Fitchburg State University
EDUCATOR Programs
Comprehensive Syllabus
January 2014
Course Prefix and Number
Working with Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Visual Impairment
3 Graduate Credit Hours
January 27, 2014 – March 23, 2014 / Online

Instructor: Marilyn H. Gense, M.A.
Telephone: 503.871.9991
E-mail: mnjg@comcast.net

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Participants will engage in an online learning environment to increase their knowledge of the needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Visual Impairments (ASDVI), and improve their capacities to assess students, and subsequently, to design and implement quality programs of individually designed instruction. Participants will use an online learning environment to view PowerPoint presentations, review video, engage in online conversations and dialogue in response to posted discussion questions, and complete and post assignments. In addition, students will complete all required readings.

If you plan on matriculating into a graduate program at Fitchburg State University, please be aware that twelve semester hours of Fitchburg State University credit taken within a year prior to the student’s admission may be applied to the degree program with the approval of the program chairperson. Anything over 12 credits prior to matriculation will NOT be accepted towards the degree.

TEXTS:


Buron, Kari Dunn *The 5-Point Scale and Emotional Regulation* Retrieved from: [http://www.5pointscale.com/5Pt_Scale_and_Emotiona...](http://www.5pointscale.com/5Pt_Scale_and_Emotional_Reg.pdf)


LEARNING OUTCOMES / OBJECTIVES:

State precisely what the students will learn by taking this course. In later sections the syllabus should clearly indicate how course assignments and your assessment of them are linked to these course goals. In this section highlight both the Professional Association Goals for this course and specific State Licensure and Professional Standards for Teachers and label with an agreed format., if applicable.

This course will address the dispositions of the Conceptual Framework in the following way(s):

**Knowledge:** As a result of the learning experiences in the course, you will become more cognizant of:
- Identify at least 5 different intervention strategies to address the expanded core curriculum needs of learners with ASDVI

**Skill:** As a result of the learning experiences in the course, you will become better able to:
- Identify, review and implement at least 3 assessment tools and strategies to “build a picture of the learner” for program planning
- Select an intervention strategy, then develop and instructional plan for one learner, to include instructional steps, reinforcement and data collection

**Caring:** As a result of the learning experiences in the course, you will become more competent in your ability to:
- Develop a comprehensive implementation plan to address the needs of at least one learner with ASDVI

**Ethical:** As a result of the learning experiences in the course, you will become more competent in your ability to:
- Articulate the impact of visual impairment on educational performance vs the impact of autism on educational performance and the importance of an appropriate diagnosis for students with visual impairment
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Data Collection and Analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Discussion/Questioning</td>
<td>Pre-Practicum</td>
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<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>Role Playing/Simulation</td>
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<td>Independent Learning</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>Discovery</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>Reflective Responses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Creating Visual Illustrations of Concepts</td>
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This is a graduate level course. As such, the expectation is that participants will submit work that is rooted in adequate theory with evidence of critical thinking, analysis and synthesis of material. The required assignments for this course are as follows:

**Pre/Post Tests:** there will be a pre-test and post-test in each of the eight sessions. Participants are required to complete the pre and post-test in each session. Completion of the tests satisfies the requirements – these are not graded assignments. However, failure to complete the tests will result in a loss of points toward the final grade.

The rubric point scale will be used to assess your work based on a 2-point scale.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric for Pre-Post Tests</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
<th>0 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completion of Pre-Post Test</td>
<td>Both pre and post tests are completed within the specified timeframe</td>
<td>Only one (pre or post) test is completed in the specified timeframe.</td>
<td>Pre and Post tests are not completed in the specified timeframe</td>
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</table>

**Max pts:** 2

**Discussion Forums:** There will be a discussion forum assignment in each of the eight sessions. Each participant is required to contribute to each forum using information and knowledge gathered from the class lecture, assigned reading, website visits, etc. Participation in the discussion forums is critical for maximizing your learning experiences in this course. You are required to be part of an online community who interact, through discussion to enhance and support the professional development of the group. Part of the assessment criteria for the course includes assessing the quality and quantity of your participation in the discussion forum.

*Discussion Forum Questions will be posted on Saturday morning for the following week. Discussions should be completed by 6:00 pm Friday of each week. Refer to the timeline for the exact date each discussion is due.*

Some characteristics that are considered to be part of excellent discussion contributions are outlined below.
• A minimum of two posts are required. You must submit your initial post by Wednesday and your subsequent responses to the posts of other participants at timely intervals within the duration of the session. Keep in mind that the goal is to have a dynamic discussion that lasts throughout the entire session.

• Your posts and responses should be thorough and thoughtful. Just posting an “I agree” or “Good ideas” will not be considered adequate. Support your statements with examples, experiences, or references. You are, however, encouraged to be brief – keep each post and response to one or two short paragraphs. Keep in mind that your fellow participants will be reading and responding to you, too.

• Make certain to address the discussion prompt(s). This does not mean you should not extend the topic, but do not stray from the topic.

• Discussions occur when there is dialogue. Build upon the posts and responses of other learners to create discussion threads. Make sure you revisit the discussion forum and respond (if necessary) to what other participants have posted to your initial responses.

• When relevant, add to the discussion by including prior knowledge, work experiences, references, web sites, resources, etc. (giving credit when appropriate).

• Your contributions to the discussions should be complete and free of grammatical or structural errors.

The rubric point scale will be used to assess your work based on a 5-point scale.

Eight discussion forums are required at 5 points possible for each = 40 possible points. Rubric =

• 1 pt. possible for appropriate incorporation of and reference to the readings
• 2 pts. possible for the appropriate number of responses (two responses per discussion – one to the question and one to another participant’s post)
• 2 pts. possible for quality response (well-written, appropriate response to the question/topic).
**Appropriate number of responses**  
**Max pts: 2**

| A minimum of two responses are posted. First response is posted by Wednesday. | Only one response is posted | No responses are posted |

**Activities:** There will be an activity assigned for each of the eight weeks. Each assignment will require the participant to gather information from a variety of sources (current research literature, websites that are strong resources on the topic) and post their findings. Participants should reference the readings and lecture notes in their posts. Each participant will be expected to complete the activity as described in the weekly session.

The rubric point scale will be used to assess you work based on a 20-point scale. Eight activities are assigned with 20 pts. possible for each = 160 points.

- 4 points possible for turning posting your activity on time
- 8 points possible for a quality, well-written response
- 8 points possible for providing feedback to at least 3 other participants

The Activity must be posted by 6:00 pm on Sunday of the week in which the Session occurs. Once the Activity is posted, participants will react and respond to each other’s activity. The activity discussion must be completed by 6:00pm on Wednesday of the following week. Refer to the timeline for the exact date each activity and activity discussion is due. **Note: The Activity for Session 8 will be due on Friday of that week. You will have until Sunday at 6:00 pm to react and respond to each other’s activity. Activity 8 is a cumulative activity. You should refer to the requirements for the Activity and complete an appropriate section beginning with Session 2.**

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<th>Activity Rubric</th>
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<td>Post contains all the components of the activity, references several of the readings and cites 2 or more current resources and is a well-developed, appropriate response to the activity</td>
<td>Post contains some of the components of the activity, references at least one of the readings, cites one current resource and is an appropriate response to the activity</td>
<td>Post contains some of the components of the activity and is a partial response to the activity</td>
<td>Post is incomplete and does not address the requirements of the activity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quality, well-written response</strong></td>
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<td>Max: 8 pts.</td>
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<td>Participant provides appropriate feedback to at least 3 other participants</td>
<td>Participant provides appropriate feedback to at least 2 other</td>
<td>Participant provides appropriate feedback to at least 1 other participants’ activity posts</td>
<td>Participant does not provide feedback to other</td>
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<td><strong>Feedback to other posts</strong></td>
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<td>Max: 8 pts.</td>
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</table>
All assignments must be posted by the posted due date. Assignments will be accepted late but 4 points will be deducted for each week the assignment is submitted after the due date. Assignments more than two weeks late will not be accepted. No assignments will be accepted after August 18, 2013.

EVALUATION OR GRADING POLICY:
Methods of Evaluation
Participants are evaluated by the following methods:

- Pre/Post Tests = 32 points
- Discussion Forums = 40 points
- Activities = 160 points

Passing Grade:
Participants must accumulate a minimum of 186 points to earn 40 continuing education credits. For those taking the course for credit, the following scoring system applies.

![Fitchburg State University Graduate Grading System](image-url)
COURSE CONTENT / TOPICAL OUTLINE

SESSION 1: January 27 – February 2
Identification and Assessment:

Session Goals: content to address the identification of characteristics of autism spectrum disorders in learners with visual impairments as well as assessment to develop an intervention plan.

Required Readings:
- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapters 2, 4

Other Readings:

Online Lecture and PowerPoint Presentation:
- ASDVI Identification: What Does It Look Like?
- Assessment Planning for Intervention

Handouts:
- Comparison of Characteristics for Identification
- Assessment Summary

Discussion Forum:
- Is it necessary to identify ASD in a learner who is blind/vision impaired? Why or Why Not? Under what circumstances would you consider referring a learner for an ASD evaluation?

Activity:
- Plan an assessment for a learner suspected of having an ASDVI. You can use a student you work with, a student you know about, or a student you make up. Your plan should include the following:
  A) The age, vision, and the current “picture of the learner”;
  B) The settings you will use to assess and why;
  C) The other needed members of the team besides yourself, the tools you will use and why;
  D) Information needed from the parent; and
  E) The additional information you need about the learner to identify ASD and to determine needs.
- Refer to and use, if appropriate, any forms provided in the book, the lecture, or handouts.
SESSION 2: February 3 - 9
Critical Components of a Quality Program:

Session Goals: addressing the expanded core curriculum, use of reinforcement, generalization of skills, and functional applications.

Required Readings:
- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 3

Other Readings:

Online Lecture and PowerPoint Presentations:
- Critical Features of Quality Programs for Student with ASDVI

Handouts:
- ASDVI Individual Student Planning Form-Instruction1
- CAPS Example
- Task Analysis Data Sheet
- COMPREHENSIVE AUTISM PLANNING SYSTEM for learners with ASDVI

Discussion Forum:
- How do the sensory responses of any one individual impact the ability to respond to instruction? Provide specific examples. As an instructor – what responsibility do you have for addressing those sensory responses as part of your program?
Activity:
- Using the learner from Activity 1:
  A) Identify any sensory and/or biological needs that impact the learner’s ability to benefit from instruction. Describe at least one strategy you will put in place to address those sensory needs;
  B) Describe what is reinforcing to this learner and how you will use reinforcement with this learner; and
  C) Using the ASDVI Individual Student Planning Form – Instruction1, fill out the form for your learner for each area of the ECC for ASDVI.

Session 3: February 11-17
Intervention Strategies- Communication 1:

Session Goal: addressing strategies for working with learners who are non-verbal and/or who have emerging verbal skills

Required Readings:
- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 5

Other Readings:
- Vicker, Beverly, CCC-SLP, Indiana Resource Center for Autism, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community Communicative Functions or Purposes of Communication Retrieved from: http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/?pagelId=508
- Paul, Rhea, PhD, CC-SLP. Communication in Autism Spectrum Disorders Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alaIR28iT-8

Online Lecture and PowerPoint Presentation:
- Critical Components Communication

Handouts:
• The Autism Programs

Functional Communication Questionnaire 8/2007 Retrieved from
http://www.cdd.unm.edu/autism/autism_course/PDF/Functional_Communication_Questionnaire.pdf

• Requesting Opportunities 2

Discussion Forum:
• What data should be collected to determine a) the need for, and b) the effectiveness of an augmentative communication system?

Activity:
• You can use a student you work with, a student you know about, or a student you make up. Develop one of the following:
  A) For a non-verbal (or emerging verbal) child, select an intervention strategy used to teach communication for learners with ASD. Practice using the intervention strategy. Take a video (2-3 minutes) of you providing instruction using the intervention (the instruction can be with an adult, a child, or a learner you work), and post for feedback; OR
  B) For a non-verbal (or emerging verbal) child, complete the “Requesting Opportunities 2” form across the student’s day. Include both school and home. You should have a minimum of 10 different opportunities. Design a data collection system (include the form) to track requesting skills and discuss how to collect data using the form.

SESSION 4: February 18-24
Intervention Strategies - Communication 2:

Session Goal: addressing communication strategies for working with students who are verbal.

Required Readings:
• Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 5

Other Readings:

Online Lecture and PowerPoint Presentation:
• Intervention – Communication 2

Discussion Forum:
• Is it possible to teach a learner who is totally blind with ASD to expand social communication skills using video modeling?
  a) If yes, what would the instruction be like? What would data collection look like?
  b) If no, why not?
Activity:
- You can use a student you work with, a student you know about, or a student you make up. Using one of the instructional activities discussed in the lecture or available in the readings, develop the following:
  A) Design a program of instruction to enhance the social communication skills for a learner with ASDVI who has verbal skills. Include discussion of target goals, who will provide instruction, materials, what type of reinforcement will be used, the setting, and any other critical information.
  B) Design a data collection system matched to the target goal(s) to identify student progress and discuss when and how the data will be collected and analyzed.

SESSION 5: February 25 – March 2
Organization Strategies:

Session Goal: addressing the development and use of concrete supports to assist with understanding.

Required Readings:
- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 12

Other Readings:
- Autism Internet Modules Retrieved from: http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/

Lecture and PowerPoint Presentations:
- Critical Component Concrete Support

Handouts:
- Concrete Supports Planning Form 2

Discussion Forum:
- Review the APH list, select an item, and discuss how it might be used to provide a concrete support.

Activity:
Using the student you selected for Activity 1 or a student you are working with, design the following:

A) Fill out the CONCRETE SYSTEMS PLANNING FORM 2 across the student’s day. Be specific about the student’s needs.

B) Once you have completed the form select one support you have identified and provide a sample of what that support will look like.

**SESSION 6: March 3 - 9**

**Intervention Strategies - Social Interactions:**

**Session Goal:** addressing strategies for expanding social skills and interactions for a range of learners with ASDVI

**Required Readings:**

- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 6
- Buron, Kari Dunn *The 5-Point Scale and Emotional Regulation* Retrieved from: [http://www.5pointscale.com/5Pt_Scale_and_Emotional_Reg.pdf](http://www.5pointscale.com/5Pt_Scale_and_Emotional_Reg.pdf)

**Lecture and PowerPoint Presentations:**

- Social Interaction

**Handouts:**

- Task Analysis Data Sheet

**Discussion Forum:**

- What strategies can we use to teach our learners with ASDVI to address teasing and bullying?

**Activity:**

- Using the learner you identified in Activity 1, develop the following:
  
  A) Select an intervention strategy related to social skill development discussed in the lecture or available in the readings,
  
  B) Design an instructional plan for teaching the selected strategy with the identified student. Include your instructional plan, materials to use, setting, and type of reinforcement to be used.
  
  C) Design a data collection system matched to the target goal(s) to identify student progress and discuss when and how the data will be collected and analyzed.

**SESSION 7: March 10 - 16**

**Intervention Strategies**
Session Goal: Purposeful Movement: addressing strategies for expanding purposeful movement and orientation and mobility for a range of learners with ASDVI.

Required Readings:
- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 8

Lecture and PowerPoint Presentations:
- CAPS for O&M

Handouts:
- Functional Routines
- Functional Assessment of Purposeful Movement
- Environmental Analysis and Planning 2
- COMPREHENSIVE AUTISM PLANNING SYSTEM for learners with ASDVI

Discussion Forum:
- When preparing to teach purposeful movement and O&M skills what are the characteristics of learners ASDVI that may impact the delivery of instruction? How might instruction need to be modified?

Activity:
- Using the learner you identified in Activity 1, complete the following:
  A) Complete the Environmental Analysis and Planning Form across all environments the learner is currently involved in and those he/she will encounter in the near future.
  B) Identify one instructional strategy/intervention used for learners with ASD that might be applicable to learners with ASD and how you would use the strategy/intervention.

SESSION 8: March 17-23
Intervention Strategies - Career and Life Goals:

Session Goal: develop strategies for identifying and implementing a plan for addressing lifelong skills as well as career planning

Required Readings:
- Gense and Gense 2005, Chapter 9, 10, 11
- Person Centered Planning Education Site. Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University retrieved from: http://ilr-edi-r1.ilr.cornell.edu/PCP/courses.cfm

Required Videos
- Today’s Man - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYGOSz6xTNg
- Autism Employment Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erFrIz9HNNg

Other Readings:
Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Age Appropriate Transition Assessment Retrieved from: http://www.ocali.org/project/tg_aata

Lecture and PowerPoint Presentation:
- Career and Life Goals Planning

Handouts:
- COMPREHENSIVE AUTISM PLANNING SYSTEM for learners with ASDVI

Discussion Forum:
- What are some critical life skills that should be addressed early with students who are ASDVI? Why?

Activity:
**Note: The Activity for Session 8 will be due on Friday. You will have until Sunday at 6:00 pm to react and respond to each other’s activity. Activity 8 is a cumulative activity. You should refer to the requirements for the Activity and complete an appropriate section beginning with Session 3.

For the student you have addressed throughout this workshop, develop the following:
A) Complete a “CAPS for ASDVI” across the learners instructional day; and
B) Discuss how you will help your team, including parents, implement the CAPS for ASDVI for your student.

Summary of Weekly Topics and Assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ID and Assessment</td>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
<td>2pts.</td>
<td>2/2/14</td>
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<td>Lecture/Discussion Question</td>
<td>5pts.</td>
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<td>Activity</td>
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<td>Post-Test</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Critical Components</td>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
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**Fitchburg State University** encourages all Extended Campus students to take advantage of our online student services. We have created a “virtual student center” just for you. Here you will find access to Counseling Services, Career Services, The Student Activity Center, the university bookstore and many other helpful links. You can access our student center by going to the university homepage at [http://www.fitchburgstate.edu](http://www.fitchburgstate.edu) and clicking on Offices and Services. Scroll down and click on Extended
Campus Center. You will find links to Library Services, our Virtual Student Center and other important information.

**UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATION UNIT POLICIES**

**Policy on Disability**

Disability Services is the primary support system for students with disabilities taking classes in the day and evening divisions. The office is located on the third floor of the Hammond Building and can be reached at 978-665-4020 (voice/relay). If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medication information, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment at the beginning of the course to talk with me. It is important that the issues relating to disabilities be discussed with me as soon as possible.

**Attendance and Participation**

1. As an emerging professional, you are expected to attend every class session, to be on time, and to communicate with the instructor regarding any absences. Absences and tardiness may result in a permanent grade change. Attendance at all pre-practicum sessions is mandatory.

2. Participation in class discussions and cooperative groups is expected. All candidates are responsible for meeting required deadlines on projects and assignments; your ability to complete tasks in a timely fashion demonstrates professional maturity and an ability to organize and manage time. Completion of assigned reading is imperative to your individual development as a professional.

3. All of these behaviors regarding attendance, preparation, and meeting deadlines are critical for successful teaching and thus are factored into the final grade.

4. If you have questions for the instructor please post them in the Q&A forum found at the top of the home page for the course. Your instructor will respond to any questions posted within 48 hours. This is the best place to post all non-private questions that pertain to the course since other members of the class will benefit from the answers as well.

5. The instructor will make every effort to check email frequently. However, please avoid any last minute “crises” regarding any of your assignments by reviewing the requirements with sufficient time to obtain clarification prior to the deadline.

6. Participants are welcome to use the “email the class” feature. Please keep messages sent to the whole class related to course content and maintain the same professionalism as you would in a face-to-face class.

7. Participants often have the misperception that taking a course online is easier since they don’t have to physically go to a classroom. While the convenience of “attending class” on your own schedule does make taking an online course easier, this type of educational environment requires discipline to ensure that you don’t get behind. This medium does give participants flexibility in attending class – it is more convenient – not easier!
**Grade Appeal**
If you disagree with the evaluation of your work or believe an improper grade has been assigned, an appeal may be followed. Please discuss the matter with the instructor and refer to the Fitchburg State University Grade Appeal Policy in your Student Handbook.

**Academic Integrity Policy**
The faculty in the Education Unit at Fitchburg State University that work submitted in fulfillment of course requirements will be solely that of the individual candidate and all other sources will be cited appropriately. University Academic Integrity Policy, as outlined in the University Catalogue, will be strictly adhered to.

**Copyright Policy**
You are reminded that, in preparing handouts for peers or the instructor, reproduction of copyrighted material without permission of the copyright owner is illegal. Such unauthorized copying may violate the rights of the author or publisher. Fitchburg State University adheres to federal laws regarding use of copyrighted materials. See the Student Handbook for more details.

**READING AND RESOURCES**


Buron, Kari Dunn *The Incredible 5-Point Scale* Retrieved from: [http://www.5pointscale.com/](http://www.5pointscale.com/)


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