

**Fall 2016**  
**Identification and Assessment of Learning Disabilities**  
**15:293:526:01**  
**3 credits**  
**Thursdays, 4:50 -7:30 pm in ED 347 CAC**

Instructor: Edith Ferris EdD	Email: <a href="mailto:edith.ferris@gse.rutgers.edu">edith.ferris@gse.rutgers.edu</a>
Phone: 609-947-0507	Location: 10 Seminar Pl Rm 347
Office Hours: Thursday 3:00-4:30 Or by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: 15:291:515 Psychometric Theory and 15:291:531 Statistical Methods I OR 15:291:511 Introduction to Assessment, Applied Statistics, and Research
Mode of Instruction: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes  Contract Dr. Ferris

**Learning goals**

All course goals are related to the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers Standard #6 Assessment. Goal 8 is basic to Standard 1. Learner Development and Standard 2. Learner Differences. In addition, the areas of Professional Learning #9, Leadership and Collaboration #10, and Ethical Practice #11 are inherent in all objectives.

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of ethical considerations relevant to assessment, as well as the implication of assessment-based decisions for various student populations
2. Demonstrate knowledge of legal provisions, regulations and guidelines regarding assessment of individuals with disabilities including those specific to the identification of students with learning disabilities
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic terminology and statistics used in assessment
4. Distinguish between different types of tests and specify their uses and limitations
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the criteria used to evaluate the quality of tests, including test development procedures, standardization and norming procedures, test reliability, and validity, types and interpretation of test scores
6. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate tests administration and interpretation procedures
7. Demonstrate a knowledge and use of report writing skills
8. Demonstrate a knowledge and use of functional assessment as an alternative method of identification and progress monitoring
9. Identify current issues in the assessment and identification of students with disabilities, including the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION MASTERS PROGRAM GOALS**

Learning Goal 1: Attain mastery of the essential aspects of practice and research in the field of special education.

Learning Goal 2: Attain in-depth understanding of Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) professional standards and code of ethics for special education professionals.

Learning Goal 3: Further develop critical professional dispositions that help education professionals promote improvement in the lives of their students (commitment to ongoing professional development, using data-informed approaches, collaborative approaches, developing cultural competencies, etc.).

Learning Goal 4: Prepare to be professionals in special education or closely allied professional fields or to further advance in their professional work.

### **Course catalog description:**

This course introduces students to the procedures and practices for the assessment and identification of students with disabilities. The legal, ethical and professional requirements of individuals involved in assessment are discussed. The philosophical bases of test design and test selection are taken into account, as well as consideration of students from a variety of cultural and language backgrounds. There will be an examination of measurement theory and various assessment tools will be reviewed and critiqued. Students will be trained to administer the Woodcock Johnson IV and will be provided with the test to practice on a subject and write a comprehensive report. Test selection, administration, scoring and interpretation will be addressed. There will be a focus on current trends in the development of functional assessments and standardized testing.

### **Class materials/ Textbooks:**

#### Required:

Venn, J. (2014). *Assessing Students with Special Needs*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson

Mather, N., & Wending, B. (2015) *Essentials of the WJIV Tests of Achievement* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

### **Additional Readings/Sites:**

1. The state department of NJ – Achieve NJ – presents everything you need to know about Student Growth Objectives. (SGO Training Modules - How do I create a high quality SGO's? Option 2 –SGO guidebook – pg. 10 Setting Tiered SGO's) also (Documents & Resources – SGO's – Additional Resources – SGO Quality – Power Point) also SGOs – SGO Training Modules – Module 2 Assessment.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/objectives.shtml>

2. Special Education Scenarios -

<http://www.danielsongroup.org/article.aspx?page=SpecialEd>

This site provides examples of implementation of the Danielson principals for special education students with examples that range from Unsatisfactory to Distinguished.

3. PARCC website <http://www.parcconline.org/> The PARCC Assessment – Assessment System – read all components.

Additional required readings available online at SAKAI: <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>

## Assignments and Grading:

Course assignments have been assigned a point value and the total number of points will be used to calculate the final grade. Late assignments will only be accepted with the permission of the instructor and will lose 5% of the grade for each day they are late. Included in the class participation component is the score received on group assignments completed in class. Because group work is based on assigned readings, it is important that students keep up-to-date on their reading in order to be good group members. Because of the hands-on-approach, attendance is imperative. Therefore, 10 points will be deducted from the class work score for each absence and more than two absences will necessitate repeating the course. Students should notify the instructor by e-mail or in writing when they are absent.

1. Class participation	60 points
2. Child Study Team Report	50 points
3. Classroom Observation	50 points
4. Test Review Presentation	100 points
5. Administration of the WJIV and Assessment Report	100 points
6. Quizzes	50 points

## Final Grades

A	90 – 100	C+	77 – 79
B+	87 – 89	C	70 – 76
B	80 – 86	F	below 70

## Assignments:

### 1. Child Study Team Assignment Guidelines

**Due 9/22**

Sample questions:

1. Who usually attends the meetings? How are parents notified and do most parents attend?
2. What are the responsibilities of each person?
3. What generally happens at meetings? How long do the meetings generally last?
4. Who coordinates the meetings? Are there practices that make the meetings run more smoothly or make the meetings more difficult? What is the climate of most meetings?
5. What assessments are completed (domain such as reading, math, specific instruments? Who completes and reports on the assessments? What is your specific role in the Child Study Team? How is assessment information utilized?

6. How do Child Study Team members coordinate the results to make decisions about eligibility for special education?
7. What are some of the benefits of the Child Study Team process?
8. What are some of the problems with the Child Study Team process?
9. How are parents and students involved in the process?
10. What changes would you make to the process to improve it for parents, teachers, and fellow Child Study Team members?

## Observation

Observe at least one Child Study Team meeting. You should seek permission from all involved to observe, and you should not be a participant in the meeting.

## Specific areas to observe

1. Who is in attendance (including parent/guardian and student)?
2. What appears to be the role of each person? What is the purpose of the meeting?
3. What does each person report and what is the source of the information (e.g., assessment instruments, observations, informal class work)?
4. Who coordinates the meeting? What does he/she do to make the meeting run smoothly?  
What might make the meeting run better if needed?
5. Depending on the purpose of the meeting, how was the need for an assessment determined? How was eligibility determined?
6. What appears to be the climate of the meeting? How are members of the Child Study Team interacting?

## Written Summary

Summarize your findings from the interview and the observation. Rather than providing a list of question and responses or a play-by-play of the meeting, integrate the information into a cohesive essay describing the Child Study Team process. Support your conclusions with examples, if possible. To maintain confidentiality, use pseudonyms for all participants in your report. Your written summary should be three to five pages~ double-spaced.

## 2. Test Review Assignment

### Due date based on sign up

Select a norm referenced test to review from the sign-up sheet and prepare a written report and an oral presentation for the class. Tests may be substituted with instructor permission. Although it is not required that you have access to the test, it will make life easier if you do. We do have some tests in our supply which you may borrow for this assignment.

1. Prepare a 15-20 minute presentation for the class.

Your presentation should include

1. An overview of the test (including background info such as previous editions)
2. Purpose of the test

3. Subtests (if there are subtests)
4. Types of scores
5. Scoring procedures (computer~ hand, combination, qualitative or rating scoring, ease of scoring)
6. Information on technical adequacy (norms, reliability, validity).
7. Interactive component which allows the class to experience the test

2. You should also research the test and provide summaries/reviews of the test by others. At minimum, you must use 3 outside resources (plus the review in your textbook). Conduct an ERIC Search and you must use either *The Mental Measurements Yearbook* and/or *Tests in Print* (Both in the reference section of the library).

3. Prepare an outline (1 page) for peers to use as a resource and a 2-3 page paper to hand in. Include a list of references.

4. Buros' Mental Measurement Yearbook can be accessed online and a review can be obtained for \$15.

### **3. Classroom Observation Assignment**

**Due 10/13**

Observe a student for at least 30 minutes. This can be one of your students, a student from another class, etc. but the observation cannot occur while you are teaching. If you are unable to access a school-aged student, this assignment may also be completed in a college/university class. -

**Step 1:** Observe the classroom (at least 5 minutes) Observe the classroom environment and instruction

- How many students? How many teachers?
- Where is the targeted child in the classroom - relationship to teacher, board, other students, materials, windows or door?
- What is the instructional activity? What subject? What are all students expected to be doing?
- What is the overall classroom climate (calm, loud, structured)?

**Step 2:** Observe the targeted student (at least 10 minutes)

- What is he/she doing related to instruction (positively or negatively)?
- What is he/she doing behaviorally (positively or negatively)?
- Identify behaviors that appear to be helping or hindering him/her academically or behaviorally. Define the behavior. Determine how they can be measured (frequency, duration, latency, other)

**Step 3:** Measure behavior (at least 15 minutes)

- Choose one behavior to measure
- Identify two to three targeted students that might be a typical or random student
- Collect data on that behavior for the targeted child and the comparison student(s)

**Step 4:** Examine or collect other relevant information

- Collect samples or description of classwork, assignments, etc.
- Identify areas of strength and weakness in terms of classroom performance and/or behavior

- What examples can you use to support your observation?

Ideally, the observation steps would occur on the same day. However, if it is necessary to split the observation time, Steps 1 and 2 should be completed together and Step 3 can be completed at a later point. If you choose to split up the observation, you should include components of Step 4 at both observations.

Write a summary of the observation. You should include two parts. The first part should include a one-page description of your observation of the child's performance (academic and behavior). Do not write more than one double spaced page. This should be in paragraph form. The second part should include your definition of the behavior on which you collected data and a summary of that data. After describing the selected student's performance, compare his/her performance to two peers (use data to support as well). This does not need to be in paragraph form (i.e., it can be in list or table format).

#### **4. Test Administration/Report Assignment**

**Due 11/17**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide practice and application in educational assessments. You will administer, score, and interpret the WJIV.

Student selection: There are several criteria for student selection. First the student can be kindergarten to college age. Thus, their effort should be genuine, rather than having someone pretend to test as if they were in elementary school. Second, the student cannot be your own child (son, daughter). Third, best practice is not to assess someone with the same measure within a six-month period. If your child has been assessed recently, you may want to consider using the alternate form of the test, if available.

You should have verbal permission from parents/guardians. Parents should be aware that the purpose of the testing is a course project and that the results of the testing should not be used for any educational decisions.

Your student does not have to be a special education student or even a low-achieving student. However, your results might be more interesting and typical of what you may see in future practice as an LDTC if the student is classified.

Test administration: Choose an appropriate setting and time for administration. Consider the distractions of the environment as well as the best time of day for your examinee. It may take two or more sessions to complete the testing.

You should administer the academic subtests of the WJIV standard battery and Oral Language Battery.

- At a minimum you must administer the oral language subtests 1 & 2.
- For early elementary students, you must administer the phonological awareness subtests (Spelling of Sounds and Word Attack). Use your discretion for these subtests for older students, but you may want to use these subtests for older students with reading disabilities.
- If you are testing a younger student, see the examiner's manual for information on which subtests are appropriate for younger students.
- You may want to consider tape recording the assessment sessions, but it is not

required.

- In addition to in-class practice, you should practice test administration until you are comfortable with providing directions, identifying basals and ceilings, identifying start points, etc.
- Included in your assessment should be a functional component as required by the state.

### Test report

Information to be included

1. Background information (age, grade) and other relevant information (medical history, grade, educational placement, previous testing if available). Parent or teacher interview, if possible.
2. Reason for testing (to practice the administration)
3. Assessment methods
4. Behavioral observations, including whether or not the testing performance appears to be representative of academic performance
5. Results (subtest and cluster scores) and Interpretation of Performance  
Each subtest should be grouped by area (all reading tests together). A short description should be given of the subtest (found in your texts) and then an error analysis should be included for each test. (Discuss what student could and could not do – grade level will determine your discussion.) Also explain the student's score in terms of ranges (average). You should also include an explanation of the Cluster Scores.
6. Summary - should be one paragraph and an outline will be given.
7. Recommendations

Sample reports can be seen in the Essentials book or on Sakai.

Your score report should include (at minimum) the following scores: raw scores, standard scores with 68% confidence intervals, percentile ranks. The scoring program is in the computer lab and it can be used before and after class. The WJIV can be borrowed. We have 5 sets – so let me know in class or by e-mail when you would like to sign up for the test.

You may adapt your report to meet your specific school district requirements (order of information, format) but your report must include the listed information.

### **COMPLETE ASSIGNMENT:**

You should turn in:

1. Completed test record and student response sheet
2. Compuscore printout
3. Evaluation Report

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity at [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI\\_Policy\\_2013.pdf](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf)

**Office of Disability Services:**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.



**Schedule:**

**Reading AR/S = Additional Readings/Sites**

Date	Topic	Reading and Assignments
9/1	Legal basis for assessment in New Jersey, review of federal laws regarding assessment and classification, parental rights in procedural safeguards, changes in assessment re IDEA04, the Core Content Standards & PARCC.	Venn Chapter 1
9/8	Introduction to assessment procedures and report writing, WJ4 Administration and Scoring	Mather Chapters 1 & 2. Venn p. 89-99
9/15	Administration of the WJ4	Mather Chapters 3, 4 & 5.
9/22	Classroom Observation	Venn Chapter 9 <b>Child Study Team assignment due</b>
10/1	Measurement Concepts – reliability and validity Report writing	Venn Chapters 3 & 4 & pg. 97-99 Mather chapter 8
10/8	Test Scores & How to evaluate a test	Venn Chapter 4 & pg. 82-88, Mather Chapter 6 Review Mather 139-158
10/15	Curriculum based assessment – developing SGOs	Sakai – Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt (2013) Teacher Made Tests & Curriculum Based Assessment, AR/S 1 and AR/S2 Domain 1 pgs. 17-19 & Domain 3 pgs. 54-57 <b>Classroom observation due</b>
10/22	Assessment of Intelligence & Adaptive Behavior	Venn Chapter 6 Sakai – 1. Behaviors Sampled by Intelligence Tests & 2. Miller, Peter (2012) Twin Study
10/29	Assessment of Academic Achievement & Reading	Venn pg. 251-264 & Chapter 12 Sakai – 1. Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt (2013) Multiple Skill Devices 2. Downs, Patrick (2011) Dyslexia Not Related to Intelligence Mather 221 - 226

11/5	Assessment of Reading continued, Written Language	Venn Chapter 14 Sakai – Serafini, Frank (2010) Classroom Reading Assessment Mather 227 - 230
11/12	Assessment of math & oral language and multi-cultural assessment	Venn Chapter 8 & 13 Sakai – 1. Maxwell, L. & Shah, N. (2012) Evaluating ELLs for Special Needs – 2. Thurlow, Liu, Ward & Christensen (2013) Assessment Principles & Guidelines for ELLs with Disabilities Mather 230 - 233
11/19	Assessment of perceptual-motor skills & infants-preschoolers	Venn Chapter 7 Sakai – 1. Ackerman, Coley (2012) State Pre-K Assessment Policies 2. Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt (2013) Measuring Perceptual Motor Skills  <b>Assessment report due</b>
11/26	No class	
12/3	Assessment of social & emotional behavior, ADD, Autism & Using Technology to Make Assessment Decisions	Sakai – Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt (2013) 1. Assessment of social & emotional behavior & 2. Using technology for assessment <a href="http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/kennedy_files/TSSAManual102010.pdf">http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/kennedy_files/TSSAManual102010.pdf</a> Assessing Children with Autism spectrum Disorder Vanderbilt University
12/10	Using assessment to make decisions, communicating assessment information and standardized national assessment.	Sakai – Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt (2013) Assessment Decisions and AR/S 3.
12/17	Final – using actual assessments to determine classification, placement and program.	