

SYLLABUS

Transdisciplinary Perspectives on Evaluation and Assessment of Diverse Learners, Aged 0 to Three and Their Families EDUT 522.01 (5U1)

**Spring 2006
3 credit hours**

**Fridays 9:00 – 4:00
Robinson A349**

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Office Hours: By appointment**

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 in a variety of inclusive community settings. This strand is offered in conjunction with three other courses and linked to a full-time placement with diverse infants and toddlers and their families. Students participating in this course are enrolled full-time in the UTEEM program.

Course Description:

This course focuses on family centered practice in assessing infants and toddlers from diverse cultures and with diverse abilities. Students in this class learn assessment practices that lead to plans for supporting infant development in ways that are individually and culturally relevant for families and caregivers and that are consistent with current recommended practices in the field of early care and education. Students will learn how to co-plan for assessments with families, to actively involve families in conducting assessments, and to share information in culturally, linguistically, and family-relevant ways. The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) will be presented as providing the philosophical basis for structuring family-centered assessment and intervention and as a strategy required for work with infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students will gain an understanding of appropriate strategies for conducting, reporting, and decision making related to specific functions of assessment. They will learn about adapting assessment practices for culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse infants and toddlers and their families. They will also learn about how to use the assessment process to build on family strengths and resources and to support parent-child relationships. All students will be expected to use selected assessment strategies with young children and their families in their field placements and are expected to become competent in the use of authentic assessment strategies to plan with families and their children.

Course Format

This class meets for six full days (9:00 – 4:00), approximately every other week over the course of the semester, enabling students to continuously link what they are doing in their field sites with what they will be learning in this class. The class is designed as a seminar, requiring active participation of all students. Guest lecturers from the community support content from the readings and discussions. A seventh half-day session during the final exam period is used for student presentations and to link the assessment product with the products from the other course strands. Keeping up with reading is essential for this class to be successful. In addition, students will complete assignments through interaction with a focus family and child in their internship placement.

Objectives 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 infants and toddlers and their families. (NAEYC 3; CEC CC8K1-4; CEC EC8S2)
2. Demonstrate knowledge of key guiding principles of family-centered assessment, including co-planning for assessment with families, taking into account family concerns, priorities, and resources, as well as developing assessment strategies that are culturally and linguistically relevant. (NAEYC 1, 2, 3, 4a; CEC CC 7S3, 8S1, 8Sr, 8S6)
3. Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate and adapt the assessment process to ensure cultural relevance and to reduce language bias.
4. Develop an IFSP that demonstrates a knowledge of the IFSP process; the ability to build on family strengths and resources; and collaboration with families in planning for early intervention with infants and toddlers. (NAEYC 1, 2, 3, 4a; CEC CC 7S3, 8S1, 8Sr, 8S6)
5. Use parent-child interaction and pre-linguistic narratives as a source for planning.
6. Demonstrate the ability to authentically represent portray a child's capacities. (NAEYC 3; CEC CC8S9)

Resource Materials:

Required Text:

Meisels, S. & Fenichel, E. (1996). New visions for developmental assessment of infants and children. Washington D.C.: Zero to Three.

Bergen, D. (1994). Assessment methods for infants and toddlers: transdisciplinary team approach. New York: Teachers College Press.

Recommended:

Linder, T. W. (2001). *Transdisciplinary play-based assessment: A functional approach to working with young children*. Baltimore, MD: Brooks

Additional Resources:

Batshaw, M.L. (2001). When your child has a disability. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes. (required text for development class)

Trawick-Smith, J. (2003). Early childhood development: A multicultural perspective. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (required text for development class)

Lally et al. (1995). Caring for infants and toddlers in groups: Developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood programs. Washington, DC: Zero to Three. (required for curriculum class)

Segal, M. & Adcock, D. (1985). Your child at play: Birth to one year; one to two years; two to three years. NY: New Market.(required for curriculum)

McCollum, J et al. (1999). Project Triad. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois. (triad and dyad handouts)

Course Requirements:

Students will be expected to:

1. Attend class sessions and actively participate in small and large group activities.
2. Complete all written assignments in a timely fashion. It is expected that assignments be turned in on the due date unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. A pattern of late papers will affect grading.
3. Prepare for class by completing all assigned readings prior to class.
4. Maintain an ongoing reflective interactive dialogue journal.
5. Develop a collaborative relationship with one family at your site and determine their strengths, needs and resources that would be used in the development of an IFSP.
6. Develop an authentic portrayal of a child at your site and identify implications for planning, through your ongoing observation and interaction with one child on your site.

Course Grading:

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|--|-------------|
| 1. Participation and preparation for class | 10% |
| a. attend all classes (on time) | |
| b. complete all assignments (on-time) | |
| c. participate in class discussions and activities, demonstrating knowledge of assigned readings and site experiences | |
| d. create opportunities for the participation of your classmates and work collaboratively to support the contributions of each other | |
| 2. Team assessment group project | 30% |
| 3. IFSP Project | 60% |
| a) Phase one: Family inquiry plan | (8 points) |
| b) Phase two: Child observation connection | (32 points) |
| c) Final IFSP project | (20 points) |

Assignment of Grades:

95 – 100	A
89 – 94	A-
83 – 88	B+
78 – 82	B
70 – 77	C
Below 70	F

University Honor Code:

Students must follow the guidelines for the University Honor Code.

See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apologies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Responsible Use of Computing:

Students must abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing.

See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Accommodations:

Students with Disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2472 to access the DRC.

Tentative Class Schedule Topics and Reading Assignments

- Jan 27 Overview of Course/Syllabus/Assignments
Internship Assignments
- Feb 3 Role of Assessment in Infant/Toddler Settings; Principles and definitions;
Meisels principles of assessment: Observing newborns and toddlers.
- Read:** Meisels, chapters 1 and 2
Read: Cohen, chapter 11
- Feb 17 Family-centered assessment; learning from families not about them; using
assessment for family-relevant, culturally responsive assessment; The
Family Stories Model. Parent-child interaction, using dyadic observations
to plan for triadic intervention. Siblings in family- centered assessment.
- Read:** Meisels, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 18
Read: Bergen, Ch. 1, 2, 8 & 9
Due: Examples of assessments used on site
- Guest Speakers:**
Parent Panel....
Topic: The assessment from parents' perspectives
Topic: Assessment through a triadic lens
- Mar 2 Neuromotor assessment; assessing for function; adapting assessment for
children with neuromotor disabilities; The Neonatal Behavioral
Assessment Scale. Planning for use of technology to enhance interaction.
Assessing Cognitive Development: Learning
and problem solving; planning culturally and linguistically relevant
interventions. observing and making sense of infants and toddlers as story
tellers (the role of pre-linguistic narratives).
- Read:** Meisels, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16
Read: Bergen, Ch. 3, 4 5 & 6,
Due: Phase one IFSP: Family Inquiry Plan
- Mar 24 The role of formal assessment in early intervention. Assessment for
diagnosis and eligibility. Interpreting and using formal assessment. Using
clinical assessments. Law, ICC, natural environments
- Read:** Meisels, 7, 9, 12 & 17
Due: Team Assessment Group Project Presentations

April 28 Assessing social-emotional development: observing behavior and the emotional environment; Temperament; Social/peer interaction; Infant Mental Health; Cultural and ability variables in interpreting social-emotional development. Increasing the capacity for resilience for children and families.

Read: Meisels, Ch. 10, 12

Read: Bergen, Ch. 7

Due: Phase two IFSP: Child Observation Connections

May 5 The interdisciplinary team. Roles of team members. The multi-disciplinary evaluation in early intervention. Developing an IFSP. Law, ICC, natural environments,

Read: Meisels, 8,13

Visit to Loudon County EI

Guest Speakers: Ellen Egerton and Nancy Gordon

Topic: The Team Process in Assessment of Infants and Toddlers

Marilyn Hoexter,

Topic: Legal aspects related to the ICC. The role of natural environments

Due: Final IFSP

Description of Assignments:

1. **Team assessment group project (30 points): March 24** In groups of 4 or 5, you will become familiar with one assessment typically used with infants and toddlers. Each group will be assigned a different tool. You will practice administering it, review at least three journal articles relevant to its use, and prepare a fifteen-minute class presentation that includes a handout for your classmates. In combination, your handout and presentation should demonstrate your understanding of the assessment, its relative strengths and weaknesses, the degree to which it is amenable to family-centered assessment, potential cultural and linguistic issues related to its use and any limitations with regard to infants/toddlers with disabilities. A summary paper should be written that addresses the above points and reference information.
2. **IFSP Project (60 points total):** This project represents the primary assessment for this course. The three-part project will provide students with the opportunity to experience the process of assessment for infants and toddlers recommended by professional organizations. The project approaches assessment from an ecological perspective, considering family perspectives, an in-depth understanding of the child through authentic assessment, and an understanding of the natural environment to include the family home and early education program. The final project will also

include any available information gathered through screening or standardized assessments.

a) Phase one: The Family Inquiry Plan (10 points). Due March 3

The purpose of this assignment is to apply family- centered principles and sociological methods to the process of gathering information from families.

The first phase consists of preparing preliminary notes for IFSP planning. Write a paper that addresses the key elements of the IFSP, including family resources, hopes and dreams. Share questions developed to assess categories of information you need to gather from families. Provide details on how your assessment process enabled (or will enable) you to establish a collaborative relationship with the family while identifying resources, concerns and priorities. A brief rationale (2 –3 pages) for your guide should be attached to your paper. Please include in the paper your reflection of the process. What type of questions did (will) you ask? How did (will) you obtain information that provides insight into the family’s story? What did (will) you learn about family routines and family stories that might be relevant for IFSP planning? Bring your paper to class, and we will use it to practice IFSP team meetings. By this time you should have met with your focus family at least once. Your paper should demonstrate that you have used family-responsive ways to learn **from the family, not about them.**

b) Phase two: Child observation connections (30 points). Due April 28

Create a videotape of a child at your site: This tape should include the child alone, the child interacting with an adult both formally and informally, the child interacting with a peer and the child involved in a family activity. You are to tape the child for short segments several times. Be sure to observe a child at your site from the perspective of dyadic interaction and narratives (story telling). Write a paper that addresses each of the following specific issues:

1. Describe the environment(s) in which you videotaped the child.
2. Describe how observing the child in a family activity gives you an understanding of the child’s development.
3. Describe the priorities this family has identified.
4. Describe three emerging skills of the child, each in a separate developmental domain.
5. Describe three activities that would facilitate the emerging skills you described.
6. Discuss activities to facilitate interaction between the child and caregiver and or parents.
7. Provide a rationale for these activities and describe how you involve the family.

This paper should be written in a manner that:

- 1) Describes what you saw using the frameworks discussed in class and your readings to date;

- 2) Interpret what you saw. What sense do you make of this? What are you wondering? What patterns are emerging?
 - 3) Proposes ideas for implications for constructing a supportive teaching/learning environment for the child..
 - 4) **Tells a story about your child**
- Be sure to site lectures, handouts, and readings. Be sure to consider any ideas you may have about adapting for function. Attach the video

Following your completion of the second phase you should develop a family book about your child to share with the family. Make a copy of the book for yourself and one for me, because your original is to be shared with the family. The final phase of this paper should be completed after you have shared your “book” with your family.

c) Final IFSP Project (20 points): Due by May 5

The final phase of this assignment is your final paper describing your child and what you have learned about the child and family presented in accordance with a written IFSP. The IFSP is to be a design of your choosing. Be creative. It must contain what the Public Law (Part C) requires. This paper should provide a description of the child, and interpretation of what you have seen, and a discussion of implications. Include in your reflective paper: (1) a description of the family; (2) a summary of the information obtained from your family communications and interactions; (3) a discussion of its relevance in planning assessment and intervention for the infant/toddler; and (4) a self-assessment of the format and you as an early intervention professional. In your final formal paper, please include feedback from the family about the “book”. What was their reaction? Did they feel you captured the child? What did you learn from presenting the book to them? A key feature of this assignment will be your ability to identify family priorities, concerns and resources that emerge from the family story.

Include Phases one and two of this project and a reflection on your learning through completion of all phases of this project.

EDUT 522: Team Assessment Group Project Rubric

Purpose: To assist classmates in gaining a working knowledge of assessment tool from a critical perspective

Name of assessment tool _____

Group Members _____

Contents of presentation (25 points) Rate the following on a scale of 1 – 5. Please include comments. Use back if need more room

1. General description of assessment tool: Include population, purpose, scope, standardization information and limitations.

2. Your experiences and learning from administering the assessment

3. Critical analysis of the tool. Include strengths and weaknesses from various perspectives: from own perspective, from perspective of class readings, from perspective of cultural, linguistic and ability appropriateness, and from a family perspective.

4. Supporting information: How did you learn about your tool? (e.g. literature, personal experience, interviews)

5. Quality and usefulness of reference handout

Presentation (5 points)

1. All members participate
2. Interesting and creative
3. Information clear and informative
4. Use of visuals (attend to multiple learning styles in presentation)
5. Check with classmates for understanding