

George Mason University Graduate School of Education Fall 2013

Course Title: EDSE 627.601 Assessment

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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. Discussions and readings will emphasize policies and procedures appropriate in international settings as well as in US Schools.

Objectives/Competencies

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.
- Describe relevant litigation and legislation pertinent 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.
- Select, administer, and score of a variety of educational tests.
- Interpret test results; generate appropriate educational goals and objectives based upon these results, and report test results in a professional written format.
- 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.

Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization (CEC)

This course is part of the George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development, FAST TRAIN Programs. This program complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the major special education professional organization. As such, the learning objectives for this course cover many of the competencies for language development and emerging literacy for individuals with emotional disturbances and learning disabilities.

The CEC Standards are listed on the following web site:

http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/common_core_4-21-01.html

CEC standards that will be addressed in this class include specific standards for ED/LD, MR, (Standard 8: Assessment) and some of the following core standards:

Standard 8 - Assessment

Knowledge:

- Basic terminology used in assessment.
- Legal provisions and ethical principles regarding assessment of individuals.
- Screening, pre-referral, referral, and classification procedures.
- Use and limitations of assessment instruments.
- National, state or provincial, and local accommodations and modifications.

Skills:

- Gather relevant background information.
- Administer nonbiased formal and informal assessments.
- Use technology to conduct assessments.
- Develop or modify individualized assessment strategies.
- Interpret information from formal and informal assessments.
- 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.
- Report assessment results to all stakeholders using effective communication skills.
- Evaluate instruction and monitor progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Develop or modify individualized assessment strategies.
- Create and maintain records.

Nature of Course Delivery

Learning activities include the following:

1. Online presentation of materials, discussion, participation, and Internet use
2. Relevant media presentations
3. Written literature and research reviews
4. Application involving evaluation and use of relevant assessment instruments

5. Assignments and critique
6. Written research papers and projects

Relevant readings will be assigned

Required Text:

Overton, Terry. (2012). Assessing Learners with Special Needs: An Applied Approach (7th Ed.)
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Supplemental readings: as assigned throughout the course, available electronically

Publications from <http://www.ed.gov/about/pubs.jsp>

Websites to explore

<http://www.cec.sped.org/content/navigationmenu/policyadvocacy/idearesources>

www.TeachingLD.org

www.Interdys.org

www.cldinternational.org

<http://www.ldonline.org/index.html> and follow links for good info.

<http://www.projectpro.com/ICR/Research/Summary.htm>

<http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home>

<http://www.nwea.org/products/computer-based-adaptive-assessments>

NOTE:

This syllabus may change according to class needs.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or if you have emergency medical information to share with the instructor or need special arrangements, **please contact the instructor as soon as possible.**

Evaluation

1. Participation in Discussion Board activities/discussions 15 points
2. Test evaluation paper, protocols. 20 points
3. Weekly Chapter Assignments. 20 points
4. Local Assessment Practices Description/Reflections. 20 points
5. Curriculum-Based Measurement. 25 points

Note: All assignments should be submitted online and are due on the dates indicated. In fairness to students who make the effort to submit papers on time, points will be deducted for work submitted after the due date. Two points will be deducted for each week an assignment is overdue. Students may be given the opportunity to resubmit assignments; however, full credit will not be given.

It is recommended that students retain copies of all course products to document their progress through the GMU FAST TRAIN program. Products from this class can become part of your individual professional portfolio used in your portfolio classes to document your satisfactory progress through the GMU program and the CEC performance based standards.

Grading Scale for FAST TRAIN:

A+ = 100

A = 94-99

A- = 90-93

B+ = 85-89

B = 80-84 (no B- grades)

C = 70-79 – does not meet licensure requirements or Level I award recommendation

F = Does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

Assignments

Detailed Assignment Descriptions (***rubrics for assignments will be offered several weeks before a project is due***)

Discussion Board: Online discussions and class readings for the Overton chapters, other readings, and class debate will occur in most online classes. Students must make an initial response to Discussion Board and then respond to at least two of their classmates. Students are expected to read chapters assigned prior to the class when chapters will be discussed, in preparation for overall understanding/online questions. Individual discussion is expected to be supported by chapter material or research. (15 points)

Local Assessment Practices: Description and Reflections:

Write a paper describing school-based assessment practices for a local school. Students have latitude in how they approach this piece. It should be a minimum of 3 pages, typed, double-spaced using APA format. You may include interviews with other professionals regarding their understanding of local assessment practices, your own reflections, official documents describing the school system's/special education department's approach to assessment issues, etc. This is meant as a reflective and information gathering process, and to provide students with an opportunity to critique these practices relative to the information they learn in this course. A rubric will be provided. (20 points)

Test Administration, Write-Up:

Students will explore test administration, manual evaluation and other relevant information in written format. Choose a test from the Test List. This assignment is designed to allow for: (a) scholarly and professional analysis of the instrument, (b) experience with administering, scoring and interpreting test instruments, and (c) practice with understanding and presenting assessment instruments and the salient features to other professionals (as is important with collaborative work with other professionals and stakeholders). A rubric will be provided. (20 points)

Curriculum-Based Measurement Project:

Students will create, implement and share a curriculum-based assessment procedure for a student or a group of students. The project will include a rationale/need for the skill improvement/mastery, plan for educational intervention and monitoring progress, implementation chart/graph, and results/reflections on the project. (25 points)

Weekly Chapter Assignments:

Students will read weekly assigned chapters from the textbook, and complete related activities as assigned.
(20 points)

Class Participation

Students are expected to complete all assignments and class activities. The success of any course in this field stems largely from the scholarly and collegial culture created by our commitment to the class. Points will be subtracted for work turned in after the due date. While we realize that we all have busy lives and various personal and professional commitments outside of this course, you have made a commitment to participate in this online course and to complete the requirements therein.

IF YOU KNOW YOU WILL HAVE TROUBLE COMPLETING CLASS REQUIREMENTS DUE TO SCHEDULING CONFLICTS, TAKE THIS COURSE ANOTHER TIME. If an emergency occurs for you during this semester, please refer to the official GMU incomplete/withdrawal policies.

Procedure for Identifying Students Who Need Help

Expectations for communication, collaboration, and professionalism are clearly stated on the GSE web site and are distributed to students.

1. If an instructor observes that a student is having difficulty with any of the behavioral indicators, the instructor completes a Professional Disposition Criteria concern form and meets with the student to discuss concerns and actions to be taken. GSE staff or other professionals may communicate concerns to program coordinators for action.
2. The instructor sends this completed form to the program coordinator. The coordinator opens a file and sends a copy to the student's advisor.
3. The coordinator states the concern at the next program meeting, and the concern is included in the minutes.
4. This one concern may be of large enough magnitude to warrant an immediate action. The Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs will be notified in writing with a copy of the concern form for placement in the student's official file. Or, if there is more than one concern form completed for a student, a pattern may be evident. The coordinator discusses the student at the next program meeting. The program faculty recommend to the advisor to meet the student to discuss concerns and recommendations to improve.
5. The advisor meets with the student and plans a course of action (e.g., referral to units in GMU such as the Writing Center, Health and Counseling Services, or Disability Support Services).
6. The student later presents evidence to the advisor of efforts to improve.
7. The advisor shares evidence of the student's progress at the next program faculty meeting and a statement is included in the minutes.
8. If a student with one or more forms on file applies for a teaching internship, the advisor considers whether the corrective action taken warrants approval for internship.
9. If the advisor cannot approve the internship, the application will be discussed by the program faculty and appropriate recommendations come from the faculty as a whole. If the decision is to deny the request for teaching internship, the program coordinator sends a letter with documentation to the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs.

GSE Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- 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/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- 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.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- 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/>].
- 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/>].

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are in good standing, but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10th week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of IN is changed by the registrar to an F. (Mason catalog); Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the FAST TRAIN office.

Online Attendance Policy: As an enrolled graduate student, you must commit fully to being a member of this learning community over the next several months. **Therefore, lack of participation in online sessions will not be allowed.** Your continued presence in this course contributes to the learning of each of your colleagues and it is your obligation to support each other's learning. In addition, you are responsible for notifying your instructor if your participation in the online course will be interrupted due to a documented emergency. **Any unexcused absences will result in a five point deduction from your participation grade.**

GMU E-mail & Web Policy: Mason uses electronic mail (www.gmu.edu/email) to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly (Mason catalog).

Course Withdrawal with Dean Approval: For graduate and non-degree students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's academic dean, and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion. (Mason catalog). Students must contact an academic advisor in FAST TRAIN to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

Every student registered for any EDSE course as of the Summer 2012 semester is required to submit a Performance Based Assignment to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one time course or part of an undergraduate minor). TaskStream information is available at http://fasttrain.gmu.edu/resources/taking_courses/. Failure to submit the assignment to TaskStream will result in reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed, upon completion

of the required submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester. The required Performance Based Assessment for this course is the Curriculum Based Measurement.

Class	Date	Agenda	Assignments
1	October 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of Class Logistics • Pretest • Syllabus Overview • Testing in international settings • History of Assessment 	Text: Chapter 1 Complete Introduction Survey Respond to discussion Prompt
2	October 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws • Ethics • IEPs and 504 Plans 	Text: Chapter 2 Response to discussion prompt
3	October 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics: Reliability and Validity • Pre-referral Process • Response to Intervention • Screening • Student Information Section 	Text: Chapters 3,4 Respond to discussion prompt Ask questions on Local Assessment Practices
4	October 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norm-Referenced Tests • Test Interpretation • Student Information Draft – Peer Review 	Text: Chapter 5 Due: Local Assessment Practices Critique
5	November 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Eligibility • Learning Disabilities 	Text: Chapter 6 Response to discussion

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional/Behavior Disorders • Mild Intellectual Disabilities 	Additional reading chosen from those poste .
6	November 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of Classroom Assessment • Constructing Assessments • Grading • Rubrics • Authentic Assessments • Administration Section 	Text: Chapter 7 Due: Teacher made assessment Respond to discussion board
7	November 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior Assessments • Checklists, self-evaluations, journals, exit slips, etc. • Record keeping • Administration Draft – Peer Review 	Text: Chapter 8 DUE: Test Administration and report - Choose from list on Overton , 266 or other approved by instructor
8	November 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress Monitoring • Data-based Decision Making Rules • Results/Discussion Section 	Text: Chapter 9 Additional reading on high stakes assessment Respond to discussion board
9	December 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High stakes Assessments • Accommodations • International School Applications 	Text: Chapter 10 Respond to discussion board. Due: Final Exam Due
10	December 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Course logistics • Wrap Up, Closing Comments • Course Evaluation 	Text: Chapter 13 Course Evaluation Due

Helpful Resources on Assessment

- Bateman, D. F. (2009). Due Process Hearing Case Study. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 42*(2), 73-75.
- Brigham, F.J. & Brigham, M.M. (2010). Preventive instruction: Response to intervention can catch students before their problems become insurmountable. *The American School Board Journal, 197* (6), 32-33.
- Byrnes, M. (2008). Writing explicit, unambiguous accommodations. [Article]. *Intervention in School & Clinic, 44*(1), 18-24.
- Conderman, G., & Pedersen, T. (2010). Preparing students with mild disabilities for taking state and district tests. [Article]. *Intervention in School & Clinic, 45*(4), 232-241.
- *Daub, D., & Colarusso, R. P. (1996). The validity of the WJ--R, PIAT--R, and DAB--2 Reading subtests with students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 11*(2), 90-95.
- Espin, C. A., Shinn, J., & Busch, T. W. (2000). *Formative evaluation* (Current Practice Alerts No. 3). Reston, VA: Division for Learning Disabilities & Division for Research of the Council for Exceptional Children.
- Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (1986a). Test procedure bias: A meta-analysis of examiner familiarity effects. *Review of Educational Research, 56*(2), 243-262.
- *Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (1986b). Effects of systematic formative evaluation: A meta-analysis. *Exceptional Children, 53*(3), 199-208.
- *Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (2001). Helping teachers formulate sound test accommodation decisions for students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 16*(3), 174-181.
- Moreland, K. L., Eyde, L. D., Robertson, G. J., & Primoff, E. S. (1995). Assessment of test user qualifications: A research-based measurement procedure. *American Psychologist, 50*(1), 14-23.
- Thurlow, M. L. (2001). *High stakes assessment* (Current Practice Alerts No. 4). Reston, VA: Division for Learning Disabilities & Division