

# VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION ADAPTED CURRICULUM

Spring 2017

Communication and Severe Disabilities, 3 Credits

## Consortium Titles

- George Mason University: EDSE 534 Communication and Severe Disabilities
  - EDSE 434 001: CRN: 12116
  - EDSE 534 001: CRN: 12117; EDSE 534 6U1: CRN:21637; EDSE 534 6Y1: CRN: 21641
- Virginia Commonwealth University: SEDP 600 Communication for Students with Severe Disabilities
- Radford University: EDSP 667 Communication & Severe Disabilities
- Norfolk State University: SPE 643 Communication Development for Individuals with Severe Disabilities
- Old Dominion University: SPED 673 Communication and Severe Disabilities
- James Madison University: EXED 602: Communication, Language and Sensory issues in ASD

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Marci Jerome	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 01/25/17 – 05/03/17
<b>Phone:</b> 703-993-8295	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Wednesday
<b>E-Mail:</b> mkinas@gmu.edu	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm
<b>Office Hours:</b> By Appointment	<b>Instructing University:</b> GMU

---

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

---

## Course Description

Introduces professionals to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for individuals with severe speech and language impairments. Addresses the knowledge and skills needed to assess the potential AAC user, make team decisions, develop and implement instruction, and evaluate the effects of instruction, aimed at motivating, building, and expanding communication, choice-making, and social interaction.

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

## Advising Contact Information

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate teacher candidates/students should contact the Special

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

### **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

### **Learner Outcomes**

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

1. Identify characteristics of non-symbolic and symbolic communication
2. Describe and discuss methods for assessment, identification of priorities, and monitoring progress of individuals with communication impairments.
3. Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology available for individuals with severe disabilities.
4. Implement assessment strategies to improve teacher candidates/students' social interaction with peers and others.
5. Implement communication/AAC/AT assessment strategies to develop and implement individual educational planning and group instruction with teacher candidates/students with disabilities in an adapted curriculum across the K-12 grade levels.
6. Understand and identify behaviors associated with communication.
7. Describe language development and emergent literacy skills for teacher candidates/students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology
8. Identify and implement strategies and activities that foster an appreciation of a variety of literature and independent reading for teacher candidates/students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology
9. Demonstrate knowledge of best practices and strategies in reading instruction for teacher candidates/students with severe disabilities for teacher candidates/students who use augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology

### **Course Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations**

This course is part of The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Special Education Adapted Curriculum, a grant from the Virginia Department of Education that includes George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Radford University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, and James Madison University. Through the completion of the Adapted Curriculum Consortium program, students are eligible for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the area of Special Education – Adapted Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization, as well as those established by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support consortium

(InTASC). The standards addressed in this class include CEC Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies (InTASC 7,8).

### **Required Textbooks**

Beukelman, D. R. & Mirenda, P. (2013). *Augmentative and alternative communication: Supporting children and adults with complex communication needs* (4th ed.). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

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

### **Recommended Textbooks**

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

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

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

### **Tk20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement**

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

For EDSE 534, the required PBA is (NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE). Failure to submit the assignment to Tk20 will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Teacher candidates/students have until five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline to upload the required PBA in order to change the course grade. When the PBA is uploaded, the teacher candidate/student is required to notify the instructor so that the "IN" can be changed to a grade. If the required PBA is not uploaded five days prior to the University-stated grade change deadline and, therefore, the grade not changed, it will become an F. Please check to verify your ability to upload items to Tk20 before the PBA due date.

### **Assignments**

1. **Class Participation (15 points)** Attendance at all sessions is very important because many of the activities in class are planned in such a way that they cannot necessarily be recreated outside of the class session. Information, activities, guest speakers, and role plays will be presented in class that are not a part of the text and can only be experienced in the class sessions. Furthermore, as part of this course you are expected to be an active and respectful participant, which includes actively engaging in class discussions and activities. Students will complete an in-class activity (or online assignment) each week (14 weeks). Students who successfully complete 13-14 in-class activities will earn 15 points, students who successfully complete 12 in-class activities will earn 7 points, students who

successfully complete 11 in-class activities will earn 1 point, while students who complete between 0-10 in-class activities will receive 0 points. Completion of in-class activities (or online assignments) includes both active participation in the activity as well as submission of a permanent product (form, summary statement, reflection, etc.). Students who miss a class will not have the opportunity to make up missed in-class assignments. Successful completion of in-class activities will be tracked in the blackboard gradebook. As a courtesy, please email me to let me know if you will not be in class.

2. **Student Introduction (5 points)** During the first week students will complete the Student Introduction Assignment, located in the *Assignments* section of the course Blackboard site. Students will answer 11 questions to both introduce themselves to the instructor as well as help the instructor design class activities based on student interests and level of experience. Included in the introductory assignment is submission of a picture (in .jpg format). This will be used by the instructor to associate your name with your face. These photos will not be shared with others. **(Due February 1 by 4 pm)**
3. **Research Critiques (30 Points)**. In small groups (up to 3 people), students will read and critique two intervention research studies in the area of augmentative and alternative communication for students with autism and/or intellectual disabilities. Each critique should include an a) complete APA reference (6<sup>th</sup> edition); b) statement of study purpose including research questions (1-2 paragraphs); c) summary of study methods and results (3-4 paragraphs), and d) applicability of study design and results to special education and your own teaching (1-2 paragraphs; each student). See assignment rubric for further details. **(Critique 1 due Feb. 15; Critique 2 due April 12)**
  - Undergraduate differentiation: Undergraduate students will complete sections A-C only. See undergraduate assignment rubric for further details.
4. **Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection (30 points)** Using the strategies and procedures reviewed in class, students will create a topic board for their own use in a specific situation. Students will actually use the topic board for conversation for a minimum of one hour (in an identified setting) and will then write a reflection on his or her experiences and impressions. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Due March 1)**
5. **Case Study and Low Tech AAC System Development ((30 points)** Students will be given a case individual for whom they are expected to develop a low tech communication system. A rationale for why such a system was created is expected. You will be presenting your low tech systems and explaining their relevance in class. See assignment rubric for further details. **(Due March 29)**
6. **Literacy Unit Plan (40 points)** Students will choose and design a unit on a specific topic of their choice. The unit must be centered around a piece of literature, whether a published children's book or personally authored story. Students will adapt the story for students with significant disabilities using communication/literacy tools and strategies discussed in class. Furthermore, students will develop at least 3 additional supplemental resources related to the story that also incorporate communication theory and strategies discussed in class. These resources could include songboards, worksheets, games, crafts, etc. Students will also design a communication board for use during the unit. Students will present their rationale for the unit development and physically show the 5 curriculum materials during a class presentation. Students will submit a 3-4 page rationale describing the topic and target population for the unit plan, description of the 5 developed resources, and discussion of the communication/literacy theory, tools and strategies considered in the unit plan

development. Unit development must incorporate (and reference) at least two research-based AAC interventions/strategies. Students will also submit electronic copies of the 5 curriculum materials to Blackboard. See assignment rubric for further details. (**Proposal Due April 12; Final Project Due May 3**)

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

Assignment	Due Date	Point Value
Class Participation	Each week	15
Student Introduction	2/1	5
Research Critiques	(#1) 2/15, (#2) 4/12	30
Topic Board Development, Rationale, and Reflection	3/1	30
Case Study and Low Tech AAC system development	3/29	30
Unit Plan	5/3 (proposal due 4/12)	40
<b>TOTAL POINT VALUE</b>		<b>150</b>

## Course Policies and Expectations

### Attendance/Participation

Please see *Class Participation* within the assignment section.

### Late Work

**All assignments should be word-processed and are due at the start of class (4:00 pm) on the dates indicated, including assignments submitted through Blackboard.** Consult with the instructor in advance if there is a problem. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, there will be a 10% cost reduction per day for late papers for up to 5 days. (For example, a 20 point assignment will lose 2 points per day while a 50 point assignment will lose 5 points per day.) After 5 days, students will earn a 0 for the missed assignment. Please retain a copy of your assignments in addition to the one you submit. All assignments should reflect graduate-level spelling, syntax, and grammar. If you experience difficulties with the writing process you will need to document your work with your university's Writing Center during this course to improve your skills. At the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment. Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit.

## Grading Scale

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

## Undergraduate

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

## Class Schedule

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

Ses.	Date	Topic/Lecture	Readings	Assignments Due
1	1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of Course</li> <li>Review Syllabus</li> <li>Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication</li> <li>Definitions and Terminology</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 1 Russell (2008)	
2	2/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Messaging, symbols, alternative access</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Introduction due by 4pm on 2/1</li> </ul>
3	2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 5-7	
4	2/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Critique 1 Due</li> </ul>
5	2/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAC issues / AAC Strategies</li> <li>Symbolic versus nonsymbolic strategies</li> <li>Cases will be Distributed in Case Study Assignment</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapters 9, 13	
6	3/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language learning and development</li> <li>AAC and Literacy</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 10-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Topic Board Assignment Due</li> </ul>
	3/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>No Class: Consortium Spring Break</b></li> </ul>		
7	3/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Class Boardmaker Online Lab</li> <li>Bring computer</li> </ul>	Refer to Blackboard for readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed Midterm Evaluation</li> </ul>
8	3/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAC and Literacy</li> <li>AAC in the Educational Setting</li> </ul>	Beukelman & Mirenda Chapter 12	
9	3/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentations of Cases and Low Tech Solutions</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Study Rationale Due to Blackboard</li> <li>Presentations of Cases and Low Tech Solutions (In class)</li> </ul>
10	4/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guest Speaker: AAC User</li> </ul>		
11	4/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At Home AAC Device Exploration Activity (<b>ONLINE</b>)</li> </ul>	Instructor will provide assignment description and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure your Unit Plan project proposal is submitted by April 12th!</li> <li>Online activity due by Monday April 17 via Blackboard</li> </ul>
12	4/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAC and Autism (<b>ONLINE</b>)</li> </ul>	Instructor will provide assignment description and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Critique 2 Due</li> <li>Autism activity due by Monday April 24 via Blackboard</li> </ul>

13	4/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AAC Tech Lab Night / Catch Up Night</li> </ul>	Refer to Blackboard for readings	
14	5/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal Issues and AAC</li> <li>• Wrap up of AAC</li> <li>• Unit Plan Presentations</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit Plan due (Blackboard)</li> <li>• Unit Plan Presentations (In Class)</li> <li>• Completed Final Evaluation</li> </ul>



## **ADAPTED CONSORTIUM SYLLABUS STATEMENTS AND POLICIES**

### Honor Code

Each university has its own honor code and it is important for you to review the honor code at your university. However, all students taking this course, regardless of the university they are enrolled in, are expected to follow this honor code and may be asked to pledge all assignments and their exam to indicate that they have followed the honor code. A pledge means that you have not cheated or plagiarized, nor have you given or received assistance that violated the description of how assignments are to be completed for this course. The shortened version may be used: “Pledged” followed by the date and your full name (typed “signatures” will be OK for assignments/tests submitted electronically).

Students at all universities pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own or with proper citations

A complete copy of each university’s Honor System document is available through

GMU: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>

VCU: [www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html](http://www.students.vcu.edu/rg/policies/rg7honor.html).

Radford: [http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor\\_Code.pdf](http://www.radford.edu/~dos-web/handbook02-03/Honor_Code.pdf)

NSU: [http://www.nsu.edu/student\\_judicial/policy.html](http://www.nsu.edu/student_judicial/policy.html)

JMU: <http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml>

ODU: <https://www.odu.edu/about/monarchcitizenship/student-conduct>

### Accommodations for Disability

At all the participating universities, accommodations can be made with the instructor if a student has a documented disability. University specific information regarding eligibility, services and accommodations can be found at:

GMU: <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/>

VCU: <http://www.students.vcu.edu/dss/index.html>

Radford: <http://www.radford.edu/~dro/>

NSU: <http://www.nsu.edu/disabilityservices/index.html>

JMU: <https://www.jmu.edu/ods/>

ODU: <https://www.odu.edu/life/diversity/accessibility>

### Inclement Weather

If classes are cancelled at the teaching university, a message will be posted on the class Blackboard site and all class members will receive an email. Because such cancellations are often at the last minute, it may be difficult to get this message prior to leaving for class. If in doubt, visit the teaching university’s website. Do not email us; I will email you regarding weather as soon as it is announced. Please note the cancellation of classes due to inclement weather is determined by the decision of the instructing university only. If the instructing university is open and operational then you are expected to attend class.

### Cell Phones and Weapons

All cell phones and beepers should be deactivated while in the classroom. Also, University rules at all participating universities prohibit the possession any firearm, other weapon, or explosive.

Please consult the student handbook and your university for specific information concerning this policy at your university.

### Course Materials

This course gives you access to PowerPoint files, class lecture notes, handouts, and copyrighted articles. All of these materials should be regarded as authored materials, which if used or referred to must be fully credited through reference to the author, the class, and date. If used beyond citation, permission of the instructor/author is required.

### Technology Proficiencies

All students participating in this course are expected to be proficient in several technology skills. Students are expected to be proficient in using the Internet and have reliable and consistent Internet access. Students are expected to have an active university email account and to check email regularly. This course requires students to use Blackboard, which is our online course management system located at <http://mymason.gmu.edu> under the **COURSES** tab.

Students are expected to login to this system frequently and be proficient in using its features. Students are expected to be proficient in using the computer, which includes downloading and saving files, typing, and word processing skills. Students participating in this course are expected to use Microsoft Word for all written assignments. Furthermore, students are expected to use Microsoft PowerPoint and Adobe Acrobat Reader for class documents located on the Blackboard website.

### Blackboard Access and Non-Mason Students

NON GMU students will be required to activate and utilize their GMU login credentials to access Blackboard. NEW students this semester should have received an email with activation directions from Marci Kinas Jerome. Any questions please contact Marci Kinas Jerome, [mkinas@gmu.edu](mailto:mkinas@gmu.edu).

### GMU Email and Non-Mason Students

NON GMU students will be required to activate their GMU email account and either check the account regularly or forward their mail to their home university account. By default all accounts in the Blackboard system are GMU accounts. Directions for activating your GMU email account can be found at: <http://masonlive2.gmu.edu/instructions.cfm> and directions for forwarding your mail are located at: <http://masonlive2.gmu.edu/tutorials/forwardemail.cfm>

### Remote Site Student

It is the policy of the consortium that students attending classes at university sites are expected to be present at those university sites during class time. However, there are situations in which students are unable to attend classes at the university sites and may be permitted to take a course as a “remote site” student. To be considered, students must meet the **requirement of more than 90 minutes of one-way travel time to the closest participating university (under normal circumstance). OR have a documented medical need.** In addition, there are several technology and procedural requirements that are detailed on the Consortium website:

<http://kihd.gmu.edu/sdc/> and posted on Blackboard. Students must obtain permission from both the course instructor and the consortium coordinator to be considered a remote site student. Students' continued participation as a remote site will be re-assessed each semester.

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

### Course Facilitators

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

### Blackboard Assistance

This course requires that you be a regular email user and be able to use various features of Blackboard (sign on, download materials, hand in completed assignments electronically through the assignment submission link). You may direct your questions about Blackboard to Marci Kinase Jerome (mkinase@gmu.edu). She will be the best resource.

### Remote Site Viewing

All Consortium courses are recorded and archived on a video-streaming server. Students and faculty are welcome to view previous classes at [vcms.gmu.edu](http://vcms.gmu.edu). **Select the category: EDSE** and click on the link for the specific class session. **The password for this class is 4534.**

Student may also view the PowerPoints, communicate with the instructor, and interact with other at home students using Adobe Connect. Each consortium class has their own Adobe Connect website. To get to your Adobe Connect course site go to:

- Transition: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/transition/>
- Reading: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/reading/>
- Characteristics: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/characteristics/>
- Teaching Strategies: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/teaching/>
- Positioning and Handling: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/positioning>
- Communication: <https://webcon.gmu.edu/communication>
- Collaborative Teamwork: <https://webcon.gmu.edu/teamwork>
- Positive Behavior Supports: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/pbs>
- Curriculum and Assessment: <http://webcon.gmu.edu/assessment>

You will login with the guest username (sdcguest@gmu.edu) and password (sdcsite).

The first time you use Adobe Connect you may be prompted to download a plug in, it only takes a few seconds to install.

## **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

### **Policies**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### **Campus Resources**

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/api/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://course support.gmu.edu/>.
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing (see <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance (see <http://caps.gmu.edu/>).
- The George Mason University Office of Student Support staff helps students negotiate life situations by connecting them with appropriate campus and off-campus resources. Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone (703-993-5376). Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://studentsupport.gmu.edu/>, and the OSS staff will follow up with the student.

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