

Sample Syllabus

Course: Augmentative and Alternative Communication Assessment and Intervention

Department: Communication Sciences and Disorders/Speech-Language Pathology, Special Education, Occupational Therapy

For: Graduate students or advanced undergraduate students

Course Description: The course provides a comprehensive overview of evidence-based augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems, assessment, and intervention to enhance the communication and participation of children and adults with developmental and acquired conditions who have complex communication needs. The course provides an overview of current AAC research and then applies this knowledge to evidence-based AAC services for individuals with complex communication needs who experience a wide range of disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, aphasia, and dementia.

Required Textbook: Beukelman, D. R., & Light, J. C. (2020). *Augmentative & Alternative Communication: Supporting children and adults with complex communication needs* (5th ed.). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Learning Objectives: Through this course, students will

- Demonstrate knowledge of communication disabilities resulting in complex communication needs, including etiologies and characteristics.
- Demonstrate current knowledge of principles and methods of AAC assessment for children and adults with complex communication needs, including appropriate assessment procedures, adaptations to meet the needs of individuals receiving services, culturally competent assessment approaches, and strategies for collaborating effectively with individuals with complex communication needs, their family members, and other communication partners.
- Demonstrate current knowledge of principles and methods of AAC intervention for children and adults with complex communication needs, including personalization of AAC systems to meet the individual's needs and skills, goal setting, instructional procedures, evaluation of progress, and strategies for collaborating effectively with individuals with complex communication needs, their family members, and other communication partners.
- Demonstrate current knowledge of principles for effective, culturally competent AAC services and interprofessional team-based collaboration.

| SCHEDULE FOR CLASS MEETINGS AND ASSIGNED CHAPTERS | | |
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| Week 1 | The experiences of individuals with complex communication needs who rely on AAC | Chapter 1 |
| Week 2 | AAC assessment | Chapter 2 |
| Week 3 | Overview of AAC intervention Collaborating with family members and other communication partners | Chapters 3 and 4 |
| Week 4 | Vocabulary selection and message management for children and adults with complex communication needs | Chapter 5 |

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| Week 5 | Unaided and aided AAC systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representations • Organization and layout • Navigation • Encoding techniques or linguistic prediction | Chapter 6 |
| Week 6 | Alternative access for individuals with motor impairments Selecting and personalizing AAC systems for children and adults with complex communication needs | Chapters 7 and 8 |
| Week 7 | Key considerations in AAC interventions for individuals with developmental disabilities | Chapter 9 |
| Week 8 | Supporting communication and participation for beginning communicators | Chapter 10 |
| Week 9 | AAC intervention to maximize communicative competence for individuals with developmental disabilities: building more advanced skills | Chapter 11 |
| Week 10 | Literacy intervention for individuals with complex communication needs Intervention to support participation in education, employment, and community activities | Chapters 12 and 13 |
| Week 11 | Individuals with acquired physical conditions | Chapter 14 |
| Week 12 | AAC supports for adults with severe aphasia and/or apraxia | Chapter 15 |
| Week 13 | AAC intervention for individuals with traumatic brain injury | Chapter 16 |
| Week 14 | AAC intervention for individuals with degenerative cognitive/linguistic disabilities | Chapter 17 |
| Week 15 | Patient-provider communication in medical settings Importance of advocacy | Chapters 18 and 19 |