



Research Enrichment Curriculum, 2006-07

COURSE DAYS, TIMES, LOCATIONS:

On-line components at <http://ecampus.pco.edu>

Research Summit in Low-Incidence Disabilities, September 14-16, 2006, Vail, CO (sponsored by the National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities and the Bresnahan-Halstead Center for Developmental Disabilities)

American Educational Research Association Annual Convention, April 8-13, 2007, Chicago, IL

National Federation of the Blind Annual Convention and National Organization of Parents of Blind Children Annual Seminar, early July 2007, Atlanta, GA

COURSE INSTRUCTORS

The University Consortium, Public Advisory Council, the NCLVI Staff are all potential course instructors, as well as many others in the field of special education and rehabilitation for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. However, the Research Enrichment Committee for NCLVI has taken on the primary responsibility for developing the curriculum. Members are:

- Kay Ferrell, University of Northern Colorado & The American Foundation for the Blind (Chair)
- Anne L. Corn, Vanderbilt University
- Silvia Correa-Torres, Florida State University
- Missy Garber, Pennsylvania College of Optometry
- Stacy Haack, Fellow Representative
- Glinda Hill, OSEP
- Kathleen M. Huebner, Pennsylvania College of Optometry
- Amanda Lueck, San Francisco State
- Robert Wall Emerson, Western Michigan University
- Diane Wormsley, North Carolina Central University

Drs. Ferrell and Huebner are the primary coordinators of the course. Dr. Ferrell can be reached at kay.ferrell@unco.edu and Dr. Huebner can be reached at kathyh@pco.edu.

NCLVI UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM MISSION STATEMENT

To increase, through specialized doctoral training, the number of quality leadership personnel competent in the areas of research, public policy, advocacy, administration, and higher education to improve services for individuals with visual impairments from birth through age 21.

COURSE VALUE:

NCLVI Fellows are required to participate fully in all enrichment activities. Individual universities will determine if academic credit will be earned for participation and if so how credit will be assigned (seminar, independent study, etc.). For those universities assigning credit, the credit value will be determined by the individual consortium member universities and communicated to each NCLVI Fellow.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This enrichment activity is designed to develop a research culture among NCLVI Fellows and to provide the skills to work collaboratively with consumers, parents, and colleagues to conduct scientifically based research.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

Face-to-face meetings in Vail, CO, Chicago, IL, and Atlanta, GA.
Online discussion of research topics with noted researchers.
Collaborative investigation of evidence-based practices.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

NCLVI Fellows will:

1. Analyze the literature for evidence-based practices and disseminate the findings.
2. Engage in research with consortium faculty and NCLVI Fellows.
3. Collaborate with consumer/parent/professional organizations to understand varying perspectives of relevant research.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of salient research issues from the perspectives of consumers/parents/professionals.
5. Collaborate with practitioners (teachers, O&M instructors, general education teachers, related service providers) and consumers (blind adults, parents of children with visual impairments) – all persons or groups providing direct services to children with visual impairments, in a variety of settings, to design and conduct scientifically based research.
6. Create a research agenda for the future (individual and collectively).

The outcomes for the enrichment year are measured post-graduation and result in NCLVI Fellows who:

7. Utilize rigorous methodologies appropriate for small sample sizes.
8. Conduct studies that investigate innovative practices that lead to systems change.
9. Conduct studies that meet the criteria for scientifically based research.
10. Disseminate research through refereed publications and conference presentations.
11. Seek and obtain external funding to support the research agenda.

GENERAL ASSIGNMENTS

1. Participate in listservs. There are two listservs designed for NCLVI Fellows:¹

NCLVIFELLOWS@listserv.unco.edu, This listserv is hosted by the National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities at the University of Northern Colorado, and designed only for NCLVI Fellows. No one else has access to this listserv. It is meant as a private communication tool to be used among yourselves.

COMMUNITYNCLVI@listserv.unco.edu, also hosted by NCLID, includes the full consortium of NCLVI Fellows, University Consortium Faculty, Public Advisory Council, and Staff.

You may use the listservs to discuss issues with each other. The Community NCLVI listserv can be used to pose questions, comments, and to get additional perspectives from NCLVI staff, consortium faculty, and members of the Public Advisory Committee. Use them judiciously as everyone has very full commitments and schedules, but know that all collaborating partners are eager to participate and interact with you through this new model for doctoral study. They can serve as a rich base from which members can network you to additional leadership throughout the world.

2. Sign onto Blackboard: Go to <http://ecampus.pco.edu>. Log in with your name and your password, which you received after sending NCLVI your signed OSEP payback agreement. This will give you access to the Web-based courses using Blackboard throughout your studies. This course is listed as [NCLVI-Research](#).

¹ There are two additional listservs involved in NCLVI: One for the Public Advisory Committee (NCLVI_ADVISORY@LISTSERV.ARIZONA.EDU) and one for the members of the university consortium (NCLVI_University_Consortium@listserv.unco.edu).

https://ecampus.pco.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=courses&url=/bin/comm/course.pl?course_id=355.

There is also an Introduction to Blackboard on the Graduate Studies Information and Orientation Course (GSIO). [GSIO: Graduate Studies Information and Orientation](https://ecampus.pco.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=courses&url=/bin/comm/course.pl?course_id=213_1), https://ecampus.pco.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=courses&url=/bin/comm/course.pl?course_id=213_1. We suggest that you review this introduction if you have had no experience with the Blackboard platform or if you have not participated in other on-line courses.

3. Portfolio: The portfolio development is on-going throughout your 4 years of full-time study. This assignment is further explained in both the documents and assignments section of the NCLVI Research Course on Blackboard. https://ecampus.pco.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=courses&url=/bin/comm/course.pl?course_id=355. Portfolio components related to research will be added at a later date.

RESEARCH ENRICHMENT ASSIGNMENTS

4. Meta-Analysis of the Literature: NCLVI Fellows will work in teams over the course of the year to conduct a meta-analysis of the literature to determine evidence-based practice. Topics are identified by Fellows, and Fellows will self-select their topics and teams, which will include both first- and second-year students during the first face-to-face meeting in September 2006. Training on how to conduct the analyses will also occur at the meeting in Vail.²

Expectations:

Document best practices in the education of infants, children, and youth with visual impairments by conducting meta-analyses and compiling a compendium of evidence-based practice. (Note that this is not a literature review, but an investigation that identifies the scientifically-based evidence for educational practices with students who are visually impaired. Examples will be distributed in Vail.)

Procedures in Vail:

- Establish criteria for inclusion of studies; we suggest the definition of scientifically-based research defined in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the model utilized by the What Works Clearinghouse (www.whatworksclearinghouse.com):

² The analyses produced as part of the research enrichment activities cannot supplant other requirements of your doctoral program. Please verify your university's policy with your advisor.

The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) defines scientifically-based research as "research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs," including research that:

- (i) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
- (ii) involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;
- (iii) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators;
- (iv) is evaluated using experimental or quasiexperimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs, or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent that those designs contain within-condition or across-condition controls;
- (v) ensures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings; and
- (vi) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review. (20 USC 7801, Sec. 9101(37)(B))

- Identify research topics of interest. The following suggested topics are organized around the goals of the *National Agenda for the Education of Children and Youths with Visual Impairments, Including Those with Multiple Disabilities* (rev'd) (Huebner, Merk-Adam, Stryker, & Wolffe, 2003). While many of these suggestions are too discrete for a meta-analysis by themselves, they are presented here to stimulate your thinking about broader topics suitable for meta-analysis.

Goal One: Referral

Efficacy of Early Intervention
Development of young children with visual impairment

Goal Two: Parents

Parents' Observations
Strategies for Working with Parents
Parent Support Groups
Parents' Learning Braille and outcomes for children

Goal Three: Personnel preparation

Distance Education Strategies
Reliable Demographics
Highly Qualified Teachers and O&M Specialists
Curriculum Development
Professional development

Goal Four: Caseload and staff development

Goal Five: Placement

- Paraprofessional use
- Access to a Full-Array of Services
- Caseloads for VI Teachers and O&M Specialists
- Outcomes for students in various placements

Goal Six: Assessment

- Adaptations and modifications
- Learning Media Assessment
- O&M Assessment
- Reading Assessment
- Effectiveness of Graphics in Testing

Goal Seven: Instructional Materials

- Access To Instructional Materials
- Tactile graphics
- Access To Multimedia Instructional Materials

Goal Eight: Expanded core curriculum

- Compensatory/Alternative or "Functional" Academic Skills,
Including Communication Modes
- Pre-Braille Skills
- Contracted vs. uncontracted braille

- Orientation and Mobility
 - Concept Development
 - Sensory Awareness
 - Electronic Travel Devices
 - Environmental Changes
 - Motor Development
 - Spatial Understandings
- Social Interaction Skills
- Independent Living Skills
 - Organizational Skills
- Recreation and Leisure Skills
- Career Education
- Technology
- Visual Efficiency Skills
 - Vision stimulation
 - Low vision devices

Goal Nine: Transition

- Self Determination Skill Training
- Self-Advocacy

Goal Ten: Professional Development

- Select working groups/teams.
- Nominate colleagues to present preliminary findings at Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute (final selection is made by Consortium).
- Select faculty reviewers for each topic/team.

Procedures after Vail:

- Conduct exhaustive literature search;
- Summarize each article by research question, subjects, dependent and independent variables, research design, and results;
- Screen each summarized article for:
 - Criteria decided upon in step 1 above.
 - Presence of a control or comparison group.
 - Evidence of causal validity.
- Faculty members review research article and verify that article meets all criteria (inter-observer agreement).
- Faculty apply the Study Design and Implementation Assessment Device (DIAD) to each article that meets the screening criteria above.
- Faculty return DIAD to students.
- Students calculate effect sizes. This step involves entering the means and standard deviations from the studies into a formula for calculating effect size;
- Provide preliminary results to Fellows elected to present at JLTLI.
- Write draft report;
- Submit report to advisors for review; Fellows may also enlist Consortium and PAC members of their choice to review their report.
- Present preliminary findings at Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute in Dallas, March 23-25, 2007.
- Revise and submit final reports by June 30, 2007.
- Research Enrichment Committee assists with final editing and pursues publication on behalf of the NCLVI Fellows.

5. “Meet the Researchers” Online Seminars: The format of this year’s online component is somewhat different from last year’s. We have asked researchers – some identified by NCLVI Fellows, some identified by Consortium and PAC members – to create online materials for your review and comment. The materials may take different forms, but they are all **asynchronous**. During a two-week period, the researchers will be available to respond to your comments and questions via the discussion board and blogs. This is meant to be interactive in nature and while participation is expected, your contributions should be authentic and based on your interest in what the researchers present. No minimum number

of postings is required; you participate for your own enrichment, to answer your questions, and to learn more about the research being conducted.

Participants are reminded that postings should be substantive and not statements of agreement. Keep in mind that all participants have significant demands on their time as do you, so we want postings to be worth the time it takes to open and read them. Try to be clear with your questions and your statements. If you offer resources, please be sure to post all contact information or complete citations.

Expectations:

- Seminars in October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May
- Read researchers' materials (which could involve additional readings as well as materials created for this program);
- Respond in some way to the researcher.
- Ask questions of the researcher.

Confirmed Presenters/Discussion Facilitators (confirmed and updated information will be posted within BlackBoard)

<u>Dates (confirmed)</u>	<u>Researcher(s)</u>	<u>Title</u>
October 1-15, 2006	Dr. Robert Wall Emerson (Western Michigan University)	Factors that Influence a Research Agenda: Studies Reflecting Pedestrians' Access to a Changing Travel Environment
November 2006	Dr. Silvia Correa-Torres (Florida State University)	
December 2006	[not yet confirmed]	
January 2007	Drs. Diane Wormsley (North Carolina Central University), Jane Erin (University of Arizona), and Sharon Sacks (California School for the Blind)	ABC Braille Study

<u>Dates (confirmed)</u>	<u>Researcher(s)</u>	<u>Title</u>
February 2007	Dr. Corinne Kirchner (American Foundation for the Blind)	On the Move: Promoting Consumers' Physical Activity in Orientation and Mobility Practice, Using Evidence and Advocacy
March 2007	Dr. Madeline Milian (University of Northern Colorado)	
April 2007	Drs. Amanda Hall and Ian Bailey	Print Size and Magnification Requirements for Students with Low Vision: An Example of Evidence-Based Practice and Collaborative Research
May 2007	Dr. Karen Blankenship (Iowa Department of Education)	Looking for Success: Transition Planning for Students with Visual Impairments in the State of Iowa

6. American Education Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, April 9-13, 2007, Chicago, IL: NCLVI Fellows will attend the AERA Annual Meeting and participate in daily discussions with Research Enrichment Committee representatives regarding sessions attended.

Coordinators

Kay Ferrell, University of Northern Colorado
Missy Garber- NCLVI
Kathleen M. Huebner - NCLVI

Expectations:

Attend Annual Meeting.
Participate in daily discussions.
Join AERA as student member.
Establish a Special Interest Group for Visual Impairment.
Submit research proposal to program committee for 2008 meeting.

7. National Federation of the Blind/National Organization of Parents of Blind Children Annual Convention, June 30-July 6, 2007, Atlanta, GA:

Although exact dates are not yet confirmed, Fellows and NCLVI Research Enrichment Committee representatives will attend several days of the NFB/NOPBC annual convention in Atlanta. At the very least, Fellows will attend sessions, but activities are being designed that will (a) assure interaction with NFB/NOPBC members; (b) identify research issues of concern to consumers; and (c) discover and execute collaborative research opportunities among Fellows and members.

Coordinators

Betsy Zaborowski, National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute
Kay Ferrell, University of Northern Colorado
Kathleen M. Huebner, NCLVI
Missy Garber, NCLVI

Expectations:

Attend convention;
Participate in required and other convention activities;
Interact with convention-goers;
Identify and execute at least one collaborative study (during 2007-08 year).

8. Work with Consortium Faculty on research projects that contribute to your program of study.

9. Develop and post on the discussion board your individualized research plan for your future. Work with your advisor on developing this plan, a suggested format for which will be posted shortly.

EVALUATION POLICY. NCLVI strives to be a model for the preparation of doctoral leaders in other low-incidence fields. Obviously, evaluation of our programs and processes is important. NCLVI Fellows are required to participate in all evaluation activities, electronically or otherwise. NCLVI Fellows will also be asked to generate evaluation questions.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Fellows are required to attend all NCLVI functions, required conferences, seminars, workshops, and to participate fully in all on-line activities. If a Fellow is unable to attend or participate, he or she must have permission for absence from his or her advisor, who will then notify NCLVI in

writing. Please keep in mind that all face-to-face activities bear financial obligations to the grant budget; therefore, if anyone should need to be excused, 24 hours' minimum notice is required to facilitate penalty-free cancellations.

CODE OF CONDUCT: Fellows are expected to comply with the student code of conduct delineated in their participating University's handbook. This includes compliance with the policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism means to intentionally or knowingly represent words or ideas of another as your own in any academic exercise. This also includes all policies related to honor codes and professional conduct.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Access Center at their respective universities as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.