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

Fall 2020
EDSE 311 DL1Characteristics of Students with Blindness and Visual Impairments
CRN: 80856, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Catherine (Kitty) Edstrand	**Meeting Dates:** 08/25/20 – 10/6/20
Phone: 303-827-5183	**Meeting Day(s):** Tuesdays
E-Mail: cedstran@gmu.edu	**Meeting Time(s):** 7:20 pm – 10 pm
Office Hours: before or after class or by appointment	**Meeting Location:** N/A; Online
Office Location: online	**Other Phone:** NA

❖ **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
Provides an overview of the characteristics of and services to persons with blindness and visual impairments, including the impact of blindness and visual impairment on infants' and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and social development, and family interaction patterns. Considers the educational, conceptual, psychosocial, and physical implications of a visual impairment.

Course Overview
EDSE 311 provides an overview of the characteristics of and services to persons with blindness and visual impairments, including the impact of blindness and visual impairments on infant's and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and social development, and family interaction patterns. The course will consider the educational, conceptual, psychological, and physical implications of a visual impairment.

Advising Contact Information
Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

Advising Tip
Would you like the opportunity to work on campus with students with special needs? The LIFE Program (http://masonlife.gmu.edu/) is an innovative post-secondary program at Mason for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire a university experience in a supportive academic environment. A variety of employment opportunities are available.

Course Delivery Method
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

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using **both synchronous or asynchronus** format via the 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 by August 23, 2020.

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 standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: Browser support (https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)

  To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: Tested devices and operating systems

(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

- 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 will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- 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:
  Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place, Tuesdays. Pay attention to course schedule for due dates
- 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. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- 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 ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services or with your Consortium university disability office.

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the education of persons with a visual impairment.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the terminology used in the field of working with persons with a visual impairment.
3. Demonstrate basic knowledge of basic anatomy of the eye and of eye diseases.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the educational settings that provide education of persons with a visual impairment.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of local, state, and national resources for services to persons with a visual impairment.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic techniques for adapting and modifying instruction for a student with a visual disability.
7. Become familiar with the psychosocial effects of sensory impairment on the child and adult with visual impairment.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the legal rights of a person with a visual impairment.
9. Recognize the effects of a visual impairment when it occurs in conjunction with other disabilities.
10. Demonstrate knowledge of the need for specialized instruction for persons with a visual impairment to include areas of the expanded core curriculum.
11. Recognize the importance of considering individual, cultural, and family characteristics in intervention.

Professional Standards

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: CEC Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences (InTASC

1,2); CEC Standard 2: Learning Environments (InTASC 3); CEC Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge (InTASC 4,5).

Required Texts
Holbrook, C., McCarthy, T. & Kamei-Hannan, C. *(2017). Foundations of Education Volume 1*: AFB Press.

Recommended Texts
American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000

Required Resources
In order to fully access this course, you are required to have several technology tools. Failure to have these tools for class, particularly during live sessions will result in a deduction in participation points.

- Personal computer
- A high-speed Internet connection
- A headset with microphone
- A webcam

Additional Readings
Articles and websites will be posted on Blackboard and students are expected to read articles/resources as assigned.

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

VIA 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 VIA (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 VIA.

For EDSE 311, the required PBA is Response and Reflection Paper on Visual Impairments. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to VIA before the PBA due date."

Assignments and/or Examinations
      Performance-based Assessment
      (VIA submission required)

Please <u>see Blackboard</u>. EDSE 311/511 Response and Reflection Paper on Visual Impairments. Due October 2.

Choose a content area (e.g. social studies, language arts, math, science), the level of the student (elementary/secondary and grade level), and provide for how this student can successfully participate in this content area in an inclusive general education setting. Your paper must include the following headings with information and references to support each strategy you discuss.

Include:

a. Background information: summarize your student's visual impairment and how this impacts the student's access to general education. Include other relevant information on other disabilities, language, culture, and social considerations.
b. Core Curriculum and Virginia Standards of Learning: Define the level of your student (approximate age and grade), locate the relevant Virginia Standards of Learning for this level/content area and describe the general concepts this student must master by the end of this academic year.
c. Expanded Core Curriculum: provide a section defining the ECC and describe how this student can benefit from ECC supports within the general education context.
d. Accommodations: define and discuss accommodations your student can use to promote access to this content area (e.g. does preferential seating need to be implemented, why and how will this be done?)
e. Strategies: discuss strategies that support the student's participation in the content area in the inclusive setting.
f. Assistive technology and devices: this may include items schools readily have access to, commercially available technologies and devices, and adaptive technologies/devices from companies that specialize in disability, blindness and visual impairment (e.g. items on federal quota funds from the American Printing House for the Blind.)
g. Instructional techniques: describe instructional techniques general education teachers and teacher of students with visual impairments may integrate to support instruction for your student. Consider if alterations need to be made in the classroom organization and arrangement to accommodate your student.
h. Services and supports: describe the types of service delivery options for your student and how it will support your student's ability to access this content area in general education (e.g. consultation, services in the general education setting on regular or intermittent basis or services in the special education setting on a regular or intermittent basis.)
i. Resources needed to facilitate content curriculum knowledge for the student: describe other resources that will support your student's ability to access this content area equally with peers.

Be sure to explain strategies, methods, technological adaptations for students with VI and blindness (for example, a student with low vision may use an online atlas in social studies with screen magnification, while a student who is blind would use a tactile map.)

Your paper must also incorporate the following:

- Accurate medical, educational and accommodation terminology pertaining to blindness/visual impairment and education.
- Disposition: use person-first language and a positive tone in writing about your student. Carefully consider that your student may come from diverse family, cultural, and language backgrounds. This should be reflected in your paper.
- References and citations: include course content references and citations for other relevant instructional strategies, accommodations, techniques, devices, and technologies.

Case Studies Please choose one case study for this assignment.

NOTE: If you already have a student on your caseload that fits the VI criteria, you may use this student for this assignment **after approval from Dr. Edstrand.**

Student with Low Vision:

Logan is a 4th grade Caucasian student who has an ophthalmological diagnosis of ocular albinism and nystagmus. He attends a small charter school. He receives the services of a teacher of the visually impaired and orientation and mobility instructor. His visual acuity for distance is 20/200 bilaterally and near 20/160 bilaterally.   He lives with his grandparents and also has a younger brother with the same eye condition. He currently does not visit with his parents. Logan is below grade level in his reading including both fluency and comprehension. This also negatively impacts science and social studies due to the lower level of reading. He currently is receiving C's and D's on his latest progress report. Logan accesses large print to accommodate his visual impairment and is sensitive to glare both indoors and outdoors. He is very unorganized with his school material and equipment and receives assistance with organization from his 4th grade teacher and TVI (Teacher of the Visually Impaired).   He uses a long cane when he is in unfamiliar environments. Both the TVI and O and M specialist have goals for the use optical and non-optical aids. He is also receiving some reading support from a reading specialist at his school. Logan likes to play video games and play outside with his brother. He does not have many friends at school.

Student with Blindness: Margarite is a 9th grade Hispanic student who attends a regular high school. She has an ophthalmological diagnosis of retinoblastoma. She was diagnosed with retinoblastoma as 12 months and both eyes were enucleated. She currently wears prosthetics bilaterally. She also was diagnosed with melanoma at 4 years of age and sees a cancer specialist. She lives with a single mother and a younger brother who has a diagnosis of autism. She began her educational placement at the Virginia School for the Blind in kindergarten but transferred to public school in the 3rd grade in order to develop social skills and meet friends. She is excellent with her braille reading and writing skills but struggles with mathematical concepts and is sometimes below grade level in math. She uses an abacus for math computation. She is also proficient with computer skills. A paraprofessional provides in class academic support for the majority of her classes. She also needs some assistance with organization of her materials and equipment. Margarite occasionally receives after school tutoring by the TVI (Teacher of the

Visually Impaired) for her mathematics. She sings in the school choir and loves to talk to friends on the phone when she is home. Margarite has one best friend but is reluctant to make other friends. Other students do not feel comfortable when she reaches out to touch them and she appears to have a limited sense of personal space. Margarite uses a long cane and receives weekly orientation ad mobility training by a certified O and M Specialist.

College Wide Common Assessment
(VIA submission required)
NA

Performance-based Common Assignments
(No VIA submission required)

1. MENU ITEMS
   Undergraduate Students must complete one menu item. 100 points each. Papers should be double-spaced, size 12 font, and follow APA style guidelines. **Due September 21**

   a. Observe your current work setting and write a 3 to 5-page paper detailing your observation, including a section on how a person who is blind or visually impaired could participate/work in that setting (or why they could not). Do not use real names! Describe the setting, activities that were occurring, information about the visual abilities of the individuals, materials that were used, social interactions between the individuals, and any other relevant information that ties to the expanded core curriculum.

   b. Spend three days without the use of your personal car and write a 3 to 5 page paper describing the impact this had on your activities during the time period you were car-free. Discuss your feelings related to independence/dependence, asking for assistance, the methods you used for travel and why you selected them, and how you will apply the information you learned to your future work. Do not provide a time diary; rather synthesize the experience when writing your paper. (You may do this only if you regularly drive your own car in Virginia). The assignment must be completed during the fall semester.)

   c. Develop a 2-hour in-service about visual impairment or deafblindness for a school or adult agency in which a child or adult is to be included. Include a brief description of the child/adult including visual condition, functioning level, and classes/work the student is involved with at the setting. Your in-service should include an outline of the key points you will make, a description of any activities you will have participants do, samples of unique handouts (not simply a Xerox of things off of the course web site or what the instructor has provided in class), a list of references, an agenda etc. Creativity and thoroughness will be considered in the assignment of a grade for this project.

d. Interview an individual with a visual impairment OR the parent of a person with a visual impairment. This individual may be someone whose history you know in regards to his/her visual impairment or child's visual impairment. Gather information about ways in which his/her life is affected by blindness/low vision and about how others respond to the visual impairment. Write a 3 to 5 page paper summarizing the interview. Your paper should be a reflective summary, not a transcript of the interview! It is fine to use quotes in the paper, however, it is important to organize the information and weave together a story about the person interviewed.

e. Read an adult level autobiography or a biography of an individual with a visual impairment. Write a 3 to 5-page paper about the experiences of the person as they relate to the visual impairment, the reactions of others to the visual impairment, the adaptations the individual uses, etc. Do not spend more than 1 page telling the story of the book! Your paper should focus on the *character's visual impairment and his/her experiences* as an individual with visual impairment. *See Blackboard link for ASSIGNMENTS partial list of books*

f. Review 3 children's books that have characters with visual impairment or dual sensory impairment. Write a review of each book you read. Your reviews should focus on the character's visual impairment or dual sensory loss, do not spend more than 1-2 paragraphs retelling the story. Read at least one of the books to a child. For the one(s) you read to a child, tell about the child's reaction to the book and any material presented. You may substitute an adolescent level book (grades 6 and up) for 2 children's books thus only reading 2 books instead of 3. *See Blackboard link for ASSIGNMENTS partial list of books*

g. Pick a topic covered in the course. Design a public relations promotional project (e.g., a Power Point, a collage, a role play script, a brochure, a video) that educates the general public about the positive abilities of visually impaired children and/or adults in this area. This project will be graded based on your creativity, clarity with which information is conveyed, and the message given about people with visual impairment. Provide a paragraph of information explaining the purpose or goals of the project as well as characteristics of the intended audience.

h. Pick one of the 3 scenarios below. For the individual in the scenario locate 10 web sites that would assist the individual in getting information specific to his/her needs at this time. For each web site provide the (a) name of the company or organization, (b) the address (URL) and (c) 1-2 paragraphs describing what you found at the site that would specifically be of value to the individual in the scenario. Give at least one example of something on the site and how it applies to the individual in the scenario. Your opinion of the site and a description in your own words is what is being sought here – please do not "cut and paste" the site's description into your paper! *You will lose points if you "cut and paste" directly from the site or if you don't give examples of what specifically on the site would be relevant to the individual in the scenario.*

(1) Gavin was born with a syndrome called CHARGE. Mrs. Toothman is going to be Gavin's 3rd grade teacher this year. She has been told that Gavin cannot see and has a severe hearing loss. Gavin will have an intervener working with him. Mrs. Toothman has never had a child who is deafblind in her classroom. She wants to learn more about CHARGE, how deafblind people communicate, what exactly an intervener does, what materials and equipment Gavin might use in her classroom, and what she can do to assist the 24 other 3rd graders to get to know and accept Gavin as their peer.

(2) Shawn is the father of a 10-month old daughter, Ashley, who has been diagnosed with cortical visual impairment and appears to have delays cognitively. Ashley is not yet sitting by herself and rarely reaches out for things. Shawn has an older son (age 7) and an older daughter (age 5). His wife is taking on the primary responsibility for Ashley's care and is the one who is home when the teacher of the visually impaired comes each week. Shawn wants to know more about his daughter's visual impairment. He wants to know what equipment and materials he'll need at school as she gets older. He's also interested in knowing what resources are out there for siblings of children who have disabilities such as Ashley's. He'd like to learn about how people who have disabilities and can't read and write communicate.

(3) Gracie is 16 and has just been diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). She has failed the eye exam to get her driver's license because her visual fields are so restricted. She is really having a lot of trouble seeing the white board and overheads in school. When walking she often has branches hit her in the head because she does not see them. She is unable to see at night and therefore won't go out of the house unless she is with a family member or close friend. Gracie would like to find out what resources are available to her if she goes to college, she'd like to know about tools that may help her at night, she is very anxious to talk to other's with the same condition, and most importantly she wants to see if there is a way she can drive.

i. Go to the public library and find out what services are available for patrons with visual impairments. Create a list of available services and resources that the library has for patrons with visual impairments. Then, develop a handout for families of children with visual impairments to familiarize them with the services available for their child who has a visual impairment. Make your handout attractive, informative, and jargon free. This should be your own work, not a handout from the library. In developing your handout consider how to present material about the services to parents of children with low vision and to parents of children who are blind. Also give consideration to the age of the child and the presence of additional disabilities. Turn in the list and handout.

j. Develop an individual project to increase your knowledge or understanding of visual impairment or deafblindness. Submit a one-paragraph description of your proposed project to the instructor via e-mail by January 27th for approval. Examples of projects might include a public opinion survey, development of a videotape, or creation of

instructional materials. If you don't get your project approved ahead of time it may not be accepted by the instructor, resulting in a grade of zero points.

l. Simulation Assignment: Spend at least 2 hours in conditions simulating a visual impairment (very low vision or blindness).   Prior to the simulation you should show the person who will be with you how to act as a human guide. This person should be instructed to monitor for your safety and provide information when requested, but to allow you to do things for yourself. You can borrow a sleepshade or low vision simulator from the instructor; you can purchase your own sleepshade; or you can create a blindfold from fabric.

Select a 2-hour **<u>continuous period of time</u>** when you will be in your home or apartment. Arrange for the human guide to be with you for the entire 2 hours. Part of the time should be spent in your home doing typical activities (e.g., laundry, preparing and eating a meal, cleaning). Part of the time should be spent in your home doing an activity that is not as familiar to you (e.g., preparing a meal you've never made before, planting plants in your garden you've never planted before, trying a new craft project, playing a new card game with someone).

Directions: Following your simulation, write a 4 to 6-page paper describing the experience emphasizing the following: (a) adaptations you used, (b) feelings you experienced, (c) interactions with others including your guide, and (d) what knowledge you gained about visual impairment and how you will apply this to your own career. Discuss things the guide did to help you, things that the guide did that made you uncomfortable, and things you learned from working with your guide.

m. Book Review*: Traveling Blind* – Write a reflective 4 to 6-page paper about the book *Traveling Blind* by Laura Fogg. Pick two children that Fogg describes. For each child discuss the child's learning needs in the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum and how Fogg addressed them in her teaching. Compare and contrast these two children sharing what similarities and differences they have. Discuss the strategies Fogg used with her students that you believe are exemplary giving an example for each strategy that ties to a specific student. Finally, explain how you will apply Fogg's work in your own work with people with visual impairments or other disabilities.

2. **RESPONSE AND REFLECTION PAPER ON VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS 100 points (You will submit this assignment in Blackboard.) DUE: October 2**

Choose a content area (e.g. social studies, language arts, math, science), the level of the student (elementary/secondary and grade level), and provide for how this student can successfully participate in this content area in an inclusive general education setting. Your paper must include the following headings with information and references to support each strategy you discuss.

Include:

a. Background information: summarize your student's visual impairment and how this impacts the student's access to general education. Include other relevant information on other disabilities, language, culture, and social considerations.
b. Core Curriculum and Virginia Standards of Learning: Define the level of your student (approximate age and grade), locate the relevant Virginia Standards of Learning for this level/content area and describe the general concepts this student must master by the end of this academic year.
c. Expanded Core Curriculum: provide a section defining the ECC and describe how this student can benefit from ECC supports within the general education context.
d. Accommodations: define and discuss accommodations your student can use to promote access to this content area (e.g. does preferential seating need to be implemented, why and how will this be done?)
e. Strategies: discuss strategies that support the student's participation in the content area in the inclusive setting.
f. Assistive technology and devices: this may include items schools readily have access to, commercially available technologies and devices, and adaptive technologies/devices from companies that specialize in disability, blindness and visual impairment (e.g. items on federal quota funds from the American Printing House for the Blind.)
g. Instructional techniques: describe instructional techniques general education teachers and teacher of students with visual impairments may integrate to support instruction for your student. Consider if alterations need to be made in the classroom organization and arrangement to accommodate your student.
h. Services and supports: describe the types of service delivery options for your student and how it will support your student's ability to access this content area in general education (e.g. consultation, services in the general education setting on regular or intermittent basis or services in the special education setting on a regular or intermittent basis.)
i. Resources needed to facilitate content curriculum knowledge for the student: describe other resources that will support your student's ability to access this content area equally with peers.

Be sure to explain strategies, methods, technological adaptations for students with VI and blindness (for example, a student with low vision may use an online atlas in social studies with screen magnification, while a student who is blind would use a tactile map.)

Your paper must also incorporate the following:

- Accurate medical, educational and accommodation terminology pertaining to blindness/visual impairment and education.
- Disposition: use person-first language and a positive tone in writing about your student. Carefully consider that your student may come from diverse family, cultural, and language backgrounds. This should be reflected in your paper.
- References and citations: include course content references and citations for other relevant instructional strategies, accommodations, techniques, devices, and technologies.

Case Studies Please choose one case study for this assignment.

NOTE: If you already have a student on your caseload that fits the VI criteria, you may use this student for this assignment **after approval from Dr. Edstrand**. Email Dr. Edstrand as soon as possible to discuss your own student.

Student with Low Vision:

Logan is a 4th grade Caucasian student who has an ophthalmological diagnosis of ocular albinism and nystagmus. He attends a small charter school. He receives the services of a teacher of the visually impaired and orientation and mobility instructor. His visual acuity for distance is 20/200 bilaterally and near 20/160 bilaterally.   He lives with his grandparents and also has a younger brother with the same eye condition. He currently does not visit with his parents. Logan is below grade level in his reading including both fluency and comprehension. This also negatively impacts science and social studies due to the lower level of reading. He currently is receiving C's and D's on his latest progress report. Logan accesses large print to accommodate his visual impairment and is sensitive to glare both indoors and outdoors. He is very unorganized with his school material and equipment and receives assistance with organization from his 4th grade teacher and TVI (Teacher of the Visually Impaired).   He uses a long cane when he is in unfamiliar environments. Both the TVI and O and M specialist have goals for the use optical and non-optical aids. He is also receiving some reading support from a reading specialist at his school. Logan likes to play video games and play outside with his brother. He does not have many friends at school.

Student with Blindness:

Margarite is a 9th grade Hispanic student who attends a regular high school. She has an ophthalmological diagnosis of retinoblastoma. She was diagnosed with retinoblastoma as 12 months and both eyes were enucleated. She currently wears prosthetics bilaterally. She also was diagnosed with melanoma at 4 years of age and sees a cancer specialist. She lives with a single mother and a younger brother who has a diagnosis of autism. She began her educational placement at the Virginia School for the Blind in kindergarten but transferred to public school in the 3rd grade in order to develop social skills and meet friends. She is excellent with her braille reading and writing skills but struggles with mathematical concepts and is sometimes below grade level in math. She uses an abacus for math computation. She is also proficient with computer skills. A paraprofessional provides in class academic support for the majority of her classes. She also needs some assistance with organization of her materials and equipment. Margarite occasionally receives after school tutoring by the TVI (Teacher of the Visually Impaired) for her mathematics. She sings in the school choir and loves to talk to friends on the phone when she is home. Margarite has one best friend but is reluctant to make other friends. Other students do not feel comfortable when she reaches out to touch them and she appears to have a limited sense of personal space. Margarite uses a long cane and receives weekly orientation ad mobility training by a certified O and M Specialist.

Assignment	Total Points Possible	% of grade	Due Date
Class attendance & Participation/discussion boards	70	26%	Tuesday class times or end of "course week"
MENU Item #1	100	37%	September 21
Response & Reflection Paper on Visual Impairments	100	37%	October 2
Total	270		

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

Attendance. This course is offered asynchronously and synchronously. Students are expected to review course content on Blackboard and participation points will be based on your accessing and engaging with the online materials. Students are expected to attend class during live Blackboard Collaborate sessions. During asynchronous weeks, students will get participation/attendance points for participating in an online discussion board. Points will be assigned for participation in online discussions (both synchronous and asynchronous) and group activities.

Late Work

Only in the case of serious family emergency or illness with late assignment submission be considered. You must communicate via email or text with the instructor as soon as possible if there is an emergency circumstance. Late assignments will be accepted with -5 points per day late.

Other Requirements

For the asynchronous classes, you will need to complete a discussion board question in order to obtain your participation points as well as view recorded lecture.

Grading Scale
A = 95-100%
A- = 90-94.9%
B+ = 88-89.9%
B = 85-87.9%
B- = 80-84.9%
C = 75-79.9%
C- = 70-74.9%
D = 60-69.9%
F = 59% and below

*Note: The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See Academic Integrity Site (https://oai.gmu.edu/) and Honor Code and System

(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/). 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 new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions
Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See Policies and Procedures (https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/). Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in at least two points in each student's program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, and a university supervisor's evaluation during internship. In special education licensure programs, the self-evaluation is an online survey distributed via email upon program entry for graduate students and within initial courses (EDSE 241, EDSE 361, and EDSE 311) for undergraduate students. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is 'occasionally evident' or 'rarely evident,' the student takes steps to grow as an educator. See https://cehd.gmu.edu/epo/candidate-dispositions.

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

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
Week 1: Live August 25	• Introductions • Review syllabus, assignments Module I: Overview of the field of services for students with blindness and visual impairment • Professional Roles • The Expanded Core Curriculum	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 10 *Online readings*
Week 1: Online (8/25-8/30)	• Demographics and data • Terminology & History • Local, State, and National resources for Visually impaired	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 1 & 2

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
Week 2: Recorded (9/1-9/7)	Module II: Characteristics of students with ocular blindness and visual impairment • Structure & Function of the Eye, Common Diseases • Growth and development of children with ocular visual impairment and blindness	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 3 (pgs 75-100), ch 4, & 5 *Online readings*
Week 2: Online (9/1-9/7)	(Module I continued…) • Local, state, national laws and policies for persons with blindness and visual impairment • IFSPs, IEPs, 504 plans for students who are blind and visually impaired • Placement Options/Educational Settings	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 9 **Online Discussion Board**
Week 3: Live Sept 8	(Module II continued) • Assessment for students with blindness and visual impairment • Accommodations, adaptations, modifications • Introduction to neurological visual impairment (Module III)	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 3 (pgs 100-112), *Online readings*
Week 3: Online (9/8-9/14)	• Literacy for students with blindness and visual impairment • Technology instruction and support	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 10
Week 4: Live Sept 15	Module III: Characteristics of students with neurological/cortical visual impairment • Demographics and data of population affected by CVI • Defining characteristics of CVI • Introduction to the brain and neurology • Accommodations, modifications, and instructional/intervention strategies for students with CVI	CVI Scotland What is CVI, from Little Bear Sees website. Strategies to See *Online Readings*

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
Week 4: Online (9/15-9/21)	• Assessment for students with CVI • Plan development for students with CVI • Technology and literacy for students with CVI • Inclusion and placement decisions for students with CVI	CVI Intervention and Assessment Literacy for CVI Perkins: CVI Literacy **Menu Item #1 Due (9/21)**
Week 5: Recorded (9/22-9/28)	Module IV: Characteristics of students with multiple disabilities, Deafblindness, and diverse languages/cultures • Demographics and data • Defining characteristics of multiple disabilities and diversity	FoE Vol. I: Ch. 7 & 8 *Online readings*
Week 5: Online (9/22-9/28)	• Assessment methods for students with multiple disabilities and ESL students • Plan development	**Online Discussion Board**
Week 6: Live Sept 29	• Accommodations, modifications for students who are blind/visually impaired and have multiple disabilities • Technology and literacy development	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 13 *Online readings*
Week 6: Online (9/29-10/5)	• Transition and post-secondary considerations for students who are b/vi, CVI and those who have multiple disabilities. • Psychological aspects of blindness, visual impairment, CVI on individuals and families	FoE Vol. 1: Ch. 6 & 18 *Online readings* **Response and Reflection Paper on Visual Impairments Assignment Due (10/2)**

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: See Core Values (http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/).

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

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

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See Responsible Use of Computing (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 or with your Consortium university disability office. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. See Disability Services (https://ds.gmu.edu/).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to VIA Help support@watermarkinsights.com. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students (https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/).

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

- As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing the Title IX Coordinator (titleix@gmu.edu).

- **For information on student support resources on campus, see Student Support Resources on Campus (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 College of Education and Human Development (http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Appendix
Assessment Rubric(s)

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
Student Background Information B&VI Standards 1	• The candidate provides partial information about learners' backgrounds omitting information about eye condition, functional implications of visual impairment, learners' academic and social abilities, or attitude regarding psychosocial impact of having a visual impairment.	• The candidate provides accurate medical information about the learner's visual conditions and describes the effects of the learners' visual impairment on development. • Candidate discusses the impact of the learner's academic and social abilities. • Candidate describes attitude, interests, and/or values on instruction. • Candidate describes the psychosocial aspects of visual impairment and identity. • Candidate provides general information about the medical and functional implications of the	• The candidate provides accurate medical information about the learner's visual conditions and describes the effects of the learner's visual impairment on development. • Candidate discusses the impact of the learner's academic and social abilities. • Candidate describes attitude, interests, and/or values on instruction. • Candidate describes the psychosocial aspects of vision impairment and identity. • Candidate describes in detail the medical and functional implications of the learner's visual conditions, including	

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
		learners' visual conditions.	diagnoses presented within the context of the anatomy and functioning of the eye, typical and atypical human growth and development, and impact on student learning.	
Description of Typical and Compensatory Strategies

B&VI Standards 3 | • The candidate inaccurately discusses access rights to specialized instruction, equipment and materials for individuals with visual impairments.
• The effects of the learners' visual impairments on receptive and expressive literacy and communication are vaguely described.
• The candidate provides limited description of instructional techniques or adaptations used by learners with a visual impairment to | • The candidate accurately describes and cites the access rights to specialized instruction, equipment, and materials for individuals with visual impairments under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other legislation.
• Examples of uses of specialized equipment in the classroom used to provide access to the general education curriculum are given.
• The candidate describes the effects of the learners' visual impairments on receptive and | • The candidate accurately describes and cites the access rights to specialized instruction, equipment, and materials for individuals with visual impairments under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other legislation.
• Examples of uses of specialized equipment in the classroom used to provide access to the general education curriculum are given.
• The candidate describes the effects of the learners' visual impairments on receptive and | |

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
	complete tasks in the classroom.	expressive literacy and communication, highlighting use of specific literacy tools described in class lectures/readings. • The candidate discusses instructional techniques or adaptations used by learners with a visual impairment to complete tasks (e.g., traveling) and engage in literacy activities (e.g. writing, reading).	expressive literacy and communication, highlighting use of specific literacy tools as described in class lectures/readings. • The candidate discusses instructional techniques or adaptations used by learners with a visual impairment to complete tasks (e.g., traveling) and engage in literacy activities (e.g. writing, reading). • Candidate researches and describes adaptive techniques used by persons who are visually impaired to complete a specific content area in the classroom. The candidate cites information (e.g. website, practice report).	
Description of Services and Supports B&VI Standards 3	• Candidate provides limited discussion on family perspectives, the impact of the	• Candidate discusses the impact of the family's culture, such as family background,	• Candidate discusses the impact of the family's culture, such as family background,	

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
	family's dominant culture and any differences in values, languages, and customs that exist between the home and school on the learners' educational development, and family attitudes. • Candidate provides limited description on services student may need in the classroom and at school in order to be successful with the Expanded Core Curriculum and general education curriculum.	socioeconomic status, religion, or geographic influences and any differences in values, languages, and customs that exist between the home and school on the learners' educational development. • Candidate discusses family attitudes and how they support development (e.g. educational, social, career, etc.). • Candidate provides a description on the services student may need in classroom and at school in order to be successful with the Expanded Core Curriculum and general education curriculum (SOL). • Candidate discusses training school staff will require in order to accommodate a student with a visual impairment in their classroom.	socioeconomic status, religion, or geographic influences and any differences in values, languages, and customs that exist between the home and school on the learners' educational development. • Candidate discusses family attitudes and how they support development (e.g. educational, social, career, etc.). • Candidate provides a detailed description on services student may need in classroom and at school in order to be successful with the Expanded Core Curriculum and general education curriculum (SOL). • Candidate discusses in detail training school staff will require and gives examples in order to accommodate a student with a visual impairment in their classroom.	

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
			• Candidate provides specific websites that can be used as resources by school staff to assist with VI student in the content area.	
Learning Environment B&VI Standards 2	• Candidate discusses limited information regarding classroom organization to accommodate materials, equipment, & technology for vision loss and other disabilities.	• Candidate discusses information regarding classroom organization to accommodate materials, equipment, & technology for vision loss and other disabilities and provides examples of adapted materials, optical and non-optical aids if applicable or equipment for a student with blindness and assistive technology.	• Candidate discusses detailed information regarding classroom organization to accommodate materials, equipment, & technology for vision loss and other disabilities and provides examples of adapted materials, optical and non-optical aids if applicable or equipment for a student with blindness and assistive technology. • Candidate provides specific examples of resources that can be used by school staff to assist with VI student in the content area.	

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
Placement B&VI Standard 3	• Candidate does not discuss continuum of services for children with visual impairments, citing language within IDEIA or only provides one or two options as far as placement of student with unique learning needs.	• Candidate supports and discusses the importance of a continuum of services for children with visual impairments, citing language within IDEIA and provides examples as far as placement of student with unique learning needs.	• Candidate justifies the importance of the continuum of services for children with visual impairments, citing language within IDEIA. • Candidate includes additional information from course readings/literature in the field to support philosophical statements.	
General and specialized Curricula B&VI Standard 3	• Candidate describes his/her instructional philosophy, but the importance of individualized instruction plan to access the general curriculum and continuum of services for students with visual impairments is not evident. • Candidate provides limited information on the Expanded	• Candidate describes his/her instructional philosophy that draws on understanding of the unique needs of learners with visual impairments and responds to the specific implications of visual impairment within the general curriculum. • Candidate provides information and examples on the Expanded Core Curriculum and why it is important	• Candidate describes his/her instructional philosophy that draws on understanding of the unique needs of learners with visual impairments and responds to the specific implications of visual impairment within the general curriculum. • Candidate provides detailed information and examples on the Expanded Core Curriculum and why it is important	

Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard	Score/Level
	Core Curriculum and why it is important to teach components of it during student specific content area.	to teach components of it during student specific content area. • Candidate provides examples of the Standards of Learning for the content area and how to incorporate compensatory techniques in order for student to successfully access the teaching standards.	to teach components of it during student specific content area. • Candidate provides detailed examples of the Standards of Learning for the content area and how to incorporate compensatory techniques in order for student to successfully access the teaching standards. • Candidate cites information from additional readings and class lectures to support integration of Expanded Core Curriculum and Standards of Learning for student content area.	