George Mason University  
Graduate School of Education  
EDSE627: Psychoeducational Assessment  
Section 601  
3 Credit Hours  
Spring 2004

Place:  FCPS Administrative Office  
Time:  Thursdays from 4:30 - 8:30 PM  
1/8/04 – 3/18/04

Instructor:  C. Yvonne Balfour, Ph.D.  
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H (540) 338-6385  
Email:  cbalfour@gmu.edu

Blackboard:  blackboard.gmu.edu  
Textbook Web Site:  www.prenhall.com/overton

Consult Hours:  By appointment on Thursdays before or after class  
Weather info:  FCPS website/local media

REQUIRED TEXT

COURSE DESCRIPTION
EDSE627 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, and curriculum-based measurement, as well as informal testing will be addressed. Opportunities are provided for administration, scoring, and interpreting academic and behavioral assessments commonly used in special education with an emphasis on communicating results. Consideration will be given to the use of assessment results for instruction and placement decisions. Scholarly and professional review of various assessment instruments will be conducted.

RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
EDSE627 is part of the George Mason University Graduate School of Education Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the 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 (CEC), the major special education professional organization. As such, the learning objectives for the course cover many of the competencies of assessment defined by the CEC standards.
The CEC standards are listed on the following web site:
http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html

Standard 8 of the CEC standards will be addressed (the disability-specific standards for ED/LD and MR):

Knowledge:
- Basic terminology used in assessment.
- Legal provisions and ethical principles regarding assessment of individuals.
- Screening, pre-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 individual assessment strategies.
- Create and maintain records.

*** It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the ED/LD program. Products from this class can become part of the individual professional portfolio that you are developing in your portfolio courses. These documents can help you show your satisfactory progress through the GSE Masters program and the CEC performance standards. ***

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities, assignments, and presentations
4. Textbook readings
5. Video & power point presentations

COURSE ADAPTIONS
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, please call and/or make an appointment to discuss this with me as soon as possible.

STUDENT OUTCOMES
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Provide the definition and purposes of assessment of exceptional children.
2. Describe relevant litigation and legislation pertinent to assessment.
3. Describe the characteristics of norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, curriculum-based, and informal teacher-made tests, their similarities and differences, and their respective roles in the assessment process.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of basic measurement concepts and evaluate the psychometric properties of individual tests.
5. Administer instruments designed to measure educational and behavioral progress.
6. Interpret test data and report results in a professional written format.
7. Use assessment information in making intervention, eligibility, program, and placement decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs, with consideration of the cultural and linguistic diversity of students.
8. Write an essay describing the assessment practices of the local school system.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1. Consistent attendance is expected because (1) colleagues rely on each other to make in-class activities valuable learning experiences; 2) the accuracy of test administration, scoring, and interpretation is essential and will be covered in class; and (3) in-class discussions will address field-based, "real-life" issues.

The success of any course in Special Education stems largely from the scholarly and collegial culture created in class. As such attendance is required. You, however, may miss one class without penalty to your grade. Each class missed after the first one will result in a 3-point deduction from your final grade. Arriving to class after 4:50 and/or leaving more than 20 minutes before the end of class will result in a 1-point deduction from your final grade each instance that it occurs. If you know that you will have trouble attending class each week on time and for the full duration of each class, please take the course at another time.

2. All assignments must be typed (except if certain forms or techniques are used). Work submitted should reflect graduate level expectations in terms of scope, depth, writing mechanics, appearance, and APA style (where appropriate).

3. All assignments must be handed in on time. Late assignments may not be given full-credit. However, there are legitimate reasons for turning in assignments late (e.g., serious health or family issues) and these will be considered. Please make an appointment with me to discuss a situation that requires you to miss an assignment deadline. If you have to miss a class, please arrange to turn in any assignment that is due that night and be sure to keep up with the textbook reading assignment in your absence.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS (A criterion sheet is posted on the blackboard for requirements 1 - 5)
1. Behavioral Observation: Conduct at least a 30-minute behavioral observation in a classroom (or other setting as appropriate based on concerns), expand upon a provided instrument or developed another as a result of textbook readings. Select a situation in which the teacher/caretaker has some concerns about a student. Be sure to maintain student and teacher anonymity when reporting results.

2. Local Assessment Practices Paper: Interview someone from your school system who knows about the special education assessment practices of the school system (i.e., school psychologist, educational diagnostician, or special education administrator). You may conduct the interview in pairs. Ask questions that will help you understand the
following: 1. The status of the Child Study Committees (who attends, how intervention plans are developed and monitored, and the referral for testing rates). 2. The approach to the Eligibility process (where meetings are held and who attends meetings). 3. The role of the evaluators in the county (what do they do in addition to evaluate students). Gather and review at least two documents that you have not used before but pertain to the assessment process (i.e. a form used at Child Study or Eligibility). Finally, reflect on the practices you see in your school system relative to the information you have learned in this course. Include in this reflection a statement about what you know now that you did not know about the assessment practices of your school system and how your new knowledge will positively impact your practice as an educator. This reflection component is designed to help you with your portfolio entry for Standard 8. It is suggested that your interviews be arranged and conducted early in the semester (when you are not so busy). You can write up the information/description piece early on and add your reflections later. This assignment should be about 4-5 pages in length.

3. **Goal/Curriculum-based Measurement (CBM/GBM) Tool:** Design a GBM/CBM tool based on the components of an IEP to discuss and present in class.

4. **Instrument Assessment (Group Project):** Students will work in groups to share test administration, manual evaluation, and other relevant information about a specific assessment instrument. The project will culminate in a written product (on a form provided to you) and a brief presentation to groups or to the class. This assignment is designed to allow for scholarly and professional analysis of a given instrument and some cursory experience with administering, scoring, and interpreting of the selected test instruments. *Pick an instrument other than the WJ-III and the QRI-3 as we will discuss these in class.

5. **Three case studies:**
   - **Case Study I**
     Administer the Woodcock Johnson-III (WJ-III) in class to a partner
     Score the protocol and run the compuscore with your partner

   - **Case Study II**
     Interpret provided assessment data (scored protocols, compuscore, and bands)
     Write a Report

   - **Case Study III**
     Select your own student and administer the WJ-III
     Score the protocol and run the compuscore
     Interpret assessment data and write a report

6. **Textbooks readings:** Students are expected to complete the Activities in each of the chapters prior to the class when the chapter will be discussed in preparation for group work, chapter quizzes, and/or overall understanding/in-class questions (you can check your answers in the back of the chapters). Specific activities regarding chapter readings will be assigned in class to ensure understanding.

7. **In-class group work, discussion, presentations/role-plays, etc.:** Work based on lectures, course experiences, and readings from the Overton chapters. No direct point value for in-class activities will be assigned as it is assumed that all students will
participate in class activities. See the attendance policy for the implications of missing classes.

GRADING POLICIES:
Grades will be calculated according to the following point values:

- Behavioral Observation: 15 points
- Local Assessment Practices Paper: 20 points
- GBM/CBM Assignment: 15 points
- Instrument Assessment Project: 10 points
- Case Studies: 40 points
- (I – 10 pts., II – 10 pts., III – 20 pts.)

Total: 100 points

A = 95-100  A- = 90-94  B = 80-89  C = 70-79  F = 70 or below

TENTATIVE CLASS OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/8/04</td>
<td>Introductions&lt;br&gt;Organization of the Course&lt;br&gt;Federal Law and VA Regulations&lt;br&gt;Legal and Ethical Issues&lt;br&gt;Cooperative Team Meetings&lt;br&gt;Definition/Overview of Assessment&lt;br&gt;Organize Semester Assignments</td>
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<td>1/15/04</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics&lt;br&gt;Reliability &amp; Validity&lt;br&gt;Work on Instrument Assessment Project (items 11 – 17)</td>
<td>Chpts. 1 - 4 activities&lt;br&gt;Review page 486</td>
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<td>1/22/04</td>
<td>Unpack Definitions: OHI, LD, ED, MR, &amp; Autism&lt;br&gt;Pre-Referral Procedures</td>
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<td>1/29/04</td>
<td>Norm Referenced Assessments&lt;br&gt;Standardized Diagnostic Testing&lt;br&gt;Administration &amp; Scoring of WJ–III&lt;br&gt;Work on Instrument Assessment Project (items 1 – 10)</td>
<td>Chpts. 5 - 7 activities</td>
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<td>2/5/04</td>
<td>Administer &amp; Score WJ-III&lt;br&gt;Discuss &amp; work on Case Study I assignment</td>
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<td>2/12/04</td>
<td>Discuss Instrument Assessment&lt;br&gt;Interpretation of WJ-III Instrument</td>
<td>Chpt. 12 activities&lt;br&gt;Instrument Assessment Project (with handouts for everyone)</td>
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<td>2/19/04</td>
<td>WJ-III Interpretation &amp; Report Writing&lt;br&gt;Distribute Case Study II materials &amp; work on Case Study II assignment</td>
<td>Case Study I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>Assignments Due</td>
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<td>2/26/04</td>
<td>Assessment of Behavior &amp; Emotional Functioning</td>
<td>Chpts. 9 &amp; 10 activities</td>
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<td>Discuss &amp; work on Behavioral Observation Assignment</td>
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<td>Psychological Evaluations &amp; Eligibility</td>
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<td>3/4/04</td>
<td>IEP Team/IEP Contents,</td>
<td>Case Study II</td>
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<td>Accommodations, &amp; SOL’s</td>
<td>Chpt. 8 activities</td>
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<td>Informal Assessment Techniques</td>
<td>Behavioral Observation</td>
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<td>Discuss Case Study III assignment</td>
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<td>3/11/04</td>
<td>Task Analysis &amp; Error Analysis</td>
<td>Local Practices Paper</td>
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<td>GBM/CBM</td>
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<td>Discuss &amp; work on GBM/CBM assignment</td>
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<td>3/18/04</td>
<td>Discuss, work on, and present GBM/CBM assignment</td>
<td>GBM/CBM assignment</td>
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<td>Case Study III</td>
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