COMD 674 Autism and Severe Disabilities

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Room & Time: 125 TLRB Tues. Thurs. 12:30-2:50 p.m.
Course Credit: 3 Semester hours
Office Hours: Tues. Thurs. 8:30-9:30 A.M. or by appointment

Aims of a BYU Graduate Education

“Building on the foundation of a strong bachelor’s degree, graduate education at BYU asks for even greater competency. Graduate studies may be either academic or professional and at either the master’s or doctoral level. In all cases, BYU graduate programs, like undergraduate programs, should be spiritually strengthening as well as intellectually enlarging.

Graduate programs should help students achieve excellence in the discipline by engaging its primary sources; mastering its literature, techniques, and methodologies; and undertaking advanced systematic study—all at a depth that clearly exceeds the undergraduate level. In addition, graduate programs should prepare students to contribute to their disciplines through their own original insights, designs, applications, expressions, and discoveries. Graduate study should thereby enable a variety of contributions—such as teaching complex knowledge and skills, conducting original research, producing creative work that applies advanced learning in the everyday world, and extending professional service to the discipline and to society.”

The Purpose of this Course: This course is designed to prepare graduate students to assess and treat persons with severe communication disorders associated with autism (ASD), cognitive impairment, congenital syndromes, and/or multiple disabilities. Methods of enhancing communication, including augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) will be emphasized.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics and social communication needs of individuals with severe disabilities including ASD and intellectual impairment.
   Evidence of competence: Performance on quizzes/exams, presentation project. (KASA Standard III-C)
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of intervention principles that underlie and support clinical intervention with individuals with severe communication impairments.
   Evidence of competence: Performance on quizzes/exams, presentation project.

3. Students will demonstrate familiarity with the social communication characteristics and needs of individuals with a variety of congenital syndromes that are associated with speech and language impairment.
   Evidence of Competence: Class project/presentation and performance on quizzes and exams. (KASA standard III-C, III-D)

4. Students will understand the issues and considerations that determine best practice in treating individuals using AAC.
   Evidence of competence: Performance on quizzes/exams, assignments, class presentation. (KASA standard III-C, III-D, III- E, III-F)

5. Students will understand issues and concerns in working with families of individuals with ASD and severe disabilities.
   Evidence of competence: Performance on exams, quizzes, assignments, case presentation. (KASA standard, III-E)

**Course requirements**

Assigned readings, class attendance and participation, quizzes/exams, assignments, class presentation

Grades: Grades will be based on accumulated points. Points will be based on the following:

- Quizzes, assignments: up to 100 points
- Class participation: 70 points
- Class presentation: 25 points
- Exam: 100 points

Quizzes: Quizzes will cover information in assigned readings and class discussions.

Class participation: Students are expected to attend all classes and to be prepared to respond to questions and to participate in class discussions. Any University excused absence must be cleared with the instruction prior to the class period except in cases of medical emergencies. Please plan to be “in class” when you’re in class. Please avoid using your cell phones or
computers for activities not directly related to class discussions. If you find yourselves drifting into somnolence, please feel free to stand up and/or walk to the back of the class. Please avoid sleeping in class as it injures the instructor’s fragile ego. Students must attend any field trips. Five points will be awarded for each class period.

Class presentations: Each student will prepare a presentation on a congenital syndrome associated with impairments in communication. The presentation should be about 30 minutes in length and include the following:

- A description of the syndrome and etiology including
  - Physical characteristics and manifestations
  - Prevalence/incidence
  - Developmental characteristics
  - Language, communication, learning, & social issues
    (stress what SLPs should know and do)
  - Treatment/best practice considerations
  - Organizations to support individuals and families
  - Photos, videos, as available

- A handout (electronic or paper) for each class member summarizing what you have learned about individuals with this syndrome (a summary of the research and clinical literature). One purpose of this assignment is to compile a portfolio for each student with these summaries included. This summary should stress social-communication characteristics and needs and intervention considerations.

- In addition, please submit an electronic copy of a photo of an individual with the syndrome (choose a photo from the internet that is characteristic of the manifestations you have discussed in class). This photo should not be shared with class members or shown as part of your presentation.

In order to complete this class successfully for the MS program of study, students must earn a grade of B- or better. Students who do not perform at this minimum level will be required to complete clinical remediation through retaking the class.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability, which may impair your ability to complete this
course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. Students are required to notify the instructor of the disability prior to deadlines, test dates or any other class requirement where accommodations need to be arranged. For the purposes of this class, COMD 674, students must notify the instructor in writing during the first week of class if they are registered with SSD or if they have a disability that will require accommodations. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895. D-382 ASB

PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895 or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours), or http://www.ethicspoint.com; or contact the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847.

HONOR CODE
In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university.

Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university’s expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have
questions about those standards.