

Etiology and Characteristics of Infants and Young Children with Disabilities

Introduction to Sensory Impairments: Hearing Impairment, Vision Impairment, and Deaf-Blindness

Sample Syllabus

Course Description

This course provides students with an overview of content areas relevant to providers working with children with sensory impairments and their families. The sensory impairments covered in this course include hearing impairments, vision impairment, and deaf-blindness. Topics include an overview of each impairment, assessment and intervention measures, the impact of the impairment on development, educational considerations and accommodations, as well as policies and resources for families.

Required Texts

Boothroyd, A., & Gatty, J. (2011). *The deaf child in a hearing family: Nurturing development*. Plural Publishing.

Goodman, S., & Wittenstein, S. (Eds.). (2003). *Collaborative assessment: Working with students who are blind or visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities*. AFB Press.

Lenihan, S., Voss, J., White, E., & Salvucci, D. (Eds.). (2020). *Preparing to teach, committing to learn: An introduction to educating children who are deaf/hard of hearing*. National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah University.
<https://www.infanthearing.org/ebook-educating-children-dhh/>

McInnes, J. M., & Treffry, J. A. (1993). *Deaf-blind infants and children: A developmental guide*. University of Toronto Press. <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442657359>

Course Learning Objectives

As a result of active participation and successful completion of course requirements, students will be able to:

1. Describe assessments and interventions for infants and young children with sensory impairments such as hearing impairments, vision impairments, and deaf-blindness.
2. Explain the impacts of sensory impairments on child development.
3. Identify early intervention and education services for infants and young children with sensory impairments.
4. Develop IFSP and IEP outcomes for infants and young children with sensory impairments.
5. Identify resources for families of children with sensory impairments.

Readings

Correa-Torres, S. M., & Bowen, S. K. (2016). Recognizing the needs of families of children and youth who are deafblind. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 161(4), 454–461.

<https://doi.org/10.1353/aad.2016.0037>

DesJardin, J. L. (2006). Family empowerment: Supporting language development in young children who are deaf or hard of hearing. *The Volta Review*, 106(3), 275.

<https://doi.org/10.17955/tvr.106.3.m.574>

Janssen, M. J., Riksen-Walraven, J. M., & van Dijk, J. P. M. (2002). Enhancing the quality of interaction between deafblind children and their educators. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*, 14(1), 87–109. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1013583312920>

Kyzar, K. B., Brady, S. E., Summers, J. A., Haines, S. J., & Turnbull, A. P. (2016). Services and supports, partnership, and family quality of life: Focus on deaf-blindness. *Exceptional Children*, 83(1), 77-91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402916655432>

Nicholas J. (2020). Cognitive assessment of children who are deafblind: Perspectives and suggestions for assessments. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 571358.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.571358>

Watkins, S., Clark, T., Strong, C., & Barringer, D. (1994). The effectiveness of an intervener model of services for young deaf-blind children. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 139(4), 404–409. <https://doi.org/10.1353/aad.2012.0306>

Additional Texts (select chapters)

Batshaw, M. L., Roizen, N. J., & Pellegrino, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Children with disabilities* (8th ed.) Paul H. Brookes.

Corn, A., & Erin, J. (Eds.). (2010). *Foundations of low vision: Clinical and functional perspectives* (2nd ed.). AFB Press.

Ferrell, K. A. (2011). *Reach out and teach: Helping your child who is visually impaired learn and grow*. AFB Press.

Niemann, S., & Jacob, N. (2000). *Helping children who are blind: Family and community support for children with vision problems*. Hesperian Health Guides.

Accommodations

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 require the institution to provide academic adjustments or accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students seeking academic adjustments or accommodations must self-

identify with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities on the appropriate campus.

Attendance

Since many of the classes involve activities, videotapes, discussion, etc., regular attendance is vital to gain maximum benefit. Because this is a 15-week course, each class member needs to make every effort to attend each class. Anyone who misses more than one class will lose 5 points for each class missed after the first absence. Significant tardiness or early departure beyond 15 minutes will count as an absence. If you know ahead of time you will not be in class, please contact the instructor the day before the class.

Communicating with the Instructor

All correspondence from the instructor to the students by way of announcements, updates, assignments, and so forth, will be communicated via school email or online learning management system if not verbally in class. It is the student's responsibility to ensure their university e-mail is correct. Failure to do so may result in missing important information that could negatively impact your grade. Please be mindful of professionalism.

Course Outline

The following schedule is subject to change. For any course syllabi posted prior to the beginning of the semester, the course instructor reserves the right to make changes prior to or during the semester. The course instructor will notify students, via e-mail or verbal announcements when changes are made in the requirements and/or grading of this course. ***The course instructor reserves the right to revise the schedule/assignments if needed.***

Course Schedule

| Week | Topics | Readings | Activities |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Hearing Impairment | | | |
| 1 | Introduction to hearing impairment | Batshaw et al., 2019, Ch. 7 Boothroyd & Gatty, 2011, Ch. 3, 5 | Weekly reflection/journal |
| 2 | Assessment and intervention | Boothroyd & Gatty, 2011, Ch. 6, 7 Lenihan et al., 2020, Ch. 1, 2, 7, 11 | Discussion Prompt: Goodman & Wittenstein (2003) advocate for collaborative, strength-based assessment for students with visual impairments. What are the benefits and challenges of using collaborative assessment approaches with students who are blind or visually impaired, and how can these assessments inform inclusive instructional planning? Weekly reflection/journal Describe hearing assessments and interpret sample audiograms: https://www.babyhearing.org/what-is-an-audiogram |
| 3 | Effects of hearing impairment on child development | Boothroyd & Gatty, 2011, Ch. 4, 11 Lenihan et al., 2020, Ch. 3, 4 | Weekly reflection/journal |
| 4 | Early intervention and educational services for children with hearing impairment | Boothroyd & Gatty, 2011, Ch. 4, 8 Lenihan et al., 2020, Ch. 8, 10 | Discussion Prompt: Lenihan et al. (2020) discuss the importance of accessible communication in inclusive classrooms. How can educators ensure that children who are deaf or hard of hearing have equitable access to classroom |

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| | | | <p>communication, and what role does technology play in this process?</p> <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Write 2 IFSP outcomes for a child with hearing impairment and their family</p> <p>Create 2 measurable IEP goals for a child with hearing impairment</p> |
| 5 | Resources for families of children with hearing impairment | <p>Boothroyd & Gatty, 2011, Ch. 12</p> <p>DesJardin, 2006</p> <p>Lenihan et al., 2020, Ch. 5</p> | <p>Discussion Prompt: Boothroyd & Gatty (2011) emphasize the emotional and developmental impact of deafness on hearing families. How can educators and early interventionists build trusting relationships with families of deaf children to support both communication development and emotional well-being?</p> <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Identify 3 parent advocacy organizations for children with hearing impairment</p> <p>Due: Hearing Impairment Project</p> |
| Vision Impairment | | | |
| 6 | Introduction to vision impairment | <p>Batshaw et al., 2019, Ch. 7</p> <p>Corn & Erin, 2010, Ch. 5, 9</p> <p>Goodman & Wittenstein, 2003, Ch. 1</p> | Weekly reflection/journal |
| 7 | Assessment and intervention | <p>Corn & Erin, 2010, Ch. 6, 9</p> <p>Goodman & Wittenstein, 2003, Ch. 3, 4</p> | <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Review as a resource: https://familyconnect.org/browse-by- </p> |

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| | | | age/preschoolers/education-preschoolers/assessment-for-preschoolers/ |
| 8 | Effects of vision impairment on child development | <p>Corn & Erin, 2010, Ch. 3</p> <p>Goodman & Wittenstein, 2003, Ch. 6, 7</p> | <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>In-Class Activity: Vision-Friendly Learning Environment Design</p> <p>Objective: Students will apply clinical and functional knowledge of low vision to adapt a preschool classroom for a child with low vision.</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present a brief case study of a child with low vision (e.g., diagnosed with albinism, has light sensitivity and reduced acuity). 2. In small groups, students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identify potential barriers in a typical classroom (lighting, layout, materials). o Propose specific adaptations using strategies from Corn & Erin, 2010. |
| 9 | Early intervention and educational services for children with vision impairment | <p>Ferrell, 2011, Ch. 4</p> <p>Goodman & Wittenstein, 2003, Ch. 5, 8</p> <p>Niemann & Jacob, 2000, Ch. 14</p> | <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Select one of the journal articles on blindness to read and record a 3-5 minute video of 3 take-aways to share with parents and other service providers.</p> |
| 10 | Resources for families of children with vision impairment | Niemann & Jacob, 2000, Ch. 13, 15 | Weekly reflection/journal |

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| | | | <p>Design 2 IFSP outcomes for a child with a visual impairment</p> <p>Write 2 measurable IEP goals for a child with visual impairment</p> <p>Due: Vision Impairment Project</p> |
| Deaf-blindness | | | |
| 11 | Introduction to deaf-blindness; Assessment and intervention | <p>McInnes & Treffry, 1993, Ch. 1</p> <p>Nicholas, 2020</p> | <p>Discussion Prompt: Across these texts, interdisciplinary collaboration is a recurring theme. What strategies can educators use to advocate for and participate in effective interdisciplinary teams that support children with sensory disabilities in early childhood settings?</p> <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> |
| 12 | Effects of deaf-blindness on child development I | McInnes & Treffry, 1993, Ch. 3, 4, 7 | Weekly reflection/journal |
| 13 | Effects of deaf-blindness on child development II | McInnes & Treffry, 1993, Ch. 5, 6, 8 | <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Review the clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hu2WOpTdXMY: Given the overall desire for communication when working with children with deaf-blindness, Select 5 strategies shared in the clip that you feel are most beneficial and why for each selection.</p> |
| 14 | Early intervention and educational services for children with deaf-blindness | <p>Janssen et al., 2002</p> <p>McInnes & Treffry, 1993, Ch. 2</p> <p>Watkins et al., 1994</p> | <p>Discussion Prompt: What are the key components of high-quality interactions between educators and children who are deafblind, and how can these interactions be intentionally fostered in early learning environments?</p> |

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| | | | <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Review the following clip about early intervention of working with children with deaf-blindness https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZjSmnCY-MU</p> <p>What 3 parts of the clip resonate as being the most beneficial to share with other service providers around environmental considerations for the child's development? Explain your reasoning for each selection.</p> |
| 15 | Resources for families of children with deaf-blindness | <p>Correa-Torres & Bowen, 2016</p> <p>Kyzar et al., 2016</p> <p>Wiley et al., 2016</p> | <p>Discussion Prompt: How can educators and service providers build culturally responsive and emotionally supportive partnerships with families of children who are deafblind, especially when navigating complex systems of care and communication?</p> <p>Weekly reflection/journal</p> <p>Due: Final Project</p> |

Instructions for Assignments

1. Weekly reflections/journal

Turn in a short reaction paper (~1 page) in response to each week's topics including readings, class discussion, activities, and other learning experiences. Reflections may include information about aspects thought to be interesting or helpful content as well as a space to share what remains unclear and additional questions. Additionally, reflections should include a connection to current or future professional applications. Weekly reflections will be assessed based on thoughtful consideration of the material. Reflections are due each week following the class meeting.

2. Hearing impairment project

For this assignment, you will develop a resource of your choosing (e.g., brochure, handout, infographic, etc.) related to hearing impairment. Topics include prevention, assessment, intervention, effect on development, services, and resources for families. Sample topics include newborn screening initiatives, information about assistive hearing devices, specialized curriculum for children with hearing impairments, or local parent advocacy groups. Content of your resources should be evidence-based, drawing on articles/chapters covered in class or additional articles. This information should be presented in a way that will be accessible to the general public, families, teachers, and related professionals.

Resources are due Week 5.

3. Visual impairment project

For this assignment, you will be provided mock assessment data for a student with a visual impairment. Use what you have learned in class this semester to develop an assistive technology plan. The content of your assistive technology plan should include information and knowledge received in this course, but you may also use other resources as needed. This assistive technology plan will be used to help children who are blind or visually impaired (with and without additional disabilities) increase their access to the general curriculum and improve their academic performance. It is important to thoughtfully consider what devices, tools and technologies will be appropriate to meet the child's individual and unique learning and visual needs. **Assistive Tech plan is due Week 10.**

4. Final assignment

For this assignment, you will create a comprehensive action plan for a child with a sensory impairment. The purpose of this assignment is to simulate working with a child with a sensory impairment and their family from identification to transition to school-age services. Choose a disorder area (hearing impairment, vision impairment, or deaf-blindness), create, and outline an action plan for that child. Consider topic areas such as screening measures that could be used, how to interpret and explain assessment results to a family, development of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), transition to school

information, and family resources. Include information for relevant team members and their various roles. Reflect on how you will empower the family to make informed decisions regarding their child's disability without imposing your own beliefs. **Final assignment due Week 15.**

Course Grading

Assignments are due by 11:59pm on the indicated date. Late assignments without previous written approval of the instructor will incur a 50% penalty for the first time and lose all points beyond. This instructor and learners are required to adhere to the University's Academic Integrity policy. Any plagiarism will not be tolerated and referred to the Academic Integrity Office. The learner will be given an "F" in the course and be recommended to the Student Conduct Office.

Learners will be evaluated based upon the assignments described below. The plus/minus grading system and scale is as follows:

| Letter Grade | Grade Range |
|--------------|--------------|
| A | 93 and above |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 88-89 |
| B | 83-87 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 78-79 |
| C | 73-77 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D | 60-69 |
| F | 59 and below |

| Component | Weight for final grade |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Weekly reflections/journal | 20% |
| Hearing impairment assignment | 20% |
| Visual impairment assignment | 20% |
| Final assignment | 40% |

Resources

Resources to supplement the Syllabus:

- American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus: <https://aapos.org/home>
- American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB): www.aadb.org/
- American Federation for the Blind: <https://www.afb.org/>

- American Speech Language Hearing Association, Hearing Screening and Testing Information: <https://www.asha.org/public/hearing/Hearing-Testing/>
- Better Hearing Institute: <https://betterhearing.org/>
- Boys Town National Research Hospital Parent-to-Parent Hearing Impairment: <https://www.babyhearing.org/parenting/parent-to-parent>
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Hearing Loss in Children Resources: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/parentsguide/resources/index.html>
- Central Institute for the Deaf: <http://www.cid.edu/>
- Council on Education of the Deaf www.deafed.net/
- Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths & Adults: <http://www.hknc.org/>
- <https://teachblindstudents.org/>
- iCanConnect: The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program <http://www.icanconnect.org/>
- National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management Utah State University: <http://www.infanthearing.org/>
- National Center on Deaf-Blindness <http://www.nationaldb.org/>
- National Family Association for Deaf-Blind <https://nfadb.org/>
- National Federation of the Blind: <https://www.nfb.org/>
- National Institutes of Health (NIH); National Institute on Deafness & Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD): <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/>
- National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) www.ntid.rit.edu/
- Questar III BOCES, Itinerant Services: Teacher of the Visually Impaired video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNiFMEPcROA&feature=emb_title
- The American Academy of Ophthalmology: Eye Screening: <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/children-eye-screening>
- University of Iowa Cochlear Implant Music Simulations: <https://medicine.uiowa.edu/iowaprotocols/music-and-hearing-loss/cochlear-implant-ci-technology-and-music/cochlear-implant-ci-technology-and>
- Virginia Center for Sensory Disabilities: <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/special-education/specific-disabilities/autism-spectrum-disorders/sensory-disabilities>

Journals in Sensory Impairments and EI/ECSE

Below are examples of journals that publish topics about Sensory Impairments and Early Childhood. Faculty may want to explain how to use articles to support practice and to examine current research. Clarify the difference between practitioner-based journals and research-based journals.

- *American Annals of the Deaf*
- *British Journal of Ophthalmology*
- *British Journal of Visual Impairment*
- *American Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*
- *Child Development*
- *Exceptional Parent Magazine*
- *Infants and Young Children*
- *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education*
- *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*
- *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*
- *Journal of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention*
- *Journal of Early Intervention*
- *Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability*
- *Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders*
- *Journal of Pediatrics*
- *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*
- *Journal of Special Education Technology*
- *Pediatric Research*
- *Rural Special Education Quarterly*
- *Teaching Exceptional Children*
- *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*
- *Young Children*
- *Young Exceptional Children*

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