

**Department of Educational Psychology, Special Education Program
Spring, 2016**

Current Topics in Special Education: Instruction for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities
15.293.630.01

Class Meets: Wednesday 4:50-7:30 p.m.
Course Instructor: Christopher J. Manente Ph.D., BCBA
Office Location: Room 321A, Graduate School of Education
Office Hours: By appointment only
Contact Me:
 by phone: 973-618-3583
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Course Prerequisites: N/A
Mode of Instruction: Lecture ___ Seminar ___ Hybrid ___ Online ___
Course Website: sakai.rutgers.edu

Required Text:

Wheeler, J., Mayton, M., & Carter, S. (2015). *Methods for Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Evidence-based Practices*; Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Overview

This course provides a practical overview of the field of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and intellectual disabilities (ID) for in-service and future educators planning on working with these populations of students. The course serves a dual purpose in familiarizing students with the common characteristics of ASD and ID while also placing a particular emphasis on the importance of adopting empirically validated instructional strategies for these learners. Students in the course are encouraged to explore various evidence-based approaches to the design of educational programming for students with autism and intellectual disabilities including: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA); Pivotal Response Training (PRT); Developmental Individual Difference Relationship-based Model (DIR/Floortime); & Teaching, Expanding, Appreciating, Collaborating and Cooperating, Hollistic (TEACCH). In addition, the merits of other common approaches to the development of instruction for learners with ASD and ID are also examined (e.g., Sensory Integration Therapy, Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), etc.).

Course Catalog Description

15:293:630 Current Topics in Special Education: Instruction for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities (3)
Provides an overview of the field of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and intellectual disabilities (ID). The causes, characteristics, assessment, and research-based interventions for students with ASD and ID will be the focus of the class.

Course Learning Objectives Aligned with the NJ Professional Teaching Standards (NJPTS)

Upon completion of this course, students can expect to:

- Identify and describe the common characteristics of ASD and ID and demonstrate an understanding of the general implications of these characteristics for the design of learning environments (NJPTS # 1 & 2).
- Understand the importance of evidence-based practice and be familiar with the prevalent research-based instructional strategies for teaching students with autism and intellectual disabilities (NJPTS # 1, 2, 3, 7, & 8).
- Understand the varying educational needs of students with ASD and ID across the developmental periods of early childhood, elementary school, adolescence, and adulthood (NJPTS # 1, 2, & 3).
- Understand the challenges associated with the design and implementation of evidence-based instruction across home-based, school-based, and community-based settings for learners with autism and intellectual disabilities (NJPTS # 1, 2, & 3).
- Demonstrate competence in the implementation of an evidence-based instructional strategy for students with autism and intellectual disabilities (NJPTS # 1, 2, 3, 7, & 8).

Special Education Masters Program Goals

Learning Goal 1: Attain mastery of the essential aspects of practice and research in the field of special education.

Learning Goal 2: Attain in-depth understanding of Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) professional standards and code of ethics for special education professionals.

Learning Goal 3: Further develop critical professional dispositions that help education professionals promote improvement in the lives of their students (commitment to ongoing professional development, using data-informed approaches, collaborative approaches, developing cultural competencies, etc.).

Learning Goal 4: Prepare to be professionals in special education or closely allied professional fields or to further advance in their professional work.

Class Format

A mixed method of pedagogy will be used as a means of instruction in this course. These techniques may include the use of lectures, class discussions, small group activities, cooperative group activities, individual activities, and the use of videos, web resources etc. The methods used to assess student performance will also be mixed. These methods may include written assessment including test items involving multiple choice, short answer, essay, or true/false responses in addition to other performance-based methods of assessment.

<i>Required Activities</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Percent of Grade</i>
Sakai Blog Entries	Ongoing	15%
Comprehension Assessment # 1	2/10	10%
Comprehension Assessment # 2	3/2	10%
Comprehension Assessment # 3	3/30	10%
Literature Review	4/20	15%
Field-based Lesson	4/27	20%
Final Examination	TBA	20%

How You Earn Your Grade

The evaluation of your performance in this course is based on a points system. It is possible for you to earn a total of one hundred points (100) for this course. This system allows you to monitor your progress as the semester progresses. Details of requirements are provided on succeeding pages. The following is a list of the number of points you will need in order to earn the associated grade.

To Earn	A	B+	B	C+	C	D	F
Points Needed	90+	87	80	77	70	60	<60

Policies

Academic Integrity: I expect that you will comply with standards of academic integrity (that is, you will *not even think* about cheating) in this course. Most of you wish to become teachers or are considering becoming teachers. You have a professional responsibility to model the standards of professionalism and integrity you would hope for from your own students. If you need assistance in understanding an assignment or course content, please seek assistance from other appropriate resources or me. Assignments, however, should be your own work, except in cases where I have required a group product. The consequence for violating policies of academic integrity and other elements of the student code of conduct are serious and can have a tremendous negative impact on your academic progress and future career. You should not turn in the same work in two separate classes without the specific written approval of the faculty members involved. Leaving work until the last minute can increase the temptation to plagiarize work from journals or “borrow” friends’ work. You can avoid problems by getting your work done early. Exams are also your own work. The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>)). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>).

Make Up Exam: Make-up assessments/exams will NOT be scheduled unless you miss an exam because of religious observance or because of a properly documented illness. Proper documentation means that you provide a doctor's note that states you were unable to attend class on the specific day of the exam.

Attendance: Attendance at all regularly scheduled classes is required in accordance with the university's attendance policy. Excused absences include absences due to religious observance (please let me know *before* the holiday), travel on university business (e.g., sports team), and properly documented illnesses. It is likely that students who are frequently absent will not do as well in this course as those who are regularly in attendance. Attendance will be monitored by a sign-in sheet that will be circulated at each course meeting. It is the responsibility of each student to be diligent about signing the attendance sheet at each class meeting to avoid any discrepancies related to their attendance.

Missed Classes: It is your responsibility to arrange to get any course content including announcements, notes (including handouts), from another student if you must miss class.

Policy on Late Assignments: Assignments must be submitted on time. Late assignments will only be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Late assignments may be subject to a grade reduction.

Classroom Culture: Please turn all cell phones to **SILENT** during class. Please refrain from sending text messages during class. If you bring a laptop to class, I expect that you will use it for the purposes of the class **ONLY**. In other words, please do not use your laptop to surf the web or check email. If you like doing the puzzles in the Targum, please solve these puzzles **BEFORE** coming to class. I expect that all of us will treat one another with respect and have a pleasant learning environment (I cannot make promises about the heating/cooling issues!!).

Problems?

Personal problems: A variety of resources are available at the university to assist you with personal difficulties (e.g., stress, anxiety, bereavement, etc). Each campus has a counseling center and these services are free to you as a student. Please seek assistance as early as you can so you can maintain a good academic performance.

Academic problems. If you are having difficulties with this course, you should seek assistance from me during office hours or by making an appointment with me. The Learning Resource Centers on each campus also provide a variety of services to help you with your academic performance. If you are a student with special needs, you should contact the Office of Disability Services if you need accommodations in the course. The office can be found at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

Details of Assignments

1. Sakai Blog Entries (15% of total grade):

This assignment is intended to encourage you to spend time outside of class meetings to reflect upon course topics and specific readings. Minimally, you will keep a Sakai blog of your reflections on each of the course readings which must include three questions related to the content of the readings AND respond to at least two of your fellow classmates' blogs by answering one of their three questions each week before lecture. Blog entries are due by Sunday at midnight each week.

2. Comprehension Assessments (30% of total grade):

The three comprehension assessments are intended to test knowledge of course content presented in the lectures, readings, and/or group work.

Format: The assessments will consist of open-ended questions requiring a response in essay format.

Grading: Your grade will be based on the extent to which you are able to answer the questions and demonstrate competency in a particular area of content.

3. Final Examination (20% of total grade):

The final exam will be cumulative. Specifically, this means that any material that has been covered up to the point of the exam is fair game. Reasons for cumulative exams include an appeal to the cumulative nature of knowledge and a chance to capitalize on previous success.

Format: This examination may include multiple choice, short answer, essay, true/false responses, application, or problem-solving items.

Grading: Your grade is based on the number of correct answers on the multiple-choice questions, combined with scores from the alternative format questions.

Please note: The final exam is to be scheduled according to the University schedule that allocates exam slots based on the period/day of the class and is still subject to change accordingly.

4. Literature Review and In-class Presentation (15% of total grade):

This assignment requires that students identify a topic of interest related to the course content on which they will be expected to write a 4-6 page literature review (1,000-1,500 words) and give a 15-20 minute in-class oral presentation based on their literature review. All topics for the literature review and class presentation must be preapproved by the instructor.

5. Field-based Lesson Informed by Evidence-based Practice (20% of total grade):

This assignment will involve students planning and conducting a block of instruction inspired by one of the evidence-based instructional strategies that are examined in the course within their field placement. This assignment requires that students create a formal lesson plan, a portfolio of artifacts from their lesson, and final report of their experience. This assignment will also require students to give a 10-15 minute in-class presentation describing their experience in implementing the lesson during the last two class meetings.

Tentative Schedule and Assigned Readings

<i>DATE</i>	<i>LECTURE TOPIC</i>	<i>ASSESSMENT-DELIVERABLE</i>	<i>READING</i>
			All Readings are to be completed before the corresponding date.
Wednesday 1/20	Introduction Characteristics of ASD		Wheeler et al. Chapter 1
Wednesday 1/27	Characteristics of ID	Blog Entry Due Sunday 1/24 By Midnight	Readings on Sakai
Wednesday 2/3	Determining Evidence-Based Interventions	Blog Entry Due Sunday 1/31 By Midnight	Wheeler et al. Chapter 2
Wednesday 2/10	Assessment and Treatment in Early Intervention	Blog Entry Due Sunday 2/7 By Midnight Comprehension Assessment #1	Wheeler et al. Chapters 3 & 4
Wednesday 2/17	Teaching Communication Skills	Blog Entry Due Sunday 2/14 By Midnight	Wheeler et al. Chapter 5
Wednesday 2/24	Methods for Developing Social Competence	Blog Entry Due Sunday 2/21 By Midnight	Wheeler et al. Chapter 6
Wednesday 3/2	School-based Strategies for Learning & Teaching	Blog Entry Due Sunday 2/28 By Midnight Comprehension Assessment #2	Wheeler et al. Chapters 7 & 8
Wednesday 3/9	Strategies for Facilitating Academic Skills	Blog Entry Due Sunday 3/6 By Midnight	Wheeler et al. Chapter 9
Wednesday 3/16	SPRING BREAK-NO CLASS		
Wednesday 3/23	Fostering Self-determination	Blog Entry Due Sunday 3/20 By Midnight	Wheeler et al. Chapter 10 Readings on Sakai: Bannerman et al. (1990)
Wednesday 3/30	Transition to Adulthood	Blog Entry Due Sunday 3/27 By Midnight Comprehension Assessment #3	Wheeler et al. Chapters 11 & 12
Wednesday 4/6	Advanced Topics in ASD & ID	Blog Entry Due Sunday 4/3 By Midnight	Readings on Sakai
Wednesday 4/13	Advanced Topics in ASD & ID	Blog Entry Due Sunday 4/10 By Midnight	Readings on Sakai
Wednesday 4/20	Literature Review Presentations	No Blogs Literature Review Due	No Readings!
Wednesday 4/27	Field Placement Presentations Concluding Thoughts	No Blogs Field Placement Report Due	No Readings!
TBA	Final Exam	Final Exam	Cumulative