



**College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

EDSE 627-675: Assessment

CRN: 80915, 3 - Credit(s)

Fall 2012

Instructor: Dr. Margaret Weiss	Meeting Dates: 09/11/12 - 11/13/12
Phone: 703.993.5732	Meeting Day(s): Tuesday
E-Mail: mweiss9@gmu.edu	Meeting Times: 4:30pm - 8:30pm
Office Hours: By appointment	Meeting Location: OCL

Course Description:

Offers knowledge and experiential learning activities related to assessment of students with mild disabilities. Includes statistical and psychometric concepts in assessment. Addresses norm-referenced, criterion-referenced, curriculum-based, and informal assessment for instructional and placement decisions.

Prerequisite(s): None.

Advising Contact Information:

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress through your program. For assistance contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703)993-3145.

Nature of Course Delivery:

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

Learner Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Provide the definition of assessment and the purposes and assumptions regarding assessment of exceptional children.
- Compare and contrast the terms assessment and testing.
- Describe relevant ethical standards, litigation, and legislation related to assessment.
- 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.
- Demonstrate knowledge of basic measurement concepts and evaluate the psychometric properties of individual tests.
- Create graphic displays of data in appropriate formats including: stem and leaf plot, scatterplot, and line graph using a computer spreadsheet.
- Calculate descriptive statistics using a computer spreadsheet.
- Interpret test results, generate appropriate educational goals and objectives based upon these results, and report test results in a professional written format.
- Select, administer, and score of a variety of educational tests.
- 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.
- Conduct curriculum-based assessments to guide instructional decision-making. Explain the benefits and limits of different forms of assessment (e.g., individual, norm-referenced assessment vs. continuous progress measures).
- Explain the benefits and limits of different forms of data collected for assessment (e.g., standard scores vs. grade equivalents).
- Score and interpret behavior observation protocols from time sampling, event recording, and interval recording procedures.
- Describe the procedures and purposes of Response to Intervention (RTI).
- Critique assessment and instructional accommodations relative to specific learning characteristics.

Write assess

Required Textbooks:

Overton, T. (2012). *Assessing learners with special needs: An applied approach (7th ed)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Recommended Textbooks:

None

Required Materials:

Available on Blackboard

Additional Readings:

Available on Blackboard

Course's Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organizations:

This course is part of the George Mason University, Graduate School of Education (GSE), Special Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the special education areas of Special Education: Students with Disabilities who Access the General Curriculum K-12. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. The CEC Standards are listed on the following website:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ProfessionalStandards/> The CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include Standard 4: Instructional Strategies and Standard 8: Assessment. *NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional CEC standards.

Policies (Attendance and Late Work Policies):

Participation

Each class session is worth 10 points toward your Participation grade in the course. In order to earn these points, students must (a) attend class, (b) arrive on time, (c) stay for the duration of the class time, (d) show evidence of having read/studied material, and (e) complete all in-class assignments.

Workload

Graduate-level work requires in-depth reading, study, and work on course requirements outside of class time. The general expectation is approximately three hours per week for each credit hour of a course. Students are expected to allot class study and preparation time weekly in addition to time spent on papers and assignments.

Written and Oral Language

APA Style is the standard format for any written work in the College of Education and Human Development. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) You are required to use APA guidelines for all course assignments. Please use the following website for APA format guidelines: <http://apastyle.apa.org>.

We will use person-first language in our class discussions and written assignments (and ideally in our professional practice). We will also strive to replace the term "Mental Retardation" with "Intellectual Disabilities" in our oral and written communication in accordance with terminology choices in the disability community.

Academic Integrity

Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you borrow either exact words or general ideas. Generally, if you use four (4) or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper APA citation. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. Evidence of plagiarism or any

other form of cheating in the class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the Dean's Office.

Blackboard Site

I will use the Blackboard website for posting of course materials, announcements, and discussion boards. You will be responsible for all material posted on the website. Please check it regularly. An announcement email will be sent to your Mason email account if changes or updates are made to the site.

Communication with Dr. Weiss

The most efficient way to contact me is through email. I check email daily at least at 9am and 2pm Monday through Friday. If your email has reached me by either of those times, I will respond immediately. Otherwise, I will respond within 24 hours during the week. Keep in mind that I teach from 4:30-8:30pm. On weekends, I check my Mason account on Sunday evenings around 9pm and will respond to all received then. Do not email me an hour before an assignment is due and expect a response. If you would prefer to meet with me either before or after class (or at another time during the day/after school), please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dr. Weiss's Ideas About This Course

This is a professional course, directly related to the teaching required in schools. Therefore, my goal is to help students master the skills taught in the course, not to assign grades. As such, I am happy to review drafts of assignments, discuss ideas and progress, and generally provide feedback to students on all aspects of the course at any time before an assignment is due or before the end of the course. I provide grading rubrics for all course assignments and encourage students to follow these as they complete their work. If, at any time, you are confused about course material or assignments, or something is not going as you hoped in the course (e.g., our interactions, interactions with other students, difficulty of the work), please contact me FIRST so that we can problem solve together.

Late Work

Assignments are due on the date indicated in the syllabus. If I change the due date for reasons related to student need in the course, the change will be discussed in class, posted on the Blackboard site, and confirmed in an email to all students.

I will not accept late work. If you are not in class on the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for submitting the assignment. You may submit an assignment by emailing the assignment to me with a date sent no later than the end of the class on the date due or by having someone bring the assignment to me in hard copy by the same time. Choose the person wisely--if I do not receive the assignment on the due date, it will not be accepted.

Evaluation

<i>Item</i>	<i>Points</i>	
Participation	100	10 sessions @ 10pts each (posted on BB after each session)
Reading responses	60	3 @ 20pts each
CBM Project	120	10 pts proposal 100 pts CBM project 10 pts final presentation
Test report	40	
Midterm exam	20	
TOTAL	340	

Grading Scale:

95 - 100% = A
 90 - 94% = A-
 80 - 89% = B
 70 - 79% = C
 <70% = F

Schedule:

Session	Topic	Readings	Assignments due on this date
1 (9/11)	Intro, ethics, basic ideas	Chapter 2	
2 (9/18)	CBM	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chp 6 p. 165-179; • Busch & Reschly (2007) • Hasbrouck, Woldbeck, Ihnot, & Parker (1999) <p><i>Choices for reading response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Tutorial 4 (oral reading fluency) • Teaching Tutorial 5 (maze procedure) • Fuchs, Fuchs, & Zumeta (2008) (math) • Busch & Espin (2003) (content areas) • Hosp & Hosp (2003) (reading, spelling, math) • McMaster, Du, Parker, & Pinto (2011) (writing) 	Reading response 1

Session	Topic	Readings	Assignments due on this date
3 (9/25)	Classroom assessments	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bennett (2001) • Chapter 6 p. 180-202 <p><i>Choices for reading response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miller (2009) (writing) • De La Paz (2009) (rubrics for writing strategies) • Allsopp et al. (2008) (math) • King-Sears & Duke (2010) (reading in content areas) 	CBM proposal Reading response 2
4 (10/2)	RtI	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 <p><i>Choice for reading response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division for Learning Disabilities (2007) 	Reading response 3 (Optional: CBM Consult)
5 (10/9)	Quantitative concepts I	<p><i>Required</i></p> <p>Chapter 3 (descriptive statistics)</p>	(Optional: CBM consult)
6 (10/16)	Quantitative concepts II	<p><i>Required</i></p> <p>Chapter 4 (reliability and validity)</p>	MIDTERM (Optional: CBM consult)
7 (10/23)	Standardized test administration and interpretation	<p><i>Required</i></p> <p>Chapter 5, 8</p>	(Optional: CBM consult)
8 (10/30)	Standardized test administration and interpretation	<p><i>Required</i></p> <p>Chapter 9, 10</p>	Test report
9 (11/6)	High stakes tests and accommodations	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engelhard, Fincher, & Domaleski (2011) • Randall & Engelhard (2009) • Review SOL links in Blackboard folder (only read about accommodations, not entire report) 	
10 (11/13)	Wrap up		CBM Project/Posters

Assignment Descriptions

Reading Responses

One of the purposes of this course is to develop your critical analysis skills. One way to do this is to ask you to read literature from the special education field about assessment and discuss it critically with colleagues. To this end, you will be asked to complete several reading response activities throughout the course. We will use your Reading Responses in jigsaw activities in class, allowing us to evaluate many articles related to assessment topics.

For this assignment, you will be responsible for:

1. Choosing one article from the list of choices for the week.
2. Signing up for that article with me during class.
3. Reading the article in its entirety.
4. Completing a review of the reading as described in the rubric below.
5. Bringing the hard copy to class to use in our class discussion.
6. Posting your electronic copy to the class wiki on Blackboard.
7. Contributing to the in-class group activity related to the reading.

Your grade for each of these assignments will be determined as follows:

Component	Points Available	Points Earned
Citation for reading and general writing style	2	
Thorough but concise summary of the article	5	
Thorough but concise statement of implications for teachers	8	
Rationale for implications	5	
Contribution to the group discussion	<i>Part of participation grade</i>	
TOTAL	20	

Curriculum-based Measurement Project

Each student will complete a curriculum-based measurement project including at least two baseline measures and six instructional probes for a total of eight separate measurements of the student's performance. Any academic curriculum area is acceptable for the project; however, the curriculum taught must be appropriate for continuous progress monitoring and the tasks selected must be an academic learning task.

Practicing teachers are encouraged to select curricular areas for which they currently bear instructional responsibility. Students in the class may also create their lessons for other college-aged students or friends and family members.

Types of Instructional Outcomes Best Suited for CBM

Academic curriculum. Your CBM project must target instruction of tasks from the

academic curriculum such as those that would be used to support students in schools. For example, measures of reading or calculation fluency, identification or matching of facts from a curriculum area, spelling tasks, mathematical calculation, or vocabulary (English or other language). Developing motor skills used for sports or games, playing musical instruments or other nonacademic tasks are very difficult to measure and are not appropriate or acceptable for your project in this class. There are, however, academic tasks in every aspect of athletics and the arts and you may use one of those tasks for your project.

Think about what the choice of target area says about you as an educator to the reader of your portfolio. This project is a required artifact for the portfolios of degree-seeking students. Teaching your roommate to play guitar hero demonstrates a high level of disinterest in the welfare of your present and future students. Projects that target important and demanding aspects of the curriculum are more impressive to portfolio evaluators and potential employers than are projects devoted to more tangential aspects of schooling.

Continuous progress monitoring. Curriculum-based measure assumes a variable appropriate for continuous progress monitoring. Tasks that are appropriate for continuous progress monitoring require the individual to be both accurate and fast in their responses. Such tasks are called fluency tasks. Fluency tasks require practice for mastery; therefore, they can be assessed repeatedly to show progress toward a pre-identified goal. Single trial, discrete learning tasks are better measured by single-administration of a criterion-referenced measure.

Discrete response tasks. Curriculum-based measurement lends itself most directly to behaviors for which fluency (the union of rate and accuracy) is the primary determinant of competence. Elements such as reading fluency, arithmetic computation, recall of factual information, and so on are easily monitored through CBM because they are composed of discrete behaviors which can be scored binomially (i.e., right or wrong) and must be executed automatically in order for them to be usable in higher-order tasks that rely upon them. This allows one to consider the child's proficiency of the target behavior to be judged in terms of "hits and misses" exhibited during a certain time period. Behaviors that are scored holistically or qualitatively do not lend themselves as easily to CBM. Also, behaviors that are complex or deliberative are poor choices for CBM.

CBM Proposal

A form for creating your CBM proposal is found below. Please use this form for your CBM proposal. You will receive feedback and advice on the proposal and, if the proposed project does not fit the parameters discussed in class, you will be asked to modify the proposal.

Specific Steps for Completing the CBM Project and Report

1. Specify reason for assessment. A variety of legitimate reasons for assessing learning and performance exist. Find something better than: "I had to do project for a class."
2. Make sure that the content you are teaching is appropriate for continuous progress assessment. That is, do not set up a series of discrete criterion referenced tests that could be administered independent of each other and without reference to each other. *Such projects can receive grades no higher than 70%, even if everything else is perfect!*
3. Analyze curriculum to determine the content and skills necessary to complete the task.
4. Formulate behavioral objectives. What does the person have to do to show that they know the skill how well and how fast do they have to be able to do it? Even though the word objectives is plural, you only need one for the project.

5. Develop appropriate assessment procedures (i.e., probes). A clear objective leads directly to a logical probe. Look back at your objective. What do you want the student to do? In what format? How well? How fast?
6. Create your probes ensuring that each probe is of the same difficulty, same number of items, same format, and same tool skills as the others. *The first probes (baseline measures) should be as difficult as the last probes that you will use.*
7. Obtain baseline data. One data point is not sufficient. Collect a minimum of two baseline measures, if the baseline measures are stable, then proceed to the next step. If the first two measures show instability, collect a third measure. If the third point is similar to either of the first measures, select a measure of central tendency to represent the overall baseline score for the left side of your aimline. If the addition of a third measure shows a trend, consider selecting a different topic or continue to probe until a stable baseline is obtained.
8. Conduct instruction and collect assessment data (6-10 lessons of ten to fifteen minutes in duration are sufficient for this exercise). You will need, in addition to data indicating a stable baseline, data from six instructional probes.
9. At each probe, load your data on a computer-generated graph that describes your project and apply the data decision rules so that you may adjust your instruction as needed.
10. Repeat steps as necessary.
11. Create a summary written presentation of your project. Each written summary should include the following headings:
 - a. Student Information
 - b. Content Description and Reason for Selection
 - c. Behavioral Objective
 - d. Description of the Probe(s) and measurement format including time limits
 - e. Description of the instructional methods/materials employed
 - f. Performance graph
 - g. Discussion of results including:
 - o summary of the student responses to instruction,
 - o any decisions made using the data decision rules, and
 - o recommendations for others or to be implemented on a repeated implementation (i.e., what would you do different next time?)
12. Prepare a poster presentation of your project for the final night of class.
13. Submit your report, including the computer-generated CBM graph, on the final day of class.

CBM Proposal Form (10 points)

Student Name	
Description of target student (indicating need for CBM) and reason for assessment	
Content area for CBM	
How is this content area appropriate for CBM?	
Behavioral objectives for student	
General description of probes	
General description of instruction	
Proposed timeline (including development, baseline, instruction, and review)	

Scoring of CBM Project

Project Elements	Wt	1	0.5	0	NFD	Comments
Planning (50 points)						
Reason for assessment clearly stated	5					
Topic appropriate for continuous progress measure	5					
Curriculum analysis	5					
Evidence that student posses requisite preskills	5					
Behavioral objective(s)	5					
Probes: constant time	5					
Probes: constant number	5					
Probes: constant difficulty	5					
Probe avoids spurious measurement artifacts	5					
Probe record keeping is clear and transparent	5					
Instruction (10 points)						
Adequate description	5					
Evidence of response to measurement data	5					
Measurement Presentation (30 Points)						
Clarity of Display	10					
Baseline	5					
Aimline	5					
Phaseline	5					
Data-decision rules evident	5					
Overall Project Presentation (10 Points)						
Writing quality	5					
Clarity of explanation	5					
Total Score		0				

Test Report

You will be given data from and description of a testing situation for a student with disabilities. You will use this information to write a test report that could be presented at a student's eligibility meeting and entered into their confidential file documentation. We will practice writing a test report in class and then you will write a report on your own. You will submit that report in hard copy form on the date due in the course schedule. Your grade will be determined using the attached rubric.

Component:	Expected Criteria	Points Possible	Points Earned
Identifying Information (pseudonyms), student background information, and behavioral/testing situation descriptions	All included, with descriptive language as described in class. Clarity and completeness of information; student strengths and weaknesses, academic and behavioral background detailed;	5	
Test instruments used, testing results	Explanation of choice of instruments/appropriateness; clearly explains testing results; tables and charts as needed; scores reported appropriately (percentiles? Standard scores? Grade equivalents?)	5	
Interpretations/ discussion	Interpretations are clear and linked to test results; strengths and weaknesses in profile discussed; limitations of test instruments explained;	10	
Recommendations	Written for mixed audience: parents, multidisciplinary team, other professionals/stakeholders; ties assessment and background together towards long term and short-term goals;	10	
IEP components	Related to test results; clear objectives and goals related to learning and behavior needs emergent from assessment;	10	
TOTAL		40	

Bibliography

Curriculum-based Measurement

- Busch, T. W. & Espin, C. A. (2003). Using curriculum-based measurement to prevent failure and assess learning in the content areas. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 23*, 49-58. doi: 10.1177/073724770302800306
- Busch, T. W. & Lembke, E. S. (2005). *Teaching tutorial 5: Progress monitoring in reading using the CBM maze procedure*. Charlottesville, VA: Division for Learning Disabilities.
- Busch, T. W. & Reschly, A. L. (2007). Progress monitoring in reading: Using curriculum-based measurement in a response-to-intervention model. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 32*, 223-230. doi: 10.1177/15345084070320040401
- Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., & Zumeta, R. O. (2008). A curricular-sampling approach to progress monitoring: Mathematics concepts and applications. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 33*, 225-233. doi: 10.1177/1534508407313484
- Hasbrouck, J. E., Woldbeck, T., Ihnot, C., & Parker, R. I. (1999). One teacher's use of curriculum-based measurement: A changed opinion. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, 14*, 118-126.
- Hosp, M. K. & Hosp, J. L. (2003). Curriculum-based measurement for reading, spelling, and math: How to do it and why. *Preventing School Failure, 48*, 10-17.
- Lembke, E. S. & Busch, T. W. (2004). *Teaching tutorial 4: Curriculum-based measurement in reading: Oral fluency*. Charlottesville, VA: Division for Learning Disabilities.
- McMaster, K. L., Du, X., Parker, D. C., & Pinto, V. (2011). Using curriculum-based measurement for struggling beginning writers. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 44*, 26-34.

Informal assessment

- Allsopp, D. H., Kyger, M. M., Lovin, L., Gerretson, H., Carson, K. L., & Ray, S. (2008). Mathematics dynamic assessment: Informal assessment that responds to the needs of struggling learners in mathematics. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 40*, 6-16.
- Bennett, R. E. (1982). Cautions for the use of informal measures in the educational assessment of exceptional children. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 15*, 337-339.
- De La Paz, S. (2009). Rubrics: Heuristics for developing writing strategies. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 34*, 134-146. doi: 10.1177/1534508408318802

King-Sears, M. E. & Duke, J. M. (2010). Bring your textbook! Using secondary texts to assess reading demands and skills required for students with high-incidence disabilities. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 45*, 284-293.

Miller, L. (2009). Informal and qualitative assessment of writing skills in students with disabilities. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 34*, 178-191. doi: 10.1177/1534508408318806

Response to Intervention

Division for Learning Disabilities. (2007). *Thinking about response to intervention and learning disabilities: A teacher's guide*. Charlottesville, VA: Author.

Hughes, C. A. & Dexter, D. D. (2011). Response to intervention: A research-based summary. *Theory into Practice, 50*, 4-11.

High Stakes Tests and Accommodations

Engelhard, G. , Fincher, M., & Domaleski, C. S. (2011). Mathematics performance of students with and without disabilities under accommodated conditions using resource guides and calculators on high stakes tests. *Applied Measurement in Education, 24*, 22-38.

Randall, J. & Engelhard, G. (2010). Performance of students with and without disabilities under modified conditions: Using resource guides and read-aloud test modifications on a high-stakes reading test. *The Journal of Special Education, 44*, 79-93.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS:

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

d. The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].

- e.* Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- f.* Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g.* The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/Revised 06/25/12>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Note: *This syllabus may change according to class needs. Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.*