



College of Education and Human Development

Early Childhood Education Program
4400 University Drive, MS 4B3, Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Phone: 703-993-3844; Fax: 703-993-4370; email: earlyed@gmu.edu
<https://gse.gmu.edu/programs/earlychildhood/>

ECED 511 Assessment of Diverse Young Learners (3:3:0)

Spring 2012

Monday, 7:10-10:00

West Room 1004

Professor: Jennifer Magaha O'Looney Ph.D.

Phone:

Email address: jmagaha@gmu.edu

Office hours by appointment

Professor: Debra Fulcher, MEd

Phone:

Email: dfulche1@gmu.edu

Office hours by appointment

Course Description

Examines types of assessment for planning and implementing effective preschool through third-grade programs across content areas for culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children. Addresses selection, administration, analysis, and interpretation of formal and informal assessments.

Prerequisite

Admission to the Early Childhood Education program or permission of instructor

Nature of Course Delivery

This course utilizes a distributed learning format requiring active participation of all students. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue, productive learning, and critical reflection. Activities will include instructor presentation, small-group discussions, student presentations, videos, and whole class sharing to support course content. In addition, students will be required to utilize the TaskStream program for uploading course projects for grading.

Learner Outcomes

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the theory, research, and application of child development and assessment within a sociocultural context.
2. Describe legal mandates and their implications for diverse learners to include the foundations of instructional design based on assessment data.
3. Explain the connections among assessment, instruction, and monitoring student progress to include student performance measures.
4. Review, critique, and select appropriate formal and informal assessments to include evaluating for cultural relevance and bias.
5. Explain procedures for administering various standardized assessments.
6. Use formal and informal assessments to diagnose needs, plan and modify instruction, and

record student progress, while taking into account the requirements of the state standards of learning.

7. Analyze, evaluate, apply, and conduct quantitative and qualitative research.
8. Report assessment results in a manner that is relevant for family members and other educators.

Professional Standards

This course is aligned with the standards established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Required Texts

Brantley, D. (2007). *Instructional assessment of English language learners in the k-8 classroom*. Boston, MA: Pearson Allyn & Bacon

Mindes, G. (2011). *Assessing young children*. (4th ed). Upper Saddle, NJ: Pearson

Recommended Texts

Linder, T. (2008.) *Transdisciplinary play-based assessment-2*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks.

Linder, T. (2008). *Transdisciplinary play-based intervention: Guidelines for developing a meaningful curriculum for young children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Mason Email – 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, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – 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/>].
- Office of Disability Services – 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 <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – 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/>].

- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

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

Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important human activity that involves shared responsibility in promoting healthy, productive lives, and educational success. We commit ourselves to work toward these goals in genuine partnerships with individuals, families, community agencies, schools, businesses, foundations, and other groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Ethical Leadership

In all professions represented by the college, leadership is an essential component denoting ability and willingness to help lead professional practice to higher levels. We commit ourselves to practice ethical leadership through deliberate and systematic attention to the ethical principles that guide all leaders in a moral society.

Innovation

We have a history of creating dynamic, innovative programs, and we are dedicated to continue creating innovative approaches in all areas of our work. We commit ourselves to seeking new ways to advance knowledge, solve problems, improve our professional practice, and expand on our successes.

Research-Based Practice

The best practice in any discipline is based upon sound research and professional judgment. We commit ourselves to basing our instruction, scholarship, and policy recommendations on well-established principles that, wherever possible, emerge from research and reflection on its implications for professional practice.

Social Justice

Social justice embodies essential principles of equity and access to all opportunities in society, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for all persons and points of view. We commit ourselves to promoting equity, opportunity, and social justice through the college's operations and its missions related to teaching, research, and service.

Course Requirements

General Requirements

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.

- Attendance in class is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message or send an email before class. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

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

- In line with Mason's policy that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious holidays, students shall be given an opportunity to make up, within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observations in advance of the class that will be missed. Notice should be provided in writing as soon as possible.
- During face-to-face meetings, cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Students must keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but students must submit a request in writing to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in their participation grade.
- It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor prior to the assignment due date (when possible). If the student does not communicate with the instructor, a late penalty will be applied.
- Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the [Office for Academic Integrity](#) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when responsible for a task, students will perform that task. When students rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, they will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), students will ask for guidance and clarification.

Written Assignments

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals

link on the Mason library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

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

Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100 A- = 90 – 94 B+ = 87 – 89 B = 83 – 86
 B- = 80 – 82 C = 70 – 79 F = < 70

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

Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

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

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15
Interest Preference Analysis	Feb. 27	20
School Assessment	Mar. 19	20
Assessment Review	Apr. 9	15
Child Portfolio	Apr. 30	30
TOTAL		100

Attendance and Participation (15 points)

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

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class and online learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) using laptops and other electronic devices only to support discussion and learning and not for non-academic uses during class time, (4) completing written work related to the activities, and (5) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.

Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu.

Interest Preference Analysis (20 points) Due Feb. 27

Students are to select a target child and conduct two to four observations of that child. Students will select a child whose cultural background is different from their own. Students, using their knowledge of observational strategies, will develop an observational protocol for documenting children's interests and preferences to guide their planning for a classroom. Students will do the following:

1. Conduct an observation of 30 minutes in the classroom during free play.
2. Use an observational protocol developed by the student to record the data on the child's interests and preferences and keep a record of activities, materials, spaces, events, play partners, etc. that seem to engage the child.

In a written paper, students will do the following:

1. Compare the data obtained in step two above and look for shared interests and preferences.
2. Discuss the cultural, linguistic and ability factors that might influence the results.
3. Describe what was learned, as well as, any limitations or need for further information.
4. Discuss how the observations might help to plan for a group of children.

Students will support their conclusions with references to class readings. The paper must include a description of how the information was collected (including the observation formats).

School Assessment Report (20 points) Due March 19

Students will identify the established procedures at the school site for dealing with teachers' concerns about children's performance in the classroom, especially when involving culturally and linguistically diverse children. They will do the following:

- Outline the referral process for children having learning difficulties, English learners, and children who may qualify for gifted and talented services.
- Indicate which school personnel should be consulted about resources and services that are available to teachers and families for getting additional support for English learners and children who seem to be having difficulties in the classroom.
- Identify and describe the formal and informal instruments used to assess children's overall development/performance.
- Discuss how families and teachers are informed about the results.
- Give examples of the types of informal and formal follow-up support is available to teachers, children, and families.

Assessment Review (15 points) Due April 9

Students will work in groups of 4 and select either a norm-referenced commercially published test or a criterion-referenced commercially published test for use with children between the ages preschool - third grade.

1. Select a test and explore its use by administering different parts to your team members.
2. Each team member will administer the **entire** test to one child (preferably the target child) over more than one visit if needed. Request parental consent if it has not been previously obtained.
3. Each individual member will write a report summarizing the findings of administering the assessment. Include the scores, as well as, information on how the child responded.
4. As a **group** critically evaluate the assessment taking into consideration each of the following: each other's own perspective, the perspective of class readings, the perspective of cultural, linguistic and ability appropriateness, the perspective of usefulness for families, and one's experiences at the site.
5. As a group, prepare an in-class presentation with a one-page reference handout for their classmates. The groups' task is to provide classmates a working knowledge of the assessment from a critical perspective. Include the following information in the team evaluation paper:
 - a. **Publication information.** Students will include title, publisher, recommended age range, stated purpose, scope, standardization, and stated limitations.
 - b. **Description.** Students will describe how the assessment was normed, either a normed-referenced or criterion or curriculum referenced assessment, what they did and what they learned from administering the assessment.
 - c. **Critical analysis.** Students will give their general reaction. What did they see as strengths, and/or limitations of the assessment? Students will support their position with information from the readings, class discussion, and their experience

on site. In particular, they will evaluate the assessment for cultural and linguistic bias, as well as for the appropriateness and usefulness of the assessment for children and families.

In class, each team will present a 15-minute presentation on the assessment and share their experiences.

Individual Child Assessment Portfolio (30 points) Due April 30

This is the NCATE 6 Individual Child Assessment Portfolio that shows evidence of meeting NAEYC Standards. This assignment must be submitted on TaskStream. See the assessment description and scoring rubric attached.

Course Schedule and Topics

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments Due
January 23	Introduction to a Comprehensive Assessment System for Young learners	Mindes, Chapter 1
January 30	Issues in Preschool/Primary Assessments	Mindes, Chapters 10 & 11
February 6	State and Federal Legal Mandates, Including NCLB Standardized Assessment Interpreting, Analyzing, and Using Standardized Test Results	Brantley, Chapter 1 & 2 Mindes, Chapter 4
February 13	Becoming a skilled observer	Mindes, Chapter 3 Brantley, Chapter 3 <i>Linder (optional)</i>
February 20	Matching Students to Assessments Planning for assessment and using assessment to make informed instructional decisions Assessment cycle	Mindes, Chapter 5 Brantley, Chapter 4 <i>Linder (optional)</i>
February 27	Record Keeping and Collaborating with Family and Others Building a Child Study	Mindes, Chapter 7 & 8 Interest Preference Analysis Due
March 5	Using Alternative Assessment Strategies Play-Based, Authentic, Portfolio	Mindes, Chapter 6 Brantley, Chapter 6 <i>Linder (optional)</i>
March 12	<i>NO CLASS GMU SPRING BREAK</i>	
March 19	Developing Family Partnerships in Assessment	Mindes, Chapter 2 Brantley, Chapter 7 School Assessment Due

March 26	Linking Standards to Assessments Benchmark Assessments (bring laptop to class)	Virginia Department of Education Website http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/index.shtml Brantley, Chapter 8
April 2	Assessment Critiques (small group presentations- students will evaluate a variety of informal and formal assessments and present their findings in class) No Class Meeting - Work with groups	
April 9	Using Assessment to Identify and Monitor Children with Disabilities Academic Performance	Mindes, Chapter 10 Group Presentations Due
April 16	Conferencing with Students	Mindes, Chapter 7 Group Assessment Report Due
April 23	Using Assessment to Identify and Monitor English Language Learners Academic Performance	Brantley, Chapter 9, & 11
April 30	Pulling it All Together: Reflecting on Best Practices in Assessment	Child Portfolio Due
May 7	Child Portfolio Presentations (small group)	Presentations Due

Early Childhood Education PK-3 NCATE Assessment 6 *Individual Child Assessment Portfolio*

Early Childhood Education PK-3 NCATE Assessment 6 is the Individual Child Assessment Portfolio in ECED 521 Assessment of Diverse Young Children. This assessment shows evidence of meeting NAEYC Standard Elements 3a, 3b, and 6b.

Assessment Overview

In this assessment, students will use knowledge of child development and learning and informal and formal assessment strategies in partnership with the child's family to understand, assess, and promote student learning. Students will do the following:

- Select a child to observe, in consultation with cooperating teacher, who has special learning needs (for example, a child who is learning English, uses non-standard dialects, has a learning disability, or has other developmental, behavioral, or learning differences)
- Establish, with support from cooperating teacher as necessary, a relationship with the child's family to learn about the family (e.g. goals, language, culture, and individual characteristics)
- Include at least two informal and one formal assessment strategies or tools supported by standards, best practices, and research-based knowledge
- Construct a developmental portrait of the child including physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language developmental domains
- Describe instructional strategies, inclusive of information gained from interaction with the child's family and from development portrait, that encourages the child's positive development, challenges the child to gain new competencies, and respects the child's culture and individuality

NAEYC Standard Elements Assessed

NAEYC 3a Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment.

NAEYC 3b Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues

NAEYC 6b Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines

Students will respond to each of the following steps and questions for the Individual Child Assessment Portfolio.

Step One: Students will describe the context for the child they are studying (NAEYC 3b, 6b). Students will do the following:

- Select a child who is from a culture different from their own for assessment project
- Obtain permission from the child's family to practice informal and formal assessment strategies with the child
- Include the following as part of the final portfolio:
 - Describe the setting where child will be observed and assessed

- Provide additional insight into child's development from the classroom teacher, therapists, or other adults who are working with the child
- Describe how the introduction and first meeting with the family occurred: What was learned from that initial contact? What questions emerged from the meeting?

Step Two: Students will involve the child's family (NAEYC Standards 3a, 3b, 6b). Over the course of the semester, students will meet with the family at least two times. As part of final portfolio project, students will do the following:

- Discuss their relationship with the family as well as what they learned from that relationship by responding to the following:
 - How was a relationship with the child's family established?
 - What approaches were taken to better understand the child's family, their community, values, and culture? If initial approaches were not successful, discuss how efforts to involve the family were modified.
 - Describe what was learned about the child's family and community and how it was learned. How is this information relevant to the child's development and learning?
 - What insights into the child's developmental and learning needs were gained from the relationship with the child's family? What are the family's immediate and long-term developmental goals for the child?

Step Three: Students will identify the child's developmental needs using informal and formal assessment strategies (NAEYC 3a, 3c, 6b). Students will do the following:

- Observe the child two to three times, for 15-20 minutes, and record anecdotal notes on the observations
- Collect work samples in three to five different developmental areas
- Select one additional authentic assessment strategy and implement it
- Select a criterion or norm-referenced assessment to assess child. Students will familiarize themselves with the assessment protocol. Students will administer assessments to the child, keeping in mind developmental, cultural and ethical considerations
- Select the appropriate technology to individualize the assessment process.
- Include as part of final portfolio the following:
 - A description of the assessment process and the assessment tools used. What informal and formal observation, documentation, and assessment strategies and tools were used in order to better understand the child's development and learning needs?
 - An explanation of why assessment tools and strategies were selected over other potential strategies.
 - A critical analysis of the informal and formal assessment tools utilized. What were the strengths, and/or limitations of the assessment tools? Students will support position with information from readings, class discussion and site experience. In particular, they will evaluate the assessment for cultural and

linguistic bias, as well as for appropriate use with young children and children who have differing abilities, and for the appropriateness and usefulness of the assessment for families.

- Reflect on the process of administering informal and formal assessment strategies. How did it feel as the assessor/evaluator and what might be done differently in the future?

Step Four: Students will make a plan for action (*NAEYC 3a, 3b, 6b*). Students will do the following in an action plan:

- Describe what was learned about the child's development and learning needs:
 - Interpret the findings from informal and formal assessment tools and summarize information
 - Link knowledge gained from informal and formal tools with what was learned from family and other source
 - Include test scores as relevant, as well as descriptions of each of these five domains: physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development
- Identify and present a rationale for two immediate developmental goals for this child that can be supported by the early childhood education program setting based on the study of the child and relationship with the child's family
- Identify actions that can be taken to promote positive development and challenge the child to gain new competencies in each of the two areas identified:
 - Describe immediate and long-term actions where assessment findings are used to help the child meet each of the two goals selected: How might families be involved in the ongoing evaluation process as well as partnering in the development of and implementation of strategies to support the child's positive growth and development?

ECE PROGRAM OUTCOME STANDARDS (Aligned With State and NAEYC Standards)	Assessment Measure Descriptions			
	Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Partially Meets Criteria	No Evidence
Early Childhood Education PK-3 NCATE ASSESSMENT 6 Individual Child Assessment Portfolio ECED 511 Assessment of Diverse Young Learners				
NAEYC Standard 3: Observing, Documenting and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families				
NAEYC Standard 6: Becoming a Professional				
3a: Understanding the goals, benefits and uses of assessment	Provides an in-depth critical analysis that integrates readings, class discussions, and site experiences to the selection criteria, strengths and limitations of the tools, and interpretation and effective use of assessment findings	Provides a critical analysis that includes selection criteria, strengths and limitations of the tools, interpretation and effective use of assessment findings and a discussion that reflects readings, class discussions and site experiences	Provides minimal analysis of selection criteria, strengths and limitations of the tools, interpretation and effective use of findings	Does not provide documented evidence
3b: Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues	Includes an in-depth discussion of the process for collaborating with families and colleagues to develop goals, implement strategies, and share assessment information	Discusses the process for collaborating with families and colleagues to develop goals, implement strategies, and share assessment information	Includes a minimal discussion of the process for collaborating with families and/or colleagues to develop goals and share assessment information	Does not provide documented evidence
6b: Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines	Describes in-depth the legal and ethical principals addressed in the administration of assessment tools that connects readings, class discussion, and site experiences	Describes legal and ethical principals addressed in the administration of assessment tools that connects readings, class discussion, and site experiences	Minimal evidence of a discussion of ethical principles addressed in the administration of assessment tools or connection to readings, class discussion, and site experiences	Does not provide documented evidence