

George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
EDSE 627: Psychoeducational Assessment
Section 001
Spring 2004

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Credit Hours: 3.0

Meeting Day/Time/Place: Wednesday/7:20-10:00PM/Robinson A205

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students with knowledge and experiential learning activities related to psychoeducational assessment of students with mild disabilities. Content covered includes statistical and psychometric concepts in assessment. Norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, portfolio assessment, and curriculum-based measurement, as well as informal testing will be addressed. Opportunities are provided for the administration, scoring, and interpretation of academic and behavior measures commonly used in special education. Educational report writing and development of educational goals and benchmarks will also be covered. Consideration will be given to the use of assessment results for instructional and placement decisions. Scholarly and professional critiques and awareness of limitations and strengths of various instrument design and usage will be addressed.

Student Outcomes:

- Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Provide the definition of assessment and the purposes and assumptions regarding assessment of exceptional children.
 - Describe relevant litigation and legislation pertinent to assessment.
 - Describe the characteristics of norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, curriculum-based and informal tests, their similarities and differences, and their respective roles in the assessment process.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of basic measurement concepts and evaluate the psychometric properties of individual tests.
 - Select, administer, and score a variety of educational tests.
 - Interpret test results, generate appropriate educational goals and objectives based upon these results, and report test results in a professional written format. Use assessment information in making eligibility, program, and placement decision for individuals with exceptional learning needs, with consideration towards implications regarding cultural and linguistic diversity.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:

EDSE 627 is part of the George Mason University Graduate School of Education Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Emotional Disturbance, Learning Disabilities, and Mental Retardation. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children, the major special education professional organization in the United States. As such, the learning objectives for this course cover many of the competencies for assessment.

The CEC standards are listed on the following web site:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stdts/common_core_4-21-01.html

The CEC standard that will be addressed in this class includes:

Standard 8 – Assessment: Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators, and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs (ELN) and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with ELN, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand measurement theory and practices for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making. Special educators conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with ELN. Special educators use assessment information to identify supports and adaptations required for individuals with ELN to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators use appropriate technologies to support their assessment. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

Knowledge:

- Basic terminology used in assessment.
- Legal provisions and ethical principles regarding assessment of individuals.
- Screening, prereferral, referral, and classification procedures.
- Use and limitations of assessment instruments.
- National, state, or provincial, and local accommodations and modifications.

Skills:

- Gather relevant background information
 - Administer nonbiased formal and informal assessments.
 - Use technology to conduct assessments
 - Develop or modify individualized assessment strategies.
 - Interpret information from formal and informal assessments.
 - Use assessment information in making eligibility, program, and placement decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
 - Report assessment results to all stakeholders using effective communication skills.
 - Evaluate instruction and monitor progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
 - Develop or modify individualized assessment strategies.
 - Create and maintain records.
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Nature of Course Delivery:

Learning activities include the following:

- 1) Class lecture, discussion, and participation..
 - 2) Application activities, including in class evaluation of tests.
 - 3) Small group activities, assignments, and presentations.
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Required Text:

Overton, Terry. (2003). Assessing learners with special needs: An applied approach (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Course packet to be purchased later in the semester at the GMU copy center at the Johnson Center. Packet contains case studies and information required for class activities. Additional supplemental readings may be assigned throughout the course, some available electronically

**Note: this syllabus may change according to class needs. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with your instructor, please call and/or make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.*

Evaluation:

1. Class attendance and participation
2. Administration/Scoring of Protocols (2)

3. Test Reports/I.E.P Goals & Objectives (2)

4. Curriculum-Based Measurement Project (Group Project)

**It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GSE ED/LD program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes that documents your satisfactory progress through the GSE program and the CEC performance based standards.*

Grading Criteria:

95-100% = A

90-94% = A-

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

< 70% = F

Detailed Assignment Descriptions:

Class Attendance, Participation, and In-Class Activities:

Students are expected to attend class and participate with all assignments and group activities. Required readings should be completed prior to class. The success of any course in this field stems largely from the scholarly and collegial culture created by our attendance and commitment to the class. Points will be subtracted for work submitted after the due date, or for activities for which a student is not present. Excessive absences will result in significant grade reductions, and may result in withdrawal from the course.

Point value: 10 points

Test Protocols:

Students will administer and score **two separate educational tests** (approval of test must be provided from instructor). The Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement-III **must** be one of the tests administered (all subtests).

Completed protocols should have recorded a pseudonym for the subject, date of birth, date of test, grade, and raw and derived scores. Grading will be based on the **accuracy of test administration and scoring**. Basals and ceilings should be established. Raw scores and derived scores (standard scores, scaled scores, percentiles, etc.) should be recorded. Unless otherwise

permitted by the instructor, tests should be administered in their **entirety**. Protocols that reflect partial completion of test administration will be returned ungraded.

Behavioral observations should also be included as a component of this assignment. Write a minimum of one **typed** paragraph describing relevant behavior the subject exhibited during testing.

Test subjects: Students will be responsible for finding their own subjects to test (find a different subject for each of the two evaluations). Since one objective of this course is to familiarize students with assessment instruments and procedures, these subjects may be friends, neighbors, etc. Subjects should be school-aged and should not be receiving special education services. Have the parent of the child read and sign the letter of explanation provided by the instructor. This letter should be submitted with your protocols.

Point value: 15 points per protocol (total 30 points)

Educational Reports:

Using the test data from two separate cases provided by the instructor, students will write two separate educational reports and develop relevant I.E.P. goals and objectives. The reports should be typed and double spaced. Time for in-class group work will be provided to analyze the case studies; however, reports will be written on an individual basis. Format to follow will be reviewed at a later date.

Point value: Report 1=15 points. Report 2=25 points.

Group Project: Curriculum-Based Assessment or Portfolio Assessment:

Working in groups, students will create, implement, and share a curriculum-based assessment procedure or a portfolio assessment for a student or a group of students. The project will include a four to five page literature review (APA style), a rationale for skill mastery or improvement, a plan for educational intervention, evaluating and monitoring progress, and an implementation chart or graph. This information will be written and one group copy will be submitted for evaluation. Groups will also present their findings to the class using appropriate visuals.

Point value: 20 points.

TEST LIBRARY:

Tests can be checked out by Nancy Miller at the Special Education Program Office in Robinson B Room 441. Nancy's office hours are generally M-Th 10:00 AM –5:00 PM, Fridays are flexible. However, **you are encouraged to call** her prior to coming out for test check-out (703-993-3145). Protocols are \$1.25 each.

HONOR CODE:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at www.gmu.edu.

WEATHER CHECK: (703)993-1000

Tentative Course Schedule:

Date	Book Chapter(s)	Concepts	Assignments Due
1/21	1,2	Introductions/ overview/Legislation & Litigation	
1/28	3,4, 5,6	Basic Measurement Concepts/ Norm-Referenced Testing	
2/4	8 <i>Responsiveness to Intervention: An Alternative Approach to the ID of LD by F. Gresham</i> www.air.org/ldsummit	Behavioral Observations/ Informal Testing: CBM & Portfolio Assessments	Summary of Gresham article
2/11	6 7 (p.263; 270-71; 274-279)	Oral Language/ Phon. Awareness/ Reading Assmt.	Bring WJ-III ACH (test easels and manuals):should be brought to every class meeting
2/18	6 7 (p.263-;270-71)	Reading Assessment	CBM/Portfolio Proposal
2/25	6 2 (p.61-64) 7 (p.272-273)	Written Language Assessment IEPs	
3/3	6, 12 7 (p. 251-263)	Math Assessment Report Writing	Protocol 1
3/10		Spring Break	
3/17	10	Intellectual Assessment	Protocol 2
3/24	9	Emotional/Behavior Assessment	Report 1
4/7	2, 12	Screening Comm/ Local Eligibility/ Federal Definitions/ Feedback to Parents/Students	Local Eligibility Criteria
4/14	11	Current Trends	Report 2
4/21		Group Presentations	CBM/Portfolio Assessment Project
4/28		Group Presentations	
5/5		TBA	

