Description:
This course is designed to immerse the learner in text, research, and data describing the characteristics and defining qualities of Autism Spectrum Disorder. The significance of early identification and intervention across the five primary autism spectrum disorders will be analyzed. Best practices for intervention including collaboration, communication, and observation strategies will be introduced. Web and print-based resources for professionals regarding ASD will be presented as well. Weekly themes centered on specific topics will be presented.

Texts, required:
2. Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators, Kari Dunn Buron and Pamela Wolfberg

Standards:
A. Foundational knowledge. A teacher of special education: autism spectrum disorders understands the foundations of special education services for students with autism spectrum disorders on which to base practice. The teacher must demonstrate knowledge of the:

(1) historical and philosophical foundations, legal basis, and contemporary issues pertaining to the education of students with autism spectrum disorders;
Unit 1: Reflective writing on Janzen and Buron/Wolfberg text; history of ASD lecture

(2) educational definitions, issues related to identification, medical diagnoses, and eligibility criteria pertaining to students with autism, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;

Unit 1: Overview of criteria of characteristics of ASD, informal/formal assessment procedures,

(6) etiology, early indicators, and core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, and their impact on social interaction, communication, behavior, and learning;

Unit 1: Overview of criteria of characteristics of ASD, early indicators in ASD - reflective writing and discussion on Janzen and Buron/Wolfberg text

(7) impact of the combined effects of the restricted range of interests, limited social understanding, impaired language skills, idiosyncratic sensory behaviors, and anxiety on the student’s ability to benefit from incidental learning opportunities;

Unit 3: Learning styles of ASD - Janzen and Buron/Wolfberg text study guides completed for discussion

D. Collaboration and communication. A teacher of special education: autism spectrum disorders cultivates and maintains positive, collaborative relationships with children and youth, families, educators, other professionals, and the community to support development and educational progress. The teacher must be able to:

(4) consider the impact of core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders on family dynamics and functioning and the perspectives of families and individuals with autism spectrum disorders when interacting and planning;

Unit 16: ASD Across Lifetime - Family Perspective, Janzen and Buron/Wolfberg text

(5) promote collaborative practices that respect the individual’s and family’s culture and values relative to the impact that autism spectrum disorders may have on the individual and family across the lifespan;

Unit 6 lecture and reading: Parent Perspective on the IEP process; research article critique

**Course Objectives:**
The students will:
1. Differentiate Autism Spectrum Disorders within the spectrum.
2. Identify prominent characteristics of ASD.
3. Describe early observable features of ASD.
4. Explain research-based practices for early intervention.
5. Identify best practices for collaboration in relation to services for ASD.
6. Identify quality resources for parents and professionals

Course Requirements:

1. text based reading and response  
   6 @ 20 points each  
   120 points
2. article critiques on special topic  
   1 @ 25 points  
   25 points
3. presentation  
   1 @ 25 points  
   25 points
4. midterm/final  
   35 points each

Graduate Students:  (a) book review and presentation to peers of text, student choice with instructor approval;  OR  (b) graduate paper on course related topic with PowerPoint presentation to peers; points for (a) and (b):  50 points each

Course Assignment Descriptions:

1. text-based responses:  2 – 3 page written essays will address each of the following; rubric will be provided; 20 points total possible for each high quality summative essay; papers will create a standards-based portfolio

*historical and philosophical foundations, legal basis, and contemporary issues pertaining to the education of students with autism spectrum disorders;

*educational definitions, issues related to identification, medical diagnoses, and eligibility criteria pertaining to students with autism, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;

*etiology, early indicators, and core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, and their impact on social interaction, communication, behavior, and learning;

*impact of the combined effects of the restricted range of interests, limited social understanding, impaired language skills, idiosyncratic sensory behaviors, and anxiety on the student’s ability to benefit from incidental learning opportunities;

*impact of core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders on family dynamics and functioning and the perspectives of families and individuals with autism spectrum disorders when interacting and planning;

*collaborative practices that respect the individual’s and family’s culture and values relative to the impact that autism spectrum disorders may have on the individual and family across the lifespan;

Standards:  A 1, 2, 6, 7;  D 4, 5
2. article critique on special topics: candidate will reflect upon the core ideas of the following standard and will locate/critique 3 articles addressing the topic; 25 points possible for high quality critique; rubric will be provided —

promote collaborative practices that respect the individual’s and family’s culture and values relative to the impact that autism spectrum disorders may have on the individual and family across the lifespan;

Standard: D5

3. presentation: students will create a presentation (audio, visual, print-based) addressing the impact of core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders on family dynamics and functioning and the perspectives of families and individuals with autism spectrum disorders when interacting and planning

Standard: D4

4. midterm and final exams will address the standards and will contain multiple choice, short answer, and reflective tasks

Standards: A 1, 2, 6, 7; D 4, 5

**Evaluation Plan**

*Based upon a point system for assignments:*

Grading: A – F scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 65%</td>
<td>Failed Course</td>
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**Policy on Graduate Credit**

Graduate credit may be earned in offerings at the 500 or above level. It is intended that there shall be a qualitative difference in all work for graduate students. The department will be responsible for indicating the manner in which differentiation will be made for proposed 400/500 level courses. Individual instructors, in compliance with approved policies, will determine the specific requirements for graduate credit in 400/500 level courses and will announce the expectations of graduate students in classroom sessions.

**Course Outline**

Unit 1

Topic: introduction to course, review of classroom resources and policies; history of Autism Spectrum Disorders lecture; overview of eligibility criterion and characteristics of ASD including that which pertains to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; overview of historical and philosophical foundations, legal basis, and contemporary issues pertaining to the education of students with autism spectrum disorders
Screening and Diagnostic Procedures, overview of criterion and characteristics of ASD evaluation components: informal/formal

Reading: Janzen, Buron & Wolfberg: chapter 1, Overview of ASD
Assignments: reflective writing and discussions

Unit 2 Early Indicators and Intervention in ASD

Reading: Janzen, Buron & Wolfberg: Chapter 1; Chapter 3, Effective Early Intervention; lecture & presentation addressing etiology, early indicators, and core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, and their impact on social interaction, communication, behavior, and learning
Assignments: reflective writing and discussions

Unit 3 Learning Style of Students with Autism

Reading: Janzen; Buron & Wolfberg; Chapter 2, Brain/Learning Behavior Connection in Autism; lecture/presentation regarding the impact of the combined effects of the restricted range of interests, limited social understanding, impaired language skills, idiosyncratic sensory behaviors, and anxiety on the student’s ability to benefit from incidental learning opportunities
Assignments: chapter study guide completed for discussion; written reflection

Unit 4 Effects of ASD on Communication and Social Development

Reading: Janzen, select pages; Buron & Wolfberg, Chapter 8: Fostering Peer Play and Friendships; Chapter 9: Social Thinking, Cognition, and Communication & Learning
Assignments: chapter study guide completed for discussion

Unit 5 Making Program Decisions
The Educational Team
Reading: Janzen, select pages; Buron & Wolfberg, Chapter 12: The Education Team, Effective Positive Interdisciplinary Collaboration
• Lecture addressing standard D4: the impact of core and associated characteristics of autism spectrum disorders on family dynamics and functioning and the perspectives of families and individuals with autism spectrum disorders when interacting and planning, & presentation addressing the BOT standard D5: collaborative practices that respect the
individual’s and family’s culture and values relative to the impact that autism spectrum disorders may have on the individual and family across the lifespan

Assignments: reflective writing and discussions

Unit 6
What does research tell us?
Parent perspectives on the IEP process (Brandt 2011)

Reading: related research articles
Assignments: article critique

Unit 7
Managing and Teaching Behaviors

Reading: Janzen, select pages; Buron & Wolfberg, Chapter 7: Teaching a Different Way: Positive Behavior Support
Assignments: chapter study guides and discussions

Unit 8
Positive Behavioral Support, continued: MN Dept. of Ed website review

Unit 9
Midterm Exam

Unit 10
Sensory Processing

Reading: Buron & Wolfberg, Chapter 6 Sensory Processing
Assignments: chapter study guides and discussions

Unit 11
Nutrition Issues: Special diets/research and results

Reading: select chapters/research articles available to the class
Assignments: reading guides completed and discussions

Unit 12
Interventions: A Survey of Approaches

Reading: Janzen; Buron & Wolfberg
Assignments: begin research and work for presentations

Unit 13
Organization and Structure
Use of Routines/Visual Support

Reading: Janzen: Structured Communication Supports, selected pages and example; Buron & Wolfberg, Chapter 5: Structured Teaching and Environmental Supports
Assignments: reading guides completed and discussions

Unit 14
What does research tell us?
Classroom Teacher’s perspectives on ASD

Reading: related research articles
Assigned: research for critiques, due week 16

Unit 15
Classroom-based Interventions: Survey
Adaptations and modifications

Reading: to be assigned
Study guide for final exam

Unit 16
ASD across the Lifespan: Family Perspectives

Reading: Buron & Wolfberg, Chapter 13: Growing up with Autism, A Parent’s Perspective; Chapter 14: Education Experiences Across a Lifetime, A Personal Perspective

Unit 17: Final Exam
**Bibliography:**


