



California State University, Fresno  
 Department of Counseling, Special Education and Rehabilitation  
*Leadership for Diverse Communities*

<b>Syllabus for SPED 251: Systematic Approach to Social Skills Programming for Individuals with ASD</b>	
Semester:	California State University, Fresno
Units:	Office Hours:
Time:	Email:
Location:	Telephone:
Website: <a href="http://education.csufresno.edu">education.csufresno.edu</a>	Office Hours:

**Prerequisites:**

Students must be admitted to the Level II Credential or Master’s program in Special Education or have permission from the Special Education Coordinator to enroll.

**Required Texts and Instructional Materials:**

Bellini, Scott, Ph.D. (2008) *Building Social Relationships: A systematic approach to teaching social interaction skills to children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders and other social difficulties*. Shawnee Mission, Kansas: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

**Related Readings:**

- Baker, J.E. (2003). *Social Skills training for children and adolescents with Asperger Syndrome and social-communication problems*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company
- Coucovanis, J. (2005). *Super Skills: A social skills group program for children with Asperger Syndrome, high-functioning autism and related challenges*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Dunn, M.A. (2006). *SOS: Social Skills in our schools*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.
- Quil, K. (2000). *Do-Watch-Listen-Say: Social and communication intervention for children with autism*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.
- Winner, M.G. (2005). *Think social! A social thinking curriculum for school age students*. San Jose, Ca: Think Social Publishing.

**Supplemental Journals:** (for additional ideas, methods, and material)

- Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders
- Autism-the International Journal of Research and Practice
- Autism Research
- Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities
- Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities
- Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews
- Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders

**Course Description:**

Candidates will demonstrate *how to think* about research-based interventions addressing the need for social programming for children and adolescents with ASD. Fieldwork is required to complete assignments.

**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.esu/csuf/index.html>. Internet accounts are available for a modest fee at <http://www.fresno.com/cvonline/cvip.html>

**Course Goals and Primary Learners Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will exemplify in practice the Kremen School of Education and Human Development's (KSOEHD) broad vision and mission of ethically informed community leaders from classroom teaching, education administration, and/or higher education who advocate for high standards and democratic values with attention to professional ethics and diversity. The KSOEHD faculty promotes the development of the following candidate professional dispositions across all coursework: Reflection, Critical Thinking, Professional Ethics, Valuing Diversity, Collaboration, and Life-Long Learning. Candidates will increasingly reflect these dispositions in their work with students, families, and communities.

**Course Goals**

Candidates will understand the need for social skills programming for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders and other social difficulties. Candidates will learn to assess social functioning, distinguish between skill acquisition and performance deficits, select interventions strategies, implement intervention(s) and evaluate and monitor student progress. Candidates will discriminate among the myriad of social skills strategies and resources available to professionals.

**Primary Learner Outcomes**

- List and describe the five tenets of social skills programming
- Identify and describe the three processes related to thinking that are important to the social performance of children and adolescents with ASD.
- List and explain the three general prerequisites for social thinking that should be considered every time an aspect of social cognition is taught.
- Identify all components of the Developmental Pathways Model of Anxiety and their implication for social skills programming.
- List impairments that may affect one's ability to execute the decisions made during a social interaction.
- Name and describe the six categories of social impairment that may be evident in children with ASD.
- Identify the purpose of the five-step model for social skill programming.
- Explain the purpose and importance of social skills assessment.
- Describe the methods of social skills assessment that comprise the assessment flowchart, including the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Identify examples of tools used within each method of social skills assessment, along with the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Define and distinguish between a skill acquisition deficit and a performance deficit. Explain the importance of distinguishing between the two.
- Describe how to match intervention strategies to skill deficits, including the guiding questions that may be used to do so.
- Explain the difference between social accommodation and social assimilation and identify their roles in social skill programming.
- Describe each of the strategies that promote skill acquisition and identify the social skill with which they may help.
- List and define strategies that enhance performance of social skills and explain how each may do so.

- List and describe the stages of program planning.
- Name and define strategies for promoting generalization
- Explain the importance of evaluating and monitoring progress
- Explain the following factors that should be taken into account- social validity, social acceptability, and treatment fidelity.
- Describe methods for evaluating progress.
- Describe what hinders most children with ASD from developing meaningful social relationships.
- State one of the most important factors in successfully implementing social skills programming.

## **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 179 note-taking or student presentations. No other use is acceptable.
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 immediate family (i.e., parents, spouse, or child) 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.
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. Most assignments have a rubric (evaluation) available.
  - a. It is the student's responsibility to obtain, print, and staple/clip the paper rubric to its corresponding assignment.
  - b. Assignments submitted without the appropriate rubric, without name and date, and/or not following the formats provided will be returned not graded.
6. 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.
  - b. Use transitions sentences, phrases, and words between ideas and paragraphs.
  - c. Label with headings within each assignment to identify each section of the paper. Refer to the "Areas to be Evaluated" in each rubric to determine the headings.
  - d. Check and correct spelling, organization, syntax, structure, grammar, and mechanics. Proofread and spell-check your assignments prior to submission.
7. 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.

### **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.

### **Examinations and Major Assignments**

#### **FIELDWORK REPORT:**

**100 POINTS**

(Candidate Dispositions: Reflection, Professional Ethics, Valuing Diversity, Collaboration and Critical Thinking)

During this semester, each student will engage in 20 hours of documented field experience working directly with a student diagnosed with autism. You will utilize your fieldwork to complete the assignments for the class. The fieldwork experience should include activities and observations interactions with parents, staff, and students.

1. Document field experience and obtain appropriate signatures on the course fieldwork form provided by the instructor. Upon completion of hours, present this course fieldwork form with the cumulative fieldwork form to obtain course instructor's signature.
2. Project Outline

- a. Select a child or adolescent with whom you will implement the Five-Step Model for Social Skills Programming throughout the semester with a focus on 1-2 objectives.
- b. After each step of the model is addressed in class, you can complete it/practice implementing it with your chosen child or adolescent.
- c. Select 3-4 strategies from chapter 8 (skill acquisition) or chapter 9 (enhance performance).
- d. Compile a portfolio that documents your work with the child or adolescent, including such items as completed assessments and forms, copies of materials used when implementing strategies, data sheets, and a reflection paper.
- e. Provide enough detail so that others would be able to replicate your interventions.

**PAPER (5 – 8 PAGES)**

**30 POINTS**

(Candidate Dispositions: Valuing Diversity, Collaboration, Life-Long Learning, Critical Thinking, and Professional Ethics)

**Select from ONE of the 5 Topic ideas**

1. Idea #1: The Importance of Social Skills Programming for Children and Adolescents with ASD
  - a. Write a paper that addresses why social skills programming is a critical component of comprehensive programming for children and adolescents with AS, including: the five basic tenets of social skills programming and common areas of challenges related to social skills in children and adolescents with ASD.
  - b. Address the potential impact of social skill programming if (a) implemented effectively or (b) implemented poorly
  - c. Include why social skills programming is often overlooked and/or under-implemented, including any specific components of social skills programming that are often overlooked.
2. Idea #2: Five-Step Model for Social Skills Programming
  - a. Write a paper that describes and identifies the importance of each step in the Five-Step Model for Social Skills Programming.
3. Idea #3: Social Skills Programming Resources: How Do They Compare?
  - a. Select two social skills programming resources (e.g., Baker 2003: Coucouvanis, 2005; Dunn, 2006: Winner, 2005) and write a paper that (a) summarizes, compares, and contrasts the features of each resource; and (b) evaluate them based on the guidelines for effective social skills programming included in the textbook.
4. Idea #4: When Research to Practice Isn't Possible: My Philosophy on Effective Social Skills Programming
  - a. Write a paper addressing the fact that minimal research exists to support social skills strategies and your beliefs regarding how to best balance using evidence-based strategies with anecdotally based (i.e., someone else told me this works), experience-based (i.e., I have found this to work), and have-a-go (i.e., let's give this a try) strategy
  - b. Use the National Autism Standards to support your beliefs and findings.
5. Idea #5: The Story Behind the Data
  - a. Write a paper addressing the importance of data collection (as it relates to social skills programming), various methods of data collection, and the advantages and disadvantages of each.
  - b. Create and describe a fictional child or adolescent (e.g., demographics, areas of strength and challenges, home and school situation)
  - c. Select 2-3 social skills strategies you would implement with this child or adolescent
  - d. Describe how and when you would collect data to monitor the child's or adolescent's progress

**EXAMS****100 POINTS**

(Candidate Dispositions: Reflection, Critical Thinking)

Mid Term Quiz – 25 points

Final Examination – 75 points

**RESEARCH TO PRACTICE PROJECT****100 POINTS**

(Candidate Dispositions: Critical Thinking, Valuing Diversity, professional Ethics and Life-Long Learning)

- Students work in teams to research the evidence for practices recommended in Chapters 8 and 9 (you may use citations and references as a starting point.)
- Each team will be assigned 1-2 strategies per team, based on the size of the class.
- Each team creates a table with the following column headings: (a) article citation: (b) demographics (e.g., number of subjects, age, and gender): (c) other relevant instruments (e.g., if an instrument or strategy other than the one the team is researching has been incorporated in the study): and (d) results. Teams should include the name of their strategy in the title of their table (e.g., Research on Prompting).
- If the team cannot locate any research regarding a given strategy, enter “No Relevant Research Located” in the first row of your table.
- Team’s tables will be compiled into a resource packet for download on blackboard.

**INDIVIDUAL PROJECT****60 POINTS**

(Candidate Dispositions: Reflection, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Valuing Diversity, Professional Ethics, Life-Long Learning)

Additional Strategies that promote skill acquisition or enhanced performance

- Identify and create a list of strategies that promote skill acquisition or enhance performance, beyond those discussed in Chapters 8 and 9 of the textbook.
- Exam the research literature or searching the internet, as well as building from your own experiences.
- Select two strategies; provide written answers to the six questions posed in the table on page 15: “Questions to Answer When Selecting Intervention Strategies.”
- In your answer to the fourth question, “Is the strategy supported by research?” Include a table with the following column headings: (a) Article Citation: (b) Demographics (e.g., number of subjects, age, and gender): (c) Other Relevant Instruments (e.g., if an instrument or strategy other than the one you are researching has been incorporated in the study): and (d) Results. Include the name of your strategy in the title of the table (e.g., Research on Social Autopsies).
- If you cannot locate any research regarding a given strategy, enter “No Relevant Research Located” in the first row of your table.

**CHAPTER REFLECTION QUESTIONS****65 POINTS**

(Candidate dispositions: Critical Thinking, Valuing Diversity and Life-Long Learning)

Answer reflective chapter questions on Blackboard prior to class. Come to class prepared to participate in an in-class small group activity or a Think-Pair-Share activity to share individual written reflections.

**Assignment and Exam Grading:****ASSIGNMENT/ACTIVITY**

FIELDWORK HOURS AND PROJECT

PAPER

MID TERM EXAM

**POINTS**

100 points

30 points

25 points

FINAL EXAM	75 points
INDIVIDUAL PROJECT	60 points
RESEARCH TO PRACTICE PROJECT	75 (paper) + 25 (presentation) 100 Points
CHAPTER REFLECTION QUESTIONS	5 points each session x 13 =65
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE	455

Grading Range: A = 409-455; B = 364-408; C = 319-364; D= 273-318; F= 272 or below

### University Policies

University Policies are available for review on the following website:

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

### Tentative Course Schedule

“The schedule and procedures for this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.”

	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
1		Introduction  Five Basic Tenets of Social Skills Programming	Syllabus  Chapter 1	
2		The Essence of Social Interaction Skills: Three Integrated Components	Chapter 2	<b>Identify a Student to work with for the semester</b>
3		Common Social Skill Difficulties Associated with ASD <i>Groups meet</i>	Chapter 3	
4		Five-Step Model for Social Skills Programming	Chapter 4	
5		Assessing Social Functioning	Chapter 5	
6		Distinguishing Between Skill Acquisition Deficits and Performance Deficits	Chapter 6	
7		Selecting Intervention Strategies	Chapter 7	<b>Paper Due</b>
8		Strategies That Promote Skill Acquisition  Mid Term	Chapter 8	
9		Strategies That Enhance Performance	Chapter 9	

10		Video Modeling Model Me Kids Internet Resources	Handouts on Blackboard	<b>Individual Project Due</b>
11		Implementing Intervention Strategies  Facilitate generalization of social skills to peers using role playing and video modeling	Chapter 10  Handouts on Blackboard	
12		Evaluating and Monitoring Progress	Chapter 11	<b>Fieldwork Project Due</b>
13		Social Thinking and Perspective Taking	Handouts on Blackboard	
14		Research To Practice Team Presentations		<b>Research to Practice Presentations</b>
15		FINAL EXAM: 5:45-7:45 pm		