

**George Mason University
Graduate School of Education
EDSE627: Psychoeducational Assessment
Section 630
3 Credit Hours
Spring 2006**

Place: Belmont Ridge Middle School-Media Center
 Time: Wednesdays from 4:30 to 9:30 PM
 3/15/06 – 5/31/06
 Instructor: C. Yvonne Balfour, Ph.D.
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 Email: cbalfour@gmu.edu
 Blackboard: blackboard.gmu.edu
 Textbook Web Site: www.prenhall.com/overton
 Consult Hours: By appointment on Wednesdays before or after class (or other times if necessary). Do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, concerns, and/or thoughts to share about the course.
 Weather info: LCPS website/local media

REQUIRED TEXT

Overton, T (2006). *Assessing learners with special needs: An applied approach*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

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. Power point presentations

COURSE ADAPTIONS

This syllabus may change according to class needs. If you have a disability and will be seeking accommodations for this course you must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC). See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC. If this is the case, please inform me, in writing, at the beginning of the semester.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

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 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. Develop and administer instruments designed to measure educational progress.
6. Interpret test data and report results in a professional written format.
7. Use assessment information in making intervention, eligibility/placement, and instructional 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.
9. Complete 3 portfolio entries for CEC standard #8.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. The success of any course in Special Education stems largely from the scholarly and collegial culture created in class. Consistent attendance is expected to help maintain this culture and 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.

You may, however, 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. Additionally, arriving to class 20 or more minutes after the beginning of class 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 assignments in your absence.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS (A criterion sheet is posted on the blackboard for requirements 1 - 4)

1. **Test Review Assignment:** Select a norm-referenced test used to measure academic achievement that is currently being used in your district (but not the Woodcock-Johnson III). Chapter 8 in Overton discusses several of the tests you might consider. A school psychologist or educational diagnostician can also give you suggestions as to tests that are frequently used in local evaluations. Review the test materials beginning with the Examiner's Manual. Write a review of the test using the test review document provided you. If you have a question as to the appropriateness of the test, please ask. You may complete this assignment alone or with someone from your group. **Due 4/26/06.**
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, special education contact, 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 for your school). 2. The approach to the Eligibility process (where meetings are held, who attends meetings, and how assessment information is used in the decision making process). 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 **and** one from 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. **Due 5/10/06.**

3. **Two case studies:**

Case Study I (Due 5/3/06)

- Administer the Woodcock Johnson-III (WJ-III) to a partner
- Score the protocol and run the compuscore with your partner

Case Study II (Due 5/24/06)

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

4. **Curriculum-based Measurement Assignment:** Based on a student's particular need, informal assessments, and an analysis of the curriculum, design a Curriculum Based Measurement tool. Implement instruction over the course of the semester and use the CBM tool to measure progress and guide instruction. Collect and graph data regarding the student's progress. **Due 5/17/06.**
5. **Final Exam:** This is an open book, open-note exam but it will not be a collaborative exam (meaning that you may not work with you classmates while completing it). **Complete in class on 5/31/06.**
6. **Textbooks readings:** Students are expected to complete the End-of-Chapter Exercises from each of the assigned chapters prior to the class when the chapters will be discussed. This is in preparation for group work, and the final exam, and will improve your overall understanding of the concepts presented in the text and during class (you may check your answers in the back of the book).
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.**
8. ***3 Portfolio entries:** One entry each for assignments 1, 2, and 4 (Case 3). Relative to the artifacts for these assignments, explain how you have the knowledge and/or skills as listed in CEC Standard #8. Be sure to explain how this artifact and your knowledge/skills will positively influence your practice as a special educator. While no point value is assigned to

these entries, not turning them in will result in a grade of INC (incomplete) for this course.

Due when each individual assignment is turned in.

***If you are not taking this course as part of the GMU master's program, portfolio entries are not required.**

GRADING:

Grades will be calculated according to the following point values:

Test Review Assignment	10 points
Local Assessment Practices Paper	20 points
Case Study I	15 points
CBM Assignment	20 points
Case Study II	25 points
Final Exam	10 points
Total	100 points

A = 94-100 A- = 90-93 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 F = below 70

TENTATIVE CLASS OUTLINE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments Due</u>
3/15/06	Registration & Textbooks Introductions Cooperative Groups Organization of the Course & Assignments Definition & Overview of Assessment Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) Task Analysis & Error Analysis Discuss CBM Assignment (due on 5/17/06) Website: syllabus & CBM checklist Lecture Notes: assessment & CBM	Chpts. 1 & 5
3/22/06	Federal Law & VA Regulations Legal & Ethical Issues Bias in SPED process Pre-Referral Interventions Unpack Definitions: OHI, LD, ED, MR, & Autism Discuss Local Assessment Practices Paper (due on 5/10/06) Website: LAP Paper Criterion Disability Definitions Problem Solving/CSC Committee Lecture Notes: regs, csc, LAP	Chpt. 2
3/29/06	Descriptive Statistics Reliability & Validity Begin Test Review form on WJ-III Discuss Test Review Assignment CBM checkpoint Discuss need to secure WJ-III kit(s) Website: Test Review Form (2 copies) Test Review Criterion Practical Measurement Worksheet Lecture Notes: rel,val.stats	Chpts. 3 & 4

TENTATIVE CLASS OUTLINE (continued)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments Due</u>
4/5/06	Norm Referenced Assessments Standardized Diagnostic Testing Administration & Scoring of WJ-III Discuss Case I assignment Website: Case I Assignment Criterion Lecture Notes: wj-iii wj-iii score bands	Chpts. 7 & 8 WJ-III Instrument (1 per group) WJ-III Test Review Form (from last week)
4/12/06	Spring Break	
4/19/06	Consultation with Case I & CBM Assignment	CBM & Case 1 Materials
4/26/06	Interpretation of WJ-III Instrument Report Writing Website: Interpretation Worksheet Guide to Writing Reports Report Template WJ-III Data Sheet Notes on Sherry Jose Educational Evaluation-Sample WJ-iii Scores Lecture Notes: report writing	Chpt. 11 Test Review Assignment
5/3/06	Assessment of Behavior & Emotional Functioning Psychological Evaluations & Eligibility Website: Allison Elig. Activity Sherry Psychological Evaluation Lecture Notes: elig, psyc, behavior	Chpts. 6 & 9 Case Study 1
5/10/06	Informal assessment, criterion-referenced assessment, & QRI CBM Checkpoint Website: TBD Lecture Notes: TBD	Review Chapter 5 Local Practices Paper w/Portfolio Entry
5/17/06	Review Report Writing Consult-Case 3	CBM Assignment w/Portfolio Entry
5/24/06	Exam Review Website: TBD Lecture Notes: TBD	Case Study II w/Portfolio Entry
5/31/06	Final Exam	