school administrator.

NOTE: It is not recommended that you work with your own child.

NOTE: If you selected the last option above, an email from the host teacher and the administrator is required to be sent to [cuanseru@gmu.edu](mailto:cuanseru@gmu.edu). The email serves as documentation of the approval. The administrators must approve all visitors in their school.

### **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.
- Compare and contrast the range of AAC devices and systems available for individuals with communication disabilities.
- Understand and describe the theoretical and research basis for AAC selection and implementation for individuals with disabilities.
- Conduct a customized training of how to use AAC technology for an individual with a disability, their family, or a professional who works with individuals.

### **Required Textbooks**

Beukelman, D. R. & Mirenda, P. (2013). *Augmentative and alternative communication: Supporting children and adults with complex communication needs*. 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](mailto:Molly.Haines@pearson.com).

### **Required Resources**

Students are required to have consistent and reliable access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection. Students are also expected to have 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.

### **Course Relationships to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Assistive Technology Program. The Assistive Technology Program has developed program specific standards in accordance with NCATE requirements. The Assistive Technology Program Standards incorporate several elements within the professional standards from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), while also expanding upon them to meet the specific needs related assistive technology. The primary AT Program standards that will be addressed in this class include the following: Standard 2: Knowledge and Skills and Standard 4: Practical Experience  
\*NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional AT Program 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 George Mason University Disability Services and inform their instructor, in writing, as soon as possible. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. <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.*

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.

### *Late Work.*

In fairness to students who make the effort to submit assignments on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late assignments. (For example, a 10 point assignment will lose 1 point per day while a 40 point assignment will lose 4 points per day). At the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit and a response cost of 10 percent will be assessed. Please note that assignments worth 1 point that are submitted late will receive a score of 0.

### *Course Expectation.*

- It is expected that students have continual access to a high-speed Internet connection and an active GMU email account for the duration of this course.
- Students are expected to be familiar with Blackboard features including downloading materials and submitting assignments. Students are expected to know their Blackboard username and password and to actively monitor the email account that is currently registered in Blackboard. Students who are experiencing problems using the Blackboard system must contact the instructor prior to the date an assignment is due for assistance.
- Please type ALL assignments unless otherwise noted. Please contact the instructor if you are using a word processing program other than Microsoft Word.
- All assignments must be posted to the Discussion Board or submitted through the "Assignment" session in Blackboard by 11:59 pm on the day the assignment is due (unless otherwise noted by the instructor) to be considered for full credit. Please note that Blackboard places a timestamp on all submitted material. If Blackboard is down for any reason at the time an assignment is due, you should email a copy of your assignment to

the instructor. However, you should only email the instructor your assignment if Blackboard is down. If you not available on the day an assignment is due, you are expected to submit that assignment early to be considered for full credit.

- All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar and will be graded accordingly. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with the GMU Writing Center during this course to improve your skills.
- All references including Online references must be cited in proper APA format to avoid plagiarism (cut&paste is easy to do from the Internet).

*Instructor – Student Communication.*

The easiest and best way to contact me is through email. I will respond to your emails within 48 hours, if not sooner, on weekdays. IF I will be away from email for more than two days, I will post an announcement on Blackboard.

**Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement**

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit the AAC Device Instruction Project to Tk20 through Blackboard (regardless of whether the student is taking the course as an elective, a onetime course or as part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Tk20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Tk20 (through 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 Tk20 submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

**Grading Scale**

Evaluation will be based upon a point system. The point value for each assignment is as follows:

Weekly Online Modules.....	50
AAC Device Comparison.....	20
AAC Device Instruction Project.....	30
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TOTAL POINTS.....	100

- 95-100 = A
- 90-94 = A-
- 85-89 = B
- 80-84 = B-
- 70-79 = C
- < 70 = F



## Assignments

### **Performance-based Assessment (TK20 submission required).**

The Performance-based Assessment assignment for this course is the *AAC Device Instruction Project*. Please see the *Other Assignments* section for assignment description.

### **Performance-based Common Assignments (No TK20 submission required).**

Courses with multiple sections often require "common" assignments across sections to ensure consistency in instruction and learning. This course does not require the use of a common assignment(s). All course assignments are outlined in the *Other Assignments* section.

### **Other Assignments.**

#### **Weekly Online Modules (50 points)**

Students must access online class on Blackboard weekly and complete posted activities for all classes. Posted activities will include PowerPoint presentations of content, Internet search/research assignments, video exploration and viewing, community exploration, response tasks and construction activities.

#### **AAC Device Comparison (20 points)**

Students will select 5-7 AAC devices from a specific device category to develop a detailed device comparison. Students will develop a PowerPoint outlining the overall features of the device category, the characteristics and prerequisite skills of potential AAC uses, and an overview of each specific AAC device including salient features, pricing, and vendor information. In addition, students will provide recommendations for at least two of the specific AAC devices based on the needs of a real client or an invented scenario. Students will also create a comparison chart handout that will be made available to their classmates in Blackboard.

#### **AAC Device Instruction Project (30 points)**

Students are required to create an instruction project for training the use of an AAC device. The purpose of the plan is to introduce the use of the AAC device to a potential user (i.e., individual with disability, their parent or other family member, or a professional working with an individual with a disability). The designated AAC device may be either approved through a selection process or specifically assigned by the instructor. This plan itself should be submitted as a text document and include the following:

a. Device Overview

Candidate provides a description of the AAC device. The description should include the purpose of the AAC device, its features, and its vendor/contact information.

b. User Characteristics & Needs

Candidate provides a rationale for selecting the user/individual(s) for which they are designing the training. A listing of the user's prerequisite skills as well as the needs they have for potentially using the AT will be outlined. Consideration of diverse needs of both the user in training as well as those that may be affected by the training should be addressed.

c. Customized Training

Candidate designs a training plan customized specifically for the user that is to be trained. The plan should include: goal(s) of the 1 hour training, objectives for each section or topic being trained and allocated timeframe for each, a listing of training materials, procedural steps for the training that integrate evidence-based strategies and data collection, and additional resources for the user to take with them following the training.

d. Demonstration

Candidate records a 2-3 minute video documenting a portion of the training that shows the candidate demonstrating the use of the AAC device. The video will accompany the Instructional Plan write-up as evidence the candidate has proficiency in AT use.

e. Reflection

Candidate provides a reflection on the implementation of the AAC device training from both the candidate/instructor and the user/student perspective. The reflection will also include of a listing of what would be done differently if the training were repeated, what steps should be taken if additional training was needed and what potential professional development the candidate/trainer needs might require to provide additional training.

f. Community Impact

Candidate discusses the potential impact their AAC device training could have on individuals with disabilities, their families, and communities across environments, settings and life span.

### Online Discussions

The **Online Discussion** is the heartbeat of this course. We will be sharing experiences, opinions, questions, etc. on the Discussions Board. To get the maximum point (5 points), **not only** you submit your original posting, **but also** you need to interact with at least two classmates during that week's assigned assignment. Posted messages should be significant - helping the discussion move forward. There are a variety of ways to do this, including:

- Providing concrete examples, perhaps from your own experience
- Describing possible consequences or implications

- Posing a clarifying question
- Suggesting a different perspective or interpretation
- Pulling in related information from other sources – books, articles, websites, other courses, etc.

The original posting should be posted by Saturday, 11:59pm of that week. The responses to other classmates should be posted by Monday, 11:59pm of the following week. Your participation score for a given week will be based on the timelessness, the quality of your postings to that discussion, and interactivity. You will find a detailed rubric on Blackboard.

## Schedule

### Proposed Schedule

Modules	topic	reading and assignments due
Module 1 (Jan 19 - Jan 25)	Introduction	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 1 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 1 Assignment
Module 2 (Jan 26 - Feb 1)	Message and Vocabulary Selection	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 2 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 2 Assignment
Module 3 (Feb 2 - Feb 8)	Symbol Systems	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 3 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 3 Assignment
Module 4 (Feb 9 - Feb 15)	Alternative Access	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 4 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 4 Assignment
Module 5 (Feb 16 - Feb 22)	Low & Mid Tech Tools	<u>Reading:</u> Provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 5 Assignment
Module 6 (Feb 23 - Feb 29)	High Tech Tools (symbol-based & Text based system)	<u>Reading:</u> Provided on Bb  <u>No Assignment due:</u>
Module 7 (Mar 1 - Mar 7)	High Tech Tools (mobile system)	<u>Reading:</u> Provided on Bb  <u>Assignment:</u> Combined Module 6 & 7 Assignment
Spring Break (Mar 8 - Mar 14)	Spring Break	<u>DUE: AAC Device Comparison (20 points)</u> <b>- Due March 14</b>

Module 8 (Mar 15 - Mar 21)	Software Systems Boardmaker Plus/Speaking Dynamically Pro	<u>Reading:</u> Provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 8 Assignment
Module 9 (Mar 22 - Mar 28)	Software Systems Boardmaker Studio	<u>Reading:</u> Provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 9 Assignment
Module 10 (Mar 29 - Apr 4)	AAC Assessment	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 5, 6 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 10 Assignment
Module 11 (Apr 5 - Apr 11)	AAC Decision Making, Intervention & Evaluation	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 7 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>Assignment:</u> Module 11 Assignment
Module 12 (Apr 12 - Apr 18)	AAC Strategies for Beginning Communicators	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 9, 10 & Additional readings provided on Bb <u>No Assignment Due.</u>  Start brainstorming for your final project.
Module 13 (Apr 19 - Apr 25)	AAC Strategies for Advanced Communicators	<u>Reading:</u> Chapter 11, 12 & Additional readings provided on Bb. <u>No Assignment Due.</u>  Complete brainstorming and start implementing your final project.
Module 14 (Apr 26 - May 2)	AAC Funding	<u>Reading:</u> Provided on Bb <u>No Assignment Due.</u>  Keep implementing your final project.
Module 15 (May 3 - May 9)	Final Project Implementation	<u>DUE: AAC Device Instructional Plan Project</u> – <b>Due May 9</b>