

Western Carolina University  
Jamaican Program

<u>Course Title</u>	SPED 310 – Evaluation of Exceptional Children
<u>Instructor</u>	Dr. Pam Vesely & Ms. Nancy Gryder Western Carolina University; School of Teaching and Learning
<u>Contact Info:</u>	Email: <a href="mailto:pamvesely@aol.com">pamvesely@aol.com</a> Phone: 828-230-0400
<u>Text</u>	Popham, W. J. (2011). <i>Classroom Assessment: What teachers need to know. (6<sup>th</sup> Ed )</i> Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Conceptual Framework Statement

"The mission of the professional education programs at Western Carolina University is to prepare highly effective and ethical graduates that are inspired to be lifelong learners, engaged in the community, and empowered to become leaders who strive to transform the future."

General Description

The professional education program at Western Carolina University fulfills its mission by creating and nourishing a community of learners guided by knowledge, values, and experiences. The guiding principles of this community include: 1) the belief that the best educational decisions are made after adequate reflection and with careful consideration of the interests, experiences, and welfare of the persons affected by the decisions; 2) appreciation of and respect for diversity; 3) and the fostering of the responsible use of technology.

This course assists students to become inviting and reflective decision-makers of educational assessment tools and procedures for evaluating students with exceptional needs. Students are invited to critique and read other professional critiques of several of the assessment materials currently used in the public schools today. In addition, students will be encouraged to reflect on the process of administering the different types of assessment tools with students with different exceptionalities and from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Finally, students will be asked to act as decision-makers by using the results of the assessments to plan for the instructional provision of services for the child with disabilities within the public school.

Jamaican Relevancy

*Because few resource rooms exist in Jamaican schools to address the needs of students with mild disabilities (learning disabilities, ADHD, slow learners, poor readers, etc) general education teachers are faced with addressing the needs of a diverse group of students with multiple learning and emotional needs. This course focuses on students with mild-moderate disabilities and how their learning can be accommodated in a general classroom environment through effective teaching practices and differentiating instruction. Students will be expected implement strategies discussed in class and report to the class the benefits and/or difficulties encountered when implementing a particular strategy with their students. The final evaluation for the class will include a question related specifically to whether the information presented during the course was 'relevant to Jamaican schools'.*

General Course Objectives/Competencies:

At the completion of the course, students will be competent in the following knowledge and skill areas, as outlined in the CEC Standards for Professional Practice for Special Education 2000:

*Assessment, Diagnosis, and Evaluation*

Knowledge

- Basic terminology used in assessment.
- Legal provisions and ethical principles regarding assessment of individuals.
- Screening, prereferral, referral, and classification procedures.
- Use and limitations of assessment instruments.
- Incorporation of strategies that consider the influence of diversity on assessment, eligibility, programming, and placement of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- The relationship between assessment and placement decisions.
- Methods for monitoring progress of individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Skills

- Collaborate with families and others in assessment of individuals with exceptional needs.
- Create and maintain records.
- Gather relevant background information.
- Develop and administer nonbiased, informal assessment procedures.
- Use formal and informal assessments.
- Interpret information from formal and informal assessments.

- Report assessment results to all stakeholders using effective communication skills.
- Use performance data and information from all stakeholders to make or suggest modifications in learning environments.
- Develop or modify individualized assessment strategies.
- 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.

#### *Professionalism and Ethical Practices*

##### Knowledge

- Characteristics of one's own culture and use of language and the ways in which these can differ from other cultures and uses of language.
- Personal cultural biases and differences that affect one's teaching.
- Importance of the teacher serving as a model for individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Ways of behaving and communicating among cultures that can lend themselves to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

##### Skills

- Demonstrate commitment to developing the highest educational and quality-of-life potential of individuals with exceptional learning needs.
- Demonstrate sensitivity for the culture, language, religion, gender, disability, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation of individual students.
- Demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication.
- Conduct professional activities in compliance with applicable laws and policies.

#### Diversity Statement:

In the assessment of children and in working with families, it is critical to consider cultural, racial, socioeconomic, educational, and geographical backgrounds of the children and families with which we work. This philosophy forms the foundation of SPED 310 (Evaluation of Exceptional Children). Within this framework, it is suggested that as students select articles for their article reviews, they concentrate on research that has been conducted with students of diverse populations and specific assessment instruments. In each class students are also required to complete an in-depth analysis of an assessment instrument. One of the criteria for analysis is the extent to which the assessment has addressed and meets the needs of students from diverse populations. Both of these assignments form the basis for discussions in class.

#### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities. Students who require disability services or reasonable accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and provide current diagnostic documentation to Disability Services. All information is confidential.

#### Academic Honesty Policy:

All work for this class should utilize APA Style for format and reference citations.

Western Carolina University, a community of scholarship, is also a community of honor. Faculty, staff, administrators, and students work together to achieve the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at WCU because it threatens the quality of scholarship and defrauds those who depend on knowledge and integrity. Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty in all classes. Any questions regarding the use of citations and references should be brought to the attention of the instructor of the course. Academic dishonesty includes the following: Cheating, Fabrication, Plagiarism, and Facilitation of Academic Dishonesty. These terms and procedures for cases involving allegations of academic dishonesty are described in the current WCU Student Handbook. Any student in this class found guilty of academic dishonesty will automatically receive a failing grade in the class.

Technology Requirements: Students are expected to take responsibility for becoming familiar with the technical skills and requirements necessary for researching and presenting their ideas and supporting a successful learning experience.

Clinical and/or Field Experience Component: No formal clinical component is required for this course. However, teachers will be constantly asked to apply concepts to relevant situations.

#### Class Attendance

Because of the limited amount of class time, all students are required to attend all classes. Exceptions will be made only in the face of extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control. Students are responsible for all material, assignments and announcements made in class, whether they were present in that class or not. It is the student's responsibility to keep abreast of any changes in exam dates, due dates for assignments, and changes in assigned course material implemented during his/her absence.

#### Student Responsibilities

- Students are expected to be present at all classes: including arriving to class on time and remaining for the duration of all class activities.

- Students are expected to be present for the final exam on the scheduled date.
- Assigned readings are expected to be completed before the class meeting for which they are listed.
- Assignments are to be turned in on time. One point will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.
- Students must adhere to academic honesty in all work. If plagiarism is evident, the student will not receive credit for the assignment and may receive a failing grade for the course.
- Any student with a documented disability requiring accommodations to complete course requirements should make an appointment with instructor as soon as possible.

### Assignments

#### Assignments:

1. Task Analysis (20 pts)
  - a. Candidates will create a task analysis focusing on a school-age academic skill. The Task analysis will then be presented as a checklist that can be used as a self-monitoring protocol.
2. Creating Informal Assessment and Presentation: (100pts) (50 for assessment; 30 for presentation; 20 for attention to other groups as they present)
  - a. In groups, you will develop 1 alternative assessment measure that can be used in the classroom. This may include: scoring rubrics, observation protocols, rating scales, or use of portfolios. The type of measure used should directly relate to what is being assessed and your purpose for assessment (refer to questions in the assessment process). Your group will be assigned a specific type of assessment.
  - b. Your group will prepare a demonstration assessment and a poster presentation to be presented to the class, explaining the design of your assessments, scoring procedures, and examples of data you could collect from the assessments. More details will be given in class. The due date for your assessment is posted on the course outline. You will have some time in class to prepare your assessment.
3. Response Analysis (25 pts each)
  - a. For this assignment, you will take work samples from 2 students and conduct a response analysis of each student's work.
  - b. You will summarize your findings by stating each student's strengths and needs compared to the goals for the assignment
4. Performance Assessment (30 pts)
  - a. In this assignment, you will create an assessment tool of your choice. The assessment should focus on a topic that you teach on a regular basis. Guidelines from the course should be followed when creating your assessment.
  - b. The format for your assessment may be selected from one of the following: Rubrics, Task analysis/ checklists, Observation instruments, or Portfolio w/grading criteria.
  - c. You should provide clear directions for using and interpreting the results of your performance assessment tool.
5. Content Area Assessment (50 pts)
  - a. For this assignment, you will create an assessment composed of selected response and constructed response items. The assessment should focus on the content that you teach, and should include at least 15 items (3 points will be given per item). Your questions will be evaluated based on the criteria for writing test questions discussed in our text and in class.
  - b. For this assignment you will also: (1) Write clear directions for each section of your test (10 pts) and (2) Provide clear grading criteria for your test (10 pts)
  - c. You must obtain Instructor approval prior to creating your assessment tool. This is the final assignment for the course.
6. Participation Points (10 per class = 90 points)
  - a. 10 points per class will be earned for the following actions: arrival on time/attendance throughout the class, active participation in all class activities, and supporting and encouraging colleague's participation in class.
7. Learning Checks (10 points per class = 90 points)
  - a. Through completion of the opening focus activity each day, each student's understanding of the course content from the previous day, the assigned readings, as well as the major concepts up to that point will be assessed.

### Evaluation and Grading

- |                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| • Task Analysis                    | 20 pts |
| • Informal Assessment/Presentation | 100pts |
| • Response Analysis                | 50 pts |
| • Performance Assessment           | 30 pts |
| • Content Area Assessment          | 50 pts |
| • Participation Points             | 90 pts |
| • Learning Checks                  | 90 pts |

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 430

### Grading Scale

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63-66%	D- = 60-62%

F = Below 60%

Bibliography/Additional Readings (other readings assigned for presentations)

Tentative Schedule

Date	Reading Assignment: Please read before coming to class <b>Use the questions on page 5 to guide reading</b>	Topic for the Day	Assignment Due
Thursday 3 November	Ch 1 pgs. 5-23  Ch 2 pgs. 29-37 and 42-46, and 49-53	*Introductions *Course syllabus *What is *Assessment?/Use of Assessment	
Friday 4 November	Ch 3 pgs. 63-71  Ch 4 pgs. 83-86 and p 104	*Reliability *Validity *Task Analysis *Checklists	
Monday 7 November	Ch 5 **Bring 2 samples of student work to class: Work samples should have errors	*Absence of Bias *Response Analysis *Academic Checklists	
Tuesday 8 November	Ch 6 & Ch 11 pgs. 252-265	*Selected Response Items *Item Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task Analysis due</li> </ul>
Wednesday 9 November	Ch 7	*Constructed Response Items *Learning Checks	
Thursday 10 November	Handout	*Running Records *Cloze Procedures *Prereading Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response Analyses due</li> </ul>
Friday 11 November	Ch 8	*Ratings *Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Presentations</li> </ul>
Monday 14 November	Ch 8 & Ch 9	*Rubrics *Portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Presentations</li> <li>• Performance Assessment</li> </ul>
Tuesday 15 November	Ch 14 & Ch 15	*Test Prep Practice *Grading Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Presentations</li> </ul>
Wednesday 16 November	No Assigned Reading	Vision/ Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Content Area Assessment</li> </ul>

Chapter questions to guide your reading: You do not need to answer these questions on paper; however, they will help you know what WE think is important in each chapter. Be prepared to discuss the questions in class.

Chapter 1: What do teachers need to know about assessment?

- What is the difference between assessment and testing?
- Why do teachers need to test students? (List the major reasons)
- According to Popham, what are the 2 major reasons Teachers need to know about testing?

Chapter 2: Deciding What to Assess and How to assess it?

- What are important assessment considerations?
- How do teachers decide what specific objectives to test?

Chapter 3: Reliability of Assessment

- What is a simple definition of reliability?
- Define and give an example of the 3 types of reliability evidence.
- What is a simple definition of Standard Error of Measurement?

Chapter 4: Validity

- What is an “educationally relevant variable”? Give an example.
- What is the relationship between validity and “test-based inferences”?
- Define and give an example of the 3 types of validity evidence.

Chapter 5: Absence-of-Bias

- Define assessment bias
- Define and give an example of these assessment bias terms: offensiveness, unfair penalization, and disparate impact.
- What are 3 ways to identify assessment bias?
- What are assessment accommodations and which students are able to receive them?