

**University of North Texas College of Education
NCATE Accredited Programs in Special Education**



**Course Syllabus - Fall 2013
EDSP 5310: Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder (3 Credits)**

PROFESSOR: Miriam C. Boesch, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
in Special Education

OFFICE: Matthews Hall, 322-A, UNT

PHONE: 940-565-2293 (Office)

E-MAIL: Miriam.Boesch@unt.edu (*prefer E-mail on Black Board*)

OFFICE HOURS: WED: 12:00-3:00 pm
THUR: 1:00-3:00 pm (and via email and by appt.)

Disability Accommodation: The Department of Educational Psychology complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a qualifying disability as defined in the ADA and would like to request an accommodation, please notify me as soon as possible. Students who have documentation of a disability should present a written accommodation request from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) each semester. Information regarding specific disability diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.unt.edu/oda. Also, you may visit the ODA in the University Union (Rm. 321) or phone (940) 565-4323. Please understand that the accommodations are not retroactive.

Teaching Evaluation: The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. A short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you with a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I receive from students as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class. To learn more about SETE, please visit <http://sete.unt.edu>.

Course Description: This course is an overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Students will examine history, theories, definitions and public policies related to ASD. In addition, we will explore the characteristics, diagnosis, assessment, and evidence-based practices (EBP) used with individuals with ASD across the lifespan.

1. Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will:

- 1.1. Demonstrate knowledge of important milestones in the history of ASD.
- 1.2. Demonstrate understanding of the etiology of ASD based on past and present research.
- 1.3. Demonstrate knowledge of ASD characteristics.
- 1.4. Demonstrate knowledge of ASD diagnosis and assessments.
- 1.5. Demonstrate understanding of the issues related to the early identification and intervention of individuals with ASD.
- 1.6. Demonstrate knowledge of EBPs used to address social, communicative, and behavioral skills for individuals with ASD.
- 1.7. Demonstrate understanding of the current trends and issues related to ASD.
- 1.8. Demonstrate knowledge of international, national, state and local policy issues related to ASD.

2. Materials:

- 2.1. Boutot, E. A., & Myles, B. S. (2011). *Autism spectrum disorders: Foundations, characteristics, and effective strategies*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- 2.2. Thompson, T. (2007). *Making sense of autism*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- 2.3. Readings from peer-reviewed journals will be assigned weekly. Articles will pertain to topics covered in each module.
- 2.4. American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.)*. New York: Author. [*Recommended*]

3. Performance Evaluation:

Course Modules: This course is divided into four units and 12 modules. The modules contain the content of the course and will be released on the schedule outlined in the chart below. Modules vary in length; however they contain similar core components including course questions, module description, key terms, module readings, and narrative lectures. Some modules also contain video clips and interactive games. Each student will be responsible for working through the module and responding as appropriate to discussion or other activities within the modules.

- 3.1. **Unit Discussions:** For each unit, students will participate in group discussions on what they consider the high points of the units. As you work through the modules, begin to summarize and collect what you consider the most salient points. It will also be helpful to organize your thoughts as you read the assigned module readings. This will allow you to fully participate in the unit discussions. **[5 discussions x 8 pts. = 40 points]**

Posts will begin with a response to a question posed by the instructor or teaching assistant. Points will be earned by responding to the instructor's questions **and** your peers' posts (at least 2 posts per question). The discussion will be very similar to those you might have face-to-face with points earned by making substantiate responses or original posts. If you support or agree with the comments made by a peer, you must respond with more than "I agree." You will need to share why you agree providing support from the information, particularly from the professional literature, you read or from personal professional experience.

When sharing personal experiences in discussions, be sure not to use the names of students, colleagues or family members. Limit the sharing of personal experiences to pertinent information only and link what you have shared to the context of the class.

- 3.2. **Article Review:** Students will read and write a review of one journal article. You should select an article that focuses on any of the modules. The journal should be from a peer-reviewed source and is a data-based research article. The review should be prepared using the following format. Please limit the review to no more than two double-spaced pages. **[40 points]**

- I. Research Purpose and Question(s)
- II. Procedure (how the researcher set out to answer the question)
- III. Results
- IV. Implications (for the field)
- V. Reference (APA format)

- 3.3. **Website Evaluation:** Students will evaluate three websites for credibility in disseminating ASD information. A sign-up sheet will be available on BB in order to avoid students selecting the same websites. Additional details about this assignment will be available on BB by September 21st. **[35 points]**

- 3.4. **Quizzes:** Students will be expected to complete a quiz over the syllabus and module quizzes.

3.4.1. Syllabus Quiz: The quiz is worth **5 points** and will cover content from the syllabus.

3.4.2. Module Quizzes: The quizzes will include content from the modules **and** course readings. Students will take 12 quizzes however; the lowest quiz score will be dropped. Therefore, only 11 quizzes will count towards your grade **[11 quizzes x 20 pts. = 220 points]** **No make-up quizzes allowed and quiz/exam*

questions/answers will not be released to students as a precaution to preventing academic dishonesty.

- 3.5. **ASD Policy Project:** This assignment is designed to address the fundamentals of public policy by informing the community about ASD. You will be required to assess what individuals in your community know and believe about ASD and what actions need to be taken to positively inform their beliefs. Ultimately, you are responsible for **developing a plan** for providing your community (neighborhood, school, church, recreation center, etc.) with accurate information about one of the following: ASD as a condition, individuals who have the disorder, treatment options, and/or available community resources. This information should be created in a format that is unique and appropriate for the audience you are addressing. Possible formats include, but are not limited to an article for local newspaper, presentations for school staff, presentations for church or community organizations, podcast or pamphlet. **[60 points]**
- 3.6. **Performance Evaluation Tracking:** Your final grade will be computed on the basis of the cumulative points at the end of the semester.

Assessments	Maximum (% of total grade)	Earned
Unit Discussions (5 x 8 pts.)	40 (10%)	
Article Review	40 (10%)	
Website Evaluation	35 (9%)	
Syllabus Quiz	5 (1%)	
Module Quizzes (11 x 20 pts.)	220 (55%)	
ASD Policy Assignment	60 (15%)	
<i>Extra Credit</i>		
TOTAL	400 (100%)	

Grading Criteria:

A = 400 – 360
B = 359 – 320
C = 319 – 280
D = 279 – 240
F = 239 – below

4. Administrative Policies, Requirements, and Conduct:

- 4.1. Use Person-First language when referring to people with disabilities at all times. Please do not use labels like “Autistic,” “Aspies,” or “Retarded” because of negative connotations even if other professionals at your work place use such labels.

- 4.2. Use Blackboard for communication.
- 4.3. **Completion/Submission of Assignments:** Read assignment instructions carefully before starting and/or submitting to ensure accuracy. Assignments are to be submitted through the Blackboard Assignment function. All students are responsible for paying careful attention to assignment submission deadlines. Late assignments will result in a decrease of 2 points for each calendar day the assignment is not turned in after the due date unless a prior agreement has been made with the professor.
- 4.4. Understand that your overall grade will be dependent on the *quality* of your products and not on the amount of effort or your relationship with the professor.
- 4.5. **Make-up Quizzes:** There will be NO make-up Quizzes for this course. Students will be given more than one day to take the quizzes. It is *highly recommended that you do not wait until the last day or final hour to begin a quiz* in case an unforeseen event occurs and you are unable to complete the assessment in a timely manner. A zero (0) will be given for non-completion.
- 4.6. **Incompletes:** A grade of “Incomplete” will be granted only if a student has satisfactorily completed 75% or more of the course requirements with a passing grade and requests an incomplete for extreme personal or academic reasons. The professor and student will negotiate a due date and requirements for successful completion. If the student fails to complete the requirements by the agreed upon due date, the existing grade will be submitted. Students are expected to remember and submit the requirements by the due date without waiting for reminders from the professor. Poor grades are not good enough reasons for requesting an Incomplete.
- 4.7. **Academic Integrity and Dishonesty:** To be successful in this course, you must invest a significant amount of time for study. Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy of Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Dishonesty is defined as (a) the use of unauthorized materials during quizzes/exams, (b) discussing or providing technical assistance to each other on online quizzes/exams, (c) plagiarism or representing other’s work as one’s own (e.g., copying, pasting, or retyping sentences from other electronic sources) or (d) fabricating information (e.g., “creating” a scenario not really experienced or writing a report about a past rather than current experience). Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the University Policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. I reserve the right to determine if academic dishonesty occurred and will refer such cases to the appropriate office as per the University’s policy. You will find the policy and procedures at: <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>.
- 4.8. **EagleConnect:** All UNT students should activate and regularly check their EagleConnect (e-mail) account. EagleConnect is used for official communication from the University to students. Many important announcements for the University and College are sent to students via EagleConnect. For information about EagleConnect, including how to activate an account and how to have EagleConnect forwarded to

another e-mail address, visit <https://eagleconnect.unt.edu>. This is the main electronic contact for all course-related information and/or material.

5. Calendar of Due Dates and Module Topics:

DATE	TOPICS	DUE Fri. by 11:59 PM (unless otherwise noted)
Aug. 28-30	Introduction to the Course	✓ Self-Introductions
Aug. 31-Sep. 6	<u>Unit I: Foundations of ASD</u> Module 1: Historical Foundations of ASD	✓ Quiz 1 ✓ Syllabus Quiz
Sep. 7-13	Module 2: Characteristics & Etiology of ASD	✓ Quiz 2 ✓ Unit Discussion 1
Sep. 14-20	<u>Unit II: Core Domains of ASD</u> Module 3: Social-Communication Issues	
Sep. 21-27	Module 3 Cont.	✓ Quiz 3
Sep. 28-Oct. 4	Module 4: Behavior/Sensory Issues	✓ Quiz 4 ✓ Unit Discussion 2
Oct. 5-11	<u>Unit III: ASD and the Early Years</u> Module 5: Early Identification of ASD	✓ Quiz 5
Oct. 12-18	Module 6: Early Intervention and Family Involvement	✓ Quiz 6 ✓ Unit Discussion 3 ✓ Article Review
Oct. 19-25	<u>Unit IV: School Years and Beyond</u> Module 7: Educational Assessment	✓ Quiz 7
Oct. 26-Nov. 1	Module 8: Teaching Students with ASD	✓ Quiz 8
Nov. 2-8	Module 9: Evidence-Based & Emerging Interventions	✓ Quiz 9 ✓ Unit Discussion 4
Nov. 9-15	Module 10: Controversial & Non-Validated Interventions	✓ Quiz 10 ✓ Website Eval.
Nov. 16-22	Module 11: Medical Issues	✓ Quiz 11
Nov. 23-Dec. 2	Module 12: ASD Trends, Issues and Public Policy	✓ Quiz 12 ✓ Unit Discussion 5
Dec. 3-5	Course Evaluations and ASD Project	Due Th. 12/5 ✓ ASD Policy Project
Dec. 7-13	Finals Week	None