VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION ADAPTED CURRICULUM

Spring 2016
Communication and Severe Disabilities, 3 Credits

Consortium Titles

- George Mason University: EDSE 534 Communication and Severe Disabilities
  - EDSE 434 001: CRN: 12609
  - EDSE 534 001: CRN: 12610; EDSE 534 6U1: CRN: 18864; EDSE 534 6Y1: 23845
- Virginia Commonwealth University: SEDP 600 Communication for Students with Severe Disabilities
- Radford University: EDSP 667 Communication & Severe Disabilities
- Norfolk State University: SPE 643 Communication Development for Individuals with Severe Disabilities
- Old Dominion University: SPED 673 Communication and Severe Disabilities
- James Madison University: EXED 602: Communication, Language and Sensory issues in ASD

Instructor: Dr. Marci Jerome	**Meeting Dates:** 1/20/2016 - 4/27/2016
Phone: 703-993-8295	**Meeting Day(s):** Wednesday
E-Mail: mkinas@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** 4:30 pm-7:10 pm
Office Hours: By appointment	**Instructing University:** GMU

> **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.

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:
- 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.

Additional readings will be assigned according to topic and will be made available by the instructor.

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)

Course Policies & Expectations

Attendance.

Please see *Class Participation* within the assignment section.

Late Work.

All assignments should be word-processed and are due at the start of class (7:00 pm) on the dates indicated, including assignments submitted through Blackboard. Consult with the instructor in advance if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late papers. (For example, a 20 point assignment will lose 2 points per day while a 50 point assignment will lose 5 points per day.) Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit. All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with your university's Writing Center during this course to improve your skills. At the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit.

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 (*NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE*) 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

95-100% (143-150) = A	80-82% (120-123) = B-
91-94% (137-142) = A-	70-79% (105-119) = C
87-90% (130-136) = B+	< 70% (below 105) = F
83-86% (124-129) = B	

Undergraduate

95-100% (143-150) = A	77-79% (115-119) = C+
91-94% (137-142) = A-	74-76% (111-114) = C
87-90% (130-136) = B+	70-73% (105-110) = C-
83-86% (124-129) = B	60-69% (90-104) = D
80-82% (120-123) = B-	< 60% (below 90) = F

Assignments

    Performance-based Assessment (TK20 submission required).

    None

    Other Assignments.

1. **Class Participation (15 points)** Attendance 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, guest speakers, and role plays 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 will complete an in-class activity (or online assignment) each week (14 weeks). Students who successfully complete 13-14 in-class activities will earn 15 points, students who successfully complete 12 in-class activities will earn 7 points, students who successfully complete 11 in-class activities will earn 1 point, while students who complete between 0-10 in-class activities will receive 0 points. Completion of in-class activities (or online assignments) includes both active participation in the activity as well as submission of a permanent product (form, summary statement, reflection, etc.). Students who miss a class will not have the opportunity to make up missed in-class assignments. Successful completion of in-class activities will be tracked in the blackboard gradebook. As a courtesy, please email me to let me know if you will not be in class.

2. **Student Introduction (5 points)** During the first week students will complete the Student Introduction Assignment, located in the *Assignments* section of the course Blackboard site. Students will answer 11 questions to both introduce themselves to the instructor as well as help the instructor design class activities based on student interests and level of experience. Included in the introductory assignment is submission of a picture (in .jpg format). This will be used by the instructor to associate your name with your face. These photos will not be shared with others. **(Due January 27 by 7 pm)**

3. **Research Critiques (30 Points)**. In assigned small groups, students will read and critique two intervention research studies in the area of augmentative and alternative communication for students with autism and/or intellectual disabilities. Each critique should include an a) complete APA reference (6th edition); b) statement of study purpose including research questions (1-2 paragraphs); c) summary of study methods and results (3-4 paragraphs), and d) applicability of study deign and results to special education and your own teaching (1-2 paragraphs; each student). See assignment rubric for further details. **(Critique 1 due Feb. 10; Critique 2 due April 13)**
   - Undergraduate differentiation: Undergraduate students will complete sections A-C only. See undergraduate assignment rubric for further details.

4. **Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection (30 points)** Using the strategies and procedures reviewed in class, students will create a topic board for their own use in a specific situation. Students will actually use the topic board for conversation for a minimum of one hour (in an identified setting) and will then write a reflection on his or her experiences and impressions. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Due February 24)**

5. **Case Study and Low Tech AAC System Development ((30 points)** 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 in class. See assignment rubric for further details. (**Due March 30**)

6. **Literacy Unit Plan (40 points)** Students will choose and design a unit on a specific topic of their choice. The unit must be centered around a piece of literature, whether a published children's book or personally authored story. Students will adapt the story for students with significant disabilities using communication/literacy tools and strategies discussed in class. Furthermore, students will develop at least 3 additional supplemental resources related to the story that also incorporate communication theory and strategies discussed in class. These resources could include songboards, worksheets, games, crafts, etc. Students will also design a communication board for use during the unit. Students will present their rationale for the unit development and physically show the 5 curriculum materials during a class presentation. Students will submit a 3-4 page rationale describing the topic and target population for the unit plan, description of the 5 developed resources, and discussion of the communication/literacy theory, tools and strategies considered in the unit plan development. Unit development must incorporate (and reference) at least two research-based AAC interventions/strategies. Students will also submit electronic copies of the 5 curriculum

materials to Blackboard. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Proposal Due April 13; Final Project Due April 27)**

- Undergraduate differentiation: Undergraduate students will be expected to only develop 2 supplemental activities and incorporate at least 1 research-based AAC interventions/strategy. See undergraduate assignment rubric for further details.

Assignment	Due Date	Point Value
Class Participation	Each week	15
Student Introduction	1/27	5
Research Critiques	(#1) 2/10, (#2) 4/13	30
Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection	2/24	30
Case Study and Low Tech AAC system development	3/30	30
Unit Plan	4/27 (proposal due 4/13)	40
TOTAL POINT VALUE		150

Proposed Class Schedule (Schedule may change based on guest speaker availability)

Ses.	Date	Topic/Lecture	Readings	Assignments Due
1	1/20	• Overview of Course • Review Syllabus • Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication • Definitions and Terminology	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 1 Russell (2008)	
2	1/27	• Messaging, symbols, alternative access	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 2-4	• Student Introduction due by 7pm on 1/27
3	2/3	• Assessment (ONLINE)	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 5-7	
4	2/10	• Assessment • Cases will be Distributed in Case Study Assignment	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 5-7	• Research Critique 1 Due
5	2/17	• AAC issues / AAC Strategies • Symbolic versus nonsymbolic strategies	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 9, 13	
6	2/24	• Language learning and development • AAC and Literacy	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 10-11	• Topic Board Assignment Due
7	3/2	• In Class Boardmaker Online Lab • Bring computer	Refer to Blackboard for readings	
	3/9	• **No Class: Consortium Spring Break**		• Completed Midterm Evaluation
8	3/16	• AAC and Literacy • AAC in the Educational Setting	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 12	
9	3/23	• At Home AAC Device Exploration Activity (**ONLINE**)	Instructor will provide assignment description and materials	• Online activity due by Monday March 28 via Blackboard
10	3/30	• Presentations of Cases and Low Tech Solutions		• Case Study Rationale Due to Blackboard Presentations of Cases and Low Tech Solutions (In class)
11	4/6	• Guest Speaker: AAC User	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 12	• Make sure your Unit Plan project proposal is submitted by April 13th!
12	4/13	• AAC and Autism (**ONLINE**)		• Research Critique 2 Due • Autism activity due by Monday April 18 via Blackboard
13	4/20	• AAC Tech Lab Night	Refer to Blackboard for readings	
14	4/27	• Legal Issues and AAC • Wrap up of AAC • Unit Plan Presentations		• Unit Plan due (Blackboard) • Unit Plan Presentations (In Class) • Completed Final Evaluation

ADAPTED CONSORTIUM SYLLABUS STATEMENTS AND 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 may be asked 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://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm
VCU: www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html.
Radford: http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor_Code.pdf
NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/student_judicial/policy.html
JMU: http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml
ODU: https://www.odu.edu/about/monarchcitizenship/student-conduct

Accommodations for Disability
At all the participating universities, accommodations can be made with the instructor if a student has a documented disability. University specific information regarding eligibility, services and accommodations can be found at:
GMU: http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/
VCU: http://www.students.vcu.edu/dss/index.html
Radford: http://www.radford.edu/~dro/
NSU: http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html
JMU: https://www.jmu.edu/ods/
ODU: https://www.odu.edu/life/diversity/accessibility

Inclement Weather
If classes are cancelled at the teaching 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. If in doubt, visit the teaching university's website. Do not email us; I will email you regarding weather as soon as it is announced. Please note 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. Please consult the student handbook and your university for specific information concerning this policy at your university.

Course Materials
This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. 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
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 expected to have an active university 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 under the ORGANIZATIONS tab.

NON GMU Students: Your login for Blackboard Organizations is: *x_first name.last name* For example, John Smith's username would be: x_john.smith. For **new** students (beginning Summer 2015), you will receive an email (to your university email) with your Blackboard password.

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.

Remote Site Student
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, there are situations in which students are unable to attend classes at the university sites and may be permitted to take a course as a "remote site" student. To be considered, students must meet the **requirement of more than 90 minutes of one-way travel time to the closest participating university (under normal circumstance). OR have a documented medical need.** In addition, **t**here are several technology and procedural requirements that are detailed on the Consortium website: http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/ and posted on Blackboard. Students must obtain permission from both the course instructor and the consortium coordinator to be considered a remote site student. Students' continued participation as a remote site will be re-assessed each semester.

In *special* circumstances where students would otherwise miss class (in accordance to the attendance policy) students may request to participate as a remote site if they (a) have met all of technical and procedural requirements, (b) have received permission from the instructor at least *one week* prior to class, and (c) have had a successful test session with GMU tech support personnel.

Course Facilitators
Each site will have a facilitator or assistant who will assist with the class. Learn who that person is as they will be taking role and keeping track of class participation and reporting it to me weekly. However, if you think you must miss a class, please email me ahead if at all possible (or later if need be).

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 through the assignment submission link). You may direct your questions about Blackboard to Marci Kinas Jerome (mkinas@gmu.edu). She will be the best resource.

Remote Site Viewing
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 specific class.

Student may also view the PowerPoints, communicate with the instructor, and interact with other at home students using Adobe Connect. Each consortium class has their own Adobe Connect website. To get to your Adobe Connect course site go to:
- Characteristics: http://webcon.gmu.edu/characteristics/
- Teaching Strategies: http://webcon.gmu.edu/teaching/
- Positioning and Handling: http://webcon.gmu.edu/positioning
- Communication: https://webcon.gmu.edu/communication
- Collaborative Teamwork: https://webcon.gmu.edu/teamwork

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, it only takes a few seconds to install.

Policies and Resources Specific for GMU 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/]

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.