

**University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire**  
**Department of Special Education**  
**SPED 401/601**  
**Assessment of Students with Disabilities**

**Joe Morin, Ed. D.**  
**HSS 239, 836-5299**  
**e-mail: morinje@uwec.edu**

Course Description and Course Objectives:

The course topics will include current ethical issues in assessment practices, psychometric properties of assessment instruments, administration procedures and practices used in educational assessments, the interrelation of critical factors that impact an educational assessment, and communication of assessment findings to parents and other professionals.



Course Competencies

The Teacher Education Program at UWEC claims to produce teachers of high quality. All teacher education candidates are measured against the Wisconsin Teaching Standards (WTS). The Department of Special Education course objectives for SPED 401/601 align with the WTS. This alignment is outlined in Table 1 below. Tasks and assignments associated with the course objectives and WTS are intended as evidence of your growth and development toward becoming a professional educator. An eleventh standard, Collaborative Leadership Qualities (CLQ) is a standard unique to the UWEC Teacher Education Program. CLQ is described in table 1 and a rubric associated with CLQ is found toward the end of this syllabus. Broader standards associated with the Liberal Education Learning Goals (LELGs) are also aligned with this course. LELGs are described in the last page of this syllabus.

**CEC: Initial Educator Standard for Assessment**

Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use **multiple types of assessment information** for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the **legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment** related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with exceptional learning needs, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand **measurement theory and practices** for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate **use and limitations** of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure **nonbiased, meaningful assessments and decision-making**. Special educators conduct **formal and informal assessments** of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and

development of individuals with exceptional learning needs. Special educators use assessment information to **identify supports and adaptations** required for individuals with exceptional learning needs to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators **regularly monitor the progress** of individuals with exceptional learning needs in general and special curricula. Special educators **use appropriate technologies** to support their assessments.

Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

**Table 1: Objectives, LELGs & WTS Alignment with Course Assignments /Artifacts**

Course Objectives Collaborative Leadership Qualities (CLQ)	Liberal Education Learning Goals UW-EC (see last page of syllabus for description)	Wisconsin Teaching Standard (see last page of syllabus for description of WTS)	Evidence of Performance Relative to the Standard
Discuss ethical, cultural, legal and instructional issues in educational assessment. (CLQ)	Individual and Social Responsibility	1 - knowledge	Mid-term and Final Exam Activity 2: Reducing Unintended Bias in Assessment-based Decisions (Informed discussion activity)
Define basic terms in assessment.	Effective Communication	8 - assessment	Mid-term and Final Exam
Use appropriate computer technology and / or word processing technology for preparing written reports.		Technology Standard IV (ISTE)	Activity 1: Spreadsheet activities Written Report – selected case study
Describe the basic elements of curriculum-based assessment and evaluate its use in the assessment process.		8 - assessment	Mid-term Final Exam Core Assignment 2: Design a curriculum-based measurement tool
Identify, describe, and critically evaluate current issues and practices in the pre-referral and referral process.	Individual and Social Responsibility	8 - assessment	Mid-term Final Exam
Compare and contrast various formal and informal assessment procedures and discuss their relative use and importance in the evaluation process.	Effective Communication	8 - assessment	Mid-term Final Exam

Critique technical and psychometric properties of test instruments and their appropriateness for use with special populations.	Effective Communication	8 - assessment	Mid-term Final Exam
Administer, score, and interpret results from selected assessments.		2 – broad range of ability 8 - assessment	Core Assignment 1: Std.Assessment Admin. Core Assignment 4: Written Report - Case Study
Prepare written assessment reports and list recommendations for instructional programming.		2 – broad range of ability 3 – adapts inst. 6 – communication 8 - assessment 9 - reflective	Core Assignment 4: Written Report Core Assignment 3: Making High Quality Rec.
Identify skills for effective interaction with students, parents, teachers, administrators and other professionals. <b>(CLQ)</b>		10	Activity 3: Parent Conference Simulation

### Collaborative Leadership Qualities (CLQ)

In addition to the WTS, the Teacher Education Program at UWEC claims to produce competent collaborative leaders (see definition). Some activities/assignments in this class are dedicated to advancing your progress toward becoming effective collaborative leaders. Course objectives that address this goal are indicated with the addition of **CLQ** in the table above. In the box below is a short definition of what it means to be a Collaborative Leader. A rubric that describes the developmental levels of being a Collaborative Leader is attached to this syllabus.

*Collaborative leadership is the intentional and skillful management of relationships that enables others to succeed individually while accomplishing a collective outcome.*

*Collaborative leaders ably facilitate the involvement of two or more people in a group working toward a shared outcome in a manner that reflects collective ownership, authorship, use, or responsibility.*

*Collaboration is not the outcome or goal. Collaborations are processes that, when successful, align people's actions to accomplish a goal or solve a problem.*

*Collaborative leaders possess knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable them to carry out leaderful actions such as optimizing assets, seeking new solutions, sustaining focus, promoting trust, or setting and monitoring goals and progress.*

Course Requirements:

The core assignments indicated in the table below are described in detail in documents posted on D2L.

	Course Activities & Core Assignments	Undergraduate Assignments Activities
<b>In-class Activities</b>	Activity 1: Excel spreadsheet activities. These are in-class activities that will require you to perform some Excel functions in small groups. Activity + discussion.	20
	Activity 2: Reducing Unintended Bias in Assessment-based Decisions. Assigned readings and participation in discussion.	20
	Activity 3: Oral Report to Parents – simulation & reflection. Students will analyze assessment findings from a case study and prepare for an oral report to parents. Simulation plus reflection.	15
<b>Core Assignments</b>	1. Standardized Test Administration Assignment. Students will need to administer 2 Formal measures and submit completed protocols for the grade.	50
	2. Design an informal assessment. Students will develop a scope and sequence of a skill or a knowledge component of an academic area. From this, they will create an informal assessment protocol.	30
	3. Making HQ Recommendations. Students will research an intervention that will be appropriate for one of the case studies discussed in class. Share the recommendation with your classmates.	15
	4. Written Report – Students will prepare a clinical written report on a case study.	30
	Class Participation: Students must make a substantial contribution to both whole group and small group discussions.	20
	Midterm exam Topics 1 - 7	50
	Final exam Topics 1 - 14	50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

**Assignments and Activities:** All assignments will be described in separate documents and posted on D2L. In-class activities are intended to consolidate some ‘big ideas’ through peer-to-peer interactions. Students will be awarded full points for participating in the activities. If you

are not in class the day an ‘In-class Activity’ is conducted, you will forfeit the points for that activity. Some exceptions may apply and these are at the discretion of the instructor.

**Exams:** Midterm and final exams will consist of multiple-choice questions, definitions and short answers. A study guide questions will be provided.

Approximate Dates	Topic Sequence Note: Lecture notes available on D2L Please wait for notification of when they have been updated for printing	Materials & Documents for Class Activities and Discussions	Due dates will be the Monday of the Instructional Week
Week 1 January 23 & Jan 25	1. Overview of course 2. Broad topics pertaining to Assessment 3. Context of referral-based investigations 4. The role of the special educator as a clinician. <b>5. Intro to Core Assignment 1</b> 6. Procedures for administering the WJ III – Test of Academic Achievement	WJ III – Academic Achievement Kit (supplied)  Overton (2009) pg. 142-143 & 181 – 185.  Overton (2009) pg. 254-259	
Week 2 Jan 30 & Feb 1	7. Procedures for administering the KeyMath <b>8. Assign Readings for Activity 2</b>	Key Math 3 kit (supplied)	
Week 3 Feb 6 & 8	9. Understanding performance distributions	Text and calculator required for class  Overton (2009) - Chapter 3	
Week 4 Feb. 13 & 15	10. Quantifying reliability and validity in assessment 11. <b>Activity 1:</b> Excel Spreadsheet tasks	Text and calculator required Overton (2009) – Chapter 4	
Week 5 Feb. 20 & 22	12. Legal, ethical and practical issues in assessment 13. <b>Activity 2</b> – reducing unintended bias discussion	Overton (2009) Chapter 2	
Week 6 Feb. 27 & 29	14. Planning for an assessment session 15. Formal Assessment design and function of norm-referenced measures. 16. Survey of types of norm-referenced assessments	Text required for class	Midterm Exam
Week 7 March 5 & 7	Continue with Topic 16	Text required for class	

Week 8 March 12 7 14	17. Informal Measures: Curriculum-based Assessment measures (multi-skill surveys & single skill tasks) 18. <b>Intro to Core Assignment 2</b>	Text required for class	
Week 9 March 26 & 28	Continue with topic 17		
Week 10  April 2 & 4	Continue with topic 17		Core Assignment 2: CBA Informal Assessment Due
Week 11  April 9 & 12	19. Assessing behavior and social competence	Overton (2009) – Chapter 8	Core Assignment 1: Formal Assessment Due
Week 12 April 16 & 18	20. Relationship of assessment findings to intervention practices 21. <b>Intro to Core Assignment 3</b>	Text required for class  Overton (2009) Chapter 11	
Week 13  April 23 & 25	22. Communication of assessment findings to parents and other professionals 23. <b>Intro to Core Assignment 4</b>	Overton (2009) Chapter 11  Case Studies (supplied)	
Week 14  April 30 & May 2	Continue with topic 22 24. <b>Activity 3: Oral Report to Parents Reflection</b>	Text required for class	Core Assignment 3: Making HQ Recommendations Due
Week 15  May 7 & May 9	Wrap up and course review		
Week 16	Finals' Week: Section 001 – Monday, May 14 at 3:00 p.m. Section 002 (night class), Monday, May 14 at 7:00 p.m.		Core Assignment 4: Written report Final exam:

**Optional High Impact Experiences** Below are two options that may interest you if you are looking for some extra stimulation.

- A. Participate as a student clinician in the Human Development Center Assessment Clinic (HDC). This is a full clinical experience in an interdisciplinary assessment service. Students selected for this experience would complete a file review, design and administer an assessment session for their HDC team, deliver an oral report to the parents/client and prepare a professional clinical report. This experience is excellent training for developing IEPs prior to student teaching.
- B. Student/faculty collaborative research. I am working on some primary research called the Critical Numeracy Project. Students interested in assessments related to early numeracy skills and their impact on teaching and learning may like to get involved in this research.

### Grade Range

#### **Undergraduate Grading**

300 - 280 = A  
 279 - 270 = A-  
 269 - 260 = B+  
 259 - 250 = B  
**249 - 240 = B- \***  
 239 - 230 = C+  
 229 - 220 = C  
 219 - 210 = C-  
 209 - 200 = D  
 Less than 200 = F

#### **Graduate Grading**

400 - 380 = A  
 379 - 340 = B  
 339 - 320 = C  
 319 - 280 = D  
 Less than 280 = F

**\* B- is the SPED minimum standard for this course**

### Attendance and participation:

You are entering a profession where individual initiative and self-discipline are essential characteristics for educators of high quality. Your instructor is assuming that you have both of these characteristics. Each student is expected to attend every class. Attendance will be taken. If you are sick or have a private personal reason for missing a class an absence will still be counted against your record however in most cases no penalty will accrue for a single absence but more than one unexcused absence will likely involve point reductions, beginning with a 1-point reduction for the 2<sup>nd</sup> absence and doubling for each successive one. Also, absences of two or more weekly sessions will be reported to the Department of Special Education for further action. Participation in class activities is also very important and will affect your grade. Participation is a professional disposition of collaborative leadership (see rubric Page 13 of syllabus) and a minimal expectation for the course.

Participation is **subjectively** evaluated through the following:

- a) advance preparation (materials and readings) for whole-class lecture/discussion sessions,
- b) oral contribution to lectures/discussions,
- c) sustained focus through in-class activities and
- d) and sincere and authentic contribution to small-group tasks and activities.

### Late penalty

Due dates for assignments are expected to be honored. There may be a **10%** deduction for each day an assignment is past due. In the event that due dates have to be adjusted, the instructor will announce this in class. Individual circumstances **may be taken into consideration** for unique situations. This will be at the discretion of the instructor.

### Special Considerations:

***Accommodations for disabilities:*** Any student who has a disability and is in need of classroom accommodations, please contact the instructor and the Services for Students with Disabilities Office in Old Library 2136 at the beginning of the semester.

***Religious Accommodations:*** Students who need to be absent from class due to the observance of a religious holiday or participate in required religious functions must notify the faculty member in writing as far in advance of the holiday/obligation as possible. Students will not be penalized for missing class due to religious obligations/holiday observance. The student should contact the class instructor to make arrangements for making up tests/assignments within a reasonable time.

### Classroom Conduct & University Policy:

***Civility:*** As members of this class, we are members of a larger learning community where excellence is achieved through civility. Our actions affect everyone in our community. Courtesy is reciprocated and extends beyond our local setting, whether in future jobs, classes, or communities. Civility is not learned individually, it is practiced as a community

***Academic Integrity:*** I consider any academic misconduct in this course as a serious offense, and I will pursue the strongest possible academic penalties for such behavior. The disciplinary procedures and penalties for academic misconduct are described on the UW-Eau Claire Dean of Students web site (<http://www.uwec.edu/dos/Codes/ch14.htm>) in Chapter UWS 14—Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures.

***Non-discrimination:*** UW-Eau Claire's policy prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, and any other category protected by applicable law. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

## Topic Sequence and Class Preparation Guide

Each of the topics will be given in the sequence that is specified but they may not align with the dates. Although the dates serve as a reminder of where we expect to be in the course, we will need to be flexible as frequently unanticipated issues can periodically impede the progression of the course.

### References

#### **Required Rental Texts:**

Overton, T. (2009). *Assessing Learners with Special Needs: An Applied Approach*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed). Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ.

#### **Supplemental Course Readings**

Dunn, Lloyd. (1968). Special education for the mildly retarded – Is much of it justifiable? *Exceptional Children*, 35(1), 5-22.

Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., & Speece, D. L. (2002). Treatment validity as a unifying construct for identifying learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 25(1), 33-45.

Holdnack, J. A., & Weiss, L. G. (2006). IDEA 2004: Anticipated implications for clinical practice - Integrating assessment and intervention. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(8), 871-882.

McNamara, K., & Hollinger, C. (2003). Intervention-Based Assessment: Evaluation Rates and Eligibility Findings. *Exceptional Children*, 69(2), 181.

Mellard, D. F., Deshler, D. D., & Barth, A. (2004). LD identification: It's not simply a matter of building a better mousetrap. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 27(4), 229-242.

Odom, S. L., Brantlinger, E., Gersten, R., Horner, R. H., Thompson, B., & Harris, K. R. (2005). Research in Special Education: Scientific Methods and Evidence-Based Practices. *Exceptional Children*, 71(2), 137-148.

Shinn, M. R. (2007). Identifying Students at Risk, Monitoring Performance, and Determining Eligibility Within Response to Intervention: Research on Educational Need and Benefit From Academic Intervention. *School Psychology Review*, 36(4), 601-617.

## Wisconsin Teaching Standards

1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of the *subject matter* meaningful for pupils.
2. The teacher understands how children with *broad ranges of ability* learn and provides instruction that supports their intellectual, social and personal development.
3. The teacher understands how pupils differ in their approaches to learning and the barriers that impede learning and can *adapt instruction to meet the diverse needs of the pupils*, including those with disabilities and exceptionalities.
4. The teacher understands and uses a *variety of instructional strategies*, including the use of technology to encourage children's development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. The teacher uses an understanding of *individual and group motivation and behavior* to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.
6. The teacher uses effective *verbal and nonverbal communication* techniques as well as instructional media and technology to foster active inquiry, collaboration and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. The teacher *organizes and plans systematic instruction* based upon knowledge of subject matter, pupils, the community and curriculum goals.
8. The teacher understands the uses of *formal and informal assessment* strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the pupils.
9. The teacher is a *reflective practitioner* who continually evaluates the effect of his or her choices and actions on pupils, parents, professionals in the learning community and others who actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. The teacher *fosters relationships* with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support pupil learning and well being and who acts with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

### National Technology Standards for Teachers:

**Standard IV** (*Assessment and Evaluation: Teachers apply technology to facilitate a variety of effective assessment and evaluation strategies*).

## Qualities of Collaborative Leaders

DISPOSITIONS	Qualities of Collaborative Leaders			
	0	1 UNDERSTANDING	2 INDEPENDENT LEVEL	3 COLLABORATIVE LEVEL
<b>1</b> STRIVES FOR SHARED UNDERSTANDING	Chooses to do most tasks independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asks relevant questions of “safe” person</li> <li>Compromises, or asks others to do so, to complete tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asks clarifying questions for self</li> <li>Paraphrases for personal clarification</li> <li>Cooperates when working with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asks clarifying questions for self and/or group needs</li> <li>Solicits responding from all parties</li> <li>Paraphrases for better self and group understanding</li> <li>Redirects counter-productive participation</li> <li>Demonstrates active listening during collaborations</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> SEEKS BENEFICIAL SOLUTIONS	Does not try to change what has already been done “good enough”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes situations and solutions from multiple perspectives</li> <li>Articulates potential barriers to situations</li> <li>Lists people who may be potential resources for tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes current condition</li> <li>Tells why change might be necessary</li> <li>Independently finds resources to support change</li> <li>Defers judgment in order to come up with unique and workable solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeks input from and works with others to describe current condition</li> <li>Works with others to determine need for change</li> <li>Considers other’s ideas and perspectives to generate possible solutions and meet multiple needs</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF AND TAKES ON RESPONSIBILITY FOR OTHERS	Blames others and circumstances when problems occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lists possible personal responsibilities</li> <li>Articulates the responsibilities of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accepts responsibility for tasks when asked to do so</li> <li>Assists with meeting the needs of others when within own control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accepts and seeks out responsibility for tasks</li> <li>Advocates for other’s needs, regardless of personal beliefs/needs</li> <li>Actively seeks out assistance from others to meet identified needs</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> DISPLAYS PERSEVERANCE FOR PROJECTS AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	Follow-up attempts not made when first attempt does not succeed or meet expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completes tasks on time</li> <li>Makes repeated, but minimal, attempts to correct or continue a task</li> <li>Makes weak attempts to better understand others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asks questions to find out more in order to make more productive future attempts at a task</li> <li>Describes options for approaching others for assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively seeks out others for contributions in order to make change and persist with tasks</li> <li>Acknowledges all participants contributions, concerns, and ideas</li> <li>Depersonalizes negativity from others and contributes positive responses</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> DEMONSTRATES A PASSION FOR EXCELLENCE	Does just what is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflects on how experiences has impacted their thinking about education</li> <li>Articulates the meaning of excellence in a context of learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>States expectations that go beyond the status quo</li> <li>Independently uses the meaning of excellence in a context of learning for individual growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active and positive member of groups</li> <li>Uses excellence in a context of learning to collaborate with and influence others</li> <li>Celebrates group successes</li> <li>Exhibits an appropriate sense of humor, a positive manner, and enthusiasm during interactions</li> </ul>

## Selected UW-EC Learning Goals and Outcomes for this course

### **Creative and Critical Thinking**

- UW Eau Claire students will develop critical thinking skills that can be applied to a range of contexts.
- UW Eau Claire students will develop creative thinking skills that include
  - creative expression and/or
  - creative approaches to problem solving.

Note: Critical thinking skills may include information literacy, quantitative literacy, inquiry, analysis, problem posing, and problem solving.

Note: Creative and critical thinking include general and discipline specific skills and procedures for analysis and inquiry, information and quantitative literacy.

### **Effective Communication**

- UW Eau Claire students will write, read, speak, and listen effectively in various contexts including applications to civic and discipline specific contexts.  
Note: Communicating effectively includes working effectively on teams.

### **Individual and Social Responsibility**

- UW Eau Claire students will develop skills and values for ethical reasoning and life-long learning.
- UW Eau Claire students will connect their knowledge and skills to social and civic contexts.