GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

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

Spring 2018
EDSE 636: Supporting Communication and Literacy for Individuals with Autism
3 – Credits
Section DL1 – CRN: 20162
Section 611 – CRN: 21374

Instructor: Dr. Grace Francis	**Meeting Dates**: 01/22/18 – 05/16/18
Phone: 703-993-6064	**Meeting Day(s)**:
E-Mail: gfranci4@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s)**:
Office Hours: By appointment	**Meeting Location**: Online
Office Location: 216 Finely	**Other Phone**: N/A

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

Prerequisite(s): None
Co-requisite(s): None

Course Description
Surveys the characteristics of communication and literacy, as well as the design and implementation of communication systems for individuals with autism spectrum disorder across their lifespans. Explains methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of communication and literacy instruction in order to improve behavior, academic skills, and social interactions in various environments. Offered by Graduate School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.
Registration Restrictions:
Enrollment limited to students with a class of Advanced to Candidacy, Graduate, Non Degree or Senior Plus.
Enrollment is limited to Graduate, Non-Degree or Undergraduate level students.
Students in a Non-Degree Undergraduate degree may not enroll.
Schedule Type: Lecture

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 teacher candidates/students should contact

the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3670 for assistance. All other teacher candidates/students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Advising Tip
Did you know that students in "quick admit" and non-degree status are restricted in the number of classes they can take, and later apply to a program? Students planning to complete a program should apply as soon as possible. Apply at http://cehd.gmu.edu/admissions/steps.

Course Delivery Method
Learning activities include the following:
1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Video and other media supports
4. Presentation activities
5. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on January 19th, 2018

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:
- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain 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 course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Windows Media Player: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player
  - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week:
  Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on <mark>12:00am (midnight) on Tuesday, and finish on at 11:59 pm on Monday nights.</mark> Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:
  Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.
- Participation:
  Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing 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 who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
  Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
  Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:
  Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:
  The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words*. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, candidates will be able to:

1. Identify characteristics of communication for individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
2. Describe and discuss methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
3. Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology/instructional technology available for individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
4. Design assessment and instructional strategies to improve students' social interactions with peers and others.
5. Design communication/AAC/AT assessment and instructional strategies to develop and implement individual educational planning and group instruction with students with autism spectrum disorder.
6. Identify behaviors associated with communication for individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
7. Describe methods of building communication systems to support language and literacy in students with autism spectrum disorder.
8. Describe evidence-based literacy practices for students with autism spectrum disorder.
9. Describe language development and emergent literacy skills for individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
10. Describe and plan quality pre-literacy and literacy instruction for students with autism spectrum disorder.

Course Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations
This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for the Autism Spectrum Disorders Graduate Certificate. This program complies with the Skill Competencies for Professionals and Paraprofessionals in Virginia Supporting Individuals with Autism Across the Lifespan established by the Virginia Autism Council. The competencies are listed on the following website: https://vcuautismcenter.org/documents/va_skill_competencies.pdf The competencies that will be addressed in this class are Standard 1: General Autism Knowledge, Standard 2, Environmental Structure and Visual Supports, Standard 3, Instructional Programming, Standard 4: Communication, Standard 5: Social Skills, and Standard 8: Independence and Aptitude.

Required Textbooks
None. All required readings are on Blackboard.

Recommended Textbooks
American Psychological Association. (2010*). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Additional Readings
Refer to Blackboard for additional course readings and resources.

Course Performance Evaluation
Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor
(e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement
It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are
meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE
course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the
PBA to Tk20 (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of
an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that
best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course.
A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's
grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will
provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to Tk20.

For EDSE 636, the required PBA is Literary Unit with Low Tech AAC System. Failure
to submit the assignment to Tk20 will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete
(IN). Teacher candidates/students have until five days prior to the University-stated
grade change deadline to upload the required PBA in order to change the course grade.
When the PBA is uploaded, the teacher candidate/student is required to notify the
instructor so that the "IN" can be changed to a grade. If the required PBA is not uploaded
five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline and, therefore, the grade
not changed, it will become an F. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to
Tk20 before the PBA due date.

Assignments and/or Examinations
Performance-based Assessment (Tk20 submission required)
Please see Blackboard.

Assignment	Description	Points	Due date
Literary Unit with Low Tech AAC System	Literary unit including 3 lesson plans and a communication system for a learner with autism	100	May 7th due by 11:59pm

College Wide Common Assessment (TK20 submission required)
None.

Performance-based Common Assignments (No Tk20 submission required.)
Please see Blackboard.

Assignment	Description	Points	Due date (all assignments due by **11:59pm**)
Discussion board #1	Introduction activity	15	Part 1: Jan 26th Part 2: Jan 29th Part 3: Jan 29th
Literacy Padlet #1	Find images related to language and literacy	10	Feb 5th
AAC exploration	Explore AAC devices and features	10	Feb 12th
Case study learner	Description of unit case study learner	10	Feb 19th
Literacy Padlet #2	Find resources or teaching strategies related to literacy skills	10	Feb 26th
Discussion board #2	Book and SMART goal for literary unit	10	Part 1: Mar 2nd Part 2: Mar 5th
Check-in #1	Make appointment for an individual check-in with the instructor	5	Before Mar 13th
Discussion board #3	Description of case study learner's AAC system	10	Part 1: Mar 23rd Part 2: Mar 26th
AAC across environments	Description of how potential use of case study learner's AAC system in a minimum of three environments	10	Apr 2nd
Discussion board #4	Question/bright idea	10	Part 1: Apr 6th Part 2: Apr 9th
Unit adaptations	Description of unit adaptations	10	Apr 16th
Discussion board #5	Description and demonstration of case study learner's AAC system	10	Part 1: Apr 20th Part 2: Apr 23rd
Check-in #2	Make appointment for an individual check-in with the instructor	5	Before May 1st

Total: 225

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

With the exception of one scheduled 1:1 check-in with the instructor, all coursework will be online and in an Asynchronous format.
 Students are expected to adhere to due dates for discussion board participation.

Late Work

Work is considered on time if it is submitted by 11:59pm on the date that it is due. *Ten percent of the available points* for the assignment will be deducted each day for late submissions during the first week after the due date. *After one week* **from**

the due date, assignments will not be accepted. Thus, an assignment that is three days late is able to obtain only 70% of the points for the assignment regardless of the quality of the work. After one week, the assignment will no longer be accepted and a score of zero will be entered into the grade book for that assignment.

The date that the assignment was received by the instructor via email or Blackboard will be considered the date submitted. Submitting an assignment late does not alter the due dates of the other assignments and prevents timely feedback to students regarding their work that may be of value in later assignments. Strive to keep up with the assignment schedule so that you will be able to have appropriate formative evaluation and feedback from your instructor across the semester.

Grading Scale
Students are expected to complete all assignments and, consistent with university policy, will be graded according to the following scale:

Grade	Percentile
A	100.-90.
B+	89.99-88.
B	87.99-80.
C	79.99-70.
F	69.99 and below

*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Work submitted must be your own or with proper citations (see https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).

Professional Dispositions
Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/

Class Schedule
*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Module opens	Topics Covered	Module Assignments
Jan 23rd	Introduction and characteristics of ASD	Discussion board #1

Jan 30th	Language development Early literacy	Literacy Padlet # 1
Feb 6th	Forms of communication Range of devices	AAC exploration
Feb 13th	Tool matching	Description of unit case study learner
Feb 20th	Evidence-based literacy practices	Literacy Padlet #2
Feb 27th	Writing communication and literacy goals	Discussion board #2
Mar 6th	Check in #1	Check in #1
Mar 13th	Spring Break	
Mar 20th	Teaching with AAC	Discussion board #3
Mar 27th	AAC and social skills instruction	AAC across environments
Apr 3rd	AAC and behavior	Discussion board #4
Apr 10th	Writing and adaptations	Unit adaptations
Apr 17th	Family partnerships	Discussion board #5
Apr 24th	Check in #2	Check in #2
May 1st	Final project	

Core Values Commitment
The College of Education and 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/

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see http://ods.gmu.edu/).

- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/.

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s)

	Does Not Meet Expectations	**Meets Expectations**	**Exceeds Expectations**
Description of Learner, Book, and SMART goal (15 points) **3.1K**	Candidate's book selection is not grade- or age-appropriate. Candidate's goal does not meet SMART goal criteria.	Candidate selects a grade- and age-appropriate book. Candidate creates a SMART goal for the literacy unit that documents how student progress will be measured.	Candidate selects a grade- and age-appropriate book that is typically used in a general education setting. Candidate creates a SMART goal that is detailed documents how student progress will be measured.
Book Adaptations/Modifications (15 points) **3.2.11S**	Candidate does not create adaptations/modifications or they are not appropriate for the selected learner.	Candidate creates a minimum of two thoughtful adaptations/modifications appropriate for the selected learner.	Candidate creates three or more thoughtful adaptations/modifications appropriate for the selected learner. Candidate creates adaptations/modifications for environments outside of the classroom (e.g., home, community).

	Does Not Meet Expectations	**Meets Expectations**	**Exceeds Expectations**
AAC System, including a Low-tech Communication Board (35 points) **4.2.12S**	Candidate creates an AAC system for their case study learner to access the unit that includes a low-tech communication board and a minimum of two additional forms of communication, but it does not reflect the characteristics of the student, the student's needs/abilities. It does not appear meaningful for the unit, nor does it include both core and fringe vocabulary related to the book.	Candidate creates an AAC system for their case study learner to access the unit that includes a low-tech communication board and a minimum of two additional forms of communication and provides a brief explanation as to how it reflects the characteristics of the student and the student's needs/abilities. Candidate describes how the board is appropriate for the unit and includes both core and fringe vocabulary related to the book.	Candidate creates an AAC system for their case study learner to access the unit that includes a low-tech communication board and a minimum of two additional forms of communication and provides a comprehensive explanation as to how it reflects the characteristics of the student and the student's needs/abilities. The candidate also provides a detailed explanation regarding the appropriateness of the board, the core and fringe vocabulary related to the book, and how the fringe vocabulary may change over time.
Three Lesson Plans (30 points) **3.2K**	Candidate develops two or fewer lesson plans for a single literary unit. Lessons do not include all sections of the template provided, including - subject and grade - number of students - length of lesson - goal - objectives - lesson procedures - needed materials accommodations/adaptations - evaluation procedures	Candidate develops three lesson plans for a single literary unit. Lessons include all sections of the template provided, including - subject and grade - number of students - length of lesson - goal - objectives - lesson procedures - needed materials accommodations/adaptations - evaluation procedures	Candidate develops more than three lesson plans for a single literary unit. Lessons include all sections of the template provided, including - subject and grade - number of students - length of lesson - goal - objectives - lesson procedures - needed materials - accommodations/adaptations - evaluation procedures
Self-evaluation (5 points)	Candidate does not complete a self-evaluation.	Candidate fully completes a self-evaluation.	Candidate fully and richly completes a self-evaluation.