**SPLH 430/830: Communication in Autism (3 credits, online)**

Fall 2022 University of Kansas

**Instructor Information:** Heather Fielding-Gebhardt, Ph.D.

**Email:** fielding.h@ku.edu \*\* Email is the best way to reach me, NOT Canvas messages\*\*

**Preferred Reference:** Dr. F-G (she/her/hers)

**Physical Office:** Dole Human Development Center 1101

**Office Hours (Zoom):** Thursdays 9 to 10am and by appointment

**Graduate Teaching Assistant:** Carolyn Russell

**Email:** c153r902@ku.edu

**Preferred Reference:** Carolyn Russell (she/her/hers)

**Office Hours (Zoom): TBD**

**General Information**

**Description**

This course will provide you with an introduction to the characteristics and communication of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across the lifespan. ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that is characterized by deficits in social communication and presence of restricted and repetitive behaviors and interests. As a speech-language pathologist, you are likely to work with individuals with ASD at some point in your career. This course will prepare you to do so by providing you with basic knowledge of the diagnostic criteria, identification, and assessment and intervention considerations of ASD, as well as strategies for partnering with families who have family members with ASD.

This course is one of several required courses for students pursuing an undergraduate certificate in Learning and Communication in Children with Autism. If you are interested in pursuing this undergraduate certificate, you can find out more information here: <https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/speech-language-hearing/learning-communication-children-autism-ugcert/#text> or by contacting your advisor.

**About Me**

I am a postdoctoral fellow in the Lifespan Institute at the University of Kansas. I completed my Ph.D. in Child Language in 2021. My research focuses on the ways in which children with neurodevelopmental disorders (such as ASD and fragile X syndrome) interact with their parents and the effects that parents and children have on one another’s development and well-being. I have experience working as a teaching assistant in a school for children with ASD. I enjoy spending time with my son, my husband, and our two cats. My hobbies include ultimate frisbee, quilting, and cooking.

**Expectations**

It is expected that you address any confusion regarding the syllabus at the beginning of the semester by emailing me (fielding.h@ku.edu ). This syllabus should be your first resource to answer questions about the course schedule, requirements, policies, due dates, and assignments. As a student in this course, you are responsible for independently completing the assignments by the specified due date. If you are unable to complete an assignment by the due date, please contact me. Please submit your Assignments by the time indicated on the schedule below. If you cannot submit an Assignment by a deadline, you must contact me **before** it is due so we can discuss your plans to submit it. **If you do not contact me about late Assignments, you will be deducted 1% from the final grade on that Assignment for every day it is late.** I believe that open communication between students and instructors is critical to student success, so please contact me if you have questions/concerns or need to talk about assignment instructions and due dates.

My role as your instructor is to facilitate your learning and provide you with the resources and activities that allow you to gain expertise in this material. Ultimately, you are responsible for what you get out of this course. However, I will guide you through the materials, act as a resource for your questions, and facilitate activities and assignments.

**Course Goals**

This course is designed to meet the requirements of ASHA Knowledge Standards (2020) IV-C (Communication Disorders including Etiologies, Characteristics, and Developmental and Linguistic Correlates) and IV-D (Assessment and Intervention for Persons with Communication Disorders). At the end of this course, students will have a basic understanding of:

1. The history, prevalence, and etiology of ASD
2. The diagnostic features of ASD as well as common methods of diagnosis
3. The communication characteristics of individuals with ASD across the lifespan and across levels of ability
4. Assessment of communication in individuals with ASD
5. Evidence-based interventions for communication in individuals with ASD
6. Working with families of individuals with ASD and other stakeholders

**Asynchronous Course Pacing**

This course is presented entirely online and asynchronously. For this course, asynchronous means that there are no pre-arranged online meeting times. There are deadlines for assignments, and it is expected that you complete the readings and assignments on a weekly basis. As this is a 3-credit course, it is expected that you dedicate ~9 hours of time per week to this course. However, as is the case in most courses, there will be some weeks that require more time than others. On average, you should be spending at least 9 hours per week on this course.

You will receive a reminder email every Monday with the readings and assignments for that week as well as upcoming due dates. However, you will be most successful in this course if you keep track of the schedule on your own as well. I find that students are most successful if they stick with course pacing, rather than work ahead.

**Course Materials**

**Required Texts**

Prelock, P.A. & McCauley, R. J. (2012). *Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders: Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies for Communication & Social Interactions.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.ISBN 13: 978-1-59857-053-3.

Prizant, B. M. (2015). *Uniquely Human: A Different Way of Seeing Autism.* New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks. ISBN 13: 978-1-4767-7624-8.

**Additional readings, videos, and links will be posted on Canvas.**

\*\*\*If you find that Canvas is not loading properly in your browser, please try a different one. I find that Chrome does not always cooperate, but that Firefox or Internet Explorer are more reliable.

**Course Requirements**

**Readings and Videos**

Each week there are assigned readings from your textbook(s) and/or additional resources on Canvas as well as videos so you can see real-life examples. You will need to complete the list of readings and videos during the week it is assigned.

**Weekly Journals (15 total)**

At the end of each week, you will complete a journal entry. You can complete this either as a traditional written response (1-2 paragraphs, typically) or as a media snippet (audio and/or video recordings, less than 5mins). **The purpose of the journal entries is for you to reflect on what you have learned each week and to demonstrate the knowledge you have gained from the readings/videos.** Each week there will be prompts to guide your journal entry, but you are also encouraged to discuss additional thoughts you had during the week. The journal entries are private, so only you and the course instructors (including GTA) will be able to see your entries. Either the instructor or GTA will read/view your entries and may provide feedback or comments each week.

**Assignments (7 total)**

The purpose of the assignments is for you to delve deeply into a topic and engage with the materials in such a way that you can use this information in your clinical practice in the future. You should be able to keep these assignments and directly apply them to your future practice. For example, the Early Identification Guide will be a useful tool when you are working with families with young children. The rubrics for these assignments will be posted on Canvas.

Undergraduates enrolled in SPLH 430: You will do two of these with a partner, and five on your own.

\*Graduates enrolled in SPLH 830: You will complete six of these on your own, and one with a partner (the AAC activity requires a partner).

**Solo Assignments:** Impact on Family

Early Identification Guide

Autism Navigator Scavenger Hunt

Intervention Evaluation Guide

Community Sources

**Partner Assignments\*:**  Communication Assessment

AAC Partner Activity

**Midterm Paper**

A book report and reflection based on Uniquely Human will serve as the midterm paper.

**Final Project**

A final project will be due the last week of classes.

**Final Exam**

There will be an online final exam during finals week.

Note: All Journals and Assignments are due by the end of the day on which they are assigned (i.e., by 11:59pm).

**GRADING AND POINT DISTRIBUTION**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Weekly Journal Entries**   | 15 weeks x 5 points per week | 75 points |
| **Assignments**  | Impact on the Family | 30 |
| Autism Navigator | 30 |
| Early Identification Guide | 30 |
| Communication Assessment | 30 |
| Intervention Evaluation Guide | 30 |
| AAC Partner Activity | 30 |
| Community Sources | 30 |
| **Midterm Paper**  | Book Report and Reflection | 65 |
| **Final Project**  | Interview & Reflection | 50 |
| **Final Exam**  | 100 |
| **Total Points** | **500** |

Grades are based on your performance on the journal entries, assignments, the midterm paper, the final paper, and the final exam.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Points** | **Quality of Achievement** |
| **A** |  ≥ 475 | Excellent |
| **A -** | 450 – 474  |  |
| **B +** | 435 – 449  | Good |
| **B** | 415 – 434 |  |
| **B -** | 400 – 414 |  |
| **C +** | 385 – 399 | Fair |
| **C** | 365 – 384 |  |
| **C -** | 350 – 364 |  |
| **D +** | 335 – 349  | Poor |
| **D** | 315 – 334  |  |
| **F** | < 334 | Inadequate |

**COURSE SCHEDULE OUTLINE**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit** | **Topic**  | **Assignments & Due Dates**  |
| **1** | What is ASD?  | Student Info Sheet – Fri 8/26  |
| Weekly Journal 1 – Fri 8/26  |
| **2** | History and Neurodiversity  | Weekly Journal 2 – Fri 9/2  |
| **3** | Diagnosis: Criteria, Methods, Barriers, and the SLPs role  | Weekly Journal 3 – Fri 9/9  |
| **Impact on the Family Paper – Weds 9/14** |
| **4** | Early Identification & Early Communication Characteristics | Weekly Journal 4 – Fri 9/16   |
| **Autism Navigator Scavenger Hunt – Weds 9/21** |
| Weekly Journal 5 – Fri 9/23  |
| **Early Identification Guide – Weds 9/28** |
| **5** | Autism in Adolescents and Adults  | Weekly Journal 6 – Fri 9/30  |
| **6** | Autism in Girls and Women  | Weekly Journal 7 – Fri 10/7  |
| **7** | Midterm  | **Midterm Paper – Weds 10/12** |
| Weekly Journal 8 – Fri 10/14  |
| Communication Assessment  | Weekly Journal 9 – Fri 10/21  |
| **Communication Assessment – FRI 10/21** |
| **8** | Intro to Intervention: Types, Key Aspects, and Helping Clients Choose  | Weekly Journal 10 – Fri 10/28  |
| **Intervention Guide – Weds 11/2** |
| **9** | Behavioral Interventions (PECS) | Weekly Journal 11 – Fri 11/4  |
| **10** | Developmental Interventions (SCERTS)  | Weekly Journal 12 – Fri 11/11  |
| **11** | Other Interventions  | Weekly Journal 13 – Fri 11/18  |
| *AAC* | **AAC Activity – Weds 11/23** |
| *DIR/Floortime or Social Stories* | Weekly Journal 14 – Fri 12/2  |
| *Peer-Mediated or Community-Based* | **Community Sources – Fri 12/2** |
| **Finals**  | Wrap-up and Case Studies  | Weekly Journal 15 – Thurs 12/8 |
| **Final Project – Fri 12/16** |
| **Final Exam – Fri 12/16** |

**Additional Information and Resources**

**Accommodations**

The Academic Achievement and Access Center (AAAC) coordinates academic accommodations and services for all eligible KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted the AAAC, please do so as soon as possible. They are located at 22 Strong Hall and their phone number is 785-864-4046 (V/TTY). Information about their services can be found at [www.access.ku.edu/academic-accomodations](http://www.access.ku.edu/academic-accomodations). Please contact me privately regarding your needs for this course.

**Nondiscrimination**

The University of Kansas prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, age, ancestry, disability, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, retaliation, gender identity, gender expression, and genetic information in the University’s programs and activities. Please contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator at IOA@ku.edu with any inquiries.

**Religious Observances**

Should the examination and/or assignment schedule for this course conflict with your mandated religious observance, please contact me at the beginning of the semester so we can schedule a make-up or alternate due date at a mutually acceptable time. Students are responsible for initiating discussion with the instructor to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

This is an inclusive course. At KU, administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to the creation and maintenance of inclusive learning environments. These are places of learning where you will be treated with respects and dignity and where all individuals are provided equitable opportunity to participate, contribute, and succeed. The department of Speech-Language-Hearing adheres to the College’s statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Cultural and linguistic diversity are central to the field of speech-language-pathology and an integral part of clinical practice as an SLP or audiologist. As a department, we strive to create a learning environment where differences are valued and respected, and all students have an equitable opportunity for success. We believe that all students benefit from training and experiences that will help them learn, lead, and serve in an increasingly diverse society, so we are committed to enhancing the training we provide around cultural and linguistic diversity.

In SPLH 430/830, all students are welcome regardless of race/ethnicity, gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disabilities, religion, regional background, Veteran status, citizenship status, nationality and other diverse identities that we each bring to class.

Your success at KU and beyond is enhanced by the innovation and creativity of thought that inclusive learning environments facilitate. The success of an inclusive learning environment relies on the participation, support, and understanding of you and your peers. We encourage you to speak up and share your views, but also understand that you are doing so in a learning environment in which we all are expected to engage respectfully and with regard to the dignity of all others.

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact me or Student Affairs for support (studentaffairs@ku.edu).

Other resources you may find helpful:

Student Emergency Assistance Fund: <https://studentaffairs.ku.edu/emergency-assistance-students>

Free Legal Services for Students: [www.legalservices.ku.edu](http://www.legalservices.ku.edu)

**Academic Misconduct**

Students are expected to observe all University guidelines pertaining to academic misconduct. As stated in the University Senate Rules and Regulations (2.6.1): “Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or their assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another’s work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.” Academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with all University rules and regulations.

**Intellectual Property Policy**

Course materials prepared by the instructor, including content of lectures and review sessions, are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recordings presented by the instructor for this online course are the property of the instructor and should not be distributed, transferred, or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. The video and audio recordings are only to be used by students who are enrolled in the course.

**Writing Center**

Should you need feedback, sounding boards, or other people to help coach you in the writing process, the Writing Center is an excellent resource. The Writing Center is a place for productive talk about writing, with trained peer consultants to help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing projects. The KU Writing Center is a free service for KU undergraduate and graduate students, where trained peer consultants work with writers of all levels and abilities. You can work one-on-one with a writing consultant on any course assignment or writing project—essays, research papers, presentations, application essays, and more—at any point of completeness or incompleteness. They are located in Anschutz Library and can be reached at writing@ku.edu or 785-864-2399, or by visiting [www.writing.ku.edu](http://www.writing.ku.edu).

**Medical Crises, Counseling and Psychological Services, and COVID-19**

In the case of a documented medical crisis, either personal or that of a friend or relative, whether related to COVID-19 or not, it is the student’s responsibility to initiate discussion with the instructor. Together, we will come to a mutually agreeable method for making up missed coursework.

It is not unusual to experience distress during times of uncertainty and stress. If you notice signs of distress in yourself (for a list of examples, visit [www.caps.ku.edu/coping-covid](http://www.caps.ku.edu/coping-covid)), reach out to friends, family, and/or your instructor. Continue practicing self-help and coping techniques (<https://flexteaching.ku.edu/self-care-examples> ). CAPS staff are available at 785-864-2277 or on the second floor of the Watkins Memorial Health Center.

Given the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, I aim to provide you with flexibility and transparency throughout the course as it pertains to your experiences with the pandemic. Please contact me if you need support. In this global pandemic, we are all facing unprecedented situations. It is okay not to be okay. If you tell me you are having trouble, I will not judge you or think less of you. I hope you will extend me the same grace. Some ground rules:

* You never owe me personal information about your health (mental or physical), or anything else.
* You are always welcome to talk to me about things you might be going through.
* If I can’t help you, I will try to direct you to KU resources for assistance.
* If you need extra help, please just ask! I will listen and work with you.