EDCI 624: Assessment and Identification of Gifted Learners
Cohort: Frederick County Public Schools GCE 05
Spring Semester 2006—Monday, 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM
FCPS Administration Board (or Conference) Room

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Course Description: This course is designed to examine broad understandings of intelligence and assessment; to develop specific understandings of assessment techniques, both formal and informal; and to identify gifted students. Furthermore this course is designed to make students aware of the influences of language, culture, ethnicity, gender, age and exceptionality on the recognition and subsequent identification of giftedness.

Standards: This course is designed around the National Association for Gifted Children program standards (2001) as well as the Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel (1998) and specifically addresses 8 VAC 20-21-270: Gifted Education (add-on endorsement) standards.

National Association for Gifted Children (Landrum, Callahan, and Shaklee, 2001):
Standard 4: Student Identification
Gifted learners must be assessed to determine appropriate educational services.
Standard 6: Professional Development
Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized in the preparation of gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.

Virginia Department of Education: Gifted Education:
2c. Gifted behaviors in special populations (i.e., those who are culturally diverse, low income or physically disabled)

3. Understanding of specific techniques to identify gifted students using diagnostic and prescriptive approaches to assessment including:
   a) multiple assessment instruments and identification strategies through a review of portfolio or performance, or both;
   b) the use of rating scales, checklists, and questionnaires by parents, teachers or others;
   c) the evaluation of data collected from student records such as grades, honors and awards, and,
   d) the use of case study reports providing information concerning exceptional conditions.

6. Understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education.

7. Understanding of, and proficiency in, grammar, usage, and mechanics and their integration in writing.
Course Goals: Participants in this course will demonstrate their competency in the following areas:

1. Ability to identify the salient issues in assessment and identification of gifted learners;
2. Identification of varied expressions of advanced aptitude including those that may be influenced by culture, ethnicity, gender, age, exceptionality and income;
3. Recognition of appropriate use of informal and formal assessments in the assessment and identification of gifted learners;
4. Ability to critique the use of informal and formal assessments in the assessment and identification of gifted learners;
5. Ability to utilize informal and formal assessments to provide a continuum of services to gifted learners;
6. Ability to identify and address current local, state, and national issues related to assessment and identification of gifted learners;
7. Ability to provide accurate and timely information and explanation to parents, teachers, key stakeholders, and where appropriate students; and,
8. Ability to demonstrate an understanding of the key elements and national standards for identification of gifted learners.

All participants will be expected to:

a) Demonstrate knowledge of subject matter through informed participation in class discussions, presentations and products developed;
b) Demonstrate their understanding of relevant issues and concerns in the assessment and identification of gifted students through critical reflections;
c) Demonstrate their ability to create an accurate and usable identification model based on best practices in the field of gifted child education;
d) Demonstrate their written and oral skills of expression to lead class discussions on relevant topics (e.g. age group, testing, assessment of intelligence, etc.); and,
e) Demonstrate their continued commitment to professional development through the ongoing use of their professional development plan.

Grading Scale:

\begin{align*}
A &= 94—100 \\
A- &= 90—93 \\
B+ &= 86—89 \\
B &= 80—85 \\
C &= 70—79 \\
F &= \text{Below 70}
\end{align*}

Assignments and Assessments:

A. Major Project—student choice (40%)

Students will develop a 45-minute-long presentation and associated graphics (handouts). The presentation will be assessed according to;

1. Accuracy of the information presented;
2. Ability to translate key principles into practical use;
3. Clarity of explanation;
4. Appropriateness of the presentation to the audience; and,
5. Thoroughness and accuracy of how your presentation reflects the current knowledge of the field.

1. Each student will become an “expert” in a particular dimension of the identification of gifted and talented learners. Students may choose a particular underrepresented population (e.g. culture, ethnic group, gender, exceptionality, age, income level) to study. Each student will provide an outline of their presentation, a brief report of the current research in the field and a list of references/resources to share as part of their presentation.

2. In lieu of a presentation, a student can elect to create a model for assessment and identification of gifted learners. The model will be based on a specifically described population and designed to reflect the current state guidelines on the identification of gifted students as well as “best recommended” practices in the field of gifted education. Each model will be assessed for:
   a. Accuracy of information presented;
   b. Congruence of assessments and identification plan;
   c. Accuracy of compliance with state requirements;
   d. Age appropriateness;
   e. Inclusion of critical stakeholders;
   f. Acknowledgement of issues of special populations;
   g. Model for informing parents, administrators and teachers;
   h. Model for integration of findings into programming

3. Students may propose a major project of their own choosing. This may include grant writing/submission, professional journal article (written/submitted), a professional development plan for a school/site/district, etc.

All major projects will be shared/duplicated with the members of the class. One additional copy will be submitted to the instructor as part of the overall performance assessment maintained on file for accreditation purposes. No information will be duplicated without the author’s permission.

B. Assignments:

1. Response Journal (30%)
   Each student will maintain a response journal for this course. Topics will be identified that should comprise the bulk of the articles read (the impact of the information on the assessment/identification of giftedness).
   6. Currency of literature reviewed;
   7. Accuracy of annotated bibliography;
   8. Summary of article that accurately reflects the author’s intent; and,
   9. Reflection on reading that identifies key understandings, application of the research, and influence on the reader.

2. Seminar Leader (20%)
   Each student will prepare and lead the class in a discussion (no less than 30 minutes) of a major area of study regarding the assessment of gifted children. Students will provide an outline of the major issues along with a series of discussion questions for the class.

   Your topic should be based on a chapter that you will select from:
3. Professional Development Plan (10%)
Each student will continue his/her Professional Development Plan for career planning. The PDP will be used to conference with the instructor and as a form of reflective, self-evaluation at the close of the course. The student will continue using the PDP if he/she decides to continue in the master’s program.

Mode of Course Delivery: Course delivery will be through mini-lectures, experiential activities, small group discussion based on professional interests and research based questions that can be examined through action research projects, whole class discussions, or student presentations. Regular attendance and class participation is expected.

Required Texts:


Recommended Texts:

Class Attendance (p. 34, GMU Catalog 2003-2004)
All students are expected to attend all classes for which they are enrolled. The summer session is compacted so that each day is the equivalent of one week during the semester term. Therefore no absences are permitted.

Honor Code (p. 29, GMU Catalog 2003-2004)
All students are expected to be aware of and abide by the GMU Honor Code. An explanation of the Honor Code should be given at the beginning of each class. Students should request a delineation of the policy and explanation of any part of the policy they do not understand. Students are responsible for understanding their professor’s policies with regard to the Honor Code. Students are also responsible for understanding the provisions of the Honor Code.

Individuals with Disabilities (p. 56, GMU Catalog 2003-2004)
Students requiring specific accommodations for a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center at (703) 993-2472 and notify the instructor of the necessary accommodations.

GSE Professional Performance Criteria: The Virginia Department of Education promotes maintaining standards of professional competence. Therefore, the Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects its students to exhibit the following:
Communication: clear oral, written (APA, 5th edition), and presentation skills
Collaboration: respect for the opinion and dignity of others; ability to collaborate with others; effective interpersonal skills
Professionalism: commitment to children and their families; sound judgment; integrity and honesty; acceptance of constructive criticism; positive attitude; ability to meet deadlines; appropriate assertiveness; ability to handle stress.

GSE has established due process procedures for all students. Students are notified if an instructor observes anyone having difficulty with any of the indicators of professional performance criteria.

The professor believes that flexibility is a strength, not a weakness, in the teaching/learning act. I anticipate that some adjustments may be made in the schedule. Insofar as possible, you will be notified in advance.
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