



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

Fall 2023

EDSE 311: Characteristics of Students with Blindness and Visual Impairments

Section: DL1; CRN: 83478

3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Catherine Edstrand	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 8/22/23 – 10/17/23
<b>Phone:</b> 303-827-5183 (cell; text is best)	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Tuesday
<b>E-Mail:</b> cedstran@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 7:20 pm – 10 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> N/A; Online
<b>Office Location:</b> remote	<b>Other Phone:</b> none

**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](mailto: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**

Take advantage of student resources like the Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>), Learning Services (<https://learningservices.gmu.edu/>), Assistive Technology Initiative (<https://ati.gmu.edu/>), University Life (<https://ulife.gmu.edu/>).

### **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 and asynchronous formats 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](mailto:@masonlive.gmu.edu)) and email password. The course site will be available on August 21, 2022.

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 \(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support\)](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
- 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 or high quality computer 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/): <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - [Windows Media Player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player): <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - [Apple Quick Time Player](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/): [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### ***Expectations***

- **Course Week:**  
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. 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 Service.

### **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**

This course is offered by George Mason University's Division of Special Education and disAbility Research in the College of Education and Human Development. The goal of the special education programs is to improve the lives, productivity, and education of persons with disabilities. Courses within the special education programs align with the standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major international special education professional organization, and the 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 I: History and Theory of Teaching Children and Youths with Visual Impairments\*. New York, NY: AFB Press.](#)

## **Recommended Texts**

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

Tallent, A., Tallent, A. & Bush, F. (2012). *Little Bear Sees. How Children with Cortical Visual Impairment Can Learn to See*. Little Bear Sees Publishing, a Wyatt-MacKenzie Imprint.

## **Required Resources**

- Personal computer
- A high-speed internet connection
- A headset with microphone or high quality/reliable computer microphone
- A webcam

## **Additional Readings**

Articles, medial, materials, 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/SLL (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/SLL.

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

## **Assignments and/or Examinations**

**Performance-based Assessment  
(VIA submission required)**

## ***Assignments and/or Examinations***

### **Performance-based Assessment (VIA submission required)**

Current issues in the field of blindness and vision impairment paper. Complete directions and rubric are provided on Blackboard.

### **College Wide Common Assessment (VIA submission required)**

This course contains at least one Common Assessment developed by the College of Education and Human Development to assess our candidates' performance on nationally accepted standards for beginning teachers (InTASC) and our programs' performance on national accreditation standards (CAEP). The college-wide common assessment in this course is: Initial Self-Rated Dispositions.

## ***Other Assignments***

### **MENU ITEMS**

Undergraduate students choose and complete one menu item. Papers should be double-spaced, size 12 font, include references, and follow APA style guidelines. Body of paper is specified in each option and does not include the title page or references.

#### **Interview options:**

- a. Interview an individual who is blind or visually impaired OR a parent of a person with blindness or visual impairment. Construct an interview and conduct the interview live (phone, web-conference, or in-person if an option, do not simply send the questionnaire to the interviewee to fill out). Include questions that explore educational access, independent living, transportation, emotional aspects of blindness/vision impairment, accessibility, technology and more. Write a 3-to-5-page paper summarizing the interview responses and a reflective summary of the interview, not a transcript of the interview. Quotes are permissible from your interviewee; however, it is important to organize the information and weave together a story about the person interviewed and lived experiences.
- b. Interview a current Teacher of Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired. Develop a list of several interview questions related to the TBVI's current position. Conduct the interview live with the TBVI (phone, web-conference, in-person if an option; do not simply send the questionnaire to the TBVI to fill out). The interview questions may cover topics related to their path to licensure, job expectations, professional development, instructional practices, building relationships with families and students, and other job-related topics. Write a 4-to-5-page paper summarizing the interview and include the developed interview questions with your paper submission. Your paper should be a reflective summary, not a transcript of the interview.

#### **Book review options:**

- c. 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. Reflect on similarities and differences in the type of vision condition, strategies, accommodations, and experiences. Discuss the strategies Fogg used with her students and give specific examples. Finally, explain how you will apply Fogg's work in your own work with people who are blind/visually impaired or have other disabilities.
- d. Access the list of autobiographies and biographies on individuals who are blind and visually impaired on Blackboard and select one to read in either print or alternative format (audio, electronic). Write a 4 to 5-page paper about the experiences of the person who is blind/visually impaired featured in the book, the reactions of others to the visual impairment, the adaptations the individual uses, presence of skills, accommodations, etc. Provide a reflection on any stereotypes, challenges, perceptions, and access. Do not spend more than 1 page summarizing the story of the book. Your paper should focus on the *character's blindness/visual impairment and their experiences being blind/visually impaired*. Include an APA reference of the book you chose, and in which format you read the book.
  - e. Review 3 children's books that have characters who are blind/visually impaired or have dual sensory impairment. Write a 2-3 page review of each book you read. Your reviews should focus on the character's blindness/vision impairment, experiences, perceptions, skills, accommodations, and other related themes. Do not spend more than 1-2 paragraphs retelling the story. 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*. Provide APA citations for the books you read and reviewed.

### **In-services, professional development, and research review options**

- f. Develop a 2-hour in-service for general education teachers, service providers, administrators, parents, community groups, or school-aged students about blindness and vision impairment. Your in-service should include an outline/agenda, slides/document with information that will be shared in the in-service, a description of participant activities, a list of references, materials needed, and any other items you will use in your in-service. You do not need to present the in-service, but have all materials prepared for the session. Creativity and thoroughness will be considered in the assignment of a grade for this project.
- g. [Access the Perkins Learning webinars](#) and select two of the free Perkins Learning sessions that are of at least one hour in length. After completing each webinar, write one 4-5-page paper on the sessions. Include the following: Name and URL of the webinars you chose; a summary of content; new information you learned from the sessions; how you can apply information, suggestions, strategies from the webinar; questions you have about the topic or webinar, and resources available for further information or supports.
- h. Access the *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness (JVIB)* on Mason's electronic library system. Select two *research* articles from the past three years to review (JVIB publishes practice articles and book reviews, make certain the article you chose is research.) In a 4-5-page paper divided into two sections, one for each article you

- chose, provide the APA citations of the articles, discuss the purpose and describe the research questions, summarize the participants, data collection methods, and results. Then, provide your opinion on the article, any limitations, practical implications, and how the research may impact the field of blindness and vision impairment.
- i. Choose one of the three case scenarios below and locate 10 reputable websites, books, and other sources that would assist the individual specified with getting information and supports/resources. 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 (write in your own words, do not copy information directly from the source). Give at least one example of information on the site and how it applies 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 will need at school as she gets older. He is also interested in knowing what resources are out there for siblings of children who have disabilities such as Ashley's. He would like to learn about how people who have disabilities and cannot read and write communicate.

(3) Gracie is 16 and has just been diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). She cannot get her driver's license because her visual fields are so restricted. She is really having a lot of trouble seeing the smart board and screens in school. When walking she often encounters branches that hit her in the head because she does not see them. She is unable to see at night and therefore will not 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 would like to know about tools that may help her at night, she is very anxious to talk to others with the same condition, and most importantly she wants to see if there is a way she can drive.

## **Original option**



- j. Develop an individual project to increase your knowledge or understanding of blindness, visual impairment, or deafblindness. Submit a one-paragraph description of your proposed project to the instructor via e-mail at least two weeks before this assignment is due for approval. Examples of projects might include a public opinion survey, development of a videotape, or creation of instructional materials. If you do not get your project approved ahead of time it may not be accepted by the instructor, resulting in a grade of zero points.

### Assignment Summary

Assignment	Points	Due date
Weekly module assignments, participation, and activities 12x7	84	Weekly
Menu Item 1	50	September 18, 2023
Current Issues Paper	70	October 10, 2023
Total	254	

### Student Evaluations of Teaching:

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and Blackboard notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at <https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/>

### Course Policies and Expectations

#### Attendance/Participation

This course is comprised of interactive discussions and lectures; attendance at each synchronous course meeting is mandatory and completion of asynchronous modules on time are required in this class. Only in the case of an emergency or other urgent situation will an absence be excused. Candidates must inform the instructor in advance of an upcoming, unavoidable absence, or as soon as possible if there is an emergency; communication regarding attendance, punctuality, and ability to complete course requirements is a basic courtesy. It is up to the discretion of the instructor to excuse the absence, which may or may not allow makeup for participation points.

#### Late Work

All coursework must be submitted on time in the designated location on Blackboard. A candidate who has an approved accommodation for extended time must inform the instructor in writing, in advance with documentation for this approved accommodation from the Consortium university before an assignment requiring extended time is due. In the event of an emergency, candidates must inform the instructor of the situation; it is up to the instructor to determine if a scenario may warrant a time extension. Time extensions will not be granted retroactively and late work for any reason may be penalized points.

## Other Requirements

Assignment completion and submission policies

All assignments must be original work completed during this semester

(Fall 2022). Assignments, papers, assessments or other products from other semesters or courses may not be submitted for credit in this class.

All assignments are to be posted in the designated location on Blackboard or with the specific directions provided by the instructor. Assignments that are sent via electronic mail or posted to the incorrect assignment location may not be counted as completed or submitted for credit. Please post your final products in one attempt on Blackboard (multiple submissions are permitted in one attempt). Students must confirm their assignments have submitted properly and in full. Certain assignments might require posting video(s) photo(s) and other multi-media elements. [Kaltura allows students to post video content to Blackboard, directions found on this link.](#)

## Grading

Percent Points	Grade
93-100	236-254 A
90-92	228-235 A-
88-89	223-227 B+
83-87	210-222 B
80-82	203-209 B-
70-79	177-202 C
≤69	≤176 F

**\*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.

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures](#) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>). Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures](#) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>). Professional dispositions are an essential function of a special educator’s job, indicating that these dispositions are critical to develop and assess in special education licensure programs. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in VIA/SLL at least three points in each student’s program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, a self-

evaluation at the mid-point of their program, and a university supervisor’s evaluation during internship. In special education graduate licensure programs, the initial self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 241, EDSE 361, EDSE 311), the mid-point self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 445, EDSE 465, and EDSE 419), and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 482, EDSE 483, and EDSE 484. In addition to these three designated evaluation times, students, instructors, and/or mentor teachers may complete program disposition assessments as part of other courses. Instructors and mentor teachers may complete observer-rated disposition assessments other times throughout the program, as needed. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is rated as “not proficient,” the student takes steps to grow as an educator.

**Class Schedule**

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

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<p><b>Week 1:</b> Synchronous <b>August 22, 2023</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Course overview, syllabus, web-conference orientation</li> <li>• Introduction to blindness and vision impairment</li> <li>• Terminology</li> <li>• Historical perspectives</li> <li>• Demographics and data</li> <li>• Introduction to professional roles</li> </ul>	<p>FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 1</p> <p>Additional reading posted on Blackboard</p>
<p><b>Week 1:</b> Asynchronous <b>August 22-28, 2023</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of above topics</li> </ul>	<p>FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 2</p> <p><i><b>What Do You Do When You See a Blind Person?</b></i></p> <p><b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b></p> <p><b>Due: Week 1 module assignment</b></p>

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<b>Week 2:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>August 29</b> <b>*recorded*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth and development of children and students who are blind/visually impaired</li> <li>• Early intervention services</li> <li>• Introduction to teachers of students who are blind and visually impaired: Roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 4 & 5  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>
<b>Week 2:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>August 29-September 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The visual system and causes of ocular blindness and vision impairment</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 3  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Due: Week 2 module assignment</b>
<b>Week 3:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>September 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBVI roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Eligibility, assessment, placement, and program development for students who are blind and visually impaired</li> <li>• Educational services for students with blindness and vision impairment in prek-12 settings</li> <li>• The collaborative team</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Guidelines For Working With Students Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired In Virginia Public Schools</a>  <b>Council for Exceptional Children</b> <a href="#">The Role and Function of the Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (2017)</a>  FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 9  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>
<b>Week 3:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>September 5-11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBVI roles and responsibilities, continued</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. 1 Ch. 10  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Due: Week 3 module assignment</b>

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
<b>Week 4:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>September 12</b> *recorded*	Exploring services and supports for students who are blind and visually impaired, part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodations, adaptations, modifications</li> <li>• Literacy for students with blindness and visual impairment (braille overview)</li> <li>• Technology instruction and support</li> </ul>	<b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>
<b>Week 4:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>September 12-18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Expanded Core Curriculum</li> </ul>	<b>Materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Due: Menu Item #1</b>  <b>Due: Week 4 module assignment</b>
<b>Week 5:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>September 19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapting core curricula for students with blindness and vision impairment</li> <li>• Psychosocial needs of students who are blind and visually impaired</li> <li>• Transition and adults with visual impairments</li> </ul>	FoE Vol. I: Ch. 6  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>
<b>Week 5:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>September 19-25</b>	Exploring services and supports for individuals who are blind and visually impaired, part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local, state, national, and international services and resources for students who are blind and visually impaired</li> <li>• Consumer and parent organizations in the blindness field</li> </ul>	<b>AIMVA</b> <b>DBVI</b> <b>TTAC</b> <b>NLS</b> <b>Other resources posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Due: Week 5 module assignment</b>
<b>Week 6:</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>September 26</b>	Characteristics of students with neurological/cortical/cerebral visual impairment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the brain and neurology</li> <li>• Demographics and data of population affected by CVI</li> <li>• Defining characteristics of CVI</li> </ul>	<b>CVI Resources posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment and eligibility for students with CVI</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 6:</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>September 26-</b> <b>October 2</b>	<b>Accommodations, modifications, and instructional/intervention strategies for students with CVI</b>	<b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Due: Week 6 module assignment</b>
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Synchronous</b> <b>October 3</b>	<b>Current Issues Presentations</b>  Characteristics of students with multiple disabilities, Deafblindness, and diverse languages/cultures	FoE Vol. 1 Chs. 7 & 8  <b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Asynchronous</b> <b>October 3-9</b>	Students with blindness and vision impairment, multiple disabilities, and diverse learner characteristics: evaluation, instruction, and support	<b>Additional materials and readings posted on Blackboard</b>  <b>Due: Current Issues in the Field of Blindness and Vision Impairment Paper and Presentation</b>  <b>Due: Week 7 module assignment</b>
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Synchronous and asynchronous</b> <b>October 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course conclusion, catch-up</li> <li>• VIA Submission</li> <li>• Evaluations</li> </ul>	Materials posted on Blackboard

### 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/) (<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/) (<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/) (<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 [Disability Services](https://ds.gmu.edu/) (<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 [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- 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/) (<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>).
- [Learning Services](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu) ([learningservices@gmu.edu](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu)) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

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

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 the [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 or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**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/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/>).**

**Appendix**  
**Assessment Rubric(s)**

<b>Item</b>	<b>3 Exceeds Standards</b>	<b>2 Meets Standards</b>	<b>1 Does Not Meet standards</b>	
<p><b>Current issues selected</b></p> <p><b>Standard 6: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice</b></p> <p>Beginning special education professionals understand how foundational knowledge and current issues influence professional practice.</p>	<p>Candidate incorporated foundational knowledge and identified, defined, and supported two timely and relevant current issues in the field of blindness and vision impairment. Candidate optimally exhibited comprehensive understanding of the challenges and varying impact on students who are blind and visually impaired.</p>	<p>Candidate incorporated foundational knowledge and chose two relevant current issues in the field of blindness and vision impairment. Candidate exhibited understanding of the challenges and varying impact on students who are blind and visually impaired.</p>	<p>Candidate chose one or two issues that are not relevant or lacked accuracy; exhibited limited understanding of the current issues and varying impact on students who are blind and visually impaired. Candidate minimally or did not incorporate basic and foundational knowledge of this field.</p>	
<p><b>Impact of Current Issues</b></p> <p><b>Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences</b></p>	<p>Candidate optimally identified, explored, and considered the unique aspects of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of chosen critical issues on individual differences associated with blindness and vision impairment.</p> <p>Candidate included analysis and description of the impact of selected current issues and the unique aspects of characteristics of students that are uniquely impacted by each current issue.</p> <p>Candidate clearly defines and supports how each current</p>	<p>Candidate adequately identified, explored, and considered the unique aspects of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of chosen critical issues on individual differences associated with blindness and vision impairment.</p> <p>Candidate defined and supported how each current issue impacts access to learning and education.</p> <p>Candidate sufficiently demonstrated knowledge of characteristics of students and the impact of each current issue has on students</p>	<p>Candidate did not identify, explore, or consider the unique aspects of students who are blind and visually impaired and the impact of the chosen current issues on individual differences associated with blindness and vision impairment</p> <p>Candidate does not or provides minimal information and supports on how each current issue impacts access to learning and education.</p> <p>Candidate demonstrated limited or inaccurate knowledge of characteristics of students who are blind and visually</p>	



Item	3 Exceeds Standards	2 Meets Standards	1 Does Not Meet standards	
	<p>issue impacts access to learning and education.</p> <p>Candidate clearly defined and discussed the impact both current issues can have on the family.</p>	<p>who are blind and visually impaired.</p> <p>Candidate discussed the impact both current issues can have on the family.</p>	<p>impaired and the impact of each current issue.</p> <p>Candidate does not or minimally defined the impact these current issues can have on the family.</p>	
<p><b>Educational Impact and Supports</b></p> <p><b>Standard 3</b> <b>Curricular Content Knowledge</b></p>	<p>Candidate accurately identifies and examines the impact of the current issues on access to general and special education curricula for students who are blind and visually impaired. Multiple supports, resources, and strategies identified provide prospects to mitigate the impact on educational access for students who are blind and visually impaired. Candidate thoroughly identifies and examines accommodations, modifications, training, and other supports to promote more equitable access to address educational implications of both current issues.</p>	<p>Candidate accurately identifies the impact of the current issues on access to general and special education curricula for students who are blind and visually impaired. Supports, resources, and strategies identified provide prospects to mitigate the impact on educational access for students who are blind and visually impaired.</p> <p>Candidate identifies and discusses accommodations, modifications, training, and other supports to promote more equitable access to address educational implications of both current issues.</p>	<p>Candidate does not, inaccurately, or minimally identifies the impact of the current issues on access to general and special education curricula for students who are blind and visually impaired. Supports, resources, and strategies are omitted or minimally provided to mitigate the impact on educational access for students who are blind and visually impaired.</p> <p>Candidate provides limited, inaccurate, or no discussion on accommodations, modifications, training, and other supports to promote more equitable access to address educational implications of both current issues.</p>	
<p><b>Resources</b></p> <p><b>Standard 7: Collaboration</b></p> <p>Beginning special education professionals collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, individuals with exceptionalities, and personnel from community agencies in culturally</p>	<p>Candidate supplied more than four exemplary and ideal resources for each current issue (more than eight total) and is inclusive of supports for family, educators (general and special education teachers) and the school system;</p>	<p>Candidate supplied four relevant and useful resources for each current issue (at least eight total) and is inclusive of supports for family, educators (general and special education teachers) and the school system; Candidate also provides resources and</p>	<p>Candidate supplied less than four relevant and useful resources for each current issue (less than eight total) and does not or minimally provides of supports for family, educators (general and special education teachers) the school system; Candidate omits or provides partial or</p>	

<b>Item</b>	<b>3 Exceeds Standards</b>	<b>2 Meets Standards</b>	<b>1 Does Not Meet standards</b>	
responsive ways to address the needs of individuals with exceptionalities across a range of learning experiences.	Candidate also provides ideal resources and personnel support information offered by government, state, and community agencies, and private organizations and groups.	personnel support information offered by government, state, and community agencies, and private organizations and groups.	inaccurate resources and personnel support information offered by government, state, and community agencies, and private organizations and groups.	
<b>Presentation Standard 6</b>	Candidate presented on current issues in a 5-10-minute session. Candidate optimally outlined current issues and advocated for advancement in these areas of need with supports and resources delivered to their peer special education teacher candidates.	Candidate led a 5-10-minute presentation. Candidate outlined current issues and advocated for advancement in these areas of need with supports and resources delivered to their peer special education teacher candidates.	Candidate's presentation was under 5 minutes, had limitations in highlighting challenges and impact, did not offer suitable progress or resources and/or was poorly organized and difficult to follow.	

**Additional Grading Rubric for Paper Structure and Mechanics**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectation</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Does Not Meet Expectations</b>	
<b>Mechanics</b>	Paper is free from spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors. More than 4 APA references with in-text citations and an end-of-paper reference sheet are used and formatted accurately. References include peer-reviewed and scholarly citations.	Paper contains minor grammatical, spelling, punctuation and/or APA formatting errors. At least 4 APA references were used with in-text citations and a reference sheet.	Paper contains several mechanical and APA errors or references were omitted. Limited or no in-text citations were provided; reference sheet is omitted or contains errors.	
<b>Paper length</b>	Body of paper is between 1500-1800 words	Body of paper is between 1500-1800 words	Body of paper is less than 1500 words.	
<b>Terminology, writing style, paper organization</b>	Candidate uses accurate terminology throughout the paper with respectful discussion pertaining to students who are	Candidate uses accurate terminology throughout the paper with respectful discussion pertaining to students who are	Candidate uses terminology that is outdated or unacceptable. Candidate provides a disorganized paper that is not clear and/or lacks	

Criteria	Exceeds Expectation	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations	
	blind and visually impaired. Candidate optimally organizes paper with clear and logical sequencing; concepts, issues, and resources are clearly introduced, defined, and supported.	blind and visually impaired. Candidate provides a clear and logical paper that is well supported.	supports for the overall concepts.	