

# Mayville State University

## SPED 344 Augmented & Alternative Communication

Fall 2025  
3 Credit Hours

### Course and Instructor Information

**Instructor Name:** Sarah Hovde

**Contact Information:** sarah.hovde@mayvillestate.edu

**Hours of Availability:** by appointment

**Instruction Mode:** online asynchronous

**Time Zone:** All times indicated throughout this syllabus reflect Central Time (CT).

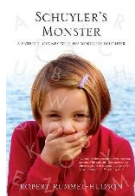
### Course Materials and Technologies

#### Required

Dell, A.G., Newton, D.A., & Petroff, J.G. (2020). *Assistive Technology in the Classroom* (3rd Ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.



Hudson-Rummel, R. (2008). *Schuyler's Monster: a father's journey with his wordless daughter*. New York: St. Martin's Press.



### Use of Artificial Intelligence in this Course

You may use AI programs (e.g., ChatGPT) to help generate ideas and brainstorm for certain activities and **specific** assignments in this course as indicated by the instructor. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Using them may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity. Material generated by an AI program should be cited like any other reference material (with consideration of the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Activities and assignments that have been indicated in the course as AI-appropriate will be presented and coincide with significant guidelines on their implementation throughout the duration of the course.

### Course Description

This course is designed to increase knowledge of the use of augmentative and alternative communication systems to enable children who are severely communicatively impaired (e.g., neurological, pervasive developmental disorders, sensory impairments) a way to communicate. Appropriate intervention strategies, procedures, and guidelines for implementation will be introduced. Students will explore a wide variety of Assistive Technology Devices used to support and facilitate learning in the

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content areas in the general education setting. Students will explore low, medium, and high-tech supports, computer access, selection methods of these devices and delivery systems, as well as the pedagogical issues that must be considered for students with disabilities who use Assistive Technology.

## Course Objectives

- Research assistive technology for individuals requiring Augmentative and Alternative Communications. (InTasc 1, NAEYC 4, SLO 2, EIECSE 6, SLO 2)
- Identify and explain the importance of parents and families regarding the education of children. (InTasc 1, EIECSE 6, SLO1)
- **Describe how technology can support the learning of students with disabilities in the classroom. (NCECTES 9, NAEYC 4, EIECSE 6, SLO 1, 2)**
- Examine and reflect on the importance of using assistive technology with a young child with communication needs. (NCECTES 9, NAEYC 4, EIECSE 6, SLO 1)
- Observe and analyze how technology is used in classrooms. (InTasc 1, **NCECTES 9, NAEYC 4, SLO 1**)
- Explain how and where assistive technology is written into a student's IEP. (EIECSE 6, SLO 1, 2)

## Course Expectations

- Students are accountable for all academic communications sent to their Mayville State University email address.
- When I need to communicate with students as a whole group, I will post an announcement through Blackboard. To stay informed, I recommend checking the Announcements section daily.
- When I need to communicate with students individually, I will do so through email. Students are accountable for all academic communications sent to their MSU email address.
- I will check my email and Blackboard Monday-Friday. If an email is sent during working hours, I will respond within 24-48 hours. I try not to respond to emails over weekends.

## Assignments and Assessments

| Activity            | No. of Occurrences | Points Possible | Percent of Total Grade |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Weekly Assignments  | 7                  | 115             | 30%                    |
| Schuyler's Monster  | 3                  | 90              | 24%                    |
| Focus Questions     | 7                  | 70              | 19%                    |
| Final Project       | 1                  | 100             | 27%                    |
| <b>Total Points</b> |                    | 375             |                        |

## Evaluation and Grading

### Grading Policies

- **Feedback:** Assignments are due on their due date. Dropbox your assignments in Blackboard. Assignment feedback is typically given within 7 days of assignment submission via Blackboard. Larger projects can take longer to review so expect feedback within 10 days of submission. Students are responsible for accessing the information and assignments as they are presented in Blackboard and the syllabus.
- After feedback has been provided on an assignment, students have 5 days, from the date the feedback was given, to ask questions on the feedback provided.
- Due dates for everything from discussion forums to assignments are critical in this course as my input or assignments are often required for others to complete their work. I know that timeliness is an attribute that is measured in the InTASC standards and disposition evaluations in teacher education.

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- Please plan ahead-don't wait until the last minute to hand in assignments. Each assignment is given sufficient time for completion. It is up to you to take advantage of this allotted time. All assignments and expectations are accessible starting day one of the semester.
- Discussion Boards are not able to be made up if missed, review due dates, and make plans accordingly.
- Students are responsible for accessing the information and assignments as they are presented in Blackboard and in the Syllabus.
- Students are required to complete ALL weekly assignments, discussion forums and graded assignments in order to earn a passing grade in this course and it is the student's responsibility to keep track that all assignments and discussion forms have been completed by their due date.
- It is the student's responsibility to monitor graded assignments. Checking the grade section of Blackboard is often the best way to make sure that assignments have been submitted.
- Late work is determined by the Blackboard Dropbox. There is a 1-point loss per day after the due date. **Late work is not accepted 5 days after the due date.**
- Please do not email your work. Dropbox your work on Blackboard. If you have difficulty submitting, please contact the MSU Help Desk or Blackboard support services.

## Attendance/Participation Policies

- **Attendance and participation.** At Mayville State University, student attendance and participation are very important elements of university success. This is required for successfully completing this course and prescribes to the attendance policy for required courses in your major. Participation is an expectation of students and teachers in the K-12 educational system, and so it is an expectation for all components of the course. To successfully complete this course, your attendance and active participation is required. Participation will result in solidifying the readings, activities, and research you have done adding to the quality of your learning experience. Check your MSU email and Blackboard for assignments and announcements.
  - Students are to fulfill all requirements of the course.
  - Professionalism, academic honesty, dispositions, and commitment to education are vital elements and are assessed throughout the course. Candidates are expected to read course materials, have assignments completed prior to class, and participate in all aspects of this course in a professional manner.

## Grading Scale

A= 94 – 100%, B= 87 – 93%, C= 80 – 86%, D= 70-79%, F= < 70%.

## Breakdown of Grades

A= 375 – 353    B= 352 – 327    C=326 – 300    D= 299 – 263    F=<262

## Enrollment Verification

### Online Course Statement

The U.S. Department of Education requires instructors of online courses to provide an activity which will validate student enrollment in this course. The only way to verify that a student has been in this course is if he, she, or they perform an action in the LMS, such as completing an assignment or taking a quiz. Logging into the LMS is **NOT** considered active course participation. Please complete the designated enrollment verification activity by the date indicated. If it is not complete your enrollment in this course will be at risk.

- Enrollment Verification Assignment for SPED 344: Week #1 Introduction Discussion Board
  - Location of Assignment: Weekly Activities < Week #1 Folder < Week #1 Introduction

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## Proctor Notification

No proctors are required for this course.

## Important Student Information

In the Announcements section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency
- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

## Course Timeline/Schedule

All information is laid out in detail on Blackboard in each weekly folder.

| Week          | Topics & Assignments  | Due Date |
|---------------|---|----------|
| <b>Week 1</b> | Introduction Discussion Board - enrollment verification assignment<br>Web Resources<br>Chapter 1 Focus Questions        | 10.26.25 |
| <b>Week 2</b> | Chapters 2 & 3 Focus Questions<br>Schuyler's Monster Journal Assignment Part 1  | 11.2.25  |
| <b>Week 3</b> | Chapters 4 & 5 Focus Questions<br>Implementing AT k-12 Clips Discussion Board   | 11.9.25  |
| <b>Week 4</b> | Chapters 6, 7, & 8 Focus Questions<br>Video Discussion Board  | 11.16.2  |
| <b>Week 5</b> | Chapters 9 & 10 Focus Questions<br>Learning About Bias Discussion Board<br>Schuyler's Monster Journal Assignment Part 2 | 11.23.25 |
| <b>Week 6</b> | Chapter 11 Focus Questions  | 11.30.25 |
| <b>Week 7</b> | Maya Finds Her Voice Discussion Board<br>Chapter 12 Focus Questions<br>Schuyler's Monster Journal Assignment Part 3     | 12.7.25  |
| <b>Week 8</b> | Final Project   | 12.14.25 |

All Assignments are listed in Blackboard. Assignments are due by Sunday at 11:59 pm unless otherwise posted. Course Timeline and Schedule are subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor.

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## Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency

The health and safety of our students, staff, and faculty is our top priority. Mayville State University is committed to continuing face-to-face instruction for on campus courses each semester while minimizing exposure risk and promoting health and safety for students, faculty, and staff.

If a significant health or safety event necessitates a change in course format, the following plans for remote options will be implemented: The class will continue as outlined.

## Conceptual Framework

Teacher Education courses are based upon the Conceptual Framework: Reflective Experiential Teacher. See the document 'Conceptual Framework' provided in the course shell.

## INTASC – Teacher Education

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objective, as aligned to InTASC Program Approval Standards through North Dakota's Education Standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

| Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards (InTASC) |   |
|---|---|
| 1   | The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences. |

## ND Early Childhood Teacher Education Standards

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Standard 9: Physical Environment: | The program has a safe and healthful environment that provides appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments. The environment includes facilities, equipment, and materials to facilitate child and staff learning and development. |
|-----------------------------------|--|

## NAEYC Standards

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Standard 4: | Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices: Early childhood educators understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages and characteristics and on the settings in which teaching and learning occur. They (a) understand and demonstrate positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for their work with young children. They (b) understand and use teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child. Early childhood educators (c) use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning. |
|-------------|---|

## EIECEC Standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Standard 6: Using Responsive and Reciprocal Interactions, Interventions, and Instruction | Candidates plan and implement intentional, systematic, evidence-based, responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction to support all children's learning and development across all developmental and content domains in partnership with families and other professionals. Candidates facilitate equitable access and participation for all children and families within natural and inclusive environments through culturally responsive and affirming practices and relationships. Candidates use data-based decision-making to plan for, adapt, and improve interactions, interventions, and instruction to ensure fidelity of implementation. |
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## ESPB Standards Alignment (Special Education Program Approval Standards – ND ESPB)

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Initial Preparation Standard 2: | Understanding and Addressing Each Individual's Developmental and Learning Needs: Candidates use their understanding of human growth and development, the multiple influences on development, individual differences, diversity, including exceptionalities, and families and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning environments and experiences that provide individuals with exceptionalities high quality learning experiences reflective of each individual's strengths and needs.  |
| Initial Preparation Standard 3: | Demonstrating Subject Matter Content and Specialized Curricular Knowledge: Candidates apply their understanding of the academic subject matter content of the general curriculum and specialized curricula to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for learners with exceptionalities.   |
| Initial Preparation Standard 4: | Using Assessment to Understand the Learner and the Learning Environment for Databased Decision Making: Candidates assess students' learning, behavior, and the classroom environment in order to evaluate and support classroom and school-based problem-solving systems of intervention and instruction. Candidates evaluate students to determine their strengths and needs, contribute to students' eligibility determination, communicate students' progress, inform short and long-term instructional planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction using technology as appropriate.       |
| Initial Preparation Standard 5: | Supporting Learning Using Effective Instruction: Candidates use knowledge of individuals' development, learning needs, and assessment data to inform decisions about effective instruction. Candidates use explicit instructional strategies and employ strategies to promote active engagement and increased motivation to individualize instruction to support each individual. Candidates use whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group instruction, and individual instruction. Candidates teach individuals to use meta-/cognitive strategies to support and self-regulate learning. |

## Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Addressed in This Course

As part of Mayville State's effort to demonstrate continuous improvement in achieving student learning outcomes, this course will address the following SLOs:

- SLO #1: Students understand diversity in learning and developmental processes and create supportive and safe learning environments for students to thrive.
- SLO #2: Students understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so they can advance their students' learning, address misconceptions and apply ideas to everyday life.

## Instructional Strategies

The content of SPED 344 will be delivered by:

- Direct Video Instruction
- Modeling
- Interactive – discussion
- Indirect - Inquiry
- Use of Technology
- Case Study Review and Reflection
- Discussion Forums
- Reflective Writing
- Feedback

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## Late Arrivals

The grading system for students adding this course after the first day of instruction will be modified. The student will be graded only on the activities that transpired while the student is enrolled. Students will not be penalized for missed assignments, but the student is still responsible for learning the course material that was covered during their initial absence.

## Course Materials and Technologies

All written work will use:

- **APA Format (AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION)** Any papers that includes research references must include internal notes and a working bibliography in APA format. The APA Formatting and Style Guide: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- **Writing Expectations:** Being able to express one's thoughts in a clear and well thought out manner is held in very high regard in this course. Individuals considering positions education must be able to convey information and ideas verbally as well as in writing. Education is a profession and professionals must be able to write well. It is suggested that students have their work proofread by a reliable person or that they access The Writing Center for assistance with their writing.