SYLLABUS

Augmentative communication systems
SHS 644
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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the communication options available for persons who are unable to meet their daily communication needs through natural modes such as speech, gestures, or handwriting. Emphasis will be placed on students acquiring the professional skills necessary for the assessment and treatment of children and adults with severe expressive communication disorders.


Additional References:

Selected Handouts and Articles

Learners Objectives: Students will

1. be able to state a definition of augmentative and alternative communication with 80% accuracy on written examination 1 and the class project.

2 be able to identify persons for whom augmentative communication is necessary with 80% accuracy on examination 1 and class project.

3 be able to name and discuss both high and low-tech communication systems and their components with 80% accuracy and class project.

4 be able to assess a client’s communication problems and from that information make recommendation for selection of the most appropriate communication system with 80% accuracy on examination 2 and class project.

5. be able to state the basic concept of evidence-based practice along with rationales
for its importance in ACC with 80% accuracy on examination 3 and class project.

6. be able to develop appropriate intervention procedures for use with augmentative users with 80% accuracy on examination 3 and class project.

7. be able to demonstrate knowledge of and skill in identifying methods of prevention of further communication and literacy disorders in AAC users with 80% accuracy on examination 3 and class project.

All learner outcomes fulfill the criteria for the American-Speech-Language-Hearing association (ASHA) standards.

Course requirements and Instructional Outcomes:

Students are expected to attend class as scheduled. Class time will be used to discuss information pertinent to the class objectives. When possible, guest speakers will be invited to share their experiences with clients that are augmentative users. A representative from a company that manufactures and sells high tech equipment will demonstrate the use of their machines during class period and give you hands on experience in programming their equipment.

Knowledge and Skills

Formative experiences will measure your acquisition of knowledge and skills and are assessed throughout the semester. This may include but not be limited to question and answer periods at the beginning of lectures, your class discussions, and examinations. The summative experience will be your final project which will assess your ability to acquire and synthesize the knowledge and skills learned in class.

There will be three written examinations, and an assigned class project, in which each student will construct and present an augmentative system appropriate for their client. All examinations and the class project will count equally (100 points each) in grading. An explanation of the project is attached and will be used to assess your presentation. The following scale will be used for all graded material.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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Remediation:
It is expected that all students will achieve a level of competency for all objectives (80%) of the total allotted points for each assignment. Therefore, students below the expected criteria are responsible to increase their level of competency by meeting with the instructor and following a plan of remediation until the desired level of competency is reached. Remedial suggestions may include additional reading, attending study groups etc.

Course Outline

Section 1 Overview of augmentative and alternative communication

1. Introduction and terms. Definition of augmentative and alternative communication, who relies on augmentative an alternative communication, what it is like to rely on AAC strategies, what is the goal of AAC systems, and competencies needed to use an AAC system.

2. Message management. This is the formulation, storage, and retrieval of messages in AAC systems. What factors influence message selection, messages for conversation, vocabulary needs for different communication modes and contexts, vocabulary needs of people with different communication capabilities, and vocabulary resources and functions.

3. Symbols and rate enhancement. Symbol characteristics: iconicity, transparent, translucent, opaque, symbols, aided and unaided systems, combined symbol systems and use of rate enhancement techniques.

4. Alternative access. Types of selection, direct and scanning. Types of displays, fixed, dynamic, hybrid and visual scene displays. Physical characteristics such as number of items, spacing orientation (position of the display relative to the floor.) size, selection techniques, feedback, and message output and input.

EXAMINATION

Section II Assessment

5. Principals of Assessment: Personnel involved in augmentative and alternative communication assessment, intervention teams, assessment models (candidacy model vs participation model) phases of assessment (referral, initial assessment, assessment for tomorrow, and follow up), and process for completing the participation model.

EXAMINATION

Section III Therapy Strategies and Scheduling.


8. Augmentative and alternative communication issues for people with developmental disabilities

9. Supporting participation and communication for beginning communicators.

10. Language development and intervention

11. Linguistic and social competency

12. Literacy intervention

13. Educational inclusion

EXAMINATION

14. Adults with acquired physical conditions

15. Adults with severe aphasia and apraxia

16. Adults with degenerative, cognitive and linguistic disorders

17. Individuals with traumatic brain injury

18. Intensive and acute medical settings

Project:

The project is designed to be practical and useful. Each student team (2-3 students) will present their case; demonstrate their device and present suggested semester goals. The team’s presentation will be evaluated using the attached outline.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. If plagiarism or another act of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be dealt with in accordance with the academic misconduct policy as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

CELL PHONES:
Cell phones must be on vibrate and need to be kept off of desk tops. Texting during class is not permitted. If you need to take a call, Please step out into the hall.

**ADA Syllabus Statement**
If a student has a disability that qualifies under the American with Disabilities Act and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

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**ASHA Standards**  
All learner outcomes fulfill the criteria for the American-Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) Standards.