George Mason University

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

Fall 2013
EDSE 627 678: Assessment
CRN: 81246, 3 - Credits

Instructor: Dr. Allison Trentman	**Meeting Dates:** 8/26/2013 - 12/16/2013
Phone: 410.610.3645 (cell)	**Meeting Day(s):** Mondays
E-Mail: atrentma@gmu.edu *best contact method	**Meeting Time(s):** 7:20 pm-10:00 pm
Office Hours: Before/After class or by appointment	**Meeting Location:** Arlington, FH111

> **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.

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

Co-requisite(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. Mason M.Ed. and Certificate students should contact the Special Education Advising Office at (703) 993-3145 for assistance. All other students should refer to their faculty advisor.

Nature of Course Delivery

- Class lecture and discussion
- Application activities
- Small group activities and assignments
- Video and other media supports
- Research and presentation activities
- Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard
- Online and in-class assessments

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.

Required Textbooks

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

Digital Library Option

The Pearson textbook(s) for this course is available as part of the **George Mason University Division of Special Education and disAbility Research Digital Library**. The division and Pearson have partnered to bring you the Digital Library; a convenient, digital solution that can save you money on your course materials. The Digital Library offers you access to a complete digital library of **all Pearson textbooks** and MyEducationLabs used across the Division of Special Education and disAbility Research curriculum at a low 1-year or 3-year subscription price. Access codes are available in the school bookstore. Please visit http://gmu.bncollege.com and search the ISBN.

- 1 year subscription $200 ISBN-13: 9781269541411
- 3 years subscription $525 ISBN-13: 9781269541381
- Individual e-book(s) also available at the bookstore link above or at http://www.pearsonhighered.com/. Search by author, title, or ISBN.

Recommended Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6ᵗʰ Edition).* Washington, DC: Author. *Make sure it is the second printing.*

Braaten, E. (2007). *The child clinician's report-writing handbook.* New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Course Relationships 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 that will be addressed in this class include Standard 4: Instructional Strategies and Standard 8: Assessment.

GMU POLICIES AND RESOURES FOR STUDENTS:

a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/].

b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].

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. [See http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/]

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

Course Policies & Expectations
  Attendance.
  Attendance points are earned for each class (more details are provided under "Other Assignments").

  Late Work.
  All assignments should be submitted on or before the assigned due date. Late assignments will be accepted in the following manner for a few selected assignments (CBM proposal, CBM project, Standardized Test Report).
- 5% point deduction – up to 1 week late

- 10% point deduction – 1-2 weeks late
- 25% point deduction – 2 weeks until the last class meeting

Assignment Submission:

Online submission of student work is required. All written assignments should be submitted through the Blackboard Digital Assignments tab, labeled with filenames in the following format: <your first initial your last name abbreviated form of assignment's name> (Examples: ATrentmanCBMProp (CBM Proposal) or ATrentmanTestReport (Standardized Test Report)). Graded assignments will be returned via Blackboard email. It is suggested that you download and save all returned assignments, with corresponding evaluations and comments. Assignments submitted by email will not be accepted, unless there is an issue with Blackboard. Each assignment should be submitted by the start of class on the due date (7:20pm).

TaskStream Submission

Every student registered for any Special Education course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, (NO ASSESSMENT REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE) (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete(IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

If you have never used TaskStream before, you MUST use the login and password information that has been created for you. This information is distributed to students through GMU email, so it is very important that you set up your GMU email. For more TaskStream information, go to http://cehd.gmu.edu/api/taskstream

Grading Scale
A: 94-100%
A-: 90-93%
B+: 87-89%
B: 83-86%
B-: 80-82%
C+: 77-79%
C: 73-76%
C-: 70-72%
F: 69% and below

Course Requirements Evaluation

Assignment	Points earned/Total points possible
Attendance, Participation, Discussion Questions	/15
Blackboard Discussion	/15
CBM Proposal	/5
CBM Project	/25
CBM Poster Presentation	/6
SDO Write-up	/4
Standardized Test Report	/13
Online Midterm	/15
In-class Final Exam	/15
Total	/113

Assignments

NCATE/TaskStream Assignments.

There are no NCATE/TaskStream assignments for this course.

Common Assignments.

Systematic Direct Observation (SDO) Write-up: Behavior Target (4 points)

The SDO write-up will be a brief exercise in using appropriate observation tools, based on the behavior of a target student. Two observations of two different students must be conducted. You may choose any student who is exhibiting "problem" behavior, which will be defined objectively. You are expected to choose your own SDO tool, based on the identified behavior.

Write-up Elements:

The brief write-up for each observation will include the following information:

1. Identify and define the "problem" behavior in objective terms.
2. Describe the environment during which the observation is made, including number of students, number of teachers/adults, and type of instruction or non-instruction (i.e., language arts, recess).
3. Briefly describe the sampling procedures, including length of observation.
4. Provide a brief (no more than one sentence), general statement of the student's behavior during the observation, relative to the identified "problem" behavior.

Scoring:

The evaluation of the SDO write-ups will be based on a ½ point scale for each required element, for a total of 2 points per observation write-up. For all items, a quarter (.25) point will be awarded for each included item and a second quarter point will be awarded for each item description's clarity.

<u>Curriculum-based Measurement (CBM) Project Proposal</u> (5 points)

The CBM project proposal will present how you plan to monitor a single student's progress on a specific academic task. The proposal must briefly detail both the assessment and instruction of the target student.

You may select any academic area for the CBM proposal, assuming that continuous collecting baseline data and progress monitoring is appropriate and feasible. It is recommended that you choose an academic area in which you are already providing instruction, so that the project is meaningful and easily applied in your own classroom. If you do not have your own classroom or access to a student in a classroom, please choose an academic area that is appropriate and easily teachable to peers or family. You would also complete this project with that peer or family member.

Helpful Guidelines:
- *Academic Area:* When selecting instructional tasks for your CBM proposal, choose tasks that directly support the academic area. For example, if you choose reading, you may target letter sounds or reading fluency as your instructional task (See National Reading Panel "Big 5"; NRP, 2000). Resources for choosing appropriate instructional tasks will be discussed as we get closer to the project. Regardless of the academic area you choose, your probes must be easily measured by correct/incorrect answers.
- *Progress monitoring:* The progress monitoring component of this project is significant. We will learn that progress monitoring guides both assessment and instruction for individual students and groups of students by providing data (learner progress) on the student's accuracy and speed (e.g., fluency) of responses. Fluency tasks typically have a benchmark for correctness and speed for mastery, which may only be achieved through practice. The academic area you target should be suitable for repeated assessment to gauge progress toward the pre-determined mastery level.

Proposal Requirements:
Proposal requirements are listed below. You will receive feedback on the suitability of your proposal relative to the scope of this course. If your proposal does not fit appropriately within the scope of the course, then you will be given suggestions for a proposal revision and given the opportunity to revise and resubmit.

1. Identify the academic area you will measure and describe the type of probe you will use to evaluate the skill.
2. Provide details for probe administration, including following standardized instructions, timing, and scoring procedures.
3. Describe how you will ensure that each probe is of identical length and difficulty.
4. Identify an appropriate benchmark (based on grade level and time of year) based on adequate evidence.

5. Include a graph displaying your estimation of baseline data, a phaseline separating the baseline data from progress monitoring data during instructional weeks, and an aimline (goal line). The graph can be created in Excel.
6. Describe your instructional method by providing a brief evidence base for it and its relationship with the selected academic area. In addition, the following details must be included: duration and frequency of sessions and materials used (including origin).
7. State your behavioral objective succinctly, which must include (a) what the student will do, including response format, and (b) the desired level of performance by the final progress monitoring probe.

Scoring:

The evaluation of the CBM proposal will be based on a ½ point scale for each required element, except for element 5 which is worth 1.5 points and element 7 which is worth 1 point, for a total of 5 points. For all other items, a quarter (.25) point will be awarded for each included item and a second quarter point will be awarded for each item description's clarity.

Curriculum-based Measurement Project (25 points)

Considering the following points will be essential to the success of your project:

- Think about whether there is a logical reason for the assessment, including reasons for assessment learning and performance.
- Analyze the curriculum in use to determine the content and skills necessary to complete the task to be evaluated.
- Make sure that the content you are teaching is appropriate for continuous progress monitoring. Do not set up a series of discrete criterion referenced tests that could be administered independent of each other. **Such projects can receive grades no higher than 70%, even if everything else is perfect.**
- Formulate behavioral objectives before you begin. Think about what the student has to do to show they know the skill, how well and how fast do they have to do it?
- Develop appropriate probes, based on your behavioral objective. What do you want the student to do? In what format? How well and how quickly?
- Create your probes ensuring that each probe is of the same difficulty, number of items, format, and skill as the others. *The first probes (baseline measures) should be of the same difficulty as the last probe you use.*
- Obtain baseline data. Collect a minimum of two baseline data points. If the baseline data is stable (similar to one another), proceed to the next step. If the data is instable, collect a third data point. Once you are satisfied with the baseline data, select a measure of central tendency to represent the baseline score.
- Conduct instruction and collect assessment data (6-10 lessons of ten to fifteen minutes in duration are sufficient for this exercise).

Final Document Elements:
1. Student information (de-identified)
2. Behavioral objective
3. Description of the probes and measurement format including standardized procedures.
4. Description of, and evidence for, the selected instructional method, as well as how the materials used supported this instructional method.
5. Discussion of results including a summary of the student's responses to instruction and any potential decisions that could be made using data-based decision making. Since the duration of this project will not allow for a change in instruction (unless discussed with the instructor), you should think about the course of your instructional method but should not make changes.
6. Conclude with a general statement about the student's progress and whether you would recommend continuing with the instructional method or if you would recommend changing instructional methods.

Scoring Rubric:

Element	*Points*	*Comments*
Student Information • Brief academic history • Brief description of student's academic strengths and weaknesses in the targeted area	/5	
Planning • Reasons for assessment • Curriculum analysis • Behavioral objective • Probes	/5	
Instruction • Instruction and materials selected show an understanding of the targeted area • Instructional modifications based on student assessment data evident	/5	
Measurement • Clarity of display • Baseline • Aimline • Phaseline • Data-decision rules evident	/7	
Overall Presentation • Logical organization and explanation of format • APA format when applicable	/3	
TOTAL	/25	

Standardized Test Report (13 points)

You will be required to write a report based on data collected for you and available on the class website. The necessary files will be in the folder labeled "Test Report" under the Course Content on the Blackboard site.

Files
1. *ACH-Test-Report-Data.pdf:* This file contains a computer printout of scores from the test. The printout should be attached to the end of a report. The information on this printout is overwhelming (and would be unethical to provide in a report), therefore, you must extract the appropriate information from this printout and insert them into the test report template provided.
2. *ACH-Test-Report-Info.doc:* This document contains the notes that the test administrator made during administration. Information about the student's behavior during the test administration is described, as well as information from the student's referral, educational history, and reports from classroom teachers regarding the student's performance. You must extract the relevant information from this document and insert them in the appropriate places on the template provided.
3. *ACH-Test-Report-Template.doc:* Using this template in Word, you must insert data from the other documents and write a coherent report. Please use the headings included. Under each heading, you will find a short description of what is to be included in italics. The instructions form the basis for the scoring rubric.

Scoring Rubric:

Element	Points	Comments
Demographics & Headings	/1	
Summary of Procedures Used	/1	
Observations & Validity Statement	/2	
Tasks for Each Subtest Described	/2	
Summary of Scores	/2	
Data Table of Subtests & Composites	/2	
Summary & Recommendations	/2	
Overall Quality of Report/Writing	/2	
Total	/13	

Curriculum-based Measurement Project Presentation (6 points)

The purpose of this assignment is to simulate a professional conference where all students will be required to bring a poster (regular poster board or tri-fold) illustrating their CBM project. You will be expected to design the poster with a particular audience (your peers) in mind. Consider readability of information and type of content displayed. You should be able to informally talk about your poster with peers, and answer questions based on your project. Each student will present the project (up to 5 minutes).

Scoring Rubric:

Element	Points	Comments
Clear & Effective Visual Display	/2	
Relevant Information Included	/2	
Presentation Content	/2	
Total	/6	

Midterm Exam (15 points)

The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. The midterm is cumulative, so will include all textbook chapters, articles, lectures, and class activities covered up to that point.

Final Exam (15 points)

The final exam will include short answer and essay questions, and is cumulative, based on all information covered in the course.

Other Assignments.

Attendance and Participation: Weekly, for a total of 15 points.

Class attendance and participation are imperative due to amount of information provided, as well as the discussions that will be generated based on newly learned information. Attendance points are earned for each class to emphasize the importance of engaging in learning activities and educational environment of the course. Students are expected to arrive on time, participate in all class discussions, presentations, and activities, and stay until the end of class. For full attendance credit during each class, students must bring discussion questions (described below), actively participate, work cooperatively, and turn in high quality class products.

If you are unable to make any class sessions, please contact the instructor by phone or email before the class session. In the event of emergency or illness, each student is given 1 grace absence without a point penalty, as long as the instructor is notified before the class session. Attendance points missed for more than one absence or any absence without instructor contact before class cannot be made up.

Discussion Questions: Weekly, no points assigned (embedded within 'Attendance and Participation' points).

Students will be expected to come to each class with two discussion questions pertaining to the readings. Please email your questions to the instructor prior to class and bring your questions to class. Small groups will lead a discussion each week, based on the questions you bring.

<u>Blackboard Discussion:</u> Weekly, for a total of 15 points.

Students are expected to read assigned chapters and/or articles prior to the class session. In addition, students must participate in a blackboard discussion each week. You may choose to start your own conversation 'thread' or respond to a peers' comment. Comments must be substantive and potentially provide the basis for in-class discussion, when appropriate. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions of your peers and/or instructor, or simply highlight a point that was particularly relevant to you.

Schedule

Date	Topics	Assignment Due
8/26	Syllabus & Course Expectations, Introduction to Assessment	
9/2	NO CLASS	
9/9	Laws, Ethics, & Issues	Read Ch. 2
9/16	RtI & Progress Monitoring, Assessing Behavior	Read Ch. 7 & 9; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2006
9/23*	CBA & Informal Measures	Read Ch. 6; Marston, Mirkin, & Deno, 1984 **SDO Write-ups due**
9/30	Problem Solving Model	Read Marston et al., 1984; Telzrow et al., 2000 **CBM Project Proposal due**
10/7	Descriptive Statistics, Midterm Review	Read Ch. 3
10/15	NO CLASS	**Midterm Exam due at 7pm**
10/21	Reliability & Validity	Read Ch. 4
10/28*	Assessment Processes, Administering/Scoring CBM, Individual CBM Project meetings as needed	TBD
11/4	Norm-referenced Assessment, Academic Assessment	Read Ch. 5 & 8
11/11	Measures of Intelligence and Adaptive Behavior, Interpreting Assessment for Educational Intervention	Read Ch. 10 & 13
11/18	Early Childhood Assessment	Read Ch. 11 **Test Report due**
11/25*	Executive Function	Read Zelazo & Frye, 1998; Jacobson et al., 2011; TBD
12/2	Case Study Practice Activities, Final Exam Review	**CBM Project due**
12/9	In-class final exam	
12/16	CBM Poster Presentations	**CBM Posters due**

*Shortened class due to meetings with TFA.

--Articles will be posted on the Blackboard site.