



# SPED 147

## ADVANCED ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AND INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH MODERATE- SEVERE DISABILITIES

**Semester:**  
**Credit: 3.0 units**  
**Day and Time:**  
**Location:**  
**Department Office: ED 350**

**Instructor:**  
**Office:**  
**Email:**  
**Phone:**  
**Office Hours:**

### **Requirements:**

1. Admission to the Moderate-Severe Disabilities Credential Program and satisfactory completion of all required courses.
2. Concurrent enrollment in practicum SPED 176.

### **Course Description:**

This course addresses the assessment and instructional strategies used to develop individualized and culturally sensitive communication systems and related goals. The focus is on strategies to teach communication skills in natural and meaningful contexts. Augmentative and alternative communication systems, as well as other assistive technologies in the classroom are introduced. Supporting the development of and facilitating peer relationships and other social supports is covered, as well as building and enhancing systems of natural supports. Finally, understanding challenging behavior and the relationship to communication and meaningful relationships is used to begin the semester and revisited at the end, as well.

Coursework will include varied instructional techniques and there is an emphasis on diversity and multicultural influence as it relates to identifying, evaluating, and implementing instruction for students with moderate to severe disabilities.

### **Required Texts:**

- Downing, J.E. (2005). *Teaching communication skills to students with severe disabilities (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed)*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Janney, R., & Snell, M.E. (2006). *Social relationships and peer supports (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed)*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

### **Additional Required Reading:**

- Biklen, D. & Burke, J. (2006). Presuming Competence. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 39(2), 166-175.
- Ferguson, D. (1992). Is communication really the point? Some thoughts on where we've been and where we might go. In L. Kupper (Ed.), *The national symposium on communication for children and youth with severe disabilities, Topic papers, research guide and videotape*. Maclean, VA: Interstate Research Associates.
- Bogdan, R., & Taylor, S. (1992). The social construction of humanness: Relationships with Severely Disabled People. In P. Ferguson, D. Ferguson, & Taylor, S, *Interpreting Disability:*

- A Qualitative Reader*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hourcade, J., Pilotte, T.E., West, E., Parette, P. (2004). A history of augmentative and alternative communication for individuals with severe and profound disabilities. *Focus on autism and other developmental disabilities*, 19(4), 235-244.
- Hunt, P., Doering, K., Maier, J., & Mintz (Nusbaum), E., (2009). Strategies to support the development of positive social relationships and friendships for students who use AAC.
- Soto, G. & Zangari, C. (2009). In G. Soto & C.Zangari, *Practically speaking: Language, literacy, and academic development for students with AAC needs*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Kent-Walsh, J., & Binger, C. (2009). Addressing the communication demands of the classroom for beginning communicators and early language users. In G. Soto & C.Zangari, *Practically speaking: Language, literacy, and academic development for students with AAC needs*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Register, A. & Singer, G. (in press). *Beyond high school: Participants' perspectives on their participation with inclusive friendship programs in high school*.
- Snell, M., et al. (2003). Concerns regarding the application of restrictive "eligibility" policies to individual who need communication services and supports: A response by the national joint committee for the communication needs of persons with severe disabilities. *Research and practice for persons with severe disabilities*, 28 (2), 70-78.
- Weiss, N. (2001). *It may be non-aversive but its it non-coercive?: The ethics of behavior change in the modern age*. Baltimore:TASH.

This course requires the use of your university email account. (The University provides free email accounts to all students. Students may sign up for email online at <https://zimmer.csufresno.edu/csuf/index.html>. Internet accounts are **available for a modest fee** at <http://www.fresno.com/cvonline/cvip.html>

### **Primary Learning Outcomes:**

This is a seminar in developing as a reflective practitioner through structured activities to encourage examination of classroom practices and behaviors, goals and outcomes, beliefs and values. The learning outcomes are aligned with the Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Preparation Programs adopted by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC), Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE), the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standards, and the KSOEHD Dispositions: Reflection, Critical Thinking, Professional Ethics, Valuing Diversity, Collaboration, Life-Long Learning.

**Program standards: 2,3,4,5,6,12,13**

**Specialty specific (M/S) program standards: 1,2,3,5,6,8**

**TPEs: 4,6**

### **The candidate will:**

- 1) utilize functional and ecological methods of assessing individuals in order to enhance different modes of communication (including AAC), across a variety of contexts.
- 2) describe and employ teaching strategies to shape unconventional and non-symbolic behavior into more conventional and symbolic means of communication.
- 3) articulate the relationship between an individual's ability to communicate, their access to meaningful relationships and environments, and their quality of life.
- 4) use ecological methods of assessing an individual's access to a range of environments and partners with whom to communicate and form relationships.
- 5) integrate a range of formal and informal methods of supporting an individual's development of social relationships into their school program and across a range of school contexts/environments.

6) recognize the dynamic nature of an individual's need to for communication supports and access to/support for relationship development and be able to make changes to make programmatic changes accordingly.

### *University Policies*

*University Policies are available for review on the following website:*

[http://www.csufresno.edu/academics/policies\\_forms/instruction/RequiredSyllabusPolicyStatements.htm](http://www.csufresno.edu/academics/policies_forms/instruction/RequiredSyllabusPolicyStatements.htm)

### *Course Policies*

#### **Classroom Environment**

1. Keep audible communication devices (cell phones, pagers, IPODs, and other portable media players) turned off during class.
2. Use of laptops, computers, and/or PDAs is permitted only for SPED 147 note-taking or student presentations.
3. Obtain advanced permission from the instructor for visitors.

#### **Attendance**

The Special Education Faculty place great importance on attendance and participation, as these are professional expectations. Every unexcused/unauthorized absence, early departure, and/or tardy may result in a lower grade.

1. Excused/authorized absences/tardies/early departures will be allowed only per University policies: (1) when the student has a serious and compelling medical condition that she/he can support with documentation, or (2) when a death or serious illness in the prohibits student from attending class, or (3) when student is participating in University-sponsored athletic, extracurricular, or academic endeavors away from campus.
  - a. If requesting an excused absence/tardy/early departure, it is the student's responsibility to provide acceptable documentation to the instructor within 2 weeks of the absence/tardy/early departure.
  - b. If the student does not provide acceptable documentation, then the absence/tardy/early departure will be marked as unexcused, and the corresponding points will be deducted.
2. Deductions for attendance occur as follows:
  - a. Each unauthorized/unexcused absence, early departure, and/or tardy will result in the deduction of 5 points per class session, from the final grade for the course.
3. If you are absent, tardy, or leave early, excused or unexcused, it is your responsibility to do all of the following:
  - a. Obtain handouts, notes, and other materials from peers. The instructor does not keep copies beyond the class session in which these were given.
  - b. Contact the instructor as soon as possible after the missed class period to provide documentation of the reasons for the absence and to discuss what, if anything, can be done to maintain your desired grade.
  - c. Submit all assignments by the beginning of the following session.

#### **Assignments**

1. Each student is responsible for completing assignments and readings prior to each class session to actively participate in discussions, activities, and presentations.
2. Assignments for this class must be each student's own work.
3. All assignments must be completed independent/individually, except where otherwise indicated.
4. All assignments must follow the formats/instructions provided in the syllabus.

- a. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain and follow all formats/instructions exactly and to seek clarification if needed.
- 5. All assignments will be submitted in paper copy and follow the guidelines listed below:
  - a. Write in narrative and word-process, using 1” margins, 12 point font, and 1.5 spaces between lines, using APA for citations and references.
  - b. Use transitions sentences, phrases, and words between ideas and paragraphs.
  - c. Use headings within each assignment to identify each section of the paper. Check and correct spelling, organization, syntax, structure, grammar, and mechanics. Proofread and spell-check your assignments prior to submission.
- 6. Assignment Timelines/Due Dates:
  - a. All assignments are due in paper copy before the end of the class session on the date the assignment is due to be eligible to receive full credit/points. It is the student’s responsibility to submit all assignments on time.
  - b. Exceptions will be made only for: (1) authorized/excused absences as defined above, if the instructor is notified within 24 hours of the absence and provided with acceptable documentation; and (2) in the event of an unforeseen, unauthorized/unexcused absence, emergency, or other issue.
  - c. Any assignment submitted late (after the class session in which it is due) will receive, at a maximum, the number of points to equal a grade no higher than a “B”. Exceptions will be made only for excused/authorized absences. **Do NOT email assignments unless requested by instructor.**

**Confidentiality.** The privacy and identity of children and their families should be protected in all written materials. Therefore when writing about a child, the recommended language is, “For the purpose of this paper, I will refer to the observed student as \_\_\_\_\_(fictitious first name).”

**Grading**

- 1. The total points received on each assignment are recorded in the grade roster.
- 2. Grades are calculated by percentage (the total points received divided by the total points possible).
- 3. Percentages: 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C, 69-60% = D; 59%-0 = F.

***Course assignments:***

*(see the breakdown and details of each assignment after the week-by-week below)*

Assignment	Points
<b>Communication support plan</b>	
Narrative description of the student, as a communicator	55 points
Ecological/communication inventories (3 total)	25 each/75 total
Plans of systematic instruction (2 total)	35 each/70 total
<b>Social integration plan</b>	
Identification and description of 4 evidence-based ways you/support staff provide integrated supports to facilitate active participation and relationship development for students	10 each/40 total
2 plans to support relationship development/active participation for students	30 each/60 total
<b>Observational writing/student description</b>	5 each/25 total

**\*\* Please see the week-by-week for a detailed breakdown of the reading and assignments due each course session. It is also posted on the course BB site under the “syllabus and assignments” tab.**

**\*\* Please see the descriptions of the major assignments handed out in class for details for each of them. They are also posted under the “syllabus and assignments” tab on the BB site.**

**SPED 147 - COURSE OUTLINE**

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignme</b>
Week 1	Course Introduction		
Week 2	Foundations of communication	Downing, J. (2005). <i>Teaching communication skills to students with severe disabilities</i> . Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. <b>Chapter 1: “The importance of teaching communication”</b>  Snell, M., et al. (2003). Concerns regarding the application of restrictive “eligibility” policies to individual who need communication services and supports: A response by the national joint committee for the communication needs of persons with severe disabilities. <i>Research and practice for persons with severe disabilities</i> , 28 (2), 70-78. (on BB site)  Weiss, N. (2001). <i>It may be non-aversive but its it non-coercive?: The ethics of behavior change in the modern age</i> . Baltimore: TASH. (course BB site)	
Week 3	Ecological assessment of communication skills: A contextual approach	Downing, J. (2005) <b>Chapter 2: Assessing communication skills</b> <b>Chapter 3: Analyzing the communicative environment</b>	
Week 4	Ecological assessment (con’t) and strategies for teaching communication	Downing, J. (2005) <b>Chapter 5: Teaching communication skills: First Steps</b> <b>Chapter 6: Teaching a Wide Range of Communication Skills</b>	
Week 5	Introduction to alternative and augmented communication (AAC)	Downing, J. (2005). <b>Chapter 4: Augmentative and alternative communication techniques</b>  Soto, G. & Zangari, C. (2009). <i>Practically speaking: Language, literacy, and academic development for students with AAC needs</i> . Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.	<b>Due:</b> Comm inventory AN ecological as of commu environ

		<b>Chapter 7: Addressing the communication demands of the classroom for beginning communicators and early language users; by Jennifer Kent-Walsh and Cathy Binger (on BB site)</b>	
Week 6	Facilitated Communication (Supported Typing) as a form of AAC	Biklen, D. & Burke, J. (2006). Presuming Competence. <i>Equity and Excellence in Education</i> , 39(2), 166-175. Biklen, D. et al. (2005). <i>Autism and the myth of the person alone</i> . New York: NYU Press. <b>Chapter 4: Reflections on language; by Lucy Blackman</b> (both readings on BB site)  * Additionally, please look closely at <i>all</i> the documents in the course folder for this week; you will need to have done so in order to be prepared for our guest speaker	<b>Guest speaker</b> Takeuchi
Week 7	The role of communication partners and facilitating student interactions	Soto, G. & Zangari, C. (2009) <b>Chapter 11: Strategies to support the development of positive social relationships and friendships for students who use AAC; by Pam Hunt, Kathy Doering, Julie Maier, &amp; Emily Mintz (Nusbaum)</b> (on BB site)	<b>Film:</b> “Wretc Jabberers”
Week 8	Meaningful relationships	Janney, R. & Snell, J. (2006). <i>Social Supports and Peer Relationships</i> . <b>Chapter 1: Building Social Relationships</b> <b>Chapter 6: Getting Started and Keeping it Going</b>  Tashie, C. & Rossetti, Z. (2004). Friendship: What’s the real problem? <i>TASH Connections</i> , January/February, 35-37.	<b>Due:</b> Tv communi instruction
Week 9	Overview of social supports	Halvorsen, A. & Neary, T. (2009). <i>Building inclusive schools: Tools and strategies for success</i> . Boston: Allyn & Bacon. <b>Chapter 5</b> (on BB site; in same PDF as chp. 2)	
Week 10	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK		
Week 11	Social supports: peers, natural supports, and informal mechanisms	Janney, R. & Snell, M. (2006) <b>Chapter 3: Building support through peer groups</b>	
Week 12	OUTSIDE OF CLASS: COURSE OBSERVATONAL	*Details on BB site and covered in class	

	ASSIGNMENT		
Week 13	Formal mechanisms to support social skills acquisition	Janney, R. & Snell, M. (2006). <b>Chapter 4: Teaching social skills</b> <b>Chapter 5: Models of peer support in instruction</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b> Stephen Hink advocate
Week 14	Classroom strategies that support relationship development	Halvorsen, A. & Neary, T. (2000). <b>Chapter 2</b> (on BB site)	
Week 15	Having a meaningful life: revisiting challenging behavior	Ferguson, P., Ferguson, D.L., & Taylor, S.J. (1992). <i>Interpreting disability: A qualitative reader</i> . New York: Teachers College Press. <b>Chapter 13: The social construction of humanness: Relationships with severely disabled people; by Robert Bogdan &amp; Steven J. Taylor</b> (on BB site)	<b>Due:</b> Social s and relationsh  <b>Guest speaker</b> Melody Ghal:
Exam week			<b>Due:</b> Observa writing assign

### **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS**

#### **1) Communication Project: (worth 200 points, in entirety)**

**PS: 2,3,4,5,6,12,13; MS: 1,2,3,5,6; TPE: 4,6**

#### 1) Narrative description of your student, as a communicator:

##### Communicative behaviors:

- describe the non-verbal communicative behaviors that the student uses
- for each of the non-verbal communicative behaviors, describe the specific message(s) expressed

##### Verbal communication:

- to what extent does the student use speech to communicate across the activities of the day?
- how does the student supplement verbal communication with other modes?
- what specific vocabulary does the student already use in natural environments?
- what is the student's receptive understanding of speech? (e.g. what spoken words does the student understand? directions? names of people? action words?); does this student's receptive understanding improve when paired with another mode?

##### Sensory, motor, and cognitive considerations:

- auditory and visual functioning/acuity: discuss any implications for considering a range of communication supports
- mobility: if ambulatory, are there any considerations for use of communication supports? if not ambulatory, what is mobility method and what are implications for designing communication supports?

- does the student have controlled reaching? head control ability? scanning and/or eye gaze? Discuss how you know if these are reliable and implications for symbol selection and lay-out of communication supports
- does the student understand cause/effect relationships?
- can the student match object-to-object? object-to-photo? object-to-symbol? verbal label to object? verbal label to picture? What are implication

Social interactions:

- With whom does the student interact and in what contexts? How will you expand the pool of communication partners initially and in the future?
- What does the student communicate to peers? What else might they like to communicate to peers (e.g. think about the communication of other, same-age students who communicate verbally) ? To adults?
- Based on the information you've gained by conducting communication and environmental assessments, describe a set of 3 communicative goals and plans for teaching that you will initially target because they are both motivating for the student, would significantly increase her/his ability to make wants and needs known, and would increase her/his ability to interact socially.

**Communication narrative total: 55 points**

2) Three (3) ecological assessments of communication, which includes:

- an IEP matrix that addresses communication goals/skills **(25 pts)**
- *either* a communication inventory OR a participation plan (depending on the support needs of your student) **(25 pts)**
- the use of one other assessment tool presented during class lectures **(25 pts)**

**Ecological assessments total: 75 points**

3) Two (2) instructional plans (plans of systematic instruction) to address identified area(s) of communication need:

***Your IPs will be graded according to the following point allocation:***

Summary of assessment information: **3 points**

Objective: **5 points**

Instructional strategies/directions for implementation: **10 points**

System for tracking student progress: **10 points**

User-friendly format: **2 points**

Implementation: **2 points**

Data collection: **3 points**

***Instructional plans for teaching communication skills should include the following elements and should be written using the Instructional Plan format from SPED 240\*:***

For this assignment you will be expected to identify individual goals/learning outcomes for a student, methods of baseline data collection about their current performance in the goal area, and write a plan of systematic instruction according to the method that we learn in class. You will need to include a method of data collection on student progress with the instructional plan, and demonstrate your consideration of natural environments when developing instruction, as well as opportunities for students to generalize their learning across multiple environments.

- ✓ What communicative functions and specific messages are a part of the teaching plan?



- ✓ Will the student's primary communication mode be through a symbol system or through a gesture/physical movement?
- ✓ If through gesture/body movement, which ones have you targeted and specifically what will they communicate? (*shaping the communicative gesture*)
- ✓ If you are using instruction in a symbol system, what symbols will be used and how do you know they are appropriate? Please describe the symbol system (e.g. what type, what size, how will they be displayed, how will the learner select symbols).
- ✓ With whom and where will the instruction take place? It should be taught across activities and partners throughout the school day. List examples of activities that could be considered for communication instruction. ***Remember, a key component of systematic instruction is teaching in natural, motivating, and meaningful contexts.***

*\*If you have **not** taken Sped240 with me we will use some class time for additional support in writing instructional plans.*

**Instructional plans total: 70 points**

## **2) Facilitating full and active integration and access to social environments**

This project is to reflect on and identify the ways in which you are supporting the development of social relationships and the active integration of your focus student into classroom and school environments.

Based on observations and use of the ecological tools that we go over in class, you will identify and describe effective strategies that you and other staff at your site use to support your focus student. You will identify **four**, evidence-based ways that you are effectively supporting relationship development and integration for your focus student. Include a statement of how you will continue to develop this practice. Be sure to reference course content (in-class lecture and discussion, guest speakers, and/or assigned reading) as the evidence for the practices/strategies you describe. The purpose of this part of the project is to identify/articulate what is going well in your program, so that you can build on these areas.

**10 points each/40 points total**

You will also write a plan to support relationship development/active participation for your focus student in **two** areas utilizing evidence-based practices. Please consider the range of course content in this area in light of the results of your ecological assessment of social environments, observations, and the areas that you describe in the first part of the project. This should not be a description of what you are currently doing, but rather how you will build on current practices or begin to use new ones. For example, you could describe a specific environment/time of the day in which you will train support staff to move away from 1:1 direct support of students or you could establish a peer-tutoring program at your school site.

**30 points each/60 points total**

**PS: 2,3,12; MS: 1,2,3,5; TPE:**

**3) Observational Exercise and Student Descriptions: worth 25 points in its entirety (PS 2; MS 2,3)**

The purpose of this assignment is to practice observation of your focus student with as neutral a lens as possible. You will observe and write about the following five (5) areas related to your focus student:

- **Meaningful relationships** (5 pts)
- **Power and control** (5 pts)
- **Things to look forward to** (5 pts)
- **A sense of value and self-worth** (5 pts)
- **Relevant skills and knowledge for a range of contexts/environments** (5 pts)

Try not to exercise judgment or your own views, but really just observe and write honestly the big and small things you notice about your focus student and their life at school, related to these areas. You might want to spend a bit of time at the end of each school day jotting down notes about what stood out to you or seems relevant in each of them. We will not meet this week for a traditional course session; rather I want you to have the time, across the week, to dedicate to this exercise.

Please look at the 'Syllabus and assignments' tab on the course Blackboard site for detailed descriptions of each of these five areas, prior to beginning your observations.