



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

Summer 2024

EDSE 638: Autism Spectrum Disorder: Issues in Assessment and Intersectionality

Section: 001; CRN: 42032

Section: 002; CRN: 42033

3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Jodi Duke	Meeting Dates: 5/10/24 - 6/27/24
Phone: 703-993-6555	Meeting Day(s): Online
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Office Hours: By appointment	Meeting Location: Online
Office Location: Finley 205B	Other Phone: N/A

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

Prerequisite(s):

None

Co-requisite(s):

None

Course Description

Examines the diagnostic criteria used to identify individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the identification and assessment process. Analyzes the role of families in the assessment process and issues and challenges related to identification, diagnosis and assessment. Surveys the intersectionality between ASD and sexuality, sexual identity, gender identity, race, class, and other marginalized identities; the historic and current challenges related to this intersectionality; and ways to address these challenges.

Advising Contact Information

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate teacher candidates/students should contact Student Services at 1-844-306-1785, mason@support.edu.help for assistance.

Advising Tip

Students apply in advance for graduation on Patriotweb. If you are graduating from a Masters and certificate, be sure to apply to graduate from each program. Visit <http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/graduation/> for more information.

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 asynchronous 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 on Friday, May 10, 2024.

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

Expectations

- **Course Week:**
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Fridays and finish on Thursdays.
- **Log-in Frequency:**
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.
- **Participation:**
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:**
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:**
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:**
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with

classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Service.

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Explain the systems and practices involved in the identification, assessment, and diagnosis of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), including: (a) the diagnostic criteria for ASD from the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders; (b) identification of trends in identification and diagnosis; and (c) examination of interdisciplinary, family-centered, and community-based assessment models for individuals with ASD.
2. Examine the impact of dual diagnoses and comorbidity (ASD and any other diagnosis from the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) on individuals with ASD across the lifespan.
3. Evaluate formal and informal methods of assessment for individuals with ASD across the lifespan.
4. Review a variety of assessments to determine strengths and needs to inform a comprehensive understanding of an individual with ASD.
5. Analyze historical and current issues in diagnostic criteria of individuals with ASD including, but not limited to, family involvement, implicit bias, disproportionality, and intersectionality.
6. Survey the intersectionality between ASD and sexuality, sexual identity, gender identity, race and class, and other marginalized identities; the historic and current challenges related to this intersectionality; and ways to address these challenges.
7. Reflect on a variety of lived experiences of individuals with ASD related to the identification, assessment, and diagnosis of ASD, as well as the influence of their identities and backgrounds on the process.

Professional Standards

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: Skill competencies for professionals and paraprofessionals in Virginia supporting individuals with autism across the lifespan developed by the Virginia Autism Council. The competencies addressed in this class include General Autism Competencies, Comprehensive Instructional Planning, Social Skills, Communication, Behavior, Sensory Motor Development, and Independence and Aptitude.

Required Texts

Goldstein, S., & Ozonoff, S. (Eds.) (2018). *Assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorder* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Conner, D. J., Ferri B. A., & Annamma, S. A. (Eds.). (2015). *DisCrit: Disability studies and critical race theory in education*. Teachers College Press.

Recommended Texts

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

Additional Readings

Additional readings will be posted in each module.

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 638, the required PBA is the Assessment and Intersectionality Assignment. 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)

You will be given a variety of assessments that have been done for an autistic individual. In Part 1 of this assignment, you will review and analyze the provided assessments. In Part 2, you will examine the identities of both the evaluator and the individual being evaluated, and the possible impact of these perspectives on assessment results.

More information about this assignment (including a grading rubric and resources) can be found on Blackboard. The rubric and resources should be thoroughly reviewed prior to beginning the assignment and well in advance of the due date.

College Wide Common Assessment (VIA submission required)

N/A

Other Assignments

Module Assignments. All modules will open on Fridays at 11:59 p.m. ET and must be

concluded with work submitted by Thursdays at 11:59 p.m. ET. Please plan accordingly. Best practices will have you open the module on Friday mornings or afternoons to review the content and check the assignments. Then, pace and participate accordingly for the rest of the week.

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

All course work will be online in an Asynchronous format. There will be no face-to-face meetings.

Late Work

All assignments (e.g., quizzes, activities, assignments, projects) must be submitted via Blackboard *on* or *before* the due date. In fairness to students who submit work on time, points will be deducted for late submissions (up to 10% per day). Assignments will not be accepted more than one week late unless prior arrangements with the instructor have been made.

Other Requirements

Communication.

The best way to contact me is through email. There is a Send Email icon on the left navigation bar in the course. My email (as well as the emails of your classmates) is located here. I will check email at least once a day on weekdays. I will respond to emails within 24 hours, if not sooner, on weekdays. On the weekends, I will check email on Sunday evening only.

Grading Scale (traditional rounding principles apply)

- 93-100% = A
- 90-92% = A-
- 87-89% = B+
- 83-86% = B
- 80-82% = B-
- 70-79% = C
- < 69% = F

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site](https://oai.gmu.edu/) (<https://oai.gmu.edu/>) and [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-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/policies-procedures/) (<https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>).

Class Schedule

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

Module	Topics and Readings	Module Assignments
1	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of ASD identification & diagnosis DSM-5 diagnostic criteria Intersectionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intersectionality defined and why it matters Microcultures and identity See Blackboard module for readings	Introductions Discussion Board
		Autism Historic Figure mini-Biography
		Reading Check #1
2	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal vs informal assessment Current scales for assessing ASD Intersectionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positionality and reflexivity defined See Blackboard module for readings	Assessment Analysis Assignment
		Reading Check #2
		VIA Assignment: Demographic Background Section
3	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and Diagnosis of Infants and Toddlers Intersectionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EASE Process for Reflexivity See Blackboard module for readings	Media Paper
		Reading Check #3
		VIA Assignment: Cognitive and Adaptive Behavior Assessment Sections

Module	Topics and Readings	Module Assignments
4	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Diagnosis of Adolescents and Adults Intersectionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adolescents/adults See Blackboard module for readings	3 Minute Pause Reflection
		Reading Check #4
		Reflexivity assignment: Gathering information strategy Discussion Board
		VIA Assignment: Additional Information and Summary Statement Sections
5	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of families in the assessment & diagnostic process • Interdisciplinary, family-centered, and community-based assessment models for children and adolescents with ASD Intersectionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds of Knowledge See Blackboard module for readings	Funds of Knowledge Assignment
		Reading Check #5
		VIA Assignment Part 1 Due
6	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disproportionality Intersectionality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit bias See Blackboard module for readings	Reading Check #6
		Reflexivity assignment: Implicit bias tests
		VIA Assignment: Work on Part 2
7	Lived experiences of autistic individuals related to intersectionality and identification, assessment, and diagnosis of ASD See Blackboard module for readings	Choice Board Assignment
		VIA Assignment: Part 2 Due Submit VIA Assignment to VIA/SLL

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 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) - 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.

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)

EDSE 638 VIA Rubric

Part 1: Assessment Analysis

	Does Not meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Part 1: Demographic Information Competencies 1.1.1 S and 1.1.2S	Candidate fails to identify the case study student’s name, date of birth, current age, and current grade level and language spoken in the home. Candidate fails to describe the individual’s background and testing that had been done prior to the evaluation.	Candidate accurately identifies the case study student’s name, date of birth, current age, and current grade level and language spoken in the home. Candidate describes the individual’s background and testing that had been done prior to the evaluation.	Candidate accurately identifies the case study student’s name, date of birth, current age, and current grade level and language spoken in the home. Candidate describes the individual’s background and testing that had been done prior to the evaluation in a high level of detail.
Cognitive Assessments Competency 1.1.3 S	Candidate fails to accurately name the cognitive assessment that was used in the case study and describes any behavioral observations that the evaluator shared. Candidate fails to summarize the findings of the assessment and provides two areas of strength and two areas of need based on the findings. Candidate fails to provide two recommendations for the individual and uses specific assessment data as the rationale for these recommendations.	Candidate accurately names the cognitive assessment that was used in the case study and describes any behavioral observations that the evaluator shared. Candidate summarizes the findings of the assessment and provides two areas of strength and two areas of need based on the findings. Candidate provides two recommendations for the individual and uses specific assessment data as the rationale for these recommendations.	Candidate accurately names the cognitive assessment that was used in the case study and describes several behavioral observations that the evaluator shared. Candidate summarizes the findings of the assessment and provides more than two areas of strength and more than two areas of need based on the findings. Candidate provides more than two recommendations for the individual and uses specific assessment data as the rationale for these recommendations.

<p>Adaptive Behavior Assessments</p> <p>Competency 1.1.2 S</p>	<p>Candidate fails to accurately name the adaptive behavior assessment that was used in the case study and describes any behavioral observations that the evaluator shared. Candidate fails to summarize the findings of the assessment and provides two areas of strength and two areas of need based on the findings. Candidate fails to provide two recommendations for the individual and uses specific assessment data as the rationale for these recommendations.</p>	<p>Candidate accurately names the adaptive behavior assessment that was used in the case study and describes any behavioral observations that the evaluator shared. Candidate summarizes the findings of the assessment and provides two areas of strength and two areas of need based on the findings. Candidate provides two recommendations for the individual and uses specific assessment data as the rationale for these recommendations.</p>	<p>Candidate accurately names the adaptive behavior assessment that was used in the case study and describes several behavioral observations that the evaluator shared. Candidate summarizes the findings of the assessment and provides more than two areas of strength and more than two areas of need based on the findings. Candidate provides more than two recommendations for the individual and uses specific assessment data as the rationale for these recommendations.</p>
<p>Additional Information</p> <p>Competency 3.1K</p>	<p>Candidate fails to accurately describe at least two additional pieces of information for each of the following domains: social skills, behavior, communication, and other areas.</p>	<p>Candidate accurately describes at least two additional pieces of information for each of the following domains: social skills, behavior, communication, and other areas.</p>	<p>Candidate accurately describes more than two additional pieces of information for each of the following domains: social skills, behavior, communication, and other areas.</p>
<p>Summary Statements</p> <p>Competency 3.1K</p>	<p>Candidate fails to provide accurate summaries of strengths and needs across the assessments and fails to provide three recommendations for the case study individual, using specific assessment data (from any area) within their rationale.</p>	<p>Candidate provides accurate summaries of strengths and needs across the assessments and provides three recommendations for the case study individual, using specific assessment data (from any area) within their rationale.</p>	<p>Candidate provides highly detailed, accurate summaries of strengths and needs across the assessments and provides more than three recommendations for the case study individual, using specific assessment data (from any area) within their rationale.</p>

Part 2			
Part 2: Intersectionality Analysis #1 and #2 Competency 3.1.1S	Candidate inaccurately identifies/identifies 4 or fewer case study individual microcultures and/or fails to describe the possible impact of each element on the assessment process and results.	Candidate identifies five of the case study individual's microcultures and describes the possible impact of each element on the assessment process and results.	Candidate richly describes six or more of the case study individual's microcultures and describes the possible impact of each element on the assessment process or results in a highly detailed manner.
Part 2: Individual Synthesis #3 Competency 3.1.3S	Candidate inaccurately identifies and fails to provide a rationale for which assessment would be useful when beginning to work with the case study individual.	Candidate identifies and provides a rationale for which assessment would be useful when beginning to work with the case study individual.	Candidate identifies and provides a highly detailed rationale for which assessment would be useful when beginning to work with the case study individual. Rationale cites specific data from assessments.
Part 2: Individual Synthesis #4 Competency 5.1.1S	Candidate fails to recommend and describe two additional informal assessments or pieces of information. Candidate fails to include at least one assessment related to social skills.	Candidate recommends and provides a brief description of two additional informal assessments or pieces of information (at least one of the assessments should relate to social skills) to conduct with the case study individual.	Candidate recommends and provides a highly detailed description of three or more additional informal assessments or pieces of information (at least one of the assessments should relate to social skills) to conduct with the case study individual.