EDSE 656.614
Assessment of Diverse Young Learners
SEEDS Cohort, Spring 2010,
Thursday 4:30-7:10 PM
Arlington Campus, Room 105B

PROFESSOR (S):
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Course Description
Examines types of assessment, including family-centered assessment, used for planning and implementing effective programs for children from diverse cultures and with varied learning needs. Addresses selection, administration, and interpretation of formal and informal assessments. Field Experience Required.

Prerequisite: Admission to the Early Childhood Special Education program or permission of the instructor.

Nature of Course Delivery
The class will have lecture, discussion, group work formats and will require active participation of all students. Guest lecturers from the community may be utilized to support content from readings.

Learner Outcomes
This course is designed to enable students to
1. Describe the forms, functions, methods, and roles of assessment for planning and implementing effective early childhood programs for young children ages three to five from diverse cultures and with varied learning needs.
2. Explore both quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluation and assessment.
3. Describe technological adaptations to enhance the assessment process.
4. Describe appropriate strategies for conducting, reporting, and decision making related to specific functions of assessment.
5. Explain assessment strategies necessary for second language learners and about adaptations for children with disabilities and at-risk conditions and their families.
6. Use selected assessment strategies with young children in their field placements and become competent in the use of authentic assessment strategies to describe a child’s learning strengths and instructional needs.
7. Administer, analyze, and interpret both formal and informal assessment techniques.
Professional Standards
This concentration is approved for licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia and it complies
with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children. The
course content has been designed to address the following standards and competencies.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Standard 8 Assessment

Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies
- Knowledge of the selection, administration, and interpretation of formal and informal assessment
  techniques for young children with disabling and at-risk conditions and their families

Required Texts
Education, Inc.


Recommended Resource:

Course Requirements

General Requirements
1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be
   structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up
   with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they
   should inform the instructor by email or phone prior to class.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins.
   Laptops and other electronic devise are to be used for educational and learning purposes only
   and should not be used during class time to check email, surf the web, or communicate with
   people outside of the class unless it is part of the class activity.
4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which
   they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students occasionally have serious
   problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to
   the instructor in a timely fashion, at least 2 days before the due date.

Attendance
Attendance in class is important to students’ learning; therefore, students are expected to make
every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect
course grades. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register.
In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class
as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use
absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students
who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the
individual instructor’s grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.
Written Assignments

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/.

Students will
1. Present ideas in a clear and concise manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Organize information using headings and sub-headings.
3. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
4. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
5. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100  A- = 90 – 94  B+ = 87 – 89  B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82  C = 70 – 79  F = < 70

Grading Policy

Students in a graduate program must maintain a 3.000 GPA (B average). Endorsement coursework grades must be C or better for undergraduate courses, and B or better for graduate courses. Grades of B minus or better are required for all graduate-level education coursework for licensure. Students with a C or lower in a licensure course must re-take the course and earn a B minus or better to be recommended for Virginia licensure. Only two grades of C will be allowed for completion of the master's degree.

Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

This course has a Program Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) that MUST be uploaded and submitted to Task Stream for evaluation when the assignment is due. Only PBAs posted to Task Stream will be graded. This means that NO final grades will be posted until all materials are on Task Stream.

Description of Assignments:

Attendance and Participation (10 points)
Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
• Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
• Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
• Students are actively involved in in-class learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
• Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class discussions, activities, and written reflections.

Team Assessment Project (20 points)

The instructor will divide the class into two groups: Group A and Group B. In groups of three, Group A will select a norm-referenced commercially published test for use with children between the ages birth to five. In groups of three, Group B will select a criterion-referenced commercially published test for use with children between the ages birth to five.

1. Select a test and explore its use by administering different parts to your team members.
2. Each team member will administer the entire test to one child (preferably the target child) over more than one visit if needed. Request parental consent if it has not been previously obtained.
3. Each individual member will write a report summarizing the findings of the assessment. Include the scores, as well as, information on how the child responded.
4. As a group critically evaluate the assessment taking into consideration each of the following:
   Individual perspective of team members,
   Recommendations in class readings,
   the perspective of cultural, linguistic and ability appropriateness,
   usefulness of information for families,
   and the experience of administering the test.
5. As a group, prepare a written paper for the instructor, as well as an in-class presentation with a one-page reference handout for the class. The groups’ task is to provide classmates a working knowledge of the assessment from a critical perspective. Include the following information in the team paper:
   a. Publication information. Students will include title, publisher, recommended age range, stated purpose, scope, standardization, and stated limitations.
   b. Description. Students will describe how the assessment was normed, either a norm-referenced or criterion or curriculum referenced assessment, what they did and what they learned from administering the assessment.
   c. Critical analysis. Students will give their general reaction. What did they see as strengths, and/or limitations of the assessment? Students will support their position with information from the readings, class discussion, and their experience on site. In particular, they will evaluate the assessment for cultural and linguistic bias, as well as for appropriate use for children with disabilities, and for the appropriateness and usefulness of the assessment for families.

In class, each team will present a 15-minute presentation on the assessment and share their experiences.

Due on: February 16, 2010
Formal Assessment Used with Young Children and a Written Report (20 points)

Students in Group A will use a criterion-referenced assessment and students in Group B will use a norm-referenced assessment to assess one child, preferably the targeted child. The child selected must be between the ages of birth to five years. Request parental consent if it has not been previously obtained. Students will complete the test during at least two separate sessions with the child. Students will complete the following steps:

1. Select either a norm or criterion-referenced test to administer.
2. Familiarize oneself with the test’s protocol.
3. Administer the test to the selected child.
4. Interpret the findings and summarize the information. Be sure to include test scores and descriptions of each domain.
5. Write a formal written report that includes the parent’s view of the child’s development and the setting in which the test took place. Compare the findings obtained from the normed-referenced or criterion-referenced test used in the Team Assessment Project. Integrate the results of both tests.
6. Reflect on the experience of administering the two tests, how one felt as the assessor/evaluator, as well as, what one would do differently in the future.

Due on: March 16, 2010

Individual Child/Study Portfolio (30 points)

Students will study and practice formal and informal assessment strategies with a child between the ages of birth to five years. The result of this experience will be the development of a child portfolio containing selected materials to support the students’ written description of what they learned about the child, as well as an interpretation of the materials gathered.

1. Successfully complete the Team Assessment Project (assignment #2).
2. Successfully complete Formal Assessment Used with Preschool Children and Written Report (assignment #3).
3. Select a target child and obtain permission from his/her parent to study and practice assessment strategies with his/her child.
4. Observe the child a minimum of two or three times for 15-20 minutes and record anecdotal observations. Consider doing the observations when visiting to test the child in the earlier assignments.
5. Select appropriate technology to individualize the assessment process. Document the child’s best performance.
6. Students will need to talk with, or interview, a parent to gain his/her insight and perspective of the child’s development in all domains.
7. Collect a minimum of two work samples in three to five different developmental areas.
8. Students are to select and provide a rationale on how they organized their portfolio contents. Students are expected to incorporate information from other assignments when appropriate.
9. Compile the portfolio to include the following sections:
   - **Annotated Table of Contents**: This section of the portfolio should be reader friendly, enabling readers to find materials easily. The table of contents should make
Annotations should provide a brief overview about each section included in the portfolio.

- **Narrative:** Prepare a narrative to accompany the portfolio that includes the following:
  - A brief summary of the portfolio contents
  - A description of and rationale for the approach that was taken to build the portfolio, including all sources of information; classroom, home, play, etc.
  - A description of the child, including observations of all key domains of development, including emergent literacy
  - A discussion of what was learned about the child, implications for teaching, and implications for collaborating with the child’s family
  - A discussion of how impressions will be validated with the family
  - A critique of the approach and what might be changed the next time

- **Summary and recommendation:** Students will prepare a summary of their portfolio to share with classmates and faculty. This section should include a discussion of implications of one’s findings for classroom planning with recommendations and analysis. It should be reflective of the child as a learner and provide an understanding of how one integrated the knowledge one gained to provide an improved educational program for the child. How would one use the results of the portfolio assessment to develop and implement individual instruction? Based on the findings of the portfolio what are one’s recommendations for monitoring the child’s progress over the course of the year?

- **Reflection and recommendation:** Students will upon completion of the above tasks write a postscript of two pages in which they discuss the process of creating their portfolio from their perspective. What was learned in the process? What are the legal and ethical principles that were considered in developing the portfolio? What would one change or do differently?

Prepare a complete paper for the instructor. In class, students are required to do an individual 15-minute presentation to share their findings. Bring work samples of the child to the presentation.

**Due on: April 6, 2010 /April 13, 2010**

**Interest Preference Analysis (20 points)**

Students are to select a target child and conduct two, three or four observations of that child. Consider selecting a child one is unfamiliar with and that has a different cultural background than his/her own. Students using their knowledge of observational strategies are to develop an observational protocol for documenting children’s interests and preferences to guide their planning for a classroom. Students are to include the following components in the analysis:

1. Begin with an observation of 30 minutes in the classroom during free play.
2. Use an observational protocol developed by the student to record the data on the child’s interests and preferences. Keep a record of activities, materials, spaces, events, play partners, etc. that seem to engage the child.
3. Compare the data obtained in step two. Look for shared interests and preferences. Discuss cultural, linguistic and ability factors.
4. In a written paper, describe what was learned, as well as, any limitations or need for further information. Discuss how the observations might help to plan for a group of children. Students will support their conclusions with references to class readings. The
paper must include a description of how the information was collected (including the observation formats). Undergraduate students may use a published observation protocol for this project.

OR

SEEDS Action Research Project

This is an opportunity for SEEDS fellows to implement the action research plan developed in EDSE 667: Research in Special Education in Fall 2009. Students must conduct this assignment during their preschool internship between March 1, 2010 and April 30, 2010. Through this assignment students will explore how they can use the data collection process to develop and modify intervention strategies to promote student learning or family participation. Develop a report addressing the following components:

- Description of children and the site (1 page)
- Introduction to the research topic and rationale for data collection (1 page)
- Brief description of intervention strategies and expected outcomes (1-2 pages)
- Preliminary findings: Claims supported with evidence (2-3 pages)
- Conclusion and future plan (1 page)

Due on: May 11, 2010

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm](http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm) for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12) for the full honor code.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

**Note:** To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).

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**PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE**
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Learning Experiences</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>Introduction to Assessment&lt;br&gt;Overview of Class, Review of Syllabus</td>
<td>NAEYC on Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>Formal Assessment&lt;br&gt;Norm and Criterion Referenced Tests</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Why, What and When to Assess&lt;br&gt;Legal, Ethical &amp; Professional Responsibilities</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 9</td>
<td>Observation Techniques</td>
<td>Losardo/Notari-Syverson Ch 4-5</td>
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<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Informal Assessment&lt;br&gt;Collecting and Recording Data</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 5-6&lt;br&gt;&lt;i&gt;Team Assessment Analysis Due&lt;/i&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>Introduction to authentic assessment and portfolio&lt;br&gt;Review Norm and Criterion Referenced Tests</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 8&lt;br&gt;Losardo/Notari-Syverson Ch 1-2</td>
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<td>Mar 2</td>
<td>Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Assessment Process</td>
<td>Class readings/Team Presentations</td>
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<td>Mar 6</td>
<td>Data Collection for Action Research Project during Internship</td>
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<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>Spring Break – No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 16</td>
<td>Portfolio Development and Assessment&lt;br&gt;Use of Technology in the Assessment Process</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 9&lt;br&gt;Losardo/Notari-Syverson Ch 6&lt;br&gt;&lt;i&gt;Formal Assessment Written Report Due&lt;/i&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>Portfolio Development and Assessment</td>
<td>Losardo Ch 3</td>
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<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>Summarizing and interpreting assessment information&lt;br&gt;Discuss Portfolio Progress and SEEDS Action Research Project</td>
<td>Losardo Ch 9</td>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>Presentations on Individual Child Study</td>
<td>&lt;i&gt;Individual Child Study Portfolio Due&lt;/i&gt;</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>Presentations on Individual Child Study</td>
<td>&lt;i&gt;Individual Child Study Portfolio Due&lt;/i&gt;</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>Collaborating with Families to Promote Meaningful Assessments</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 10</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>References</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td>Teacher Design Strategies/Dynamic Assessment</td>
<td>Wortham Ch 7</td>
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<td>Special Topics in Assessment: Discussion on Action Research</td>
<td>Losardo/Notari-Syverson Ch 7</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td><strong>No Class</strong></td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>Performance Based Assessment Upload</td>
<td>PBA must be uploaded and verified by class instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>SEEDS Action Research Presentations</strong></td>
<td><em>SEEDS Action Research Project Report Due</em></td>
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