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EDSP 456.01: Introduction to Methods for Low Incidence Disabilities

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA EDSP 456 | 556 **Instructional Methods for Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities** Fall 2021	
Instructor: **Morgen Alwell, PhD** *Office:* **Education 306| 230** *Phone:* **406-243-5512** *E-mail*: morgen.alwell@umontana.edu *Office Hours:* Some Monday and Wednesday afternoons; best to schedule an appointment.	*Meets:* **Tuesdays** *Meeting Time:* **4:00– 6:50 pm** *Location*: **PJW Education 313** *Credits*: **3.0**

Welcome to EDSP 456/ C&I 556!

This course explores instructional methods for students who face extensive challenges to learning, including students who have moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, vision loss, hearing loss, and/or dual sensory impairments (i.e., deaf-blindness). Some course attention will be also focused on teaching children and youth with physical and multiple disabilities, and autism spectrum disorders. "What to teach" is predicated on access to inclusive environments and general education common core learning standards, as well as unique considerations for each learner based on his or her abilities and needs. Current life quality and post-school goals and outcomes inform "what to teach". "How to teach" these students will focus on components of *systematic instruction*, including task analysis, prompting systems, error correction, reinforcement, data collection, and data analysis, along with alignment with content standards. Participants will apply these strategies in an instructional context.

Please note: This course requires an additional 30-hour fieldwork experience.

Course Format

This is primarily a face-face class, with an online supplement in Moodle. There may be an occasional online-only session; you will be notified in advance when this is the case.

Required Text

Brown, F., McDonnell, J., & Snell, M. (2020). *Instruction of students with severe disabilities* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. [You may purchase the 8th edition instead, a loose-leaf and/or e-text edition, but you are responsible for updates.]

Electronic readings and media *will be made available on the course website.*

Course Objectives

Unit One: Foundations/Characteristics of Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities

1. Describe general characteristics of learners with low incidence disabilities and the impact of various disabling conditions on teaching and learning.
2. Use disability classifications and terms that are appropriate and current (with person-first language).
3. Identify and describe intellectual disabilities, common etiologies, and related impacts on learning.
4. Identify and describe the function of the eye and the ear, common vision and hearing impairments, and the concomitant impact of dual sensory impairments.
5. Identify and access resources on several physical disabilities that are caused by neuromotor impairments (cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and traumatic brain injury), degenerative diseases (muscular dystrophy), and/or orthopedic and musculoskeletal disorders.
6. Describe secondary or associated conditions that frequently accompany some physical disabilities.

Unit Two: Systematic Instruction for Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities

7. Describe and demonstrate instructional strategies for moderating the effects of various low incidence disabilities in teaching and social interactions, particularly in these instructional domains: academic skills, communication and/or social skills, sensory skills, motor skills, self-help/ self-care skills, and/or recreation skills.
8. Explain *what to teach* in these domain areas based on access and support for engagement in inclusive educational environments, common core curricula, and the criterion of ultimate functioning.
9. Define and apply components of systematic instruction.
10. Describe and utilize ecological inventory and discrepancy analysis tools to assess what to teach a particular child or adolescent with a low incidence disability in domain areas in #8, above.
11. Design and implement instruction in one or more of these domain areas based on assessment data for a particular child or adolescent with a low incidence disability.
12. Design a data collection system and monitor student performance, making appropriate instructional changes as needed.
13. Learn to write specific and appropriate goals and objectives for students' individualized education programs (IEPs) in these domain areas: academic skills, communication and/or social skills, sensory skills, motor skills, self-help/ self-care skills, and/or recreation skills.

Unit Three: Evidence-based Practices for Learners with Low Incidence Disabilities

14. Explore research-based learning strategies for teaching basic skills to students with LI disabilities.
15. Explicitly teach a basic skill to a student using an evidence-based strategy.

16. Summarize research studies validating the instructional strategy selected/implanted for individual student(s).

Course Expectations

Class Attendance & Participation

In general, you are expected to attend each class session, and complete all assigned readings and assignments *prior* to the class session. Please notify me if you must miss a class in advance of the class session, if at all possible. Whether or not your absence is considered "excused" is up to my discretion. Unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade. You are responsible for course content during your absence - please contact another student in the class for assistance with missed content before contacting me.

A note on participation: please silence your cell phones during class (if you must make or receive a call, please leave the classroom). Also refrain from reading any other materials during class; your active attention during presentations and participation in small and large group discussions and activities is both expected and greatly appreciated! If you are using a laptop or tablet, please remain on topic. Please be mindful of wearing a mask during class and allow for social distancing because of the ongoing pandemic.

Please recycle any items that can be recycled- bins are located at the east end of the first floor.

Conduct Code

Students are expected to know, understand and comply with the academic honesty policies as described in the University of Montana *Student Conduct Code.* An unabridged copy of this code is available at: http:///www.umt.edu/studentaffairs/policy/code.htm. You must do your own work on quizzes, and all written work submitted for a grade must be original or properly cited. Please be careful with any information copied or remembered from another source; even when you are paraphrasing ideas the source must be cited. If you have questions, please consult with me *prior* to turning in your work.

Accommodations

If you have a documented disability and would benefit from accommodations in this class to facilitate your participation and learning, I am more than happy to work both with you and staff at Office for Disability Equity (ODE) to make these accommodations. Please contact me as soon as possible after the class commences to make plans for your needs. Every effort will be made to keep sensitive information confidential.

Person-first language

When referring to persons with disabilities, it is most respectful to use "person-first language". That means that we emphasize the *person* before the disability. For example, we would say, "a child *with* autism" *not* "an autistic child", or she "*uses* a wheelchair", *not* she is "wheelchair-bound". If you have questions or need to review the criteria for using respectful, person-first language, see p. 72, APA [6th ed.] Publication Manual.

Class Assignment Descriptions

Iris Modules 1 & 2

Module 1, choose one: Accommodations to the physical environment, setting up a classroom for students with visual disabilities OR Instructional Accommodations, Making the learning environment accessible to students with visual disabilities (due 9/19), and Module 2: Autism Spectrum Disorders (due 10/12). You should work through the entire modules, but only turn in your responses to these sections: Initial Thoughts, and Assessment questions. (Here is a link to a short video to show you how to navigate an Iris module if you are new to them.) [2 x 20 points, total 40]

Teaching Activities

See course calendar for more information. All students: teaching activity on 9/19; Grad students: additional teaching activity TBA. Worth 10 points each.

AT Iris Module

All students: If you have not taken a *course* in Assistive Technology, you will complete the IRIS module on Assistive Technology. (Here is a link to a short video to show you how to navigate an Iris module if you are new to them.) You should work through the entire module, but only turn in your responses to these sections: Initial Thoughts, and Assessment questions.
You may do this on your own at any point in the semester; your responses are due at the first class session in December (the 7th). [20 points]

Goals and Objectives

We will study writing effective goals and objectives in class, and you will have a take home assignment to write a series of appropriate goals and objectives for a particular child. You will write goals for *each area in which the child needs specialized supports*. For each goal, you will write at least two objectives. The objectives need to be both observable and measurable. When applicable, they should include baseline information. Each objective also needs to specify a mastery criterion that makes sense for that skill. Goals and objectives should be written in plain language (without jargon) and organized by domain. [20 points]

Final Presentation

You will select one instructional program with student performance data (collected over 10 sessions minimum) to present to the class. You will make a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation (or another format) with at least 4 slides: 1.) Positive student profile; 2.) Brief assessment data and rationale for skill selected; 3.) Instructional program with data sheet; and 4.) Graph of student performance. Please also reflect on the instruction—what went well; what needs adjustment; next steps. [10 points]

Field-work Assignment Descriptions

Attendance log

Students are to keep a log that includes the date and the start and stop times of each site visit or practicum session. Although the log is ongoing and must be kept up to date, it does not need to be turned in until the end of the course.

Projects 1-6

These are described in detail on the course website, and we will review these in class; a brief description follows.

Project 1: ***Ecological Inventory & Discrepancy Analysis*****:** Briefly, you will use an ecological inventory strategy to identify important skills to teach a learner with low incidence disabilities in one or more current environments for this child. [35 pts]

Project 2: ***Student Profile/ Skill Selection:*** You will pull together information about your student's learning preferences and characteristics, and evaluate the functionality of the skill(s) you are targeting for instruction. [15 pts]

Project 3: ***Systematic Instructional Program Proposal*** **[x 1, U/ x 2, G]:** You will design in detail (and implement instruction on) one or two instructional programs targeting two specific skills for one child. This will include specific instructional procedures, task analyses, data collection sheets, and graphs. [60 or 120 pts]

Project 4: ***Peer Review of Instructional Program:*** You will evaluate one of your peer's Project 3 proposals in detail. [15 pts]

Project 5: ***Annotated Bibliography of Evidence-Based Practices***: For one of the instructional programs/ interventions that you have designed, you will conduct and report on a mini-literature review of the evidence supporting the use of this instructional strategy. Undergraduate students report on two studies [20 points], graduate students on five [40 points], with the additional requirement of presenting one of these studies in class [10 pts].

Project 6: ***Report of Systematic Instructional Program*** **[x1]:** You will write a formal report on the implementation and follow up of one of your instructional programs, and prepare your final presentation on this program. Grad students: For the second program, you will turn in your program with student performance data and graph, and comment briefly on how things went, as well as recommended next steps. [35 pts] + [15 pts]

Summary of Assignments and Associated Weighting for Class Assignments

Activity	Points
Attendance & Participation (15 class sessions x 5 points/session)	**75**
Quiz on Low Incidence Disabilities	**20**
Blind/low vision Iris Module	**20**
Teaching activity	**10 (G+10)**
ASD Iris Module	**20**
AT Iris Module	**20**
Writing Goals & Objectives	**20**
Final Presentation	**10**

U [EDSP 456] 170 without AT Module**; 190** with AT module
G [C&I 556] 180

Summary of Assignments and Associated Weighting for Field-Work Assignments

Activity	Points
Project 1: Ecological Inventory & Discrepancy Analysis	**35**
Project 2: Student Profile/ Skill Selection	**15**
Project 3: Systematic Instructional Program Proposal **[1 or 2]**	**60 (U) or 120 (G)**
Project 4: Peer Review of Instructional Program	**15**
Project 5: Annotated List of Evidence-Based Practices *& research presentation*	**20 (U) or 40 (G) & 10 (G)**
Project 6: Report of Systematic Instructional Program **[1 or 2]**	**35 (U/G) + 15 (G) [50]**

180 (U)	**285 (G)**
+175 (or 195)	**+185**
355 (375 w/ AT module)	**470**

Grading Policy

EDSP 456 students may earn up to 375 points; EDSP 556 students may earn up to 470 points. Letter grades are earned as follows:

Grading*:

A	=	94 - 100	B	=	83 – 86	C	=	73 - 76	D	=	63 - 66
A-	=	90 - 93	B-	=	80 – 82	C-	=	70 - 72	D-	=	60.0 – 62
B+	=	87 - 89	C+	=	77 -79	D+	=	67 - 69	F	=	0 – 59.9

*Percentage will be determined by dividing total points earned by total possible and multiplying by 100; grades round from the tenth position using standard practices of 0 – 4 rounds down and 5 – 9 rounds up with the exception of "F".