**Introduction to the Eye and Low Vision**

**I&L 2530**

**Fall Semester 2020**

**Instructor:**

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When contacting instructor via email, please follow appropriate professional correspondence by including a greeting, separate email body, and sign off. It's helpful if the subject of your email is specific. I try to respond to email messages within 24 hours.

**Introduction**

Welcome to Introduction to the Eye and Low Vision! This course creates a base of knowledge concerning vision that will be applied throughout the rest of your coursework and into your career! **Since this is a required course for Pitt students in both the TVI program and the O&M program, this course takes a lifespan approach, discussing eye conditions that may be present in children and in adults.**

While some of your future students or clients will be totally blind, it is likely that the majority will have low vision. As a Teacher of students with Visually Impairments (TVI) and/or Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialist you will be a key player in determining how a student or client uses his/her vision in settings such as school, home, community, and/or work. You will also be involved in obtaining information from your students’/clients' eye care specialists and in helping schools and families understand the student's/client's eye pathology and how it affects visual functioning in his/her daily life. It is, therefore, important for you to have a solid understanding of eye anatomy, basic eye pathologies, and brain functioning that cause low vision or blindness.

This course serves to help you develop a foundation of eye knowledge, an understanding of the eye care team process, as well as modifications to help support visual functioning. In addition, this course will provide opportunities to begin thinking about how you will apply that knowledge. The overall goal is for you to be able to research, interpret, and functionally use information about eye conditions in order to best serve people in their particular settings.

**Course Description**

This course will introduce students to the anatomy and physiology of the eye, typical visual development, common eye pathologies, and brain-based conditions that affect visual functioning. The impact of visual disorders on the educational, social, and behavioral domains of an individual will be discussed. Low vision eye exams and assessment, optical and non-optical low vision devices, and environmental modifications will also be covered. Class format will consist of units and individual lessons on topics. Presentations will be in multi-media format including use of written lectures, Power Point, video lectures and clips, and digital photos with descriptions.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will describe the parts of the eye, their purposes, and functions.

2. Students will describe the process of vision and the workings of the visual pathways.

3. Students will describe the stages in typical vision development.

4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic optics and common refractive errors.

5. Students will list and describe common eye pathologies and conditions as well as brain-based visual conditions.

6. Students will differentiate the components of a clinical vision assessment from a functional vision assessment.

7. Students will demonstrate an understanding of low vision devices and training methods.

8. Students will discuss modifications used by persons with low vision in a variety of settings.

9. Students will describe the educational, behavioral, and social implications of pathologies affecting the eye and brain-based visual impairments.

**Required Texts**

The following three texts are required for the course. Some of the texts will also be used in future coursework. The abbreviations above the text references are how required readings are listed in the course calendar. Books from AFB Press are now available from the American Printing House for the Blind, www.aph.org.

FLV:

Corn, A.L., & Erin, J. N. (2010). *Foundations of low vision: Clinical and functional perspectives, 2nd Ed*. New York, NY: AFB Press.

VAB:

Lueck, A. H. & Dutton, G. N. (2015).*Vision and the brain: Understanding cerebral visual impairment in children*. New York, NY: AFB Press.

LEB:

Ledford, J. (2009). *The little eye book: A pupil's guide to understanding ophthalmology, 2nd Edition*. Thorofare, NJ: SLACK Incorporated. Available from www.slackbooks.com ISBN 978-1-55642-884-5

Direct URL: https://www.healio.com/books/ophthalmology/%7b3a48b9f0-19f3-4743-8935-557728bb2c29%7d/little-eye-book-a-pupils-guide-to-understanding-ophthalmology-second-edition

**Recommended Texts**

The following list are NOT required for this course but they are recommended. They are all useful additions to your professional library. If you work for WPSBC or AIU, you may wish to purchase a copy of the Roman-Lantzy text.

* Roman-Lantzy, C. (2017). Cortical visual impairment: An approach to assessment and intervention, 2nd edition. New York, NY: APH Press (formerly AFB Press).
* American Psychological Association *(2019). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).* Washington, DC: Author.

The *APA Manual, 7th Edition* is highly recommended for all students in the master’s program. You'll see that all our textbooks and professional journal articles follow "APA style" and this is the style you will need to learn in your program. If you think you know APA style, note that there are a lot of changes in this edition!

* Cassin, B. & Rubin, M.L. (2006). Dictionary of eye terminology, 5th ed. Gainesville, FL: Triad.  Available via [http://www.triadpublishing.com](http://www.triadpublishing.com/)  ISBN 0-937404-68-3
  + This books contains a much lengthier list of eye conditions in a small convenient book. If you often work in rural areas with spotty cell coverage, it's a useful book to tuck into your briefcase!
* D’Andrea, F.M., & Farrenkopf, C. (2000). Looking to learn: Promoting literacy for students with low vision. New York, NY: AFB Press.

This is an older book but it contains teacher-friendly information about teaching the use of optical devices and other useful information.

**Course Assignments**

1. Quizzes: Three short quizzes will be given for this course to determine content mastery. Each quiz is closed book and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions regarding course content. Each quiz is worth 45 points.

2. Creation of an FVE Kit: You will be required to create your own functional vision evaluation kit and share it with the class. Additional details are described in the Course Assignments tab in Canvas. This assignment is worth 50 points.

3. Medical Report Interpretations: This assignment has two parts.

Part 1 is a role-playing activity with the instructor will be scheduled during "live" Zoom session. Each student will be provided a short scenario and will need to function as the TVI or COMS who must explain the eye condition to the person who posed the question (played by the instructor). The scenario will be provided and selected at random. This piece is worth 15 points.

Part 2 will be the submission of a written interpretation of a complete eye report. You will be provided with an eye report from a medical exam that you'll need to "translate" into lay terms. This total assignment is worth 50 pts,

4. Weekend Workshops : During our virtual weekend workshops, we will watch an eye dissection (probably a cow's eye), noting its parts. We will also do a number of virtual activities around conducting Functional Vision Assessments. Your participation is required to these sessions. They are scheduled for two half-days, Saturday, Oct. 24 and Saturday, November 7.

5. Environmental Assessment: Students will conduct an environmental assessment with proposed environmental modifications of a selected area and provide a written report, including suggested modifications, for the area assessed. The final report should be of a professional quality. This activity is worth 25 points.

6. PowerPoint on Eye Condition: Each student will select an eye condition to research and to create a presentation describing the etiology, impact on visual system, functional implications, related medical issues, and resources about the condition. A full description of this assignment is in the Assignment folder on Blackboard. This assignment is worth 30 points.

7. Participation: You will also receive a grade for participation in our Discussion Board. This grade will reflect your professional conduct during both our online discussions. There will be 6 discussion board topics worth 10 points each.

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

8. Final exam: You will have a closed-book, cumulative final exam at the end of the course. The exam will cover all the material in the previous quizzes as well as the hands-on activities and other content from the course. The final is 100 points.

**Course Grades**

Your course grade will be based on the following points.

1. Quizzes: 3@45 points 135 points

2. FVE kit and description 50

3. Eye Report interpretation 50

4. Role play 15

5. Environmental analysis 25

6. Virtual Workshop (2 sessions) 50

7. PowerPoint on eye condition 30

8. Discussion Boards 6@10 pts 60

9. Zoom sessions (3@5pts each) 15

10. Final Exam 100

Total possible 530 points

Final Grades:

A 498-530 points (94-100% of total possible)

A- 477-497 points (90-93%)

B+ 461-476 points (87-89%)

B 445-460 points (84-86%)

B- 424-443 points (80-83%)

Pitt policies require students to maintain a 3.0 average; courses in the Vision Studies program require a grade no lower than a B- or they will need to be repeated.

Overview of Course Units:

Each unit or module will contain generally contain the following:

1. Instructor’s Notes: These links are the links to the lecture content for that unit and most unit contain the following sections:

A. Learning Objectives: These are the minimum skills you should make sure you are competent in by the end of the unit.

B. Lesson Content: Lecture material will be in text, PowerPoint, and/or embedded videos.

Assignments:

Assignments will be turned in via the assignment link that is built into each unit or in the Assignments folder. Some units will also list some enrichment activity ideas as well. I recommend you consult the calendar of assignments for the whole course and put the due dates on your calendar to make sure you are not getting behind. All units and assignments are listed in the course calendar along with the time frame given for completing that unit. Most readings are also listed in the course calendar and divided up among the units. The readings come from the textbooks you purchased for the course as well as some online readings. Guide to Readings will introduce the material and list the readings for the entire unit.

Assignments are to be turned into the instructor via the Assignment link no later than 11:59 p.m. of their due date. Directions for completion of assignments will be provided within the unit with which they are associated.

Points: **Your final grade is based on accumulated points**. The points that each assignment is worth will be posted with the directions. You can also print off and consult the course schedule for the whole course. Consult the units for specific deadline dates, but assignments are always due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

**Assignments turned in past the deadline will receive a 10% penalty per day**. If you have extenuating circumstances you must talk to me prior to the deadline, or as soon after the emergency as you are able.

Discussion Board (DB) Topics:

Many units will have a DB area where you will discuss a specific topic, issue, or research article related to the unit. The Discussion board is a good place to clarify and apply what we are learning. I expect that units will start with a topic that will develop into various directions.

The rubric in the Assignments folder explains the grading of each discussion board. To keep up lively discussion, you are encouraged to contribute throughout the week. **No points will be granted for postings after the deadline for that topic**.

Since on-line learning is different from traditional in-person courses, the dynamic nature of the course depends upon your participation. Do not expect full points if you only do the minimum each week.

Occasionally there may be opportunities to “chat” with guest speakers or the instructor. If such opportunities arise, they will be announced in the announcement or question and comments forum section with the time and procedure for participating. There may also be opportunities to do some of the assignments as a group. This will be announced and coordinated if the opportunity arises.

Quizzes and Final Exams

The quizzes and final exam will be taken through Canvas on your honor (see Course Policies below for an explanation of the Academic Integrity Code). These exams are **closed book exams** meaning that NO materials (either electronic or hardcopy) will be allowed to be used or referenced once you begin. The quizzes will be available during the weekend that it is listed so you can choose to take it at your convenience on Saturday or Sunday. Be prepared to take the whole test in one sitting. There will be a time limit on the exam and the computer will not let you log out of the test and return. If you do so, any answers left blank will be sent to the instructor that way. The final exam will be cumulative and closed book.

Along the way, self-assessments have been designed so you can check your own understanding of the topics we've studied. These self-assessment are not part of your final grade.

Extra Information

Because this course is primarily online and I may not get to meet with you often in person, I don't always know your circumstances. Clear communication and student support are important to me so please feel free to contact me if you are having difficulties. Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess. In addition, please feel free to share your gender pronouns with me. I want this course to be a safe space for everyone.

**Academic Integrity Guidelines**

All students enrolled in courses offered through the University of Pittsburgh’s Department of Education are expected to observe the same code of academic honesty required of all University of Pittsburgh students. The conduct below constitutes a violation of this code:

**1. Taking of Information**

Copying graded assignments from another student. Each written assignment must be the student’s own work.

**2. Tendering of Information**

• Giving your work to another student to be copied.

• Sharing answers to a quiz or an examination.

• Telling another student about the contents of a quiz or examination.

**3. Plagiarism**

“To present as one’s own work, the ideas, representations, or words of another, or to permit another to present one’s own work without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources” (University of Pittsburgh Guidelines on Academic Integrity, p. 5)

**Accommodations**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 as early as possible in the term.

Please check the items, sign the next page, and upload it to Canvas. (Please submit only the one page, not this entire syllabus.)

**This syllabus is subject to change to meet the needs of students but no due dates will be earlier than shown on the course calendar. The instructor reserves the right to alter assignment guidelines, due dates, etc. should circumstances deem this necessary. Students will be given advance notice of changes.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understood the syllabus and course calendar.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the late work and attendance policies.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that all work must be submitted in Canvas.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that written assignments must be submitted as a professionally prepared document (no handwritten papers), proofread for typos and grammatical errors.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and will follow Pitt's Academic Integrity Guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_ If I have questions or concerns regarding this course, I will be professional and

discuss concerns with the instructor.

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Student Name

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Student Signature

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Date