



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

Spring 2024

EDSE 846 DL1: Assessment, Evaluation, and Instrumentation in Special Education Research  
CRN: 22710, 3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Sarah Nagro	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 1/18/24 – 4/25/24
<b>Phone:</b> 716-572-4315 <b>Zoom Link:</b> <a href="https://gmu.zoom.us/j/5056257505">https://gmu.zoom.us/j/5056257505</a>	<b>Instructional Method:</b> Mix of face-to-face meetings and online instruction. See the face-to-face meeting dates below. All other meeting dates will be synchronous online video meetings supplemented by asynchronous online coursework, or purely asynchronous.
<b>E-Mail:</b> <a href="mailto:snagro@gmu.edu">snagro@gmu.edu</a>	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> Thursday
<b>Office Hours:</b> by appointment	<b>Meeting Time(s):</b> 4:30 pm – 7:10 pm
<b>Office Location:</b> Finley 222	<b>Meeting Location:</b> Fairfax; Finley 119

**Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Teacher Candidates/Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

**Prerequisite(s):**

Admission to PhD in education program, or permission of instructor.

**Co-requisite(s):**

None

**Course Description**

Provides in-depth study, analysis and discussion of the past, present and future directions of assessment, evaluation, and instrumentation research in special education. Emphasizes reliability and validity of the research instruments, evaluating research methodology, analyzing results,

synthesizing findings with respect to present assessment and evaluation policies; formulating future research questions relevant to assessment and evaluation of individuals with disabilities.

### **Course Delivery Method**

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

A percentage of this course will be delivered online using either a synchronous and/or an asynchronous format via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on 1/18/24.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

### ***Technical Requirements***

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [Browser support \(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support\)](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - [Adobe Acrobat Reader: https://get.adobe.com/reader/](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
  - [Windows Media Player: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player)
  - [Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## ***Expectations***

- **Course Week:**  
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **Log-in Frequency:**  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 2 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- **Participation:**  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:**  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**  
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:**  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:**  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- **Accommodations:**  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Service.

## **Learner Outcomes**

Describe various methodologies used in special education assessment and evaluation research.

1. Analyze the reliability and validity of research instruments.
2. Determine the implementation mechanisms for various assessment and evaluation procedures in special education.
3. Demonstrate how to analyze and synthesize special education assessment research.
4. Describe issues surrounding special education assessment research.
5. Develop and present an applied project investigating a selected topic in special education assessment and evaluation.

## **Professional Standards**

Not applicable.

## **Required Texts**

N/A

## **Recommended Texts**

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

## **Required Resources**

## **Additional Readings**

Additional readings will be assigned and noted in our Blackboard course site

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

## **VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement**

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL.

For EDSE 846: No requirement to upload a Performance-based Assessment (PBA) to VIA/SLL.

## Assignments and/or Examinations

**Performance-based Assessment  
(VIA submission required)**  
none

**College Wide Common Assessment  
(VIA submission required)**  
none

## Other Assignments

## Assignment Summary

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Module One: Research Questions Brainstorming	2/1/24	10 points
Module Two: Guiding Questions	2/15/24	10 points
Module Three: Comparing, Contrasting, and Drawing Connections	2/29/24	10 points
Module Four: Questions for Consideration	3/21/24 (class on 3/28)	10 points
Module Five: Method Section Review	4/4/24	10 points
Module Six: Application of Concepts	4/11/24	10 points
Final Project: Presentation and Proposal	4/18 presentations; 4/25 submission of proposal	30 points
Course Engagement and Professionalism	ongoing	10 points
<b>Total Points:</b>		<b>100 points</b>

## Student Evaluations of Teaching:

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and Blackboard notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at <https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/>

## Course Policies and Expectations

### **Attendance/Participation**

For a satisfactory grade in the course, students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom (see Professional Disposition Criteria), and complete all assignments with professional quality in a timely manner. When absence from class is unavoidable, students are responsible for getting all class information (e.g., handouts, announcements, notes) from another class member prior to the class meeting that follows the absence. Be aware that points earned for participation activities during a time of absence will not be earned and typically cannot be reclaimed.

### **Late Work**

Points will be deducted for work submitted late (up to 10% per day). This includes any items that are not submitted upon request due to class absence or tardiness. This includes items initiated or modified during class as well as those listed in the syllabus.

### **Other Requirements**

#### **APA Style**

The standard format for any written work in the College of Education and Human Development is APA. If you are unfamiliar with APA, it would benefit you to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) or to access one of the internet sites that provides a summary of this information. All work produced outside of class must be typed in APA style unless otherwise noted.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Students in this course are expected to exhibit academic integrity at all times. Be aware that plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Whether the act is deliberate or unintentional is irrelevant. You must take great care to give credit to an author when you use either exact words or paraphrased ideas. Generally, if you use 4 or more words in a row you should use quotation marks and a proper citation. Evidence of plagiarism or any other form of cheating in this class will result in a zero on that assignment and a report of the incident to the registrar and Dean's office. Remember that plagiarism is a very serious offense and can result in dismissal from the University. The instructor reserves the right to submit your work to plagiarism detection services for an integrity assessment as needed.

#### **Electronic Media**

The use of electronic devices that record class or photograph individuals or materials may not be used without instructor permission. Computers may be used to take notes during class, but they may not be used for internet exploration or other non-class activities during class time. Routine access (daily) to e-mail and Blackboard for communication and assignments is crucial to participation in this class. Retain electronic copies of all course products for use during the portfolio phases of the M.Ed. or Ph.D. programs.

#### **Workload Expectation**

For each in-class hour devoted to this course content, students are expected to spend at least 3 hours outside of class on course-related assignments, which is a typical in-class to out-of-class

ratio for graduate level coursework. Exemplary work should be considered for presentation or publication opportunities.

### **Grading Scale**

(Traditional rounding principles apply)

A	=	95 – 100 percent	A-	=	90 – 94 percent
B+	=	85 – 89 percent	B	=	80 – 84 percent
C	=	70 – 79 percent	F	=	Below 70

**\*Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site \(https://oai.gmu.edu/\)](https://oai.gmu.edu/) and [Honor Code and System \(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/\)](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/).

### **Class Schedule**

\*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

*The plan is to work on module activities within blackboard for the days and weeks leading up to the class discussion on the topic of focus within each module. The dates listed are the wrap-up/discussion dates for each module unless otherwise specified.*

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Class Schedule and Due Dates</b>	<b>Focus</b>
Introductions	1/18/24	Align course objectives with student needs
Module One: Foundational Readings	2/1/24	In class we will review brainstorming activity and settle on topics of focus for the semester
Module Two: Issues in Measurement	2/15/24	In class we will review the guiding questions and start to draw connections to individual topics of interest. We will refine research questions.
Module Three: Classroom Assessments	2/29/24	In class we will review the takeaways from the assignments with an emphasis on drawing connections to individual topics. We will review examples of assessments.
Module Four: Qualitative Methods and Logic Models	(Due on 3/21/24) class on 3/28	In class we will work through each of your plans for logic models. This will be a think aloud so having submitted early drafts will be especially helpful.
Module Five: Observation and Measuring Teacher Behavior	4/4/24	In class we will review the <i>method section review</i> assignment and discuss potential needs for your own work in terms of measurement
Module Six: Surveys, Perceptions, and Rating Scales	4/11/24	In class we will review measurement development drafts and discuss opportunities for connecting this work to the logic model and methods section template (putting it all together)
Final Project: Presentation and Proposal	4/18 presentations; 4/25 submission of proposal	Present to the group, receive feedback, refine proposal, submit

### **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: See [Core Values](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>).

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

#### **Policies**

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/) (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).



- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. See [Disability Services \(https://ds.gmu.edu/\)](https://ds.gmu.edu/).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### **Campus Resources**

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to [Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students \(https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/\)](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/).
- [Learning Services \(learningservices@gmu.edu\)](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

### **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as the [Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development \(http://cehd.gmu.edu/\)](http://cehd.gmu.edu/).**

## **Appendix**

### **Assessment Rubric(s)**

#### **Measurement Project Proposal (30 points)**

You may select a topic of interest within special education assessment and evaluation. Your proposal should focus on the identification, analysis, and evaluation of the measures needed to answer your proposed research questions. You should prepare both a presentation to present to class and written proposal to submit. Specifically,

- Select a research topic of interest in special education.
- Complete a literature search of Psych Info and other relevant databases to identify relevant original research articles (this can also include studies used in weekly assignments)
- Obtain and read original research articles.
- Develop a coding system to organize your articles based on the methods and measures used in the studies
- Code, organize, analyze, and synthesize the information about the methods and measures from the articles
- Write the paper using the American Psychological Association Publication Manual that includes a synthesis of your findings to lay the groundwork/justification for your proposed study. This paper will include:
  - Title Page
  - Abstract
  - Introduction and Purpose
  - Logic Model
  - Research Questions
  - Method
    - All sections as outlined in your model (some sections may be hypothetical or proposed, while others will be informed by your literature search, analysis, and synthesis)
  - Discussion – Summary and Conclusions (discuss the potential implications and limitations of this proposed project)
  - References