**Augmentative Communication**

**Course #: 6860**

**3 credit hour**

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| **Semester**: | Summer |
| **Instructor**: | Amy Miller Sonntag, M.A., CCC-SLP |
| **Class Schedule / Location**: | TBD |
| **Office**: | Pressey Hall, Room 115 |
| **Office Hours**: | By appointment |
| **Contact info**: | [Sonntag.12@osu.edu](mailto:Sonntag.12@osu.edu), 614-272-3711 |

**Course Description:**

This lecture course is designed to provide students with knowledge in the areas of augmentative communication/augmentative & alternative communication (AAC). The course will explore the assessment and management of people requiring augmentative communication secondary to a variety of diagnoses.

**ASHA Standards Addressed:**

**III-C 8 & 9** – The student will demonstrate specific knowledge about the nature of communication disorders, specifically in the areas of social aspects and communication modalities.

**III-D 8 & 9** – The student will demonstrate specific knowledge about the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for the social aspects of communication and communication modalities.

**IV-G-1-b 8 & 9 / IV-G-1-C 8 & 9** – The student will integrate case history and select appropriate evaluation procedures to meet client needs.

**IV-G-2-a 8 & 9** – The student will develop intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals for social aspects of communication and communication modalities.

**IV-G-2-C 8 & 9** – The student will select appropriate materials and instrumentation for intervention of social aspects of communication and communication modalities.

**Course Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Be able to define key terminology pertaining to AAC
2. Recognize characteristics that suggest candidacy for AAC
3. Be able to identify the major access techniques for AAC devices
4. Identify different scanning patterns and user demands

**Required Text:**

Beukelman, D.R. and Mirenda, P., (2013). Augmentative and Alternative Communication (4th edition). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

**Optional Text:**

Johnston, S., Reichle, J., Feeley, K., & Jones, E. (2012). AAC Strategies for Individuals with Moderate to Severe Disabilities. Brookes Publishing.

**Projects:**

1. **Lead Class Discussion - 50 points (see rubric for scoring):** Small groups will lead class discussions of various materials that document a person who uses AAC’s journey. ***Presentations occur during Week 9 of Class*** Examples can include: Chris Klein – Only God Could Hear Me, Martin Pistorius – Ghost Boy, or 1-2 of the following Ted Talks/Podcasts:
   1. <https://www.ted.com/talks/roger_ebert_remaking_my_voice?language=en>
   2. <https://www.ted.com/talks/rupal_patel_synthetic_voices_as_unique_as_fingerprints?language=en>
   3. <https://www.ted.com/speakers/ajit_narayanan>
   4. <https://www.ted.com/talks/hugh_herr_the_new_bionics_that_let_us_run_climb_and_dance?language=en>
   5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H3e2MXV6iY> (Chris Klein)
   6. <https://www.ted.com/speakers/martin_pistorius>
   7. BlissSymbols: RadioLab - <http://www.radiolab.org/story/257189-bliss/> - Listen to the “Mr. Bliss” segment. You can start at minute 5.
   8. Other options can be presented to the instructor for approval

Group discussions need to include: How video/book relates to AAC topic discussed in class, relevance to how it will relate to your future practice, evidence of pulling in additional resources to learn more about the topic, facilitation of discussion with the class about the topic.

1. **Develop AAC Overlays - 100 Points (see rubric for scoring)**: Develop 2 overlays for specified activity or environment provided by instructor. ***Due Week 11 of Class***
   1. Complete a vocabulary selection and/or create overlay design for an AAC device for an individual with a disability as the individual participates in an activity (cooking, field trip, participating in a class assignment)
   2. Determine both core and fringe vocabulary selection
      1. Determine core vocabulary by finding common words between 2 different activities during a structured and unstructured activity
      2. Determine fringe vocabulary by completing an ecological inventory as h/she participates in the activities identified by you (calendar time, cooking, field trip, snack etc.)
      3. Write a script of the student exchanges. Indicate the speakers (teacher, student, peer, family member, etc.). Write the exact words/phrases used during the interaction. A script breaks the activity or routine in components that depict the speakers, the conversation between the speakers and the activity’s needed materials
      4. Check words for pragmatics
      5. Submit the core vocabulary, fringe vocabulary along with script and overlays.
   3. Select symbols for the vocabulary. Symbols need to be appropriate for the student. You can use PCS, Symbol Stix, Lesson Pix, clip art, photographs, or you can create your own
   4. Create a communication display (e.g. board, notebook) or document how you would use a high tech AAC device using the vocabulary selection completed and the symbols selected. The number of symbols should be consistent with the intervention and functioning level of the client.
   5. Document 5 steps you would use to instruct parent/caregiver/teacher to use AAC appropriately in designated situations. Include strategies for repairing communication breakdowns.

**Grading:**

Letter grades will be assigned based on the standard ranges as follows: 93-100% A, 90-92.9% A-, 87-89.9% B+, 83-86.9% B, 80-8.92% B-, 77-79.9% C+, 73-76.9% C, 70-72.9% C-, 67-69.9 D+, 63-66 D, < 63% E

**Class Topics:** (presumed Summer semester of 12 weeks; will adjust accordingly. Teaching in the Autumn or Spring semester would allow more opportunities for groups to present their projects as well as include more time to time with AAC devices and equipment, presentations from people who use AAC and AAC device manufacturers.)

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| **Week 1**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 1, 2 | ***Introduction to AAC***   * Definitions and terminology pertaining to AAC * Candidacy – Complex Communication Needs * History of AAC * Roles and responsibilities of the SLP * AAC models: linguistic, operational, social, and strategic competence |
| **Week 2**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 3, 9 | ***Low Tech AAC & Vocabulary Selection***   * Overview of low tech AAC and how it relates to language development * Core v. fringe Vocabulary * Picture symbol sets * AAC myths dispelled * Aided language simulation * Partner Assisted Scanning * PODD (Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display) |
| **Week 3** | ***High Tech AAC***   * Dedicated v. open platform options * Major companies and their options * Vocabulary organization systems on high tech systems: Unity, Words for Life (LAMP), Compass, Communicator, WordPower, Grid2 * Rate enhancement techniques |
| **Week 4**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 4 | **Alternative Access**   * Switch access options: single, dual switch; switch options, scanning patterns, accessing vocabulary, auditory scanning * Unique needs and challenges |
| **Week 5**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 4 | **Alternative Access**   * Headpointing * Eyegaze * Unique needs and challenges |
| **Week 6**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 7, 8 | **AAC Intervention Strategies**   * Aided Language simulation * Pre-intentional behavior * Specific strategies: scripted routines, visual supports, PECS, coaching, scaffolding * Language development * Teaching specific communication functions |
| **Week 7**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 10, 11 | **AAC Intervention Strategies**   * Communication partner instruction * Universal Design for Learning (UDL) * SETT Framework (Student, Environment, Task, Tools) Joy Zabala |
| **Week 8**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 12 | **AAC & Literacy**   * Developing literacy skills in non-verbal clients * Modifications to traditional instruction * Age appropriate reading materials |
| **Week 9** | **Group presentations on assigned project/s** |
| **Week 10**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 5, 6 | **Assessment & Funding**   * Multidisciplinary evaluation process * Components of a complete evaluation * Feature matching * Specific Ohio Medicaid/Medicare regulations * Private insurance regulations |
| **Week 11** | **Assessment & Funding cont.** |
| **Week 12**  Beukelman & Mirenda: Chapter 13 | **Contemporary Issues in AAC**   * Specific issues for people with acquired communication needs * Mobile devices * Integrating AAC use in all environments |
| **OTHER** | Guest speakers to be invited at appropriate times to facilitate topics. Speakers could include:   * AAC users * AAC device manufacturer representatives * Professionals from other disciplines who use AAC |

**Laptop Use**: The use of laptops is permitted during class MAINLY for note taking purposes and the occasional need to look up something we are currently discussing. The following rules must be adhered to:

* Charge your laptop batteries fully before coming to class
* Set your laptop volume control to mute or off before coming to class
* Keep your laptop closed during presentations and other specific in-class activities
* Do not engage in unauthorized communication or entertainment (web surfing, instant messaging, cat room chatting, DVD viewing, music playing, game playing, checking e-mail etc.) during class unless it’s part of the lesson.

Because improper use of laptops is distracting to all members of the class, if any student is found using their laptop in an inappropriate way, use of laptops will not be allowed in subsequent class meetings.

**Attendance is mandatory for this course**. Only University recognized absence excuses will be accepted and should be presented to the instructor prior to the class meeting. Students are expected to arrange for a recording of a lecture or a copy of notes to be taken by a classmate if an absence occurs. A summary of notes or a recording are required if an emergency absence occurs with no reminder provided by the instructor.

* **RULES OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY**

ATTENDANCE AND GRADUATION  
Chapter 3335-9

**3335-9-21 Absences:**

Each department or school may make its own rules relative to occasional absences by students from scheduled activities. If, however, a student is absent from a course to such an extent as to imperil his or her credit, or is notably irregular in attendance, it shall be the duty of the instructor concerned to report the facts promptly to the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled. The dean may take such action as deemed appropriate.

**Academic Misconduct:**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). **For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct:** [**http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/**](http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/)**.**

**Student Affairs Information:** Our department and our university have a long legacy of embracing inclusion, diversity, community, and openness.  Our challenge is to ensure that we continue to be proactive in our efforts to nurture and realize these values.  Therefore, we will continue to make every effort to welcome students of different backgrounds, cultures, and opinions and work to maintain an environment that is respectful of this diversity.  University policies and other resources may be found here:  <http://www.studentaffairs.osu.edu/bias/>

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs.

Office of Disability Services (ODS) – ods.osu.edu/services

ODS is located at 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43210. Phone: 614-292-3307, fax: 614-292-4190, VRS (video relay service): 614-492-1334

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity. Please visit <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html> to see the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) Code of Student Conduct statement. You can also read the statement direct from this link: <http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf>

**Grading Rubric: Lead Class Discussion**

**50 Points**

Based on the video, book, or information about a person who uses AAC, you will lead a class discussion lasting 20 minutes. You will need to:

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| **Content** | **Points** |
| Provided background information about the person who uses AAC | 5 |
| Related the information about the person to an aspect of the class | 10 |
| Showed short clips of the video and/or book passage to illustrate a point and provide a base of knowledge for discussion | 5 |
| Demonstrated additional research conducted by adding in information that was not part of the book/video | 15 |
| Facilitated discussion about how it will relate to your (and your classmates) future practice for people who need AAC and who do not need AAC | 15 |
| **TOTAL** | **50** |

**Grading Rubric: Develop AAC Overlays**

**100 Points**

Develop 2 AAC overlays for 2 specified activities or environments provided by the instructor for a person who needs AAC.

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| **Content** | **Points** |
| Vocabulary selected was appropriate to activity/environment and placed in accurate categories of core and fringe. | 20 |
| Selected vocabulary was able to be used in pragmatically appropriate exchanges based on script provided. | 20 |
| Core and fringe vocabulary was organized in a way that facilitated communication with a variety of people and across a variety of exchanges in the activity/environment. This includes images/text selected. | 20 |
| Documented 5 steps for instructing use of AAC overlays/system for parent/caregiver/teacher. | 20 |
| Insight into where communication breakdowns could occur and how to repair communication breakdowns was provided. | 20 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** |