I. Course Description:

This course provides an overview of the field of visual impairment. Topics covered include the history of the development of educational and rehabilitation programs, legal definitions and requirements, and a brief examination of the agencies and resources that are available to support individuals with visual impairment. Areas of emphasis will include:

- History of the field—United States and world
- Characteristics of students with visual impairment
- Physical and motor development
- Psychological and social aspects including diversity
- Agencies serving students with visual impairments, professional resources, and organizations
- Roles, responsibilities and service delivery options of persons working with students with visual impairments
- Legal perspectives, law, Admission-Review and Dismissal (ARD’s), Individualized Educational Plans/Individual Family Service Plans (IEP’s/IFSP’s), and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU’s) as related to students with visual impairments
- Programs for Efficiently Managing Caseloads
- Working with families of students with visual impairments
- Trans-disciplinary teaming

II. Intended Learning Outcomes/Goals/Objectives (Program/Student Learning Outcomes):

Program/ Learning Outcomes:

This course directly supports the mission and values of the SFASU College of Education - It is the mission of the Stephen F. Austin College of Education “to prepare competent, successful, caring and enthusiastic professionals dedicated to responsible service, leadership, and continued professional and intellectual development.” This statement essentially sums up the intent of this class and our program as a whole. We make every effort to insure that this class (and all other vision courses) is solidly grounded in the realities of practice. It is intended to be a pragmatic, practical class with maximum emphasis being placed on equipping you to be effective and efficient facilitators of learning for individuals with visual impairments, their families, teachers, as well as caseworkers, and other stakeholders who strive to meet their unique needs.

The Core Values of our College are:

- **Academic excellence** through critical, reflective, and creative thinking
- **Life-long learning**
- **Collaboration** and shared decision-making
- **Openness** to new ideas, to culturally diverse people, and to innovation and change
• **Integrity**, responsibility, diligence, and ethical behavior, and
• **Service** that enriches the community.

This class emphasizes these values in its content, philosophy, and in its assessment of outcomes. We, as instructors, strive to reflect these principles in the teaching of this class and we also have the highest expectations that you, our students, will also demonstrate these values as you develop as leaders in the field of visual impairment. These values are analogous with ethical standards that have developed by the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired and one intention of this course is to provide you the skills to lead others to embrace these principles.

**This course directly supports the mission of the SFASU Department of Human Services**
The Department of Human Services prepares undergraduates and graduate students for leadership and service roles in East Texas and the global community. The department is committed to incorporation of community-based, service-learning experiences within its educational programs to maximize the advancement of students personal and professional development.

**This course also supports the mission of the Visual Impairment Program**
It is the mission of the Visual Impairment Program to train Teachers of students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) who are practically and pragmatically prepared to meet the needs of persons with visual impairments across the state of Texas and in the nation as a whole. We believe that completers from our program should be equipped to effectively deliver instructional services which provide opportunities for students and clients with visual impairments to be more independent, lead more meaningful lives, and participate to a greater extent in society at large. In order to meet these goals, we believe that it is our responsibility to mentor and educate our graduates in the importance of exhibiting caring and compassionate approaches to instruction and positive beliefs about the worth of all individuals regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation or level of disability.

**This course directly supports the standards of the Council for Exceptional Children, specifically;**
Standard I: Foundations of the field of Visual Impairment:
Standard II: Development and Characteristics of Learners:
Standard III: Individual Learning Differences:
Standard V: Learning Environments/Social Interactions:
Standard VIII: Assessment:
Standard IX: Professional and Ethical Practice:
Standard X: Collaboration:

**This course directly supports the codes of ethics for professional practice developed for professionals in the field of visual impairments by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, specifically;**
I. Commitment to the student
II. Commitment to the community
III. Commitment to the profession
IV. Commitment to colleagues, other professionals and to professional employers

**This course supports Tracdat objectives that have been developed for the program, specifically;**
SLO – III - The student will demonstrate understanding and applied knowledge of formal and informal assessments designed to address and measure the unique needs of students with visual impairments.
SLO – IV - The student will model and demonstrate applied knowledge of strategies that improve access to curriculum and promote the development of learners with visual impairments.
And
SLO – V - The student will document and express knowledge, ideals, skills, and standards associated with professional practice in the field of visual impairment.
This course supports the development of competencies that are accepted across professions in Visual Impairment, specifically:

Domain I - Understanding students with visual impairment.
   - Competency 2 - Effects of visual impairments on development and learning
   - Competency 4 - Effects of factors other than disabilities.

Domain II - Assessment of students with visual impairments.
   - Competency 6 -- Interpreting and communicating assessment results.
   - Competency 7 -- IEP and IFSP development.

Domain III - Fostering student learning and development
   - Competency 8 -- Organizing the learning environment
   - Competency 9 -- Communication and literacy.
   - Competency 11 -- Sensory efficiency.
   - Competency 12 -- Social interaction and recreation and leisure skills.

Domain IV - Professional Knowledge
   - Competency 16 -- Working collaboratively with families.
   - Competency 17 -- Legal and ethical foundations and professionalism.

The following outcomes are linked directly to this course

1. The student will demonstrate applied knowledge of the characteristics of students with visual impairments.
2. The student will demonstrate understanding and applied knowledge of formal and informal assessments designed to address and measure the unique needs of students with visual impairments.
3. The student will model and demonstrate applied knowledge of strategies that improve access to curriculum and promote the development of learners with visual impairments.
4. The student will document and express knowledge, ideals, skills, and standards associated with professional practice in the field of visual impairment.

III. Course Assignments, Activities, Instructional Strategies, use of Technology:

Instructional Strategies and Technology:
This course will be delivered using distance education through the use of a hybrid format. Classes will meet (synchronously) using web conferencing (Blackboard Collaborate) to deliver presentations, promote discussion, and explore concepts. Instruction will be supported through other material to be presented online on the instructor’s website (Web-Instructional Activities). Students will also be required to facilitate and participate (asynchronously) in online discussions (Chats) investigating topics and required readings. These discussions will be hosted on the course Desire to Learn (D2L) site that will be provided later. Assignments will be detailed on the website and discussed during class time (Learning Activities).

Graded Assignments

Class preparation:
You are expected to come to class prepared for discussion and activities. Please have assignments completed and materials (if applicable) read prior to attending class. Chapters from the text will be covered on the mid-term and final exam. You are expected to take part in all class activities including discussions, role-plays, small group assignments, blogs, etc. This is a rigorous class that covers an enormous quantity of material that will be obtained from the web. You cannot afford to get behind with your assignments.

Class participation:
This class is designed to be highly interactive. It works better when you are involved and asking questions. I will be asking questions and calling on every student at some point during the semester. A total of 100 points will be awarded based on your level of class participation. Please note that these points are not assigned on the basis of correct responses, but on the willingness of the student to respond and work through the problem. At the end of the semester the instructor will use the following criteria to evaluate students:
• Appropriateness of participation in class discussions and computer chats.
• Willingness to answer questions.
• Evidence of critical thinking during class activities.
• Demonstration of good “consulting skills” (e.g. politeness, manners, diplomacy, etc.)
• Display of a positive attitude toward the subject material, class activities, etc.
• Attendance (physical and mental) to class activities and discussions.
• Preparation and attendance
• Each student will be required to submit an item of interest to share with the class. I will post these items on the web. You will need to provide a description of the information and a method that can be used by your classmates can access to the material (website URL or actual docs)
• Completion of the course evaluation

Additionally-

• We are a small community and we are learning this together
• Honest disagreements in the spirit of critical academic exchange are encouraged. While you can disagree, don’t personalize it; stick to the issues. No name-calling or stereotyping.
• Derogatory comments based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or nationality will not be tolerated.
• What we say stays here, unless we agree to change that. What we learn here, though, we can share with others.
• If you are offended, say so, and say why.
Adapted from The Guide for training study circle facilitators (1998) Study Circle Resource Center, © Topsfield Foundation.

Up to 100 points will be added to the final point total based on the criteria listed above.

Web Instructional Activities:
Due to the limited amount of Distance Ed time that we have available for this class, MOST of the instructional material will be provided through Web Instructional Activities (WIAs). These WIAs are designed to be instruction provided over the web. Therefore, they DO NOT have assignments that will be turned in attached. Almost every topic that is covered in this class will have an accompanying Web Instructional Activity. WIAs are a very important part of the class, and students are responsible for completing them (reading the materials, doing the exercises, etc.) as part of their course work. The material covered in the WIAs will be included on exams and in Learning Activities. Your comments and questions about the WIAs are valuable and should be shared in class or via email with me.

Additional information Regarding All Assignments
All submissions will need to be in .pdf, .rtf, .doc or .docx format. All submissions will also need to have your name on the document and have your name in the name of the file. Naming of your files needs to be as follows….lastname_assignment.type or lastname_assignment_spe515.type. If your last name is Higgins and you were sending me Learning Activity 1 in pdf format you would name the file higgins_la1.pdf or higgins_la1_spe515.pdf
No capital letters-no first names-do not use my name-no spaces

IV. Evaluation and Assessments (Grading):

Participation: Evaluation and requirements of participation are listed above but include preparation, participation in class discussion, participation in online discussions, and completion of assignments including course profile, surveys, and or course evaluations.
Examinations: Two examinations (a Midterm and a Final worth 200 points each) will be administered in this class. A proctor system will be used to take both of these exams. Remember that you will be responsible for all material covered in class, in readings, in WIAs, and in any outside assignments or exercises.

Learning Activities: Learning activities will be turned in for grading purposes and are used to reinforce the readings, web activities, discussions, and TETN (class) time.

Field Based Experiences: This class will require the documentation of a minimum of 40 Field Based Experience hours (100 Points) to be selected according to the guidelines presented in the chart accompanying this syllabus. Forms for documenting these activities will be provided by the instructor and should be maintained in a special Practicum Notebook, which will ultimately, serve as verification of the 350 hours of field-based experience and as a portfolio of learning experiences undertaken by the student.

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 1-7</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(30 pts. each except LA 2, which is 20 pts.)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BFD (LA 8)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Hours</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following grading scale will be used to determine letter grades awarded for this class:

- **A** = 900-1000 Points
- **B** = 800-899 Points
- **C** = 700-799 Points
- **D** = 600-699 Points
- **F** = Anything below 600 Points

V. Tentative Course Outline/Calendar:

**SPE 515**

**TENTATIVE 2012 CLASS CALENDAR**

**Intro** – Syllabus and website reviewed (available August 24) –
Reading- Koenig & Holbrook Chapters 1 & 2.

**Class 1**

In class: Historical Perspectives and Common Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments 
WIA 1 and WIA 2 – Historical Perspectives and Common Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments
Preview Learning Activity One and Learning Activity Two
Reading – for this class - Koenig & Holbrook Chapters 1 & 2
**Online Discussion** – Posted three days after class meets. Information will be provided on how to assess D2L site soon. All discussions should be completed during the time between classes
**Assignment** -LA 1 is due Sunday before next class. Bring completed LA2 to our class for review.

**Class 2**

Motor Development and Functional Vision Evaluations
WIA 3 – Common Motor Development Patterns
Reading – for this class Koenig & Holbrook Chapters 4,5, & 7.
Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairment (Foundations).
Munro Fall 2012

Online Discussion – To be determined - TBD
Assignment -

Class 3 –
Self Esteem and Adjustment, Psychosocial Aspects of Visual Impairment
Review LA 2
WIA 4 – Psycho-social Concerns Related to Students Who Have Visual Impairments
Reading – Koenig & Holbrook Chapter 6
Online Discussion – To be determined - TBD
Assignment – LA 3 Psychosocial - due before next meeting

Class 4 –
Basic Assumptions, Agencies, Laws, Midterm review
WIA 5- Laws and WIA 7 Agencies
Reading – Koenig & Holbrook Chapter 9
Online Discussion – Student Led TBA
Midterm – Posted after class – due date following Sunday
Assignment – LA 4 Law due before next class

Class 5 –
Working with Families of Children with Visual Impairment, Role and function of Professionals in the Field
WIA 6 and WIA 9
Reading – Koenig & Holbrook Chapters 8, Volume 2 chapter 1, Scholl readings,
Online Discussion – Student led- TBA
Assignment – LA 5 & LA 6-Due before class

Class 6 –
Programming issues, Caseload Management, The ECC
WIA 8 and WIA 10– Evaluating programs and ECC
Reading – Koenig and Holbrook Volume II chapter 6 and Appendix B (review briefly Chapters 12-20)
Online Discussion – Student Led- TBA
Assignment - LA 7 due before next class

Class 7 –
Standards and Ethics, Fostering Change in You and Your Students, Final review
Reading – Koenig & Holbrook Chapter 10, Appendix A-D
Online Discussion - none
Final – Posted posed after class. Due the following Sunday
Assignment – LA 8 -BFD (including additional resources)
Complete – All BFDs, all assignments, all tests, all hour documentation, and everything to me Dec 8th

VI. Readings (Required and recommended—including texts, websites, articles, etc.):

Required text:

Readings are assigned as part of the Web activities and are listed at the top of each Web Instructional Activity. Additional readings will be posted to the class website. There will be test questions directly from the readings.

Also Required:
LiveText account, ISBN# 978-0-979-6635-4-3. This may be purchased at the bookstore or purchased online at www.livetext.com. Once you have purchased the account, you must activate your account at www.livetext.com. If you have purchased LiveText in another course, you will NOT need to buy a second
account. NOTE: If you plan to use financial aid to purchase this account, you must make the purchase by the date set by financial aid.

If you have any students purchasing LiveText for the first time, they need to complete the My Cultural Awareness Profile (MCAP) found within their LiveText account. Student should complete the MCAP within the first month of long terms and within the first week of short terms.

VII. Course Evaluations:

You will be given an opportunity to participate in an anonymous formal evaluation at the end of the semester. This is required as your tuition is paid by a grant. Your evaluations will be submitted to SFASU. We will receive a list of students who have not submitted their evaluation. We need 100% participation in the evaluation process. These evaluations are online and must be submitted before finals are given. Although I will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to me until after final grades are posted.

I encourage you to visit with me during my office hours or to schedule an appointment with me in order to discuss your opinions on the quality of the course or ways to improve it. I am truly dedicated to providing students with a high quality learning experience that is supportive as well as instructive. Do not wait...let me know if you need assistance or clarification on anything or if you have comments or concerns as you experience them so we can work together to resolve the issue or get you what you need. You will be given participation points for completion of the survey AND the class will be eligible for a 2-3 point bonus on their final grade for 100% completion.

In the Perkins College of Education, the course evaluation process has been simplified and is completed electronically through MySFA. Although the instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

VIII. Student Ethics and Other Policy Information:

Attendance: The SFASU Attendance Policy A-10 includes the following:

Class Attendance
Regular and punctual attendance is expected at all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which a student is registered. For those classes where attendance is a factor in the course grade, the instructor shall make his/her class policy known in writing at the beginning of each term and shall maintain an accurate record of attendance. Regardless of attendance, every student is responsible for course content and assignments.

Excused Absences
It is University policy to excuse students from attendance for certain reasons. Among these are absences related to health, family emergencies, and student participation in certain University-sponsored events. Students are responsible for providing documentation satisfactory to the instructor for each class missed. Students with acceptable excuses will be permitted to make up work for absences to a maximum of three weeks of a semester or one week of a six-week summer term when the nature of the work missed permits.

FOR THIS CLASS: Students are expected to attend class. Attendance will be taken each class day. Students may receive excused absences for illness and family emergencies, but must present written documentation for such absence (i.e. doctor's note, emergency room admissions, funeral notices). Students will be allowed one unexcused absence without penalty. After that, one letter grade will be subtracted from the final grade for each unexcused absence.
Students with Disabilities
Please copy and paste the following statement and place in your course syllabus.

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Academic Integrity
Please copy and paste the following information regarding Academic Integrity into your syllabus. In addition, you may include your own guidelines for academic integrity as appropriate.

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp.

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)
Please copy and paste the following information regarding Withheld Grades into your syllabus. Add additional information as needed to meet your departmental or course needs.

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which the WH is assigned, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Acceptable Student Behavior
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

The below is specific to Texas and may not apply to your current situation...it is a required part of this syllabus.
To complete Certification/Licensing Requirements in Texas related to public education, you will be required to:

1. Undergo criminal background checks for field or clinical experiences on public school campuses; the public school campuses are responsible for the criminal background check; YOU are responsible for completing the information form requesting the criminal background check. If you have a history of criminal activity, you may not be allowed to complete field or clinical experiences on public school campuses. At that point, you may want to reconsider your major while at SFASU.

2. Provide one of the following primary ID documents: passport, drivers license, state or providence ID cards, a national ID card, or military ID card to take the TExES exams (additional information available at www.texes.ets.org/registrationBulletin/\<http://www.texes.ets.org/registrationBulletin/>). YOU must provide legal documentation to be allowed to take these mandated examinations that are related to certification/licensing requirements in Texas. If you do not have legal documentation, you may want to reconsider your major while at SFASU.

3. Successfully complete state mandated a fingerprint background check. If you have a history of criminal activity, you may want to reconsider your major while at SFASU.

**LiveText**

LiveText is the data management system used by the Perkins College of Education (PCOE) for program improvement and to assess and monitor compliance to national accreditation standards. All Perkins College of Education majors and Secondary Education students are required to purchase a LiveText account, either through the University Bookstore or at www.livetext.com. This is a ONE-TIME purchase, and the account will be used throughout your undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral program of study. Required program assignments, designated by instructors and program coordinators, must be submitted within your LiveText account. Successful completion of this course and your degree requirements are dependent on the submission of all required LiveText assignments.

**IX. Other Relevant Course Information:**

**Caveat:**

The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.