

**George Mason University  
College of Education & Human Development  
Early Childhood Education Program**

**EDUT 612  
Assessment of Diverse Young Learners (3:3:0)  
Spring 2010  
Thursdays 4:30 - 7:10  
Engineering Building Room 1107**

**Professor: Sonia Martin, Ed.D**

**Office Hours: Monday - Friday (5 p.m. to 8 p.m.) upon appointment**

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**Course Description**

*Prerequisite: Admission to the Early Childhood Education program or permission of the instructor.* Examines types of assessment for planning and implementing effective preschool – third-grade programs across content areas for culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children. Addresses selection, administration, analysis, and interpretation of formal and informal assessments. *Field Experience Required.*

**Nature of Course Delivery**

The class will have lecture, discussion, group work formats and will require active participation of all students.

**Learner Outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the theory, research, and application of child development and assessment within a sociocultural context.
2. Describe legal mandates and their implications for diverse learners to include the foundations of instructional design based on assessment data.
3. Explain the connections among assessment, instruction, and monitoring student progress to include student performance measures.
4. Review, critique, and select appropriate formal and informal assessments to include evaluating for cultural relevance and bias.
5. Explain procedures for administering various standardized assessments.
6. Use formal and informal assessments to diagnose needs, plan and modify instruction, and record student progress, while taking into account the requirements of the state standards of learning.
7. Analyze, evaluate, apply, and conduct quantitative and qualitative research.
8. Report assessment results in a manner that is relevant for family members and other educators.

## Professional Standards

This concentration is approved for licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia and it complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The course content has been designed to address the following performance-based assessment standards of these organizations.

### *National Association for Early Childhood Education (NAEYC)*

- Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families

### *Virginia Early Childhood Education Endorsement Competencies*

- Ability to interpret valid assessments using a variety of formats
- Ability to analyze assessment data to make decisions about how to improve instruction and student performance

### *Virginia Professional Standards*

- Foundations of education

## Required Texts

Valdez Pierce, L. (2004). *Assessing English language learners*. Alpharetta, GA: NEA.

Wortham, S. C. (2008). *Assessment in early childhood education*. New York: Pearson Merrill.

## Other Required Readings

NCELA: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/symposia/second/vol1/application.htm>

CEC- Assessment:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Assessment1&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=36&ContentID=5493>

Learning Styles Assessment Tool:

<http://www.literacyworks.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html>

## Recommended Resources and Texts

The National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics

(<http://www.ecehispanic.org>). Click on “**Our Work**” to discover papers (e.g., *Mathematics Achievement of Spanish-Speaking Kindergartners and the Impact of Teacher Characteristics: A Mediation Hypothesis*) and presentations. Or click on “Selected Readings” to find new reports and annotated bibliographies on topics ranging from English language learners (ELL) and bilingual students in schools to Teacher quality in early education.

## **Course Requirements**

### **General Requirements**

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins. Laptops and other electronic devices are to be used for educational and learning purposes only and should not be used during class time to check email, surf the web, or communicate with people outside of the class unless part of the class activity.
4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

### **Attendance**

Attendance in class is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

### **Written Assignments**

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>.

Students will

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

## Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100

A- = 90 – 94

B+ = 87 – 89

B = 83 – 86

B- = 80 – 82

C = 70 – 79

F = < 70

A+ is possible if work is of exceptional high quality and includes work above and beyond that required for the course.

## Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the catalog:

<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=104>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD licensure program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

## Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

This course has a Program Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) that **MUST** be uploaded and submitted to Task Stream for evaluation when the assignment is due. **Only PBAs posted to TaskStream will be graded.** This means that NO final grades will be posted until all materials are on Task Stream.

## CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12> for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>. Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy at the bottom of the screen.
- 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 <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/> or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

## Assignments

### Attendance and Participation (15 points)

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3)

completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.

- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class discussions, activities, and written reflections.

### **School Assessment Report (20 points)**

Students will identify the established procedures at the school site for dealing with teachers' concerns about children's performance in the classroom especially when involving CLD children. They will begin by asking cooperating professional about the pre-referral and referral processes--what does she do when she has concerns about CLD children? They will find out which school personnel should be communicated with about resources and services that are available to teachers and families for getting additional support for English language learners and children who seem to be having difficulties in the classroom. They will gather information on which formal and informal instruments are used to assess children's overall development/performance. They will identify the process, instruments, department and personnel designated by the school/district to identify English language learners. They will discuss how families and teachers are informed about the results. They will find out what informal and formal procedures are followed to provide support to teachers.

### **Assessment Critique (30 points)**

Students will select a commercial assessment tool. They will review, try out, and critique the assessment tool. Students will read at least two independent, authoritative reviews of the assessment. They will write a paper that (a) explains the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment in general, (b) provides a critique of a specific commercial assessment tool, (c) a reflection on the implementation of the tool, and (d) a recommendation of the future use of this tool.

### **Child Portfolio**

#### ***Designing and Implementing Authentic Assessment (20 points)***

Students will develop a child portfolio for a child who is culturally, linguistically, or ability diverse that can be shared with other professionals and the family. It will include a (a) plan for assessing a child's understanding of concepts taught during the students' internship or field experience, (b) a description of assessments conducted, (c) selected artifacts from the assessments, and (d) plan for instruction based on data collected, and (e) a reflection on the assessment process. There should also be a clear link to the state standards of learning throughout each component.

#### ***Home Visit (15 points)***

Students will conduct a home visit while developing the child portfolio. They will talk to the focus child and the family in the home to learn about their cultural/linguistic experiences. What cultural and linguistic expectations do they hold for the focus child? What are their views of the school's role in the education of their children? How does the family feel about their child's educational progress and the school's role in this process? Students will observe how the child interacts with various family members and significant others.

Students will write a paper that describes the visit, the information gathered from the family, and how they will use the information to plan and evaluate instruction.

### Course Schedule and Topics

| Date   | Topic  | Assignments & Readings Due   |
|--------|--|--|
| Jan 21 | Introduction to assessment of diverse young children, including children with varied abilities, languages, and cultural backgrounds    | Wortham, Chapter 1<br>Vladez-Pierce, Chapters 1 & 2                                    |
| Jan 28 | Issues affecting the assessment of diverse young children, including developmental, linguistic, and socio-cultural considerations      |  |
| Feb 4  | State and Federal legal mandates, including NCLB and the Virginia Standards of Learning  |  |
| Feb 11 | Connecting developmental benchmarks with assessment  | Wortham, Chapter 2   |
| Feb 18 | Standardized assessment implementation<br>Interpreting, analyzing, and using standardized test results                                 | Wortham, Chapters 3 & 4  |
| Feb 25 | Portfolio assessment   | Wortham, Chapter 9<br>Vladez-Pierce, Chapter 4<br><b>Due: School Assessment Report</b> |
| Mar 4  | Becoming a skilled observer<br>Tools for authentic assessment: Observations, checklists, rating scales, and rubrics                    | Wortham, Chapters 5 & 6<br>Vladez-Pierce, Chapter 5                                    |
| Mar 11 | <i>Spring Break – No Class</i>   |  |
| Mar 18 | Authentic assessment in the content areas  | Wortham, Chapters 5 & 6  |
| Mar 25 | Performance-based assessment<br>Play-based assessment  | Wortham, Chapter 8<br><b>Due: Assessment Critique</b>                                  |
| Apr 1  | Planning for assessment and using assessment to make informed instructional decisions<br>Creating a teaching/learning/assessment cycle | Wortham Chapter 7  |
| Apr 8  | Communicating with families  | Wortham, Chapter 10<br><b>Due: Child Portfolio</b>                                     |
| Apr 15 | Identifying and monitoring children with disabilities, including the eligibility process, IEP meetings, and due process                |  |
| Apr 22 | Developing and using an IEP<br>Parent perspective of IEP process   |  |
| Apr 29 | Identifying and monitoring English learners  | Vladez-Pierce, Chapters 3 & 6  |
| May 6  | Reflecting on the assessment process   | Course wrap-up and evaluation  |

**Note:** To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).