

10-10-07

Sam Houston State University
SPD 660: SEMINAR IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS
Fall, 2007

Through programs dedicated to collaboration in instruction, field experience, and research, the candidates in Sam Houston State University's Educator Preparation Programs acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to create a positive learning environment. Employing a variety of technologies, these candidates learn to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction to meet the needs of our communities' diverse learners.

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Instructor: | Dr. Vicky Spencer | Class dates: | Wednesday |
| E-mail: | vgs001@shsu.edu | Time: | 5:30 – 8:20 p.m. |
| Phone: | (936) 294-4635 | Location: | University Center |
| Office: | UC Faculty Area/ TEC 149 | | |
| Office Hours: | By appointment | | |

Required Texts

Scheuermann, B. and Webber, J. (2002). *Autism: Teaching Does Make a Difference*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.

Supplemental Reading

Murray-Slutsky, C. & Paris, B. (2004). *Exploring the Spectrum of Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders: Intervention Strategies*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Journal Readings - TBA

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- describe the major intellectual, cognitive, academic, and social characteristics of students with ASD.
- discuss major factors of causation in ASD.
- discuss major trends and issues facing the field of ASD.
- discuss the major historical milestones and the growth of the major theoretical approaches influencing the field of ASD.
- compare and contrast major approaches and concerns related to screening, referral, diagnosis, identification, and assessment of students with ASD.
- explain and critique the rationale and elements involved in the design and provision of services for students with ASD including inclusive and integrated learning environments.
- compare and contrast major approaches to assessment and instruction of students with ASD.
- explain and engage in collaborative roles and responsibilities with educators and multidisciplinary professionals working with students with ASD.
- explain the nature of learning deficits for students with ASD including communication,

- listening, memory, attention, perceptual-motor functioning, and socialization.
- explain ASD through the life-span, including adult level and needed support options at various stages of life development.
 - describe service delivery arrangements for students with ASD including the types of demands and supports needed for success in various settings.
 - discuss, defend, and oppose major changes in the dominant paradigms, definition, and characterization of students with ASD.
 - develop an understanding of the characteristics of students with ASD and low incidence and the principles that should govern the educational programs.
 - explain basic research issues and trends in the field of ASD.
 - explain the design and findings of selected basic research studies in ASD and low incidence disabilities.

Course Requirements:

Courses at the master's level are progressively more advanced in academic content than the undergraduate courses. Thus, knowledge of the literature of the discipline and ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences are part of the program.

(1) Attendance and Class Participation: (5 Points)

One absence (3 clock hours) is allowed by the university. Use the allowed absence for medical, family, and personal needs. There are no excused or unexcused absences in the class. Please be aware that each additional absence constitutes a drop in letter grade. (For example, if a student has an A and two absences, the student will receive a B as the final grade for the class. If a student has an A and three absences, the student will receive a C as the final grade for the class.) Students are expected to be on time and remain for the entire class period.

Since this class does not meet every week, it is essential that you attend when we meet. You are expected to check your e-mail daily, since you will be completing some of your work on-line.

Some individual conferences times with the instructor will be scheduled. Those dates will be determined in class.

(2) Two Exams: (15 points each = 30 points total)

Format to be discussed in class.

(3) Article Critiques (2 articles @ 10 points each = 20 points total).

You are required to read and critique two research articles in the area of ASD.

Read and respond with a two-three page summary. Please follow the format provided. A sample is also attached.

(4) Implementation of research project (35 points)

This assignment will be discussed in class.

(5) Assessment Evaluation (5 points) – review an assessment that is used to identify

10-10-07

children with autism. Complete the Assessment Review Sheet and provide a copy for each member of the class.

(6) Program Evaluation (5 points) – research a program that is currently being used in the field of autism. Complete the Program Evaluation Form and provide a copy for each member of the class.

GRADING

92 - 100 = A

86 - 91 = B

78 - 85 = C

70 - 77 = D

BELOW 70= F

Schedule

| Date | Topic | Required Readings | Assignments Due |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| August 22 #1 | Introduction/Course Overview Aspects of ASD | “Person First Language” by Kathie Snow Williams (2001) Chapter 1 | |
| August 29 #2 | Basic Behavioral Principles & Strategies for Changing Behavior | Chapter 2 | Complete an Article Critique together in class. |
| Sept. 5 #3 | Deciding What to Teach | Chapter 4 | Sign up for Assessment Review Library – using databases Approval of Research Articles |
| Sept. 12 #4 | Behavioral & Social Competence Accommodating Sensory Issues | Speaker Heflin & Alaimo ch.5 (given in class) | Draft of 1 st Article Critique Due Approval of Research Project |
| Sept. 19 #5 | Teaching General Strategies Remediation Deficits in Socialization | Chapter 5 Social Stores Chapter 8 | |
| Sept. 26 #6 | Research & Writing | | Focus on literature review Submit #1 Article Critique |

10-10-07

| | | | |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Oct. 3 #7 | Research & Writing | | Focus on literature review Submit #2 Article Critique |
| Oct. 10 #8 | Mid-Term Exam | | Present Assessment Reviews – bring copies for each student Choose intervention to evaluate |
| Oct. 17 #9 | Communication – Remediation in Speech & Language | Chapter 6 | Communication – Remediation in Speech & Language |
| Oct. 24 #10 | Research & Writing | | |
| Oct. 31 #11 | Research & Writing | | |
| Nov. 7 #12 | Research & Writing | | |
| Nov. 14 #13 | Evaluating Intervention Programs | Chapter 9 Simpson (2004) | Present Evaluation of Intervention - bring copies for each student Video – Facilitative Communication |
| Nov. 21 #14 | THANKSGIVING | | |
| Nov. 28 #15 | Research & Writing | | |
| Dec. 5 #16 | | | Present Final Projects |
| | FINAL EXAM | | |

Scoring Rubric for Article Critiques

| | Meets Expectations | Below Expectations |
|--|--|---|
| APA Reference -1 point | < 2 Errors | > 2 Errors |
| Purpose -2 points | Clearly stated Reflects the authors stated purpose Identified the intended audience for the research article Includes overview of research questions | Purpose statement is unclear Does not reflect the authors stated purpose Does not identify the intended audience Does not include overview of research questions |
| Summary -4 points | Overview of methods & results Must include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - research design - subjects - materials - procedures - results Summarizes and synthesizes the key points concisely and accurately | Does not provide a clear overview/summarization of the methods & results – including all components |
| Subjective Critique: Strengths & weaknesses of the article -2 points | Provides your own critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the study – flaws in research, applicability to special education (how), applied value | Does not provide your own critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the study including the components mentioned |
| Clarity of Writing -1 point | Follows format provided Clearly written Follows APA format No grammatical or spelling errors | Does not follow format provided Not clearly written Does not follow APA format Grammatical or spelling errors |

Article Critique

Franca, V.M., Kerr, M.M., Reitz, A.L., & Lambert, D. (1990). Peer tutoring among behaviorally disordered students: Academic and social benefits to tutor and tutee. *Education and Treatment of Children, 13*, 109-128.

Purpose

The study was designed to investigate The authors were focused on three research questions.....The intended audience for this study was.....

Summary

The purpose of this study was to expand upon previous research that focused exclusively on the academic benefits of peer tutoring. The primary participants in the study included eight male, middle school students from a self-contained classroom in a private school for the emotionally disturbed/ behaviorally disordered. Prior to the study, the classroom teacher administered a pre-assessment worksheet to assess the students' math skills. Based on their math abilities, the students were arranged in dyads. The designated tutors participated in tutor training to master the structured four-step tutoring procedure. Tutoring sessions occurred in the regular math classroom during the math period and lasted approximately 15 minutes each.

The academic effects of the same-age peer tutoring were measured using timed probes that were administered three times per week. The timed worksheets provided the researchers with the rate of problems answered correctly and incorrectly. The peer tutoring effect on nonacademic areas, specifically socio-metric status, was investigated through a peer nomination measure and rating scale measure. An individually administered pre-test was conducted prior to the dyad designation and an individually administered post-test was conducted after each dyad completed the tutorial program.

10-10-07

Consistent and significant increases in academic performance were observed. An increase in the correct rate of responses and a decrease in the incorrect rate of the responses was observed across all four tutor-tutee dyads. Nonacademic effects for tutors and tutees included an increase in positive social interactions and improved student attitudes toward math. In addition, less frequent negative social interactions were observed between tutor and tutee.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The researchers took several measures to promote consistency among tutoring dyads and tutoring sessions. A combination of role playing and modeling was used during the training and the training lasted until the peer tutor used the tutoring procedure over three trials without omitting any steps. In addition, the tutors were able to meet with the researcher prior each daily lesson to resolve any issues about the tutoring procedure.

Though the study selected the classroom based on specific criteria, such as the teachers concern regarding student's math performance, the classroom selection resulted in a minimal number of participants in the study. In addition, all eight of the students were male.

While the study attempted to create successful dyads, the study acknowledges that though equally knowledgeable regarding the tutoring focus, the students' skill levels varied with regards to sub-skill competencies. In addition, the tutoring focused on only one content area, math, which is a cumulative subject that can be significantly impacted by poor prerequisite skills.

Finally, there was only one type of academic skill assessment, worksheets. The academic assessment was also a timed assessment, which assesses the students' rate of production, not mastery of the content. In addition, while the academic progress was monitored three times a week, nonacademic effects were evaluated only twice during the study.