



EDCI 624/EDPD 501: Assessment, Identification and Evaluation of Gifted Learners
CRN 501-81282, 624-81951
Independent Hill Admin Building #51 (Rm 203A/B)
14800 Joplin RD. Manassas, VA
(Monday) 4:15-7:30

Instructor: Anne Horak, PhD
ahorak@gmu.edu
(703) 993-5398
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description: This course is designed to examine broad understandings about assessment, evaluation and identification of gifted learners; to provide techniques to identify gifted students; to develop specific understandings of assessment techniques, both formal and informal; to examine gifted program evaluation design. Furthermore, this course is designed to make students aware of the influences of language, culture, ethnicity, gender, age and exceptionality on the recognition and subsequent identification of giftedness, assessment of gifted learners and evaluation of gifted programs.

Nature of Course Delivery: This course is a hybrid course and consists of in person and online meetings. Methods of course delivery will include lectures, experiential activities, large and small group work, and in person and online discussions structured around the course readings, assignments, activities, and class discussions.

Expectations for Participation: Active participation is an important element of this course. Our work together will include ongoing discussions to collectively develop ideas about assessment, identification and evaluation of gifted children. Your experiences along with the course readings, will be an important part of our developing collective understandings. Some course meetings will take place online. Successful students in an online learning environment are proactive, self-regulated, and manage their time well. During the online class meetings, you will be expected to complete the reading, participate in discussions with the whole class, and complete and post any accompanying assignments due that week. You are asked to engage deeply with the subject matter, to take risks in your thinking, and to listen to and learn from your classmates.

Learner Outcomes: This course is designed to enable students to:

- a. Demonstrate their understanding of the salient local, state and national issues in assessment and identification of gifted learners;
- b. Demonstrate their understanding of the key elements and of gifted program evaluation
- c. Apply their understanding of the identification of gifted learners in practice

- d. Apply their understanding of implementing varied assessments in the assessment of gifted learners in practice
- e. Critique the efficiency and effectiveness of gifted services in the context of criteria for program evaluation

Standards: This course is designed to incorporate the CEHD Core Values and address the joint National Association for Gifted Children/Council for Exceptional Children Standards (2010), and the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (2011). This course also addresses the Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel (1998), specifically, 8 VAC 20-21-270: Gifted Education (add-on endorsement) requirements.

CEHD Core Values	InTASC	CEC-NAGC	VA
Social Justice	1g, 2j 6b, 6e, 6h, 6p, 6u	4.1	2.a, 2.c
Innovation	1i 6c, 6i, 6j, 6k, 6n, 6o, 6s, 6t	4.5	3.a 6.b
Collaboration	1c, 1k 3n, 3q 6m	4.3 7.1, 7.2, 7.3	3.b
Ethical Leadership	2l 3r 6d, 6f, 6q, 6r, 6v 10j, 10k	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4	2.b 3.c, 3.d
Research-Based Practice	1a 6a, 6g, 6l 9c	4.1, 4.2, 4.4	2.a 6.a

Required Texts:

Renzulli, J. (2004). Identification of Students for Gifted and Talented Programs. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

VanTassel-Baska, J. (2008). Alternative Assessments with Gifted and Talented Students. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Recommended Additional Texts:

Callahan, C. & Reis, S. (2004). Program Evaluation in Gifted Education. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

McAfee, O. & Leong, D. (2007). Assessing & Guiding Young Children’s Development and Learning (4th edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Purcell, J. (2005). Designing Services and Programs for High Ability Learners: A guidebook for Gifted Education. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Salvia, J., J. Yesseldyke and Bolt, S. (2007). Assessment in Special and Inclusive Education

(10th edition). New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Relevant Websites:

[National Association for Gifted Children](#)

[Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted](#)

[Virginia Association for the Gifted](#)

[Northern Virginia Council for Gifted/Talented Education](#)

[American Psychological Association](#)

[APA Formatting Advice](#)

GMU E-mail & Web Policy: All students are required to have access to a computer with Internet access, a current GMU email account, and be able to use the GMU Blackboard site. 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). All communication sent for this course will be sent to your Mason email account.

TaskStream – there is currently no Taskstream assignment for this class.

Grading Policy: At George Mason University course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is as follows:

Grade	Grading	Grade Points	Interpretation
A+	=100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements.
A	94-99	4.00	
A-	90-93	3.67	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principals at a basic level.
B+	85-89	3.33	
B	80-84	3.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course.
C*	70-79	2.00	
F†	<69	0.00	

*not accepted for endorsement

† does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

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.

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 to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdraws will be permitted.

Online Participation/Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In addition, students are expected to actively participate in online assignments; failure to participate during a designated online class day constitutes an absence from class. Although absence alone is not a reason for lowering a grade, students are not relieved of the obligation to fulfill course assignments, including those that can only be fulfilled in class. Students who fail to participate (because of absences) in a course in which participation is a factor in evaluation, or students who miss an exam without an excuse, may be penalized according to the weighted value of the missed work as stated in the course syllabus (GMU University Catalog, pg. 32).

Assignments: All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated via Blackboard. All projects must follow APA guidelines. Writing quality will count towards overall grade for each assignment.

a) Participation (20%)

All students will be expected to demonstrate their oral skills of expression and knowledge of relevant issues and concerns in the assessment, identification and evaluation of gifted learners through informed participation during in person and online class discussions. Informed participation means that the student has read the material ahead of class and uses it to inform their opinion and experiences. Discussions are held during scheduled class sessions to collectively develop ideas about assessment, identification and evaluation of gifted learners. Therefore, participation will be evaluated during scheduled in person and online class sessions.

b) Critical Reflections Journal (25%)

All students will be expected to demonstrate their written skills of expression and knowledge of relevant issues and concerns in the assessment, identification and evaluation of gifted learners through informed participation in a critical reflections journal. The critical reflections journal will consist of a minimum of ten entries that provide an analytical description of the reading, provide a thoughtful critique of the influence of the reading on their thinking; and note the impact of the information on the assessment/identification of giftedness. All entries are expected to be posted on the Blackboard journal tool and to be of high quality and meet the expectations of the Graduate School of Education with regard to mechanics and appropriate referencing.

c) Case-Based Scenario Response (20%)

All students will be expected to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge of the relevant issues in identification and their written skills of expression through a response to case-based scenario. Each student will examine the cases related to the identification of academic achievement for gifted students. They will choose one and create a response providing rationale that considers evidence from the literature in the field of gifted education. The response must address relevant issues and trends in identification of gifted students and provide a clear recommendation or position. Students will share their responses to the case-based scenario via an online discussion on Blackboard. Students will be required to provide analytical feedback to other responses via the online discussion on Blackboard.

d) Major Project (35%)

All participants will be expected to demonstrate their ability to create an accurate and usable model for assessment, identification and evaluation of gifted learners.

All major projects will be shared with the members of the class via submission through BlackBoard. One additional copy will be submitted to the instructor as part of the overall performance assessment maintained on file for accreditation purposes. No information will be duplicated without the author's permission.

Project Options:

1. Students can elect to create a model comprehensive assessment system for gifted learners. The model will be designed to reflect current state guidelines on the identification of gifted students as well as national recommendations for best practices in the field of gifted education. The model must be vertically articulated from Pre-K-12 Grade and describe assessments for identification and evaluation of gifted learners. The model must include standardized assessments. The model must reflect pre-, formative, and summative assessments and must include samples and exemplars. A rationale drawing on current literature, theory and practice must be provided.
2. Students can elect to create a model evaluation report for an actual or hypothetical gifted program. The evaluation design must include all elements identified in the national standards for program evaluation (Landrum, Callahan, Shaklee (2001)) as well as the relevant issues identified in The Program Evaluation Standards: How to Assess Evaluations of Educational Programs (Sanders, SAGE Publications).

Each model will be assessed for:

- a. Accuracy of information presented;
- b. Congruence of model with current literature, theory and practice;
- c. Accuracy of compliance with national, state and local regulations;
- d. Inclusion of critical stakeholders; and
- e. Acknowledgement of issues of special populations.

Assignment	Percent of final Grade	Outcomes Addressed	Due Date
Participation	20	a,b,c,d,e	
Critical Reading Log	25	a,b,c,d,e	
Case-based Scenario Response	20	a,c	
Major Project	35	a,d,e	

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-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. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>
 - For GSE Syllabi:
For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>]

EDCI 624 Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
September 8	Introduction to Course	NAGC Program Standards: Strand 2, Assessment National Research Center	
September 15	Political & Social Issues in Identification	Renzulli, Ch. 1, 9 Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 1, 9 NAGC Position Paper (<i>Role of Assessment in Identification</i>) Virginia State Standards on Identification	
September 22	Myths, Misconceptions and Misapplications	Renzulli, Ch 2, 6,7 Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 4, 10	
September 29	Identifying Special Populations (Guest Speaker: Dr. Shelagh Gallagher)	Renzulli, Ch 4, 13 Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 3, 6,7	
October 6	Alternative Models of Identification	Renzulli, Ch. 3, 5 Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 8 &, 11	
October 13 Columbus Day Holiday ONLINE	Conclusion & Synthesis of Identification Review Self-Assessments/Goal Setting	Renzulli, Ch 8, 12, 14 Van Tassel-Baska Ch 2, 15	Case-Based Scenario Response Due
October 20	Overview of Assessment of Gifted Learners	A National Deceived High Achieving Students in an Era of NCLB Mind the (other) Gap	Critical Reflections Due
October 27	Portfolio Assessment	Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 12	
November 3	Creating Sound Assessment Systems	Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 13	
November 10	The Role of Performance Based Assessment	Van Tassel-Baska, Ch. 14 Matsko & Thomas (2014) <i>The Problem is the Solution</i>	

		VanTassel-Baska, J. (2014). Performance-Based Assessment. <i>Gifted Child Today</i> , 37(1), 41-47	
November 17	Assessing Creativity, Behaviors, and Social and Emotional Development	TBD	
November 24	Central Issues in Program Evaluation	Program Standards, Strand 5	Critical Reflections Due
December 1	Processes and Models for Program Evaluation	Callahan, Ch 2 (course reserve) Purcell Ch 15 (course Reserve)	
December 8	Evaluation in Practice	Avery, L. D., & VanTassel-Baska, J. (2001). Investigating the impact of gifted education evaluation at state and local levels: problems with traction. <i>Journal For The Education Of The Gifted</i> , 25(2), 153-176. Hunsaker, S. L. (2000). Documenting gifted program results for key decision-makers. <i>Roeper Review</i> , 23(2), 80-82	Final Project Due
December 15	Summary & Synthesis Course Evaluations Final Reflections		