

University of Massachusetts/Boston

ED Course #492: Deafblind Leadership

Instructor: Tracy Evans Luiselli, Ed.D.

Face-to-face Training Dates:

February 24 and 25, 2009 (9-4:30)

May 27 and 28, 2009 (9-4:30)

October 28 and 29, 2009 (9-4:30)

March 31 and April 1, 2010 (9-4:30)

Course Description:

This course focuses on the development of leadership skills for persons working with children and youth who are deafblind, as well as the educational implications of deafblindness. It is designed to provide participants with a foundation of knowledge and skills regarding effective practice for learners with combined vision and hearing loss. The blend of content and practicum experience will provide participants with the knowledge and skills to apply instructional strategies and to perform leadership activities in their state, agency or program. Training modules will be enhanced by practicum experiences as participants work directly with a child who is deafblind. Participants will apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in real life settings and in their current place of employment.

Required Text:

Remarkable Conversations (1999). Chapter Four: Conversations: The Essence of Communication. Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, MA

Authors: Barbara Miles and Marianne Riggio

Miles, B. (Rev. 2003) *Talking the language of the hands to the hands: The importance of hands for the person who is deaf-blind*. DB-LINK the National Information Clearinghouse on Children who are Deaf-Blind

Assigned Handouts

Other Class Materials:

A course binder distributed on the first day of class with handouts, articles and additional resources.

A resource table available for review of a variety of educational materials related to the fields of deafblindness and special education.

Departmental Themes:

Promoting Social Justice: We see teaching as an activity with political dimensions and we see educators as responsible for challenging inequities in the social order and working with others to establish a more just society. *ED 492 serves to educate practitioners and future educators in effective strategies to provide instruction to learners who are deafblind. An emphasis is on the unique learning style of this population of children. With under 10 graduate education programs in the United States that focus on the needs of children who are deafblind, this intensive institute fills a critical need in the educational system of our country.*

Constructing Knowledge: We regard all teachers and students as active agents in their own learning, who draw on prior knowledge and experience to construct new knowledge in interaction with texts, materials and other learners. *ED 492 is a unique course in that educators from all parts of the US will be coming together to learn and share their own unique experiences. The course will feature lectures, observations, discussion groups, team meetings, panel discussions, and group project work in order to capitalize on the unique and varied experiences of the faculty and the students.*

Inquiring About Practice: The curriculum is intended to bridge the gap between research and practice by fostering critical reflection and by treating classrooms and schools as sites for teacher research and other forms of practitioner inquiry. *This course is designed to provide students with information on research-based effective practices and allow them to practice these strategies in a genuine classroom setting. Each student will have the opportunity to spend time observing and interacting in classrooms serving students who are deafblind.*

Accommodating Diversity: We believe that one of the central challenges of teaching is meeting the needs of all learners, especially as the school culture becomes more diverse in race, culture, ethnicity, language background and ability/disability. *The foundation of ED 492 is to provide educators with the knowledge and skills to promote equity in learning by providing access to information and educational opportunities to children who are deafblind.*

Collaborating with Others: Prospective teachers are encouraged to collaborate with each of the stakeholders in the educational process (other teachers, administrators, human service professionals, parents, community members) and with fellow students and professors. *Course content in ED 492 will be presented by various lecturers who have significant expertise in their respective field. Each will emphasize their individual contribution to the team as well as the need for a collaborative approach to educating students who are*

deafblind. The students will actively engage in classroom observations, data collection and communication assessment during the week.

Competencies Upon Completion:

1. Participants will be able to identify several etiologies that are linked to children who are deafblind and the implications for developing an appropriate educational program.
2. Participants will be able to identify key educational implications of vision loss and hearing loss and develop strategies to provide access to communication and learning.
3. Participants will be better able to align a student's educational program with the state standards and frameworks by providing each student with access to the general education curriculum.
4. Participants will be better able to develop an appropriate program to teach communication skills to students by providing opportunities for conversation, modifications/supports within the curriculum, and using systematic instruction.
5. Participants will gain knowledge and skill in implementing effective research-based strategies to teach children who are deafblind.
6. Participants will gain an awareness of the role of the family in the life of a child who is deafblind.
7. Participants will develop the knowledge and skills to collect and report data related to the child's educational program, particularly in the area of communication.
8. Participants will gain an awareness of the state and federal resources available to children who are deafblind, their families and educators.
9. Participants will develop leadership and collaboration skills to effect change in their classroom, school, program, agency, state or region. Includes development of an action plan with timelines.

Attendance: Participants are expected to attend each training module, phone conferences and to arrive/depart as scheduled. Missing part of the program may result in removal from the training project/course. If an emergency arises, it is the participant's responsibility to notify their state liaison AND the NEC office at 617-972-7515, 7517 or nec@perkins.org

Assignments and Grading:

(A) Class/Training Module Participation, Attendance and Completion of Observation/Assessments: (30 points):

One of the foundations of this course is learning from each other and working within a collaborative state team during face-to-face training modules, small group meetings, and interim state phone conferences. Attendance and participation in class/training modules will be a significant portion of your grade.

(B) Deafblind Advisor Portfolio (60 points): Develop a portfolio/binder for final review that includes the following information:

(1) Child Report - includes a 5-8 page report addressing the following:

Identify a child who has combined vision and hearing loss, observe the child (total) in both structured and unstructured activities (i.e., one-to-one instruction, small group, recess, lunch). *Note: You probably already use a child report format in your program/agency. You may submit that report as your Child Plan/Report – addressing the items/assessment procedures described below:*

Following observation, complete the following:

- Classroom Observation Tool
- Criterion Referenced Assessment (MPTA)
- Communication Matrix
- Decision-Making Model and Intervention Plan for at least (1) Communication Skill

(2) Based on your observations and information gathered from these tools, complete the Child Report (5-8 pages) including:

- a. **Background Information:** Identify the child's age, etiology, type and degree of vision/hearing loss
- b. **Current Educational Setting:** Describe the type of educational setting and supports
- c. **Environmental Recommendations:** At least three recommendations for arranging the classroom environment (seating, instructional areas, placement of learning materials, transition space). Include a hand drawn diagram or picture of the classroom.
- d. **Sensory Supports:** Identify at least two recommendations for **both** vision and hearing accommodations that will support learning and access to the classroom curriculum.

- e. **Communication Level:** Complete the Communication Profile/Matrix, and determine the child's level of communication (form/functions)
- f. **Instructional Strategies: Complete Decision Making Model and Intervention Plan for at least one communication skill).** Note: Recommendations should directly reflect the "real life" learning needs of the child.
- g.
- h. **Portfolio Review:** Compile all assessment results, course handouts, related articles in the portfolio binder. Meet with the instructor to review Deafblind Advisor Portfolio, assessment records, and Deafblind Advisor Leadership Plan (20-25 minutes via phone conference, SKYPE call, or face-to-face meeting)

(C) Deafblind Advisor Leadership Plan (10 points): Upon completion of the training project, each student will submit an Leadership Plan that describes actions to be taken to apply training information to improve services for a child(ren) who is deafblind, within the region, state, or agency/program. Leadership Plan components include at least one targeted need related to each of the following recipients: child, service providers, families and state/local systems; numbered action steps; resources need to address each action item; and target dates for completion.

Examples of activities: training to program staff regarding learning needs of child(ren) who is deafblind, training at state early intervention conference, collaboration with a state agency to include deafblind specific information in state training (training at statewide meeting/conference for speech therapists, teachers of the visually impaired, teachers of the deaf). Include specific steps or activities that you will accomplish with timelines. May be completed individually or small group (state).

(D) Other: Also include the following in portfolio binder: pictures of adapted materials; articles related to the field of deafblindness and/or leadership.

Due Date: May 30, 2010

Grading:

Point Distribution:

100-95	A
94-91	A-
90-87	B+
86-82	B
81-78	B-

Proposed Training/Course Schedule

Activity #1: Initial Phone Conference - States

Activity #2 and #3 (Face-to Face Modules): Vision, Hearing and Implications of Combined Sensory Loss, Common Etiologies, Family Perspectives

Tuesday - February 24th, 2009

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Tracy Evans Luiselli, NEC; Dr. Susan Edelman (VT); Susan DeCaluwe (MA); Kim Conlon (NH); Jean Small (ME); Barbara Miles (VT); Karen Olson (CT); Kathy Morgan (CT); Janette Peracchio (CT); Deborah Chase(NEC); Cheryl Harvey (NEC)

Overview of Deafblindness

Reflections on Deafblindness: A Family Perspective - Parent Panel: Debbi Chase, Parent

Dr. Tracy Evans Luiselli, (NEC)

Etiologies of Deafblindness

Pam Ryan (Perkins School for the Blind)

Wednesday - February 25th, 2009

Exploring the Educational Implications of Hearing Impairment

Dr. Bob Gilmore (Pres. & Dir. Of Common Sense Hearing)

Exploring the Educational Implications of Vision Impairment

Derrick Wright (Perkins School for the Blind)

Activity #4: Interim Phone Conference – States – April 6th, 2009

Activity #5: Development of Communication Skills – May 27 and 28th, 2009

Hands – The Importance of Touch – Barbara Miles

Assessment – Communication Forms and Function (Sharon Stelzer, Bethany Provost)

Communication Map; Communication Matrix

Range of Communication Systems

Decision-Making Process

Activity #6: Interim Phone Conference

Activity #7 and #8: Systematic Instruction and Communication – October 28 and 29th 2009

Systematic Instruction (Dr. Jennifer Grisham-Brown)

Embedding Communication Skills into Classroom Routines and Activities

Body Tracing (Barbara Miles)

Classroom Observation Tool (Dr. Susan Edelman)

Communication Matrix review (Dr. Charity Rowland)

Activity #9: Interim Phone Conference –December 4th, 2010

Activity #10: Assessment and Intervention Strategies – Spring 2010

Assessment Continued (Dr. Jennifer Grisham-Brown); Reach for the Stars; AEPS Assessment Tool (Revision, 2010)

Statewide Assessment Process: Considerations for Learners who are Deafblind

Support for Personnel: Interveners, Paraprofessionals, Interpreters

Transition Resources

Leadership/ Consultation Skills

National and International Resources (NCDB/DB-LINK)

Final Interview Dates