



SPED 540—Assessment and Interventions for Social Communication Impairments
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer I 2026 (online)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Anabel Vega Meyer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Office Hours: By appointment
University Email Address: Anabel.VegaMeyer@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: University Email
Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours during business days

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Course Format: Web-based (Online via D2L)
Class dates: 06/02/25 – 07/03/25

Required Readings:

Prelock, P.A., McCauley, R.J., Charman, T., & Fuller, E.A. (Eds). (2021). *Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies for Communication and Social Interactions (CLI)* (2nd ed). Brookes Publishing.

Recommended Readings:

Any book from Council for Exceptional Children Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities: <http://www.daddcec.com/other-publications.html>

American Psychological Association (APA). (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (7th Ed.). Washington, D.C.*

This book is only listed because you will need to have all writing activities written in APA format.

Other resources. East Texas A&M University's Library provides access to thousands of online journals. Of particular interest to this class are resources found in the ERIC and PsychInfo databases. You may access these resources on campus or from home by using your CWID and password at <http://www.tamuc.edu/library/>

Course Description

This course addresses the (a) process of verbal, non-verbal, and paralinguistic communication skills; (b) assessment of communication competence, including social skills; and (c) research-

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based intervention strategies and effective practices for promoting effective communication for learners with social communication impairments, including Autism Spectrum Disorders. Language development, communication and language-based assessments, social skills training, alternative/augmentative modes of communication, assistive technology devices, and the impact of contextual factors affecting communication competence will be discussed and investigated.

Student Learning Outcomes At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the etiologies and characteristics of receptive/expressive language, cognitive communication, social aspects of communication & communication modalities in individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD).
2. Students will integrate developmental theories and milestones into an assessment of individuals with social communication impairments, including ASD.
3. Students will be able to identify, explain, and compare strategies and materials used to educate individuals with social communication impairments, including ASD.
4. Students will demonstrate understanding of procedures of effective assessments, instruction, and supports that target (a) social communication, (b) functional behavior, and (c) the academic performance of individuals with social communication impairments, including ASD.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Enrolled students will need a working knowledge of how to access the course online, access materials and resources the instructor posts, recording/posting videos, and the use of word processing programs for submitting assignments.

Instructional Methods

This course will be facilitated using D2L, the learning management system used by East Texas A&M University. The instructor has included various forms of instructional tools in the course such as lecture slides, videos, helpful websites/resources, scholarly articles, and discussion topics.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Students will be responsible for completing assigned readings and activities in required timelines. To be successful in this course, students should plan sufficient time to read all assigned readings and any other activities (for example, watch videos or locate websites). All work must be completed within time limits, so time management is a priority. Students must complete all assignments before the due date. In addition, students must work diligently as

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collaborative group members. Students who do not exhibit good citizenship to the class and to their group will not receive a high grade and will have difficulty passing the course.

Instructional Methods

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90% - 100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70%- 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 59% or Below

Before turning in your assignment:

- Read rubrics and weekly schedule for each assignment
- Check your grammar errors and format requirement (e.g. APA),
- Use people first language, and
- Submit all written assignments in myLeo (Activities-Assignments).

All assignments will be evaluated within a week after the due date, please send me a reminder if you do not see your grades on time.

Assignment	Points
Weekly Assignments: Quiz or Discussion	150
Resource Guide Repository	50
Case Study w/ Mock Parent Interview & Collaboration Activity	45
Professionalism and Good Conduct	5
Total	250

1. Weekly Assignments:

For each week, you will be given assignments to read, go through videos and/or lectures, and weekly assignments that will cover all the information for that week. Please read carefully the information that follows about each type of assignment.

Typically, the weekly assignments will be open for the entire week, and generally, will close on Saturday at 11:55 pm but you are responsible to verify the closing date/time of each assignment.

a. Quiz (D2L-Activities-Quizzes). You will be allowed to take the quiz only one time unless otherwise noted. These quizzes are open book, open notes, **but do not copy and paste your answers or plagiarize. Your answers should be in your own words.** The quizzes will be timed so, even though you can have access to your book, you will

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need to have a good understanding of all the material in advance of taking the quiz to complete it timely.

b. Reflective Discussion (D2L-Activities-Discussions). For each discussion, you are to contribute thoughtful reflections to a thought-provoking question based on assigned readings/lectures/ videos, etc. As these are individualized reflections, you cannot copy your opinion from the text, Google, etc. and your opinion may differ from your classmates. For all discussion forum, you will be required to respond to at least two postings of your classmates. In responding to another person's post, be considerate and respectful. Your peer responses must be posted by Saturday as well. Provide your own opinion about the discussion prompt. Provide evidence to support your opinion. Evidence must be from readings, lecture slides, other peer-reviewed articles. Please adhere to APA citation guidelines.

2. Resource Guide Repository: Students will be required to create a cloud-based repository where specific products and resources will be stored and shared with the instructor. The purpose of this assignment is to provide the student a professional resource repository to use while practicing as a service provider for individuals with social communication impairments, including ASD. The repository will include a list of local resources for families that students can tailor to their local area/district.

3. Case Study with Mock Parent Interview and Collaboration Activity will include: (a) Case information - Describe demographic and contextual information on the student (b) Methods: Describe your case study methods (e.g. interviews, duration/frequencies, observations-durations/frequencies, illustration of the educational and cultural milieu, etc.) (c). Findings: Illustrate key findings (e.g. academic, behavioral, and functional performance, educational trajectories, postsecondary goals, special education and related services) (e.) Reflection: Provide your suggestions that can improve the student's academic achievement and functional performance. Include information focused on caregiver/parent concerns and in-home/parent training needs. Explain how this case study impact your professional knowledge and goals.

4. Professionalism, Participation, and Good Conduct: It is expected that all products are completed in a timely manner and free of spelling and grammatical errors. Additionally, students are expected to use professional vernacular of (dis)ability culture. Respectful and culturally responsive discourse on discussion boards and interactions with the instructor are required! Professionalism in communications with the instructor and peers WILL BE EVALUATED—this is a course in social skills and students will be expected to display them throughout the course.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Professional Conduct. Students are expected to conduct themselves as mature and responsible adults while enrolled in this course. Be cognizant that side conversations in class can be distracting to the instructor and your classmates. Please show respect for others when they speak. If you do not agree with their point of view, ask for clarification or offer alternative viewpoints. Behavior meant to demean or belittle a class member will not be tolerated. Also, student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at ETAMU. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom

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and the instructor will seek the assistance from the proper authorities (e.g. Chair of Psychology, Counseling, & Special Education and/or Dean's Office).

E-mail and myLEOonline (D2L Brightspace). All Students should activate and regularly check their Leo Mail and myLEOonline (D2L Brightspace) accounts associated with this class. All assignments will be turned in on myLEOonline (D2L Brightspace) (when applicable) unless otherwise instructed to do something differently by the instructor of this course. All class communication will be done through D2L. I **WILL NOT** send communication about the class to personal email accounts.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will **NOT** be accepted unless you have provided adequate documentation allowing your absence to be excused (doctor's note in case of illness or copy of a funeral program in case of a death of a loved one). In the event your absence is excused, the missing assignment or exam must be completed **within 1 week** of your return to class or the student will receive a grade of 0.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advanced.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. For this course, such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the

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AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources. 13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Drop Policy. Students are responsible for officially dropping/withdrawing themselves from the course; failure to do so will result in a grade of "F." Please refer to the academic calendar in order to be aware of drop dates. The instructor reserves the right to do an administrative drop in certain situations.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to conform to the East Texas A&M University's Code of Student Conduct Procedures as it relates to academic integrity. This states in part that all instances of cheating, fabrication and plagiarism are prohibited and will be reported. Any student who assists in any form of dishonesty is equally as guilty as the student who accepts such assistance. Any work submitted to me with your name alone on it should represent your work alone. Even in the event you are assigned group projects each student is still expected to complete their own part of the assignment. To the extent that others contribute ideas, suggestions, they must be directly credited by name (and fully cited as appropriate). Disciplinary action will be taken against any student found in violation of the Code, which may include failure of the given assignment, failure in the course, and possible expulsion from the University. In the event a student fails to abide by the rules set forth in the ETAMU policy, they will receive a grade of 0 on that assignment with no opportunity to make that grade up and the student will be reported to the appropriate university officials.

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

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Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by

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calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week/ Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
Week 1	<p>Introduction to ASD Assessment & Treatment Planning Language and Communication</p> <p>Readings: Prelock: Chapters 1, 2, 3</p> <p>DSM-V-TR (posted in D2L): Social Communication Disorders & Autism Spectrum Disorders</p>	Weekly Activities & Quiz
Week 2	<p>Evidence-Based Practices I: Foundations & Family Collaboration</p> <p>Readings: Prelock Chapters 4, 6, 8 Selected readings/links in D2L</p>	Weekly Activities & Discussions
Week 3	<p>Evidence-Based Practices II: Instructional Considerations & Early Intervention</p> <p>Readings: Prelock Chapters 5 & 11 Selected readings/links in D2L</p>	Weekly Activities & Discussions
Week 4	<p>Evidence-Based Practices III: ABA, Behavioral Interventions, Sensory Considerations</p> <p>Readings: Prelock Chapters 12, 15, 16, 17 Selected readings/links in D2L</p>	Weekly Activities Resource Guide Repository
Week 5	<p>Future Directions: Social Skills, Communication, and Transition to Adulthood</p> <p>Readings: Prelock Chapter 18 Selected readings/links in D2L</p>	Case Study

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