



AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER: TRUTHS AND CONSEQUENCES

"If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism." Stephen Shore

Instructional Team

Katie Klingler Tackett, Ph.D

About Me: I am a former general education and special education teacher. I'm a parent (through both biology and the foster care system). My responsibilities here at UT include teaching and overseeing the Special Education undergrad program.

Alexandrea Pena

About Me: I am originally from Albuquerque, NM. I previously taught in special education programs that served students with Intellectual and Developmental disabilities. Currently, I am a 2nd year doctoral student here at UT in the Special Education Equity and Diversity program.

Yeji Kim

About Me: I am a former special education teacher from South Korea. Currently, I am a 3rd-year doctoral student at UT in the Special Education Equity and Diversity program.



What this course is about...

Welcome to the world of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). You always have been living in this world, and some of you are extremely comfortable and familiar with this world, whether as an individual, friend, and/or family member. Others, however, will experience your first formal exposure to ASD in this course. You will identify which approaches and strategies help improve the lives of people with ASD and which ones are wastes of time and money (or even downright dangerous).

The goal of this course is to help you to become an educated consumer of research. We will look at various claims and the research behind each of them. Additionally, we will examine the role research plays in the public perception of these claims. We will consider how research findings are communicated - and how we can best translate these findings into everyday language.

The picture is of Taipei, where Alex and I were supposed to be leading a Study Abroad program this summer. It has nothing to do with this class.



This course carries the Cultural Diversity flag. <https://ugs.utexas.edu/flags/students/about/cultural-diversity>

Course Objectives

- Explain how the definition and history of ASD impacts prevalence numbers
 - Compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative research in educational settings
 - Explain how the questions researchers ask determine the methods they use to study ASD
 - Describe various research methods used by researchers to study ASD
 - Identify strengths and limitations of various educational research methods
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Course Format

You will take this class online. The class will not meet in person or online synchronously, and there will be no scheduled exams or lectures.

You are encouraged to access the course content regularly and treat this class as if we met regularly. By doing so, you will be able to actively participate in class activities, complete your assignments, and access announcements in a timely manner.

You can complete this course in a condensed period. That doesn't mean that you should, though.

You must complete each module in order to move on to the next module. The lessons build on each other, so skipping around between modules doesn't make sense.

Strong time management skills will be your best asset in this course. Poor time management is a major reason why grades suffer in online courses.



thecoffeebee

"We didn't used to have all this ADHD and Autism and stuff" I think what you mean is that people used to go undiagnosed and get absolutely no help and were forced to suffer through their life because they had no support or understanding whatsoever but sure, Janice, pretend my generation invented Autism.

ASSIGNMENTS

"Normal is an illusion. What is normal for the spider is chaos for the fly." Barbara Sher

Detailed guidelines and evaluation criteria for assignments will be provided. The following descriptions serve as an overview of the expectations for each assignment.

We've set up due dates in Canvas for when we think you should complete modules in order to spread out the workload AND best meet our course objectives. There will be no penalty for late work, though. **All assignments are due at 11:59 pm on Friday, August 14th. All work must be turned in by then.**

1. Module Prompts. (150 points; 10 prompts x 15 points each) At the end of each module, you will write a brief (less than 200 words) response or record a short video reaction (less than 90 seconds) to a prompt provided on Canvas. Prompts will be graded on a 15-point scale.
2. Module Quizzes. (100 points; 10 quizzes x 10 points each). As you complete each module, you will take a ten-question quiz to assess your understanding of the content covered in each module. Before you start the quiz make sure you have completed the readings and watched the videos found in the module. Each quiz consists of a bank of questions, and you will be given 10 questions to answer from the bank. You have two chances to take each quiz; the highest grade will count. Once you choose to start each quiz, you will have 90 minutes to complete all 10 questions. You may refer back to the content in the module to answer your questions, but you must submit an answer for each question within the 90 minutes. NOTE: Time begins from the moment you start the Module Quiz and runs continuously: once time begins there is no way to pause it, including loss of connectivity or logging out, so please plan accordingly.
3. Research Analysis: 50 points. For this assignment, students will be assigned an article to annotate, summarize, and critique. The article review should identify the following: rationale, research question(s), participants and relevant characteristics, settings and materials used, variables, results, and strengths and limitations of the study. You will be filling out a template for this assignment; it is not a paper. The review will also contain a section where you will "translate" the research findings into practice-friendly language. A rubric is posted on Canvas.

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A	93–100%	C+	77–79%
A–	90–92%	C	73–76%
B+	87–89%	C–	70–72%
B	83–86%	F	< 70%
B–	80–82%	*Traditional rounding principles apply.	

“I view ‘autistic’ as a word for a part of how my brain works, not for a narrow set of behaviors and certainly not for a set of boundaries of a stereotype that I have to stay inside.” — Amanda Boggs

Important Notes

- **Life happens.** Please let the instructional team know if things beyond this course may be affecting your ability to complete work for this class in a timely manner.
- **Your success is important to us.** We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or cause you to feel excluded, please let the instructional team know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to both meet your needs and the requirements of the course.
- **You need to be fully present when logged into class.** It is impossible to participate in this class while texting, Snapchatting, tweeting, working on other things, online shopping, etc. When taking an online class, it is tempting to think that you can keep Google Messenger (for example) open while navigating through the module. If you need to take a break while accessing a module, do it. The modules do not need to be completed in one sitting.

“What would happen if the autism gene was eliminated from the gene pool? You would have a bunch of people standing around in a cave, chatting and socializing and not getting anything done.” Dr. Temple Grandin

• **Track your progress on Canvas.** Students should track their grades on Canvas regularly; this way you can ensure that all of your coursework is turned in and recorded on Canvas.

• **Contact Canvas Support Center for technical support.** If you need technical support, call the **Canvas Support Center [855-308-2494]**. Do not contact your instructors with technical support. They cannot help you (beyond advising you to restart your computer – that's the limit of

their technical expertise. Seriously.)

- **All communication will be through Piazza.** We will use the Piazza Discussion board to ask/ answer questions about content, course logistics, etc. This should be your first stop when you have a question; it may be that it is already asked and answered. If you have a personal question, you may message instructors privately through the Piazza Discussion Board.
- **We will use the class Facebook Page to post articles, video clips, etc.** You **do not** have to engage by posting or commenting on the class Facebook page. However, if (and only if) you have made at least 3 contributions on the class FB page, we will bump your grade up by 1 percentage point, should you find you have missed the cut off score by 1 point. This page will be private and only accessible to members of

the class. We aren't trying to be your friends; FB just has a good interface for online interaction that many of us are familiar with using.

Module Topics	Related Assignments
Module 1: Introduction and Course Review	Module 1 Quiz, Module 1 Prompt
Module 2: What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?	Module 2 Quiz, Module 2 Prompt
Module 3: Why is ASD a Fad Magnet?	Module 3 Quiz, Module 3 Prompt
Module 4: Educational Research 101	Module 4 Quiz, Module 4 Prompt
Module 5: Survey Research and Adults with Autism	Module 5 Quiz, Module 5 Prompt
Module 6: ASD and Sensory Perception	Module 6 Quiz, Module 6 Prompt
Module 7: Experimental Research and Swimming	Module 7 Quiz, Module 7 Prompt
Module 8: Horses and Single Subject Design	Module 8 Quiz, Module 8 Prompt
Module 9: Neurodiversity and Qualitative Research	Module 9 Quiz, Module 9 Prompt
Module 10: Action Research and Education	Module 10 Quiz, Module 10 Prompt; Research Review Project