Syllabus - Spring 2016
EPSY 5140 – Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities

Program Information

This is a three-credit graduate level course. The course is offered through the University of Connecticut's Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability and run in conjunction with eCampus at UConn.

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities (EPSY 5140)
Credits: 3 credits
Prerequisites: None
Format: Online via HuskyCT

Instructor: Dr. Allison Lombardi
E-mail: allison.lombardi@uconn.edu
Tel: (860) 486-2213
Fax: (860) 486-5799

Office: Gentry 002A
Traditional Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1-4pm, or by appointment
Online Office Hours: After the first day of classes, students registered in the course should send messages via HuskyCT Mail or the regular UConn email system (both are connected). To the greatest extent possible, messages sent Monday through Friday will be responded to within 24 hours, and messages sent on Saturdays and Sundays will be responded to within 48 hours.

Course Description

An examination of relevant legislation and recommended practices related to person-centered transition planning for students with disabilities in post-school and adult life, including postsecondary education, employment, community participation, and independent living.

Course Objectives

The course objectives correspond the standards set forth in the Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) “Specialty Set: Advanced Special Education Transition Specialist”. Based upon readings, class discussions, and assignments, students will:
• Examine philosophies that guide how people with disabilities have been and are viewed in society.

• Understand the history of adult outcomes for people with disabilities.

• Become familiar with federal laws and state initiatives pertaining to transition services for students with disabilities.

• Understand theories and philosophies relating to transition planning.

• Understand terminology associated with transition planning.

• Examine recommended practices in transition planning as they are applied in the field of secondary special education.

• Demonstrate knowledge of the transition planning process including approaches to assessment.

• Consider elements of transition planning within the context of culturally and linguistically diverse youth and their families.

• Become familiar with community trends related to employment and postsecondary education for students.

• Become familiar with community resources outside the public school that contribute to the transition and adult outcomes of individuals with disabilities.

• Become familiar with professional organizations and networks related to secondary transition.

• Explore interagency collaboration and other problem solving skills to assist in the transition process.

Course Guidelines

1. The content for each week will be set up as a module, and each module can be found within the “Course Content” menu in the “Learning Modules” link on the
course home page. You should open the module and follow the directions (see the navigation bar on the left side of your screen) to complete each required component of the module. Modules will be made available each Tuesday morning and should be completed by the next Monday evening at 11:59 p.m. The materials will remain available, but assignments and quizzes (including Discussion Board postings) will have lock dates and cannot be accessed after the due date. Discussion responses posted after 11:59 p.m. on Monday will be graded as a zero.

2. You must participate in online class discussions (via postings to the discussion board) and group activities as directed throughout the semester. Since this is an online class, these will be the primary means of interacting and learning from each other throughout the semester. Prompts will be provided within each module related to the readings or activities. Discussion postings should be clearly written and free of shorthand and abbreviations. All postings must show respect for the opinions and postings of classmates and the instructor. Participation is a graded component of your final grade, and failure to abide by these courtesies may result in a reduced grade. You will be expected to respond to the prompt provided in a given week, and to also respond to the prompts of your classmates. In total, you will be required to make at least two postings in a week where a discussion posting is due.

3. Complete all assignments according to specified due dates. If you anticipate a problem with any of the timeframes for completion of assignments, you must notify me prior to the date an assignment is due. Late assignments will receive a grade of zero.

4. Submit written work with the understanding that evaluation of it will include not only content but also format (i.e., correct spelling and grammar, person-first language). You should avoid slang. All work must be original. The submission of non-original work will subject the student to disciplinary action, a grade of zero for that component of the course, and the potential of a failing grade for the course.

Course Grading & Requirements

Course Grading

The final course grade will be based upon the following course components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online discussion postings (10 weeks, 2 required postings, 3 points each)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Three Communities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiki Project</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (5, 2 points each)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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EPSY 5140 – Spring 2016
Final letter grades for this course will be determined based on the following scale:

- **A+** = Superior performance in all requirements of the course
- **A** = 93-100
- **A-** = 90-92
- **B+** = 88-89
- **B** = 83-88
- **B-** = 80-82
- **C+** = 78-79
- **C** = 73-77
- **C-** = 70-72
- **D or F** = Below 70

### Course Requirements

Your course grade is determined by your performance on the following six components. More specific information will be provided within the course modules.

1. **Online discussion postings:** You will be prompted to participate in online discussion topics throughout the course modules. You must post an original response to at least ten different prompts by the conclusion of the course. Additionally, you must read your classmates’ postings and post at least one follow up post. For full credit, both postings must be completed by Monday at 11:59 pm (earlier postings are also accepted).

2. **Transition Program Observation:** Find a program or school near you that focuses on a component of transition for students with disabilities. It could be a disability services office or an age appropriate program on a college campus, a transition academy, a program within a high school, or a program in a community or state agency. Plan to spend roughly 6 hours over the course of the semester visiting, interviewing, observing, or volunteering in the program. You will then create a presentation (this can be a PowerPoint, a video, a wiki, or another medium) that you can share with your classmates. The presentation should teach your classmates about the program, its goals and objectives, the types of services offered, the types of students served (do not provide any identifying information!), and the types of outcomes that the students experience. **To enhance your opportunity to learn, you should focus on a program in which you do not currently work or volunteer.** Please
contact me as soon as possible if finding a site is an issue. See the grading rubric on the course site for more information about grading criteria. This presentation will be due by Friday, 3/11/16 and is worth 20 points.

3. **Analysis of Three Communities**: You will choose three communities and examine factors that would be related to transition in each. One will be an urban setting, one a suburban setting, and one a rural setting. Ideally, the three will all be within the same broad geographic area (e.g., Hartford, West Hartford, Mansfield; Boston, Newton, Holliston). You will research the following:

- Transition supports at the local high school (if there are multiple, pick one)
- Employment trends and options for students with disabilities
- Transportation options
- Postsecondary education and training options
- Community agencies

In addition to summarizing each of these of each of the communities, you will then compare what is available based on the student’s community, and analyze how that might impact transition options and planning.

This project will be due by Friday, April 15, 2016 and will be worth 20 points. Start early! This will require some research and possibly interviews. You can gather parts of this as part of your program observation project.

4. **Wiki**: You will be asked to select one topic from a list of topics (provided below, or you can propose your own) and build a summary “wiki” (8-10 total pages). This product should be suitable for you to use in your professional duties and as a way to share resources related to transition with your classmates (who will have access to your pages). We will examine how you can continue to build upon and use your wiki after the conclusion of the course. Your wiki will contain a series of sections related to a topic of your choosing. Each section will contain short paragraphs describing the topic, with hyperlinks to related topics and relevant web based resources. The paragraphs should feature your own work and should synthesize your research – it should NOT be a cut and paste from other websites or other sources. Wikis that feature cut and paste from other websites or sources will be considered plagiarized, and the submitter will be subject to the University Policy on Academic Integrity in Graduate Education and Research. See both the policy, and the section of the syllabus on Course Behaviors/Expectations for more detail. You will receive directions on how to join the course wiki site on HuskyCT and you must follow the prompts to register yourself. It must be completed by **12:00 pm** on the last day of the semester (Friday, April 29, 2016) and is worth 20 points towards your final grade. (20 points). See the grading rubric on the course site for more information about grading criteria. Possible topics include (but are not limited to):
• **Student career awareness and exploration.** Create a product that describes 1) Methods to increase the involvement of students with disabilities in career awareness, exploration, and planning; 2) ways to increase student self-determination into this process; and 3) specific examples of activities students can participate in to promote career awareness and exploration.

• **Building a school based transition program.** Create a product to be shared with district administrators and team members related to articulating and developing a transition program. The product should include the following: 1) a clearly articulated philosophy about transition and rationale for the need for the program; 2) ways that philosophy is promoted in transition planning; 3) methods to develop interagency coordination and how it might occur; 4) specific activities that can be taken related to developing a program. Note that if your school already has a transition program, you can adopt this topic to focus on the expansion or refinement of the program.

• **Incorporating transition into academic areas.** Create a product that demonstrates ways to incorporate and embed key concepts of transition planning (e.g., self-determination, self-advocacy, learning skills) into core areas of academic instruction.

• **Assistive Technology.** Create a product that describes how assistive technology can be used in transition planning and in postsecondary environments to enhance access. Include sections on considerations for the transition planning stage, and sections on specific examples of technologies.

• **Elementary/Middle Schools.** Create a product that promotes the beginning of transition planning for students with disabilities in the elementary or middle school levels. Include such topics as self-determination, self-advocacy, and career awareness.

• **Transition Assessment.** Create a product that outlines various methods and instruments related to student centered transition assessments.

• **Interagency Collaboration.** Create a product that outlines various interagency services available within your school’s region or catchment area. Include specific information related to eligibility for the services, accessing the services, etc…If you are currently working in a private school or a state school that transitions students back into the community
or school districts, you can modify this to fit your own agency/school needs.

• **Post-school opportunities for students.** Develop a product that can be shared with families related to specific examples of post-high school options and local resources that have been successful for students with disabilities. This product should contain a section that relates to resources and options that are specific to your local school/region.

• **The IEP process.** Develop a product that can be used by team members (including families) related to the development of appropriate and measurable transition goals.

• **Commercial curricula relating to transition, life-skills, and self-determination.** Develop a product that presents an overview and critique of commercial curricula (e.g., *Steps to Self-Determination* (2nd ed.) by Field & Hoffman, *Life-Centered Career Education Curriculum* by Brolin, *The Chocemaker Self-Determination Transition Curriculum* by Martin & Marshall, *Next S.T.E.P.* by Halpern et al.). Criteria to consider include these: 1) topics covered; 2) support materials for users; 3) ease of use by a teacher; 4) adaptability to diverse functional levels; 4) “promising practices” reflected in the material; and 5) strengths and/or areas for strengthening.

• **Postsecondary education.** Develop a product that presents important information (e.g., change in legal status, documentation, accommodations, types of services) for students who are transitioning to postsecondary education and their families. Each section should contain links to websites on the transition process and planning as it relates to the goal of postsecondary education. Consider this as a consumer product that could be distributed by high school personnel or by college disability staff working in conjunction with local high schools and/or prospective students. Be selective in the sites you choose, as there are hundreds!

• **Alternative postsecondary programs.** Develop a product that presents important information for students (and families) who are transitioning to non-traditional postsecondary education programs. Each section should contain links to websites on the transition process and planning as it relates to the goal of postsecondary education.
Design your own topic! If you have a particular “hot topic” relating to transition that you’d like to explore (e.g., Summary of Performance; working with parents, Common Core State Standards, College and Career Readiness), identify that topic, create a plan for examining it, and go for it! **NOTE:** Topic must be approved by me first.

5. **Assignments:** There will be five graded “assignment” activities over the course of the semester. Each is worth two points. You will be required to:

   • Email me your Transition Coalition certificate on Cultural Diversity (Week 4);
   • Email me with your proposed wiki topic (Week 6);
   • Email me your Transition Coalition certificate on Transition Assessment (Week 7);
   • Set up a draft of your wiki (Week 11);
   • Provide feedback to your classmates on their wikis (Week 12).

**Course Outline**

**Tentative Course Outline:**

Note that this schedule is tentative and may be adjusted throughout the semester. The date indicated is always a Tuesday, when modules will be released. Modules will close on the following Monday at 11:59 pm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Week Of</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 19</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Overview of course</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Getting set to participate in an on-line course</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What is transition planning?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Posting #1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Perspective and definition of disability</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>History of the treatment of adults with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The history of transition planning</td>
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<td>Studies on adult outcomes supporting the need for</td>
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transition planning

**Posting #2**

3 February 2 Legal mandates for transition planning

College and Career Ready and the Common Core State Standards

The Guideposts for Success

DCDT’s Transition Specialist Standards

**Posting #3**

4 February 9 Working with culturally and linguistically diverse students

Assignment #1 Due (Transition Coalition Certificate)

**Posting #4**

5 February 16 Self-Determination

**Posting #5**

6 February 23 Self Advocacy

Person Centered Planning

Assignment #2 Due (Wiki topic)

**Posting #6 (on course wiki page)**

7 March 1 Transition Assessment

Assignment #3 Due (Transition Coalition Certificate)

8 March 8 Transition Goals and the IEP

Presentation on Transition Program Due by Friday, 3/11 at Noon

**Posting #7**

March 15 Spring Break

9 March 22 The student led IEP
Posting #8
10 March 29  The Summary of Performance and post school documentation

11 April 5  Transition to Employment

Assignment #4 Due (Draft of wiki set up)

Posting #9
12 April 12  Transition to Postsecondary Education

Analysis of Three Communities Due by Friday, 4/15 at Noon

Assignment #5 Due (Feedback on peer’s wikis)

13 April 19  Independent Living

Social Skills

Posting #10
14 April 26  Wrap Up

Your questions answered!

Wiki Project Due by Noon, 4/29

Course Etiquette and Expectations

Academic Integrity and Student Code

As a member of the graduate student community at the University of Connecticut, you are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the University Policy on Academic Integrity in Graduate Education and Research. The policy can be found at http://catalog.grad.uconn.edu/. Please refer to pages 237-239 and/or online at http://policy.uconn.edu/2014/04/11/policy-on-scholarly-integrity-in-graduate-education-and-research/. The Policy on Academic Integrity in Graduate Education and Research is also reiterated in the Student Code.

Netiquette

At all times, course communication with fellow students and the instructor are to be professional and courteous. If you are new to online learning, you may want to look at this guide titled, The Core Rules of Netiquette.
Accommodations & Special Circumstances

If you require accommodations for any activities or assignments due to a documented disability (see the section below on Students with Disabilities), or if you have emergency information to share, please contact me by UConn email (allison.lombardi@uconn.edu) or by telephone (860-486-2213). You can also come to see me during traditional office hours that are indicated at the top of this syllabus.

Students with Disabilities

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University's Center for Students with Disabilities. You may contact the Center by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, an accommodation letter will be provided. Please present your official letter to me as soon as possible so special arrangements, as appropriate, can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must filed each semester.)

The University of Connecticut's online course management system, HuskyCT, is a product of Blackboard, Inc. "Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards; Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)." (Retrieved December 1, 2008 from http://www.blackboard.com/company/accessibility.aspx)

Required Course Materials & Resources

Textbook

There is no required textbook to purchase for this course. All reading and resource materials will be accessible in the instructional modules via the UConn Libraries' eJournal subscriptions, UConn Libraries' Electronic Course Reserves (ECR) and the Internet.

Professional Membership

You are required to become a member of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and its Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) for this course. Specific details will be included the first week of the course.

Software and Platform Requirements

- Microsoft Office Suite (XP or 2007)
- Microsoft Office Power Point
This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, HuskyCT. Ensure your Internet browser and browser settings are HuskyCT compatible. If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, call the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at (860) 486-HELP (4357) or send email to HelpCenter@uconn.edu

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following minimum technical skills:

• Use electronic mail (such as email) with attachments.
• Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
• Copy and paste text and graphics.
• Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
• Run and access audio and video clips from the Internet.
• Open and access PDF files.
• Create PowerPoint presentation with the notes function.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the Office of Institutional Research.