

Beacon Course Syllabi for Components Florida Autism Endorsement

Autism: Communication Needs for Students (60 hours)

Autism: Nature and Needs (60 hours)

Autism: Positive Behavior Support (60 hours)

Autism: Student Assessment (60 hours)

Autism: Communication Needs for Students

Description

Evaluate and plan for the language and communication needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) using augmentative and alternative communication systems as determined by individual student need.

- **Prior completion of Autism: Nature and Needs strongly recommended.**
- **Requires student contact.**

Learning Objectives

Chapter One: Unique Communication Characteristics

Learners will

- identify communication functions and forms, and
- recognize communication characteristics common in individuals with ASD
 - limited communication,
 - limited joint attention, and/or
 - unconventional forms of communication

Chapter Two: The Effects of Communication Differences

Learners will

- recognize that within the autism population, behavior is communication; therefore, learners will recognize how communication affects student self-management and behavior;
- explain the link between the effective use of visual cues in the student's environment, the ability of the ASD student to comprehend the intended meaning, and appropriate social behavior;
- recognize the deficits in adaptive behavior and life skills that accompany ASD; and
- explain the rationale for using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) for students with ASD.

Chapter Three: Visuals Supporting Classroom Learning

Learners will

- identify visual aids and supports;
- recognize the advantages of using visual supports when working with students with ASD;
- identify several types of commonly used visual supports within the ASD classroom;
- recognize multiple instances in the classroom in which the use of visual supports, and the fading of those supports, would be effective for individuals and whole groups; and
- use various resources for creating visual supports.

Chapter Four: Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Learners will

- recognize reasons why students with ASD may use AAC which may include deficits in motor skills necessary for speech output, deficits in expressive language skills necessary for meaningful speech, and poor attending or deficits in joint attention necessary for speech;
- identify characteristics of students who would benefit from AAC in the classroom;
- identify types of AAC systems and when to use these systems;
- learn how students acquire AAC and useful resources for access to AAC; and
- identify common myths and misconceptions about AAC.

Chapter Five: Using AAC in the Classroom

Learners will

- recognize examples of modeling AAC in the classroom to include
 - requesting,
 - making comments,
 - answering questions,
 - asking questions;
- identify routine activities to incorporate AAC into the classroom;
- identify ways AAC can be used to problem solve or reduce student frustration;
- identify ways to increase AAC use in the classroom and at home; and
- design an activity using AAC in the classroom.

Chapter Six: Behavioral Interventions to Improve Communication

Learners will:

- understand the relationship between functional communication and problem behavior,
- examine how language is classified and approached from a behavioral perspective,
- learn how to teach communication skills through discrete trial training (DTT) and natural environment training (NET), and
- understand pragmatics and interventions for effective use.

Chapter Seven: Classroom Arrangement for Effective Communication

Learners will:

- develop strategies for embedding communication opportunities across all lesson activities throughout the school day,
- arrange the environment to facilitate communicative interactions between the student and adults and between the student and peers,
- individualize strategies for communication in the classroom to include students at a variety of learner levels, including those who use different forms of AAC, and
- recognize how visual scripts and video modeling can be used to teach communication and social skills.

Chapter Eight: Addressing Individual Student Needs

Learners will

- recognize the domains of language that may be assessed;
- develop an awareness of the components of formal speech-language assessments
- recognize common procedures for assistive technology or augmentative and alternative communication referrals;
- recognize information gathered during speech/language assessments that can be used to increase communication skills for students with ASD; and
- recognize barriers to targeting communication at school and at home.

Chapter Nine: Classroom Integration of AAC

Learners will

- individualize the communication systems to meet the specific needs of students,
- identify characteristics indicative of success with augmentative communication systems, and

employ methods that integrate the use of alternative/augmentative communication and assistive/instructional technology into the curriculum.

Chapter Ten: Communication Strategies for Students with ASD

Learners will recognize

- the ethical implications of teaching,
- the difference in student-driven AAC vocabulary vs. more formal AAC vocabulary,
- the difference in social language conventions vs. meaningful language,
- pre-requisite skills in the ASD classroom,
- Initiatives in the special/exceptional student classroom,
- develop an awareness of appropriate communication with families of all cultures regarding appropriate and realistic communication goals, and
- will recognize the interdependence of experience, cognitive, social/emotional, motor ability/skills, and language development/skills in students with ASD.

Documentation Methods

Participants must document their learning by completing the following summatives.

4 File Uploads - Learner demonstrates implementation of course content by submitting documentation of a specified activity.

1 Multiple Choice Exam - Learner demonstrates knowledge of content by selecting the correct answer from the choices provided.

3 Reflections - Learner synthesizes previous knowledge and course content in order to develop a narrative response.

The summatives must meet 80% of the established criteria.

Autism: Nature and Needs

Description

Develop a working knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with emphasis on a historical perspective, the impact of the disability, environmental impact, planning, goal setting, and strategies for working with individuals with ASD.

- **This is recommended as the first course in the Autism series.**

Learning Objectives

Chapter One: Identifying an Autism Spectrum Disorder

Learners will

- explore the history of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) as a disability area,
- identify Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS) and discuss sub-types as “subthreshold” autism,
- recognize state and federal educational eligibility criteria vs. DSM-V criteria,
- develop an awareness of current beliefs as to the etiology and prevalence of ASD, and
- recognize the triad of ASD and the impact of the disability.

Chapter Two: Understanding the Nature of Autism

Learners will

- explore the areas of concern that impact students diagnosed with ASD,
- identify the impact of ASD on learning and acquiring new skills, and
- recognize strategies for managing impacted areas of concern for students with ASD.

Chapter Three: Assessments and the ASD Student

Learners will

- recognize the components of the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) as it applies to struggling students,
- describe the evaluation process for students whose difficulties are not addressed through the MTSS process,
- recognize assessment instruments and their uses for eligibility and/or re-evaluation for Autism Spectrum Disorder identification,
- describe common types of informal assessments used to monitor instruction and used to write IEP goals, and
- identify the criteria used by an IEP team to determine the appropriate state assessment (standard or alternative) and to identify the ramifications of those particular assessments.

Chapter Four: Classroom Arrangement for the ASD Student

Learners will implement classroom design to provide the optimal environmental conditions for learning to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders to include the following components:

- physical arrangement of the classroom,
- development and teaching of routines,
- adult instructional roles, and
- resources for teaching adaptive life skills.

Chapter Five: Establishing Visual Schedules and Reinforcement

Learners will develop skills which will allow them to

- recognize the benefits of visual schedules,
- determine the best type of visual schedule to meet individual student needs,
- create visual schedules,
- implement the use of visual schedules in the classroom,
- recognize the steps in implementation of reinforcement strategies,
- develop an awareness of resources available for assessing student preferences for reinforcers,
- apply reinforcement principles, and
- reflect on their classroom management system of which reinforcement is a component.

Chapter Six: Work Systems for the ASD Student

Learners will

- recognize the common characteristics in students with ASD that result in a lack of independent organizational skills,
- recognize the connection between the use of routines and visual schedules and work systems,
- recognize the definition of a work system,
- identify the 4 critical pieces of information that are provided to a student by a work system,
- identify the elements of a work system,
- recognize the steps involved in the implementation of a work system,
- recognize the types of work systems,
- identify several academic and pre-vocational tasks that are used in a work system, and
- discuss the benefits of using a work system for ASD students and the benefits of classroom use for teachers.

Chapter 7: Using Visual Strategies to Regulate Behavior

Learners will

- identify the function of behavior,
- recognize basic steps in the assessment of behavior process,
- identify visual strategies for teaching students with ASD how to make choices and requests,
- identify visual strategies for teaching students with ASD how to appropriately reject or protest,
- identify visual strategies for teaching students negotiating skills, and
- Identify visual strategies for establishing rules and guidelines.

Chapter 8: Nature and Needs: Social Learning

Learners will identify evidence-based social supports needed for social skills training for ASD students which may include

- social narratives, such as Social Stories (™), Power Cards (™), and cartooning;
- social scripts;
- video modeling/cognitive picture rehearsal; and
- peer-mediated instruction and intervention.

Chapter 9: Strategies for Including Students with Autism

Learners will

- identify characteristics of students with ASD and their target goals for success in the general education setting,
- recognize research-based strategies and supports for students with ASD in the general education setting,
- develop strategies for addressing behavioral issues of students with ASD in the general education setting,
- review the use of reinforcement for use in the general education setting with students with autism, and
- review social skills training elements for working with ASD students in a general education setting.

Chapter 10: Coordinating the Intervention Plan

Learners will

- consider all factors and needs present in students with autism when developing an intervention plan,
- develop a comprehensive program plan to systematically implement the student with ASD's intervention strategies,
- advocate for the student with autism at school, at home, and in the community, and
- manage student information and parent communication in an effective manner.

Documentation Methods

Participants must document their learning by completing the following summatives.

4 File Uploads - Learner demonstrates implementation of course content by submitting documentation of a specified activity.

1 Multiple Choice Exam - Learner demonstrates knowledge of content by selecting the correct answer from the choices provided.

4 Reflections - Learner synthesizes previous knowledge and course content in order to develop a narrative response.

The summatives must meet 80% of the established criteria.

Autism: Positive Behavior Support

Description

Develop classroom techniques for using applied behavior analysis principles and behavioral strategies for students with autism. Investigate data collection, functions of behavior, preventing challenging behaviors, and ethics in applying behavioral techniques.

- **Requires student contact.**

Learning Objectives

The History of Applied Behavior Analysis

Participants will

- familiarize themselves with the historical context and development of Applied Behavior Analysis,
- demonstrate a basic understanding of the principles of the pure science of behavior analysis and Applied Behavior Analysis,
- recognize the Seven Dimensions of Applied Behavior Analysis, and
- identify the evidence-based practices for instruction of students with an autism diagnosis.

Principles of Reinforcement and Punishment

Participants will

- recognize the effects of reinforcement and punishment of various types on behavior,
- complete **Field Exercise 1** (administer a Preference Assessment and interpret its results),
- develop an awareness of the importance of the concept of pairing with students,
- compile a rich list of student reinforcer ideas,
- embed understanding of the terms satiation and deprivation when using student reinforcers,
- demonstrate an understanding of and seek improvement in classroom Instructional Control based on feedback provided through classroom observation, and
- complete **Field Experience 2** by completing an Instructional Control self-assessment.

Teaching Using Behavioral Principles

Participants will

- become aware of the purpose for and factors that are important when choosing and administering multiple assessment instruments,
- recognize the three core areas of functioning that should be assessed in students with ASD,
- enhance data collection and recording skills,
- identify the Discrete Trial Training teaching procedures and strategies,
- recognize the hierarchy of prompting types and their respective prompting strategies,
- identify errorless teaching procedures, and
- compare and contrast Natural Environment Training to Discrete Trial Training.

Measurement and Data Collection

Participants will

- recognize the importance of accurately defining target behaviors;
- develop an awareness of the dimensions of behavior;
- when collecting behavioral data, determine the appropriate measure: count, rate, duration, latency, and interresponse time;
- develop an awareness of school personnel available to support ASD students and resource materials available for classroom data collection;
- complete **Field Experience Activity #3** and observe, record, and analyze behavior; and
- enhance knowledge of graph components and of the data graphing process.

Functions of Behavior and Intervention Plans

Participants will

- identify the function of behaviors;
- identify antecedents, behaviors, and consequences;
- recognize behavioral setting events;
- utilize tools for gathering data for a functional behavior assessment (FBA); and
- use gathered data from the FBA to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

Strategies to Increase and Develop New Behaviors

Participants will

- recognize the major types of reinforcement schedules and their benefits,
- recognize the terms of shaping and chaining,
- develop task analysis skills, and
- complete **Field Exercise #4** which includes a task analysis and chaining tasks.

Preventing Challenging Behaviors: PBIS In Action

Participants will

- explore the background of the development of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS),
- recognize the preventative school-wide and classroom-level tenets of PBIS, and
- understand the next steps to take when preventative behavioral strategies have not had the desired result.

Dealing with Challenging Behaviors

Participants will

- analyze and chose interventions and replacement behaviors based on the function of behavior, and
- recognize socially appropriate replacement behaviors.

Additional Strategies in Dealing with Challenging Behaviors

Participants will

- explore the use of behavior contracts, group contingencies and token economies for managing student behavior.

Ethics and ABA in the Classroom

Participants will

- familiarize themselves with the definition of ethics; and
- identify the ethical elements of the application of Applied Behavior Analysis in the classroom to include
 - therapeutic environment,
 - behavior change focused on student benefit,
 - professional use of ABA through collaboration,
 - student independence-focused goals,
 - on-going data collection and evaluation, and
 - teacher accountability.

Documentation Methods

Participants must document their learning by completing the following summatives.

2 File Uploads - Learner demonstrates implementation of course content by submitting documentation of a specified activity.

1 Multiple Choice Exam - Learner demonstrates knowledge of content by selecting the correct answer from the choices provided.

4 Reflections - Learner synthesizes previous knowledge and course content in order to develop a narrative response.

The summatives must meet 80% of the established criteria.

Autism: Student Assessment

Description

Gain an understanding of the educational determination and assessment of students with ASD. Apply assessment information when teaching, monitoring, and maintaining new skills.

- This course serves as the **capstone** for the autism program. **It should be the final course taken in this series.**
- **Requires student contact.**

Learning Objectives

Chapter One: Reviewing the MTSS Process

Learners will

- recognize the definition of MTSS;
- discriminate between MTSS, RtI, and PBIS;
- identify the tiers of support;
- recognize common MtSS myths;
- recognize disproportionality and how RTI may solve the issues;
- recognize barriers to the identification process and how to alleviate them; and
- identify next steps and process for entering ESE/SPED or evaluating for a new label.

Chapter Two: Working with Families of ASD Students

Learners will:

- identify common reasons parents may need additional support during identification and placement;
- recognize the relationship between medical diagnoses, educational labels, and least restrictive environment;
- understand reasons for including parents in the IEP process;
- identify ways to support and include parents in the IEP process; and
- identify general ways to facilitate a positive relationship with parents.

Chapter Three: Assessment Tools

Learners will:

- understand how IDEA relates to autism identification and evaluation,
- identify legal requirements prior to evaluation for ASD eligibility,
- identify legal requirements for ASD evaluation,
- understand the relationship between IDEA and state requirements for ASD eligibility, and
- review examples of assessment components and evaluation tools used in evaluation for ASD eligibility.

Chapter Four: Interpreting Formal Assessment Data

Learners will:

- read an evaluation report,
- recognize the key parts of the report,
- learn how to interpret assessment scores, and
- use an evaluation report to pinpoint a student's strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter Five: Writing Goals Based on Priority Educational Needs

Learners will

- recognize key components of an IEP
- identify SMART goals and the benefit of using them;
- learn how to write measurable goals and objectives for language, behavior, and academics;
- recognize legal implications of the Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District case and how it relates to goal writing;
- recognize common mistakes in goal writing and how to avoid them; and
- demonstrate the ability to write SMART goals.

Chapter Six: Least Restrictive Environment and the ASD Student

Learners will

- recognize the federal guidelines within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as they relate to student placement,
- recognize the principles of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) within the IDEA,
- analyze the classroom environment, teaching, and the student in order to determine appropriate supplementary aids and services,
- recognize which individuals make up the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Team that determines ASD student placement decisions,
- develop an awareness of the ASD student factors that influence placement decisions,
- develop an awareness of the range of placements for students with ASD, and
- recognize the complexity of decision-making when multiple diagnoses are present.

Chapter Seven: Alternate Assessments

Learners will

- identify current state and federal guidelines as they pertain to statewide standardized assessments,
- recognize the types of statewide assessments in Florida and who takes them,
- identify candidates for alternate assessment,
- recognize the decision-making process for determining who takes an alternate assessment,
- recognize the impact that alternate assessment has on transition,
- recognize current rules and regulations for using accommodations for alternate assessments,
- practice making a recommendation for traditional assessment versus alternate assessment based on student need.

Chapter Eight: Informal Assessments for Planning Instruction

Learners will

- differentiate between standardized and non-standardized assessments,
- differentiate between state assessments and those used for instructional planning,
- identify several informal tests used by teachers to determine students' mastered skills and levels of functioning.
- create and administer a reading or math informal assessment.

Chapter Nine: Transitional Needs of ASD Students

Learners will

- define transition planning and how it relates to the IEP process;
- recognize current initiatives and legislation concerning transition;
- identify transition team stakeholders and the roles they serve;
- recognize critical issues surrounding transition and how, when, and why to plan for them
- learn how to write measurable transition goals for students with ASD;
- identify programs, resources, and agencies that are available for students with ASD during and after transition; and
- demonstrate the ability to write transition goals for employment and post-secondary education.

Chapter Ten: Innovative Technology for Students with Autism

Learners will

- recognize uses of technology in the ASD classroom,
- recognize technology for the learning environment,
- recognize personal technology,
- recognize technology for personal safety concerns,
- increase knowledge of available learning apps, and
- develop an awareness of emerging technology.

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3 Multiple Choice Exams - Learner demonstrates knowledge of content by selecting the correct answer from the choices provided.

5 Reflections - Learner synthesizes previous knowledge and course content in order to develop a narrative response.

The summatives must meet 80% of the established criteria.