

**George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
UTEEM Program**

**EDUT 512 (5U1)
Evaluation and Assessment of Culturally, Linguistically, and Ability Diverse
Young Learners Ages Three to Five
Fall 2003
Wednesdays, 9:00-4:00
Robinson A349**

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Course Description:

Prerequisite: Admission to the UTEEM program or permission of the instructor.

This course provides students with an understanding of 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. The students will explore both quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluation and assessment. They will learn about technological adaptations to enhance the assessment process. Students will gain an understanding of appropriate strategies for conducting, reporting, and decision making related to specific functions of assessment. They will learn about assessment strategies necessary for second language learners and about adaptations for children with disabilities. They will use selected assessment strategies with young children in their field placements and are expected to become competent in the use of authentic assessment strategies to describe a child's learning strengths and instructional needs.

Course Purpose:

This course is offered as one of the strands in the Unified Transformative Early Education Model (UTEEM), a teacher training program providing an integrated approach to preparing teachers to work with diverse young children and their families. Teachers are prepared to work with children with diverse learning needs in a variety of inclusive school and community settings. The assessment strand is offered in conjunction with three other strands and is linked to a full-time field placement with diverse young children.

Course format:

This course will meet for six days, approximately every other week over the course of the semester and it is taken concurrent with a field placement. Students will connect classroom knowledge with field experiences. Course assignments will be closely linked with field experiences and can be completed on site with children and families enrolled in the program. The class will be conducted in a seminar format and will include

community observations, guest lecturers and panels from the community to enhance the content from readings. Active participation of all students is required.

Student outcomes and relationship to NAEYC Standards and CEC Early childhood Standards. Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the various forms and functions of assessment used with young children. (NAEYC 3; CEC CC8K1-4; CEC EC8S2)
2. Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of authentic assessment strategies to learn about a child and plan for group and individual instruction. (NAEYC 1, 3; CEC CC7S13, 8S1, 8S2, 8S3; CEC EC8S1)
3. Demonstrate the ability to incorporate a variety of assessment strategies into the daily routine in order to document learning and developmental progress and to adjust teaching. (NAEYC 3; CEC CC7S4, 8S5)
4. Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate and adapt the assessment process to ensure family and cultural relevance, to reduce language bias, and to reduce the impact of disability on the assessment. (NAEYC 1, 2, 3, 4a; CEC CC7S3, 8S1, 8S4, 8S6)
5. Report assessment results in a manner that is relevant for family members and other staff and that highlights children's strengths and capacities. (NAEYC 2, 3, 4a; CEC CC8S5, 8S7. EC8S3-6)
6. Demonstrate the ability to develop and maintain an ongoing system for documenting children's progress in the classroom context. (NAEYC 3; CEC CC8S9)

The outcomes for this course address competencies for licensure for teachers in early childhood education and early childhood special education as identified by the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Required Texts:

McAfee, O. & Leong, D. (1997). Assessing and guiding young children's development and learning. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. ISBN 0-205-14018-1.

Cohen, D., Stern, V. & Balaban, B. (1997). Observing and recording the behavior of young children. New York: Teachers College Press. ISBN 0807735752.

Puckett, M. & Black, J. (2000). Authentic assessment of the young child: Celebrating development and learning. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill.

Students with Special Needs:

Students who require any special accommodations or those with disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in the course are encouraged to work with the instructor to ensure their successful participation.

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all state and local governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has a disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please call the Disability Resource Center for required documentation (703-993-2474).

Course Requirements, Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Students will be expected to:

1. Attend all class sessions (unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor).
2. Complete all assignments.
3. Become familiar with one formal assessment and present it to the class as part of a collaborative group.
4. Maintain a reflective, interactive dialogue journal to be shared with program faculty.
5. Become familiar with one child at field site through the use of several authentic assessment strategies used over time and develop an assessment portfolio for that child.
6. Use assessment strategies, including an analysis of children's interests and preferences to guide integrated planning in the classroom.

Course Grading:

1. Participation and preparation for class; 10%
 - a) attend all classes (on-time)
 - b) participate in class discussions and activities, demonstrating knowledge of assigned readings and site experiences
 - c) completion of all class assignments (on-time) unless prior arrangements are made.
 - d) share assessment dilemmas in class

3. Language sample: Assessment Analysis	20%
4. Interest/Preference Analysis	20%
5. Team Assessment Project	25%
6. Individual Child/Study/Portfolio	30%

Description of Assignments

1. Interest/Preference Analysis (15 %)

Using your knowledge of observational strategies, develop a format for noting children's interests and preferences to guide your planning for a thematic unit for the curriculum strand. Keep a record of activities, materials, spaces, events, play partners etc. that seem to engage children. Look for shared interests and preferences. Discuss cultural, linguistic, and ability factors. In a paper, describe what you learned and discuss how your observations might help you plan for a group of children during your full time field placement in November. Support your conclusions with references to the readings. Your paper must include a description of how you gathered the information (e.g., the observation formats), and any limitations or further information needs.

Due: Oct. 6

2. Language Sample: Assessment Analysis (20 %).

This assignment is based on the language sample assignment you will have for EDUT 513. You have been asked to collect data to discuss and describe your focus child/s language while they interact with an adult. In order to complete the assignment for EDUC 512, we will ask you to add another assessment strategy to your protocol. We will provide you with a language assessment protocol that you will use with your focus child to assess their language. Based on this assessment as well as your videotape or audiotape and anecdotal records, write a paper discussing; (a) the process of gathering the information; (b) what you learned about your focus child; and (c) possible strategies you will use in the classroom to support their language development:

- a) In thinking about the process of collecting your information, please discuss the different strategies in terms of what worked well, what was difficult, and why. How did the environment, including other children and adults impact your assessment? How did you collect your data? Did any of the assessment strategies provide more useful information? (If you journal about the process as you gather your data, you will be better able to respond to this part of the assignment).

- b) What does the information gathered from the sample tell you about your child? What did you learn anything about the development of your focus child in the areas of motor, cognition and social emotional development? What does your language assessment tell you about play skills? What did you learn from the family that contributed to your understanding of the child's language?
- c) How might you use this information for instructional planning? Describe some specific strategies you will use in the classroom as well as some strategies to support the child's family to enhance the child's language development.

Be sure to use readings to support your discussion and analysis.

Due Oct. 20

3. Team Assessment Project (25 %).

In groups of three to four, select a commercially published assessment indicated for use with children aged three to five. Read the manual and instructions carefully. Try the assessment out with each other, with children you know and at your site. Critically evaluate the assessment from your own perspective, from the perspective of class readings, from the perspective of cultural, linguistic and ability appropriateness, from the perspective of usefulness for families and from your experiences at the site. As a group, prepare a written product and in-class presentation. Your task is to give your classmates a working knowledge of this assessment from a critical perspective. Include the following information:

- a. Publication information. Title, publisher, recommended age range, stated purpose, scope, standardization, stated limitations.
- b. Description of what you did and what you learned from administering the assessment.
- c. Critical analysis. Give your general reaction. What do you see as strengths, limitations of the assessment? Support your position with information from the readings, class discussion, your experience on site. In particular, 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.
- d. Supporting information. Locate at least three articles out of current journals that may be relevant to this assessment. Provide complete citations and discuss the relevance of these articles to your understanding of the particular assessment you chose. If at all possible, interview staff and parents at your site about their impressions of the assessment.

Prepare a complete paper for the instructor and a reference handout for all of your classmates. In class, you will do a 30 minute presentation on the assessment and your experiences. Please let the instructor know if you will require a VCR.

Due Oct 6 or Oct 20

4. **Individual Child Study/Portfolio (30 %).**

You will be selecting a child in your field site for intensive study and to practice authentic assessment strategies. The result of this activity will be a child portfolio containing materials to support your written description of what you learned about the child, a gathering and interpreting of the material. Assignments in the separate strands (classes) can be linked to this portfolio; e.g., language sample assignments, emergent literacy assignment, development observations can all become parts of the portfolio. This assignment will be accomplished in several steps. The final product will be a formal written paper to include a discussion of implications of your findings for classroom planning with recommendations and analysis, as well as an in-class presentation. You will incorporate direct information from the child as well as from staff and family members. It is important to make contact with the family. Note dates on the syllabus when you will have opportunities to discuss your progress.

Develop a portfolio for the child you have been studying. You will be sharing the portfolio as a learning process for how you came to know your child and family. There are three major components to this project.

Part I: Prepare a narrative (paper) to accompany the portfolio that includes:

- a. A brief summary of the portfolio contents.
- b. A description of the approach you took, including all sources of information- classroom, home, play and rationale for the approach.
- c. A description of the child, including what you have seen in all key domains of development, including emergent literacy;
- d. A discussion of what you have learned about the child, including learning style; implications of teaching; implications for collaborating with the child's family.
- e. A discussion of how you will validate your impressions with the family.
- f. A critique of your approach and what you might change the next time.

Part II: Prepare a summary of your portfolio to share with classmates and faculty..

This will be the culmination of the semester's work in all classes and at your internship site. You will be telling a child's story. Share from your observations what you think the child is wondering, what the child is interested in. Include what you planned for the child (activities etc) and why. How did the child's performance or actions influence how you viewed the child? Reflect on your interactions with your focus child. Consider what strategies worked well for you and what you might do differently next time. Include a description of your interactions with the family - visits, notes etc. Include information about transitions: (where was the child before he/she came to the center and where he/she will be next year).

Part III. Finally, consider your own story – your own perceptions/reflections as you developed a relationship with the child and his family. How does what you learn about your child and family through assessment process relate to your own story? In order to complete this portion of the portfolio, you must keep artifacts, note cards

and other representations of your own thinking as you get to know your focus child and as you develop your portfolio.

Submit 2 copies of the narrative portion of your portfolio.

Due Dec 14 and 15

Grading Scale:

A= 96-100

A- = 90-95

B+ = 86-89

B = 80-85

C = 70-79

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

**Tentative Class Schedule
Topics and Reading Assignments**

Sept 8	Assessment: Why, what, when, where, and with whom? Course overview Theoretical grounding – How do our beliefs about young children and learning impact our views on assessment?	McAfee & Leong Ch. 1, 3 Puckett & Black Ch. 1, 3, 6
	Investigate assessments used at site	
Sept 22	Observation as assessment Our own story – influencing observations Observation approaches	McAfee & Leong Ch. 4-5 Cohen, et.al., Ch. 1-6
	Choose assessment to study for team presentation	Puckett Ch 2
Oct 6	Observation within a socio-cultural context <i>Classroom observations at Main Street Child Development Center</i> Learning about children with disabilities in natural contexts Play-based assessment:	Heidemann & Hewitt Ch 3 Cohen et al., Ch 12
	Team Assessment project presentations Interest /Preference Analysis due	Abraham, Morris & Wald (Ch 8)
Oct 20	Authentic assessment in inclusive natural settings <i>Classroom observations at The Children’s School</i> Strategies for learning about culturally and linguistically diverse young children in natural contexts. Family – centered assessment Resilience as a factor in assessment	McAfee & Leong Ch 2 Puckett &Black Ch 4, 9 Resilience
	Language Sample Analysis due Team Assessment project presentations	
	October 25 – November 19: No class, full time field placement	
Dec 1	Authentic assessment strategies – for the purpose of. .? Portfolio assessment strategies Learning about children with severe disabilities. Technology adaptations in assessment	McAfee &Leong Ch. 6 - 9 Puckett &Black Ch 7-8

Team assessment project presentations (if needed)

Cohen et al.,
Ch. 7-10

Contact instructor to discuss Individual Child Study/ Portfolio progress.

Dec 8 Linking assessment to the “big picture”

McAfee & Leong

The child find process

Ch. 10 & 11

Interpreting assessment with families and other professionals

Cohen et al,

Reporting assessment results

Ch. 13

Developing Individual Education Plans

Guest Panel

Dec. 14 and 15: Individual child Study/Portfolio presentations

Assessment Rubrics