



CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHRIIDGE



Basic Information

Instructor

Email

Office Hours

By appointment (on
zoom or in person)

Class Time

Asynchronous

Class Location

<https://canvas.csun.edu>

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welcome to

SPED 404

Teaching Diverse Learners with Social-Communication
Disabilities including Autism (3 credits)
Semester, Year

I am excited to see how each of you will bring your own experiences into this class as you develop an understanding of social communication and autism as well as come up with ideas for how to support students with social-communication disabilities. It's going to be a fun semester!

Conceptual Framework- What does the college value?

Michael D. Eisner College of Education (Approved May 2018):

The faculty of the Michael D. Eisner College of Education, regionally focused and nationally recognized, is committed to **excellence, innovation, and social justice**. Excellence includes the acquisition of professional dispositions, skills, and research-based knowledge, and is demonstrated by the development of ethical and caring professionals—faculty, staff, candidates—and those they serve. Innovation occurs through the leadership and commitment of faculty, and through collaborative partnerships among communities of diverse learners who engage in creative and reflective thinking. We are dedicated to promoting social justice and becoming agents of change in schools and our communities. We continually strive to achieve the following competencies and values that form the foundation of the Conceptual Framework.

- We value academic excellence in the acquisition of research-based professional knowledge and skills.
- We strive to positively impact schools and communities. Therefore, we foster a culture of evidence to determine the impact of our programs, to monitor candidate growth, and to inform ongoing program and unit improvement.
- We value ethical practice and what it means to become ethical and caring professionals.
- We value collaborative partnerships within the Michael D. Eisner College of Education as well as across disciplines with other CSUN faculty, P-12 educators and related professionals, and other members of regional and national educational and service communities.
- We value people from diverse backgrounds and experiences and are dedicated to addressing the varied strengths, interests, and needs of communities of diverse learners.
- We value creative, critical, and reflective thinking and practice.

Campus Resources– What support is available?

If you are facing challenges related to food insecurity, housing precarity/ homelessness, mental health, access to technology, eldercare/childcare, or healthcare, you can find guidance, help, and resources from CSUN with A HEART (<https://www.csun.edu/heart>). There are also additional links on our Canvas site for resources to support your academic goals and engagement with campus activities.



CSUN WITH
A HEART
SUPPORTING YOUR BASIC NEEDS, INSPIRING YOUR FUTURE



**I am
different,
not less.**

~Dr. Temple
Grandin
Professor of Animal
Husbandry
Colorado State University
<https://www.templegrandin.com/>

**If you've met one
person with autism,
you've met one
person with autism.**

~Dr. Stephen Shore
Professor of Special
Education
Adelphi University

Course Description- What is this class about? (from the catalog)

This course is designed to provide information regarding the social-communication challenges faced by diverse learners, including students who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Emphasis will be placed on implications for intervention and instruction based on students' learning characteristics including (a) the roles of social interaction and communication in cognition and learning, (b) specific learning needs of students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD, and (c) critical evaluation, selection, and implementation of interventions for students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD. The teacher's role in working with families and teaming with other disciplines to develop a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach across ages and severity of these disabilities will be examined. This course may be taken prior to admission to the Credential Program.

This course addresses the critical need for special educators to be competent in working with students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD. Deficits, delays, and disorders in interactions and communication have been identified as significant components of disabilities in children and youth.

These include students with emotional disturbance, autism spectrum disorder, cognitive/intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, and developmental disabilities. In addition, there has been a national increase in the incidence of ASD. As a result, the recently approved California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) standards for the Educational Specialist authorization requires competencies in teaching students with ASD. The CTC also has approved an added authorization in autism to current holders of educational specialist credentials. The course will meet CTC requirements as well as the interests of graduate students at the M.A. level.

Course Objectives- What will I learn?

The goal of this course is to help you engage in critical and reflective thinking as you develop the skills and knowledge to make a difference in the lives of individuals with social-communication difficulties and in the community you serve, as well as contribute to your own professional and personal growth. After completing this course, I expect you will be able to:

1. Identify specific learning characteristics of students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD, across ages and severity of the disability.
2. Identify the major strengths of students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD.
3. Critically analyze the literature and research on students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD.
4. Identify and evaluate the major evidence-based curricular models used to teach students who have social-communication disabilities.
5. Identify evidence-based practices and promising practices.
6. Using evidence-based social skill rating protocols, assess the social-communication abilities and needs of students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD.
7. Plan and implement classroom evidence-based social skill lessons based on assessment and data collected on students.
8. Select and implement individually appropriate evidence-based instructional approaches for students with social-communication disabilities, including ASD, and evaluate their effectiveness.
9. Establish communication, collaborative relationships, and interdisciplinary teams with other professionals and parents that will support students with ASD.

You can expect me to support your attainment of these objectives by cultivating a positive learning environment that includes understanding, feedback, and guidance. We're in this together!

Accessibility– Need additional support? Ask for help.



Anything is possible!
If I can do it,
so can you!

~Dani Bowman
Head of DaniMation Studios
<https://danimationentertainment.com/>

Everyone's brain and body works differently– please ask for help if you want it.

It is my goal to create a learning environment that supports a diversity of learning styles. If you anticipate any issues related to the format, materials, or requirements of this course, please contact me so we can explore potential options. I will be more than happy to work with you so that you can have a positive learning experience.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Disability Resource and Educational Services (DRES) at <https://www.csun.edu/dres>. Registration and completion of a services agreement must occur each semester. Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided for students that register with DRES in a timely manner and with appropriate documentation in accordance with federal, state, and university guidelines. DRES can be reached at (818) 677-2684 and is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110.

Class Format– What is class like?

All official communication will be by e-mail to your CSUN email account.

Online Asynchronous: This course will be taught completely online (no campus meetings will be required) with asynchronous activities you access by logging on with your campus credentials to Canvas (<https://canvas.csun.edu/>). If you have difficulty logging in to the course or you do not see the course listed, please contact the IT Help Desk. To succeed in this course, you must have reliable access to a computer and internet connection. CSUN offers currently enrolled students the option to borrow devices such as computers and internet hotspots through its Device Loaner Program (<https://www.csun.edu/it/device-loaner-program>). Minimal technical skills, such as attaching documents and using Word are necessary for succeeding in the course. If you are having technical difficulties, please contact technical support at <https://www.csun.edu/it/need-help>.

Attendance: Although this is an asynchronous online course, your active and consistent participation is required to succeed and demonstrate understanding of the material. In this asynchronous class, attendance is equivalent to completing each weekly module, which includes, but is not limited to posting to the discussion board, submitting an assignment, or taking an assessment. Please plan to spend at least 2½ hours each week on Canvas to complete each week's class module. (An additional couple hours a week should be reserved for reviewing class material, preparing for the next class, and working on course assignments). All of us in the class– you, me, your peers– have a responsibility to create an environment in which we can all learn from each other. I expect everyone to participate so that we can all benefit from the insights and experiences each person brings. Please let me know if there are other teaching practices I can use to promote your success in this course. I know that extenuating circumstances arise that can make this difficult, please come see me to discuss options if needed. Remember that eligibility for financial aid is also based on student participation.

Restrictions on Disclosure and Distribution: To foster a safe environment for learning, the redistribution of audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course is prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Unauthorized distribution of such materials is a violation of academic standards and may violate copyright laws and/or privacy rights.



fresh sheets for the bed

Megan
Rhannon
Illustrator

<https://www.megan-rhannon.com/>

“Do the best you can and never stop.”

~Stephen Wiltshire
Landscape Sketch Artist

<https://www.stephenwiltshire.co.uk/>



Netiquette Guidelines– What are the class norms? (for you & me)

- **Write in digestible chunks.** Lengthy paragraphs are difficult for readers to digest. Keep your paragraphs short and your writing concise.
- **NO YELLING.** When you write in uppercase letters in online communication, it is usually interpreted as yelling.
- **Add some emotion :)** . Sometimes it helps communicate the tone of your message when you add an emoticon. However, only do so as necessary, for it can end up being annoying to readers if you have too many, which is probably the opposite of your intention.
- **Use humor carefully.** Sarcasm, in particular, does not translate well in an online environment. It's best to avoid the potential pitfalls of misunderstood messages.
- **Assume the best intentions.** In an online environment, it is easy to misread someone's tone or intended message. Give your peers and instructor the benefit of the doubt, and ask them to clarify their meaning.
- **We are not the same.** Respect differences and don't make assumptions.
- **Language matters.** Choose your words carefully; avoid using slang, and be kind.

Something else you'd like to add here? Please let me know.

Respect for Diversity & Commitment to Non-Discrimination

It is my intent to create an inclusive class environment where students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives will be well served by this course and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. My goal is to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity and honors your identities, including accounts and viewpoints from traditionally underrepresented groups. Please let me know if there are ways to improve in this regard for you personally or for other students or student groups. You can also submit anonymous feedback, which will lead to my making a general announcement to the class if necessary to address concerns.

With the above in mind, students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining a safe and respectful space to express their reasoned opinions. Because our classroom should be free of all forms of discrimination, professional courtesy and consideration for our classroom community are especially important with respect to topics dealing our diverse social identities. Any student who has concerns with inappropriate behavior in the course should contact me as soon as possible so I can facilitate discussions with concerned parties to talk through the issues, or you may also contact CSUN's Title IX Coordinator directly: Barrett Morris, University Hall, Room 285, Phone: (818) 677-2077, Email: barrett.morris@csun.edu





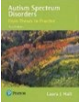
Student Conduct Code

This class will follow the CSUN Student Conduct Code. Detailed information can be found at <http://catalog.csun.edu/policies/student-conduct-code/>

*I want to know **your** own thoughts and ideas about the class material so submit your own work.*

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. If you are not clear on what constitutes plagiarism, see this resource from the University Library: <https://libguides.csun.edu/journalism/plagiarism>

Textbooks– What books do I need?

	Maurice, C. (1994). <i>Let me hear your voice: A family's triumph over autism</i> . New York, NY: The Random House Publishing Group. ISBN: 9780449906644 (*OK to read previous versions)
	Kedar, I. (2012). <i>I do in autismland: Climbing out of autism's silent prison</i> . Los Angeles, CA: Self-published. ISBN: 9780988324701
	Several modules from the OCALI AIM & AFIRM Modules will be required reading. https://autisminternetmodules.org/ https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/
	Other required readings will be posted in the Canvas modules.
	Optional: Hall, L.J. (2018). <i>Autism spectrum disorders: From theory to practice, 3rd ed.</i> New York, NY: Pearson Education, Inc., ISBN: 9780134531519

Course Requirements– What do I have to do?

Lots of different ways to demonstrate what you have learned- Detailed information and grading rubrics will be provided on our Canvas site.

□ **Let Me Hear Your Voice Reaction Paper (20 points)**

Read the book, *Let Me Hear Your Voice*, and write a three-page paper answering questions to discuss a family's experience with autism, reflect on children's early social-communication development and intervention, think about issues of assumptions, privilege, and dominant norms, as well as the resources/opportunities that are available for children and families today.

□ **Ido Kedar Reaction Paper (20 points)**

Ido Kedar was a student in the Los Angeles Unified School District and has written a book about his experience. Read the book, *Ido in Autismland*, and write a three-page paper answering questions about your feelings towards Ido's educational experiences and discuss assumptions and biases related to individuals with social-communication disabilities as well as other intersecting identities.

□ **Movie Review (30 points)**

From a list of movies about autism/individuals with social-communication difficulties, select one to watch and then write a brief review assessing the social-communication characteristics portrayed in the movie, especially as it relates to the information presented in class. Identify the major strength(s) of the target character, suggest intervention goals and strategies, and reflect on the portrayal of the target character.

□ **Intervention Strategy Review (30 points)**

In small groups, present a description and critique of a specific intervention strategy of your choice for children and youth with social-communication difficulties. All topics must be approved. After reviewing the presentations, rate each intervention strategy on whether you might (or might not) examine the strategy further for possible implementation and suggest possible adaptations for use in the real-world setting, taking into consideration issues of equity and social justice.

□ **Final Project: Lesson Plan (50 points)**

Prepare a culturally responsive lesson/activity plan for a child/youth with social-communication difficulties, reflecting your understanding of facilitating social-communication skill development, while specifically referencing the material and readings presented throughout the course. *If possible, implement the lesson/activity.

□ **Attendance/Participation (10 points each class)**

Classes will be posted once a week on Canvas. Go through each module and participate in the class activities (e.g., quizzes, assignments, discussions, etc.). Do your best to complete all modules on time so you can participate fully with your classmates. The more we all participate, the more we can all get from our class.

Need help or just want to connect? Contact me or reach out to your classmates (through Canvas or email). We can do this! The key to learning is putting in effort. I will do my best to support and encourage your efforts and I hope you will do the same.



When you're a kid and get your first bike, you want to go somewhere you've never been before. That's like Pokémon. Everybody shares the same experience, but everybody wants to take it

<https://www.pokemon.com/us/>

~Satoshi Tajiri, Video game designer, Creator of Pokémon

And how will I be graded?

Let Me Hear Your Voice Reaction Paper	20
Ido Kedar Reaction Paper	20
Movie/ Observation Review	30
Intervention Research Presentation	30
Lesson Plan (Final)	50
Attendance/ Participation	150
Total Possible Points	300

How do points change to grades?

A	93-100%
A-	90-92.9%
B+	87-89.9%
B	83-86.9%
B-	80-82.9%
C+	77-79.9%
C	70-76.9%
D	60-69.9%
F	59.9% & below

More on Grading

It is important that students set professional goals for achievement and pursue readings and assignments with your professional development as the focus (even when it might be difficult). However, this class is graded per Department of Special Education policy. Grades reflect performance in exams, projects, and class attendance and participation. Comments, questions, concerns, need help or advice or just want to talk? Contact me.

So what do the grades mean? The following is the Department of Special Education's grading policy:

- A = Outstanding.** Performance reflects an outstanding level, including the integration of information and the application of theory and research to practice. Projects and exams are comprehensive, thoughtful, well organized, and clearly written.
- B = Very Good.** Performance reflects competencies that surpass a basic level of understanding and skill, and that indicates some ability to integrate and apply information.
- C = Satisfactory.** Performance reflects a minimal level of competency attainment, understanding, and skill. It does not meet graduate-level and professional standards.
- D = Barely passing.** Performance reflects the attainment of some competencies.
- F = Failing.** Performance does not meet expectations for basic competency attainment.

Submission of Assignments- How do I submit work?

Assignments are submitted by **uploading them to Canvas**. Feedback and grades will be provided through Canvas. Please make sure you are giving yourself enough time to complete and submit the assignments for the course to minimize any unforeseen challenges. *Plan ahead!*

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments must be typed, have one-inch margins, font size 12, and be submitted as **Microsoft documents or pdfs**. CSUN provides all students with free access to Microsoft Office, which includes Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Here is a link to the CSUN free Microsoft Office site: <https://www.csun.edu/it/microsoft-office>

Writing: Students are expected to turn in papers and assignments of high quality. All work should represent your reflections upon and the integration of information covered in class in an organized way. References should follow APA guidelines (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Additionally, written assignments are to be clear in sentence construction and should be proofread before submitting. If you need additional assistance with writing, please visit the University Writing Center at: <https://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/learning-resource-center/university-writing-center>

Person-first Language: In general, use person-first language in your professional writing and speaking to acknowledge that people are more than their disability. Only use identify-first language if you have knowledge of that specific preference for an individual. Not sure? Ask.

Due Dates: Turn work in on time so you can better participate and gain more from the meetings and activities. I will also be able to give you feedback earlier which could help you with later work. Life is unpredictable though— I get it. Contact me if extenuating circumstances arise so that options can be discussed.

Extra Credit: In this course, extra credit is given through the opportunity to revise and resubmit assignments based on feedback with a chance to raise their grade if the revision is submitted before the end of the semester.

What helped to survive life's challenges is perseverance and not giving up.

~Tony Hernandez Pumajero

Advocate,
Speaker,
TV Collaborator,
Author

Withdrawals and Incompletes

Sometimes unexpected things happen— I understand. However, it is your responsibility to monitor your performance as you will not be automatically dropped for absences or poor performance. **Incomplete grades** are granted only in extreme and unavoidable situations. Fifty percent (50%) of classwork must be completed with a passing grade before an incomplete can be considered. *Before you decide you are unable to stay in this class, I encourage you to meet with me. We might be able to resolve your concerns.*



<https://tonyhernandezpumajero.com/>

Email me at connie.wong@csun.edu—I'd love to hear from you!

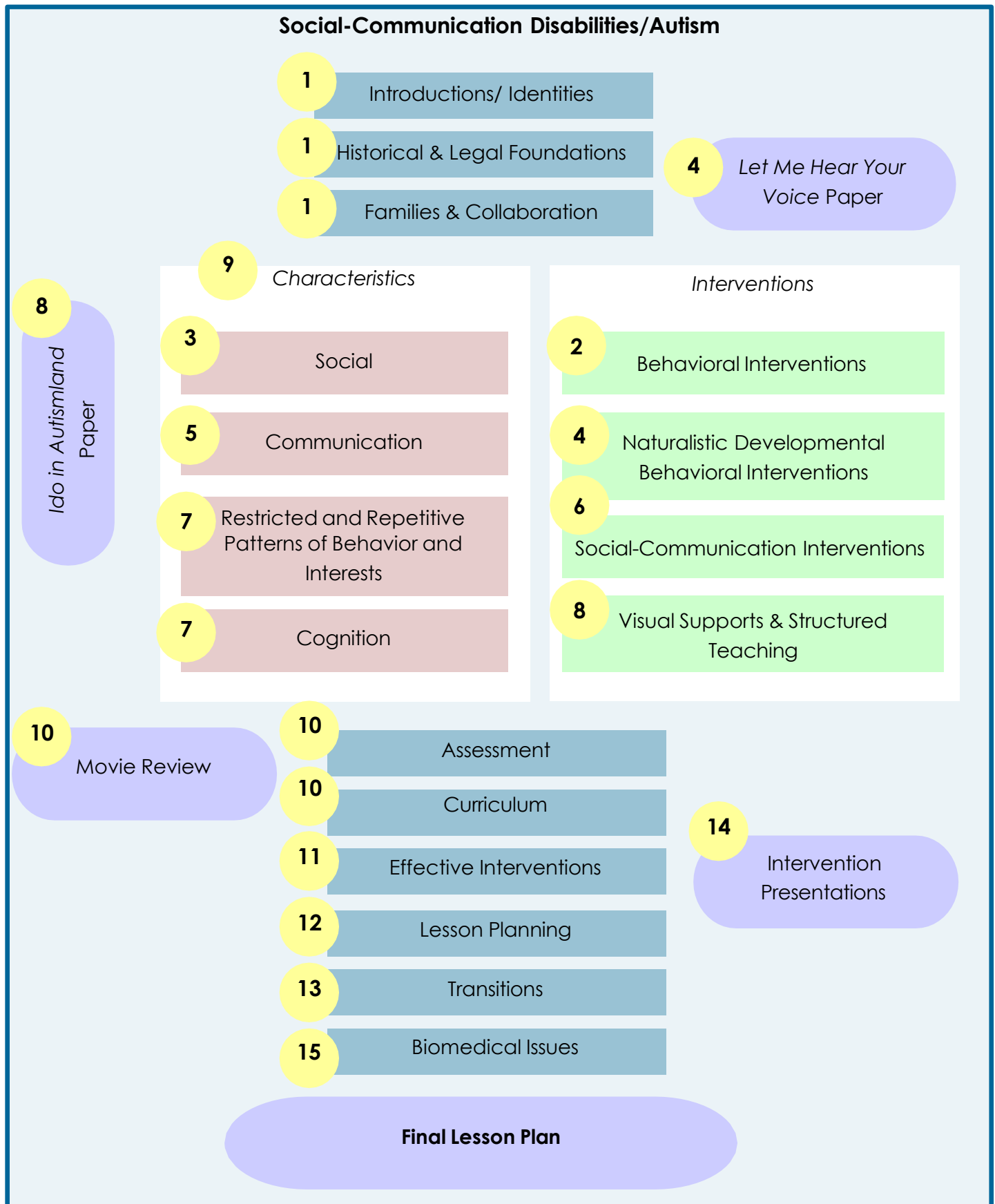


Course Schedule– When do I do everything?

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due Dates (by midnight)
Class 1 1/24	Introduction, historical & legal foundations, families & collaboration [1.2][6.1][6.12]	Cultural Competency videos <i>Let Me Hear Your Voice</i> (Hall: Ch. 10)	1/30: Class 1 due
Class 2 1/31	Behaviorally based interventions (+ direct instruction) [4.7]	AIM: Prompting, Reinforcement Discrete Trial Training (Hall: Ch. 4 & 5)	2/6: Class 2 due
Class 3 2/7	Social	AIM: Overview of Social Skills Functioning and Programming (Hall: Ch 8)	2/13: Class 3 due
Class 4 2/14	Naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions [1.3][2.6]	AIM: Naturalistic Intervention, Pivotal Response Training (PRT) NDBI Inclusion chapter (Hall: Ch 6)	2/16: Let Me Hear Your Voice Paper due 2/20: Class 4 due
Class 5 2/21	Communication	AIM: Language and Communication <i>Ido in Autismland</i> (Hall: Ch 7)	2/27: Class 5 due
Class 6 2/28	Social-communication interventions [2.5][7.14]	AIM: PECS, Speech-Generating Devices, Social Narratives	3/5: Class 6 due
Class 7 3/6	Restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviors, interests, and activities & cognition	AIM: Restricted Patterns of Behavior, interests, and activities; Cognitive Differences	3/12: Class 7 due
Class 8 3/13	Visual supports & structured teaching [2.3]	AIM: Visual Supports, Video Modeling, Structured Teaching	3/15: Ido Paper due 3/26: Class 8 due
Class 9 3/27	Review of Characteristics, mid-semester feedback		4/2: Class 9 due
Class 10 4/3	Assessment & curriculum [3.1][3.5][3.7]	AIM: Assessment for Identification Preschool curriculum book chapter (Hall: Ch 2)	4/5 Movie Review Due 4/9 Class 10 due
Class 11 4/10	Effective interventions & Research	EBP Report 2020 (Hall: Ch 3)	4/16: Class 11 due
Class 12 4/17	Lesson planning [1.1]		4/23: Class 12 due
Class 13 4/24	Transitions [6.8]	Transitions book chapter (Hall: Ch 9)	4/30: Class 13 due & Intervention Presentations due
Class 14 5/1	Intervention Research Presentations		5/7: Class 14 due
Class 15 5/8	Biomedical issues	(Hall: Ch 1)	5/14: Class 15 due
Finals Week	Final Project- Lesson Plan		5/17: Assignment Revisions & Lesson Plan due

**Schedule, topics, & assignments subject to change with notice*

How does everything fit together?



Linking Key:

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[1.4]	7
[2.3]	7
[2.5]	7
[2.6]	7
[3.1]	7
[3.5]	7
[3.7]	7
[4.7]	7
[6.1]	7
[6.8]	7
[6.12]	7
[7.14]	7