I. Course Description:

This class provides an in-depth examination of how learning takes place during the first five years of life for people with visual and visual/multiple impairments. It also provides vital information about educational programming and intervention strategies that apply to these children. Prerequisite: SPE 516. Course Fee: $50.

Research has repeatedly indicated that the first five years of a child’s life is critical. The quality of intervention provided by a well-trained professional in visual impairments during these years can strongly influence the efficiency and level of educational success that the child is likely to have throughout his/her school career. For these reasons, it is critically important that persons planning a professional career in the areas of visual impairment and/or orientation and mobility have the ability to provide efficient and effective instruction to students in this population. This class provides an in-depth examination of how learning takes place during the first five years of life of persons with visual and visual/multiple impairments. It also provides students with vital information about educational programming and intervention strategies that apply to these children.

Credit Hour Justification: Research and Practice: Visual Impairment in Infancy and Early Childhood (3 credits; online with synchronous meetings) spans 15 weeks. The class has 7 online/synchronous meetings across the semester that are 2-hours per meeting. The course contains extensive written content that includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least three hours per week. Primary source readings are woven into the content to support key concepts or provide perspective on visual impairment and the impact on youth. These concepts are reflected in examinations. Students are required to review and report on appropriate assessments for this particular population of students. In addition, students are required to research and complete an APA styled literature review on a selected topic related to the course. For every hour a student spends engaging with the content, he/she spends at least two hours completing associated activities and assessments.

II. Intended Learning Outcomes/Goals/Objectives (Program/Student Learning Outcomes): Program/ Learning Outcomes:

This course directly supports the mission and values of the SFASU College of Education - It is the mission of the Stephen F. Austin College of Education "to prepare competent, successful, caring and enthusiastic professionals dedicated to responsible service, leadership, and continued professional and intellectual development." This statement essentially sums up the intent of this class and our program as a whole. We make every effort to ensure that this class (and all other vision courses) is solidly grounded in the realities of practice. It is intended to be a pragmatic, practical class with maximum emphasis being placed on equipping you to be effective and efficient facilitators of learning for individuals with visual impairments, their families, teachers, as well as caseworkers, and other stakeholders who strive to meet
their unique needs.

The Core Values of our College are:

- **Academic excellence** through critical, reflective, and creative thinking
- **Life-long learning**
- **Collaboration** and shared decision-making
- **Openness** to new ideas, to culturally diverse people, and to innovation and change
- **Integrity**, responsibility, diligence, and ethical behavior, and
- **Service** that enriches the community.

This class emphasizes these values in its content, philosophy, and in its assessment of outcomes. We, as instructors, strive to reflect these principles in the teaching of this class and we also have the highest expectations that you, our students, will also demonstrate these values as you develop as leaders in the field of visual impairment. These values are analogous with ethical standards that have developed by the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired and one intention of this course is to provide you the skills to lead others to embrace these principles.

**This course directly supports the mission of the SFASU Department of Human Services** The Department of Human Services prepares undergraduates and graduate students for leadership and service roles in East Texas and the global community. The department is committed to incorporation of community-based, service-learning experiences within its educational programs to maximize the advancement of student's personal and professional development.

**This course supports the Core Objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating board:**

The core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) are: **Critical Thinking Skills** - to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information. FOR THIS COURSE- this will be accomplished through the performance of accurate chapter reviews, in-service package development, and selection of family resources.

**Communication Skills** - to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication. FOR THIS COURSE- this will be addressed though the development of both a class presentation and through the leading of discussions.

**Empirical and Quantitative Skills** - to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions. FOR THIS COURSE- this may be addressed through the collection and analysis of data related to the research paper.

**Teamwork** - to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal. FOR THIS COURSE- this will be addressed through the practice of development of a shared in-service package

**Personal Responsibility** - to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. FOR THIS COURSE- this will be addressed through the development of individualized, effective, and manageable recommendations AND the meeting of assignment deadlines.

**Social Responsibility** - to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities. FOR THIS COURSE- this will be address through effective contributions to class discussions and presentations.

**This course also supports the mission of the Visual Impairment Program**

It is the mission of the Visual Impairment Program to train Teachers of students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) who are practically and pragmatically prepared to meet the needs of persons with visual impairments across the state of Texas and in the nation as a whole. We believe that completers from our program should be equipped to effectively deliver instructional services which provide opportunities for students and clients with visual impairments to be more independent, lead more meaningful lives, and participate to a greater extent in society at large. In order to meet these goals, we believe that it is our responsibility to mentor and educate our graduates in the importance of exhibiting caring and compassionate approaches to instruction and positive beliefs about the worth of all individuals regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation or level of disability.
This course directly supports the standards of the Council for Exceptional Children, specifically:
Standard II: Development and Characteristics of Learners:
Standard III: Individual Learning Differences:
Standard VII: Instructional Planning:
Standard VIII: Assessment:
Standard IX: Professional and Ethical Practice:
Standard X: Collaboration:

This course directly supports the codes of ethics for professional practice developed for professionals in the field of visual impairments by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, specifically:
I. Commitment to the student
II. Commitment to the community
III. Commitment to the profession
IV. Commitment to colleagues, other professionals and to professional employers

This course directly supports the codes of ethics for professional practice developed for professionals in the field of visual impairments by the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP), specifically:
I. To the student/client
II. To the community
III. To the profession
IV. To colleagues and other professionals
V. To professional employment practices.

This course supports Visual Impairment Tracdat objectives that have been developed for the program, specifically:
• SLO – V - The Master’s candidate will demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding in the field of visual impairment.

The Master’s candidate will:
1. Develop, conduct, and present advanced research in the field of visual impairment commensurate with and meeting the requirements of the M.Ed. degree.
2. Plan, craft, and articulate clear, insightful, organized, and supported responses to multifaceted comprehensive questions.

This course supports the development of competencies that are accepted across professions in Visual Impairment, specifically:
Domain I - Understanding students with visual impairment.
   Competency 1 - Knowledge of the visual system
   Competency 2 - Effects of visual impairments on development and learning
   Competency 4 - Effects of factors other than disabilities.
Domain II - Assessment of students with visual impairments.
   Competency 5 -- Selecting, adapting, and administering assessments.
   Competency 6 -- Interpreting and communicating assessment results.
   Competency 7 -- IFSP development.
Domain III - Fostering student learning and development
   Competency 8 -- Organizing the learning environment
   Competency 11 -- Sensory efficiency.
   Competency 12 -- Social interaction and recreation and leisure skills.
Domain IV - Professional Knowledge
   Competency 16 -- Working collaboratively with families.
   Competency 17 -- Legal and ethical foundations and professionalism.

The following outcomes are linked directly to this course:
This course is designed to provide graduate students working toward their Master's degree with an
opportunity to complete the following objectives:

1. Explain the impact of visual impairment on cognitive and communication development.
2. Identify and provide the rationale behind appropriate orientation and mobility and motor skills in this age group.
3. Explain how the presence of a visual impairment is likely to impact a child’s attachment, social and personal skills development, and their relationship with their peers.
4. Explain techniques for and principles of providing family support for infants and preschoolers with visual impairments.
5. Identify resources and support groups that are available for the parents of children (VI or MDVI) below the age of 5.
6. List and provide a brief overview of assessment instruments designed for use with this population.
7. Outline the appropriate steps for development of effective IFSPs.
8. Outline effective intervention practices with this population
9. List and provide a brief overview of curriculum/intervention packages designed for use

III. Course Assignments, Activities, Instructional Strategies, use of Technology:

This is a graduate level class that is restricted to students who are pursuing a Master’s degree. It is, therefore, designed to be more rigorous than most of the other classes in our program. It is also designed to require the student to exercise more responsibility in the learning process. There will be very few times during this class when the instructor will be in “lecture mode.” Most of our work this semester will be learning independently and cooperatively through sharing with the group in a variety of ways.

**Class Presentation:**

Points: 200

Each student in the class will be assigned leadership on an assigned module topic. Each of the presentations will be made during one class period. The student who is presenting will be responsible for the following:

- Presenting the current research and theories on the topic to the group
- Presenting the most current information on best practice to the group
- Presenting any practical suggestions, demonstrations of materials, or helpful case studies that might apply to the group.
- Leading the class discussion.

The student will:

1. Submit the presentation materials to D2L by the given due date, which include, but are not limited to the following components:
   a. Topic PowerPoint, including how the topic can be applied on a daily basis by COMS and/or TVI practitioners.
   b. An outline of talking points, including integrated questions to ask participants in order to discuss the topic further
   c. Citations of all relevant sources related to the topic.
2. Lead the class discussion by asking questions and helping the class to come to their own understanding of the topic.
3. Each topic presentation will be not more than 20 minutes in length due to the number of individuals in class this semester. We will use a timer for the presentation.
4. There will be two topics presented each class, beginning with the second class.

**Quiz Contributions:**

Points: 50

From the presentations and/or module readings for each class, each student will write 2 matching or true/false questions, with their answers and their specific source, to contribute to the pool of questions for
the quiz modules 2-6. The questions will be submitted by the next day after class, and the quiz over the module will be posted and taken during the following module time frame.

**Discussions:**
Points: 100
Modules 2-6 will each contain a discussion question or activity, and instructions to start a new thread posting and to respond to at least one other classmates’ post in the thread. Each student must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads. These are each worth **50 points**, including 25 points for posting and 25 points for replying to at least one post.

**Student-made Materials:**
Points: 100
Each student will develop a teacher-made material to support chapter information (example signs for infants who are Deafblind, book bags/boxes, or visual supports, to use in teaching the student population of 0-5.

**Examinations:**
Points: 450
There will be 5 quizzes, each worth 50 points, and Midterm and Final Exams will be worth 200 points each.

**Class participation:**
Points: 100
This class is designed to be highly interactive and is dependent on good participation. Questions will be asked, or each student will be called on at some point during the semester. A total of 100 points will be awarded based on the student’s level of class participation. 10 points will be deducted per class missed. Please note that these points are not assigned on the basis of correct responses, but on the willingness of the student to respond and work through the problem. At the end of the semester, students will be evaluated by the instructor on the following criteria:
  - Appropriateness of participation in class discussions.
  - Willingness to answer questions.
  - Evidence of critical thinking during class activities.
  - Demonstration of good “consulting skills” (e.g. politeness, manners, diplomacy, etc.)
  - Display of a positive attitude toward the subject material, class activities, etc.

**IV. Evaluation and Assessments (Grading):**
Grades will be computed based on total points accumulated for all activities and tests. In order to obtain a grade other than F, all activities and tests must be completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz Contributions</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Made Material</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes &amp; Exams</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>950</strong></td>
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Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:
A = 855-950
B = 760-854
C = 665-759
V. Tentative Course Outline/Calendar: 1/15, 1/29, 2/12, 2/26, 3/18, 4/1, 4/15

Jan 15 – Module 1
Overview of course
Introducing principles of early intervention
Presentation information and dates selected
Early Intervention: pp. vii-xx
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 1: Guiding Principles in Early Intervention: Implications for Practice
  Chapter 4: Visual Activities for Babies from Birth to 6 Weeks of Age

Jan 29 – Module 2
Essential Elements:
  Chapter 1: Early Intervention: Purpose & Principles
  Chapter 2: Interactions between Young Children and Caregivers
  Chapter 3: Early Intervention Practices
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 2: Visual Impairment & Early Development
  Chapter 5: Visual Activities for Babies from 6 Weeks to 4 Months of Age

Feb 2 – Module 3
Essential Elements:
  Chapter 4: Clinical Vision Assessments for Young Children
  Chapter 5 and Appendix: Functional Vision Assessment and Early Intervention
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 3: Activities for Children with Visual Impairments: Considerations & Customization
  Chapter 6: Visual Activities for Babies from 4 to 8 Months of Age

Feb 26 – Module 4
Essential Elements:
  Chapter 6: Understanding Hearing Loss
  Chapter 7: Pediatric Audiology
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 7: Visual Activities for Babies from 8-12 Months of Age

Mar 18 – Module 5
Essential Elements:
  Chapter 8: Promoting Early Communication and Language Development
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 8: Visual Activities for Babies from 12 to 18 Months of Age

April 1 – Module 6
Essential Elements:
  Chapter 9: Critical Transitions
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 9: Visual Activities for Babies from 18 to 24 Months of Age

April 15 – Module 7
Essential Elements:
  Chapter 10: Creating Accessible Preschool Learning Environment
Everyday Activities:
  Chapter 10: Visual Activities for Babies from 2-3 Years of Age

VI. Required Texts:


VII. Course Evaluations:

Near the conclusion of each semester, students in the College of Education electronically evaluate courses taken within the COE. Evaluation data is used for a variety of important purposes including: 1. Course and program improvement, planning, and accreditation; 2. Instruction evaluation purposes; and 3. Making decisions on faculty tenure, promotion, pay, and retention. As you evaluate this course, please be thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. Please know that the COE faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your response is critical!

In the College of Education, the course evaluation process has been simplified and is completed electronically through MySFA. Although the instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

VIII. Student Ethics and Other Policy Information:

Attendance: Regular and punctual attendance is expected at all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which a student is registered. For those classes where attendance is a factor in the course grade the student will lose total point for the assignment(s) missed as well as the class participation portion of the missed class. The course instructor shall maintain an accurate record of attendance. Regardless of attendance, every student is responsible for course content and assignments.

Excused Absences: It is University policy to excuse students from attendance for certain reasons. Among these are absences related to health, family emergencies, and student participation in certain University-sponsored events. Students are expected to attend class.

Students with Disabilities: To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided.

Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university polity on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (2) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.
Withheld Grades – Semester Grades Policy (A-54): Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Acceptable Student Behavior: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

IX. Other Relevant Course Information:

Caveat: The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.