

**Fall 2021**  
**Identification and Assessment of Learning Disabilities**  
**15:293:526**  
**3 credits**  
**Tuesdays, 5:00pm to 8:00pm**

Instructor: David Antunes, MA, LDTC	dantunes@gse.rutgers.edu
Phone: 908.295.8568	10 Seminar Place
Office Hours: after class or by appointment	Prerequisites or other limitations: 15:291:511 Introduction to Assessment, Applied Statistics, and Research (3)
Mode of Instruction: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Permission required: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

**Learning goals**

Learning goals address standards set by the Council for Exceptional Children Advanced Preparation Standards (CEC) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Standards for Advanced Programs (CAEP).

**Council for Exceptional Children Advanced Preparation Standards (CEC)**

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/standards/advanced-special-education-preparation-standards>

At the completion of this course:

CEC Standard 1: Special education specialists use valid and reliable assessment practices to minimize bias.

CEC Standard 2: Special education specialists use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to improve programs, supports, and services at classroom, school, community, and system levels.

CEC Standard 4: Special education specialists conduct, evaluate, and use inquiry to guide professional practice.

CEC Standard 5: Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices, and create positive and productive work environments.

CEC Standard 6: Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional ethical principles and practice standards to inform special education practice, engage in

lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.

CEC Standard 7: Special education specialists collaborate with stakeholders to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

**Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation Standards for Advanced Programs (CAEP)**

<http://caepnet.org/~media/Files/caep/standards/advprogramstandards-onepager-lastedit819.pdf?la=en>

1. Applications of data literacy;
2. Use of research and understanding of qualitative, quantitative and/or mixed methods research methodologies;
3. Employment of data analysis and evidence to develop supportive school environments;
4. Leading and/or participating in collaborative activities with others such as peers, colleagues, teachers, administrators, community organizations, and parents;
5. Supporting appropriate applications of technology for their field of specialization; and
6. Application of professional dispositions, laws and policies, codes of ethics and professional standards appropriate to their field of specialization.

**Course catalog description:**

This course introduces students to the procedures and practices for the assessment and identification of students with disabilities. The legal, ethical and professional requirements of individuals involved in assessment are discussed. The philosophical bases of test design and test selection are taken into account, as well as consideration of students from a variety of cultural and language backgrounds. There will be an examination of measurement theory and various assessment tools will be reviewed and critiqued. Students will be trained to administer the Woodcock Johnson IV and will be provided with the test to practice on a subject and write a comprehensive report. Test selection, administration, scoring and interpretation will be addressed. There will be a focus on current trends in the development of functional assessments and standardized testing.

**Class materials/ Textbooks:**

Recommended:

Kritikos, E., Mcloughlin, J., & Lewis, E. (2018) *Assessing Students with Special Needs*: Pearson

Mather, N., & Wending, B. (2015) *Essentials of the WJIV Tests of Achievement New York*: John Wiley & Sons. (Also recommended for next semester)

Schrank, Decker & Garruto (2015) *Essentials of the WJIV Cognitive Abilities Assessment* New York: John Wiley & Sons (Also recommended for next semester; We do not cover the WJ Cog extensively. This book should be used if you are interested in private testing.)

Mather, N., & Jaffe, L. E. (2016). *Woodcock Johnson IV: Reports, Recommendations, and Strategies*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. (Not recommended for this semester, but may be helpful, will be recommended for next semester)- **\*\*A digital copy will be provided on Canvas.**

### **Additional Readings/Sites:**

1. The state department of NJ – Achieve NJ – presents everything you need to know about Student Growth Objectives. (SGO Training Modules - How do I create a high quality SGO's? Option 2 –SGO guidebook – pg. 10 Setting Tiered SGO's) also (Documents & Resources – SGO's – Additional Resources – SGO Quality – Power Point) also SGOs – SGO Training Modules – Module 2 Assessment.  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/objectives.shtml>
2. Special Education Scenarios -  
<http://www.danielsongroup.org/article.aspx?page=SpecialEd>  
This site provides examples of implementation of the Danielson principals for special education students with examples that range from Unsatisfactory to Distinguished.

Additional required readings available online on Canvas under Articles module.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

Course assignments have been assigned a point value and the total number of points will be used to calculate the final grade. Late assignments will only be accepted with the permission of the instructor and will lose 5% of the grade for each day they are late. Included in the class participation component is the score received on group assignments completed in class. Because group work is based on assigned readings, it is important that students keep up-to-date on their reading in order to be good group members. Because of the hands-on-approach, attendance is imperative. Therefore, 10 points will be deducted from the class participation score for each absence and more than two absences will necessitate repeating the course. Students should notify the instructor by e-mail or in writing when they are absent.

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|---|------------|
| 1. Class participation/Attendance                   | 100 points |
| 2. Child Study Team Interview and Observation       | 100 points |
| 3. Classroom Observation                            | 50 points  |
| 4. Review of Records                                | 50 points  |
| 4. Supplemental Test Review Presentation & Paper    | 200 points |
| 5. Administration of the WJIV and Assessment Report | 400 points |
| 6. Assessment Concepts Quiz                         | 100 points |

Final Grades

A	90 – 100	C+	77 – 79
B+	87 – 89	C	70 – 76
B	80 – 86	F	below 70

**Assignments:**

**1. Child Study Team Interview and Observation Guidelines**

You will interview a Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant. Create a list of questions to ask prior to the interview. The questions can include a mix of factual questions as well as questions related to personal opinions or experiences *with Child Study Team policies and procedures*. Your summary of the interview should include the background of the individual interviewed (e.g., educational background, work experience, etc.)

Sample questions: (50 points)

1. Who usually attends the IEP meetings? How are parents notified and do most parents attend?
2. What are the responsibilities of each person?
3. What generally happens at meetings? How long do the meetings generally last?
4. Who coordinates the meetings? Are there practices that make the meetings run more smoothly or make the meetings more difficult? What is the climate of most meetings?
5. What assessments are completed (domain such as reading, math, specific instruments)? Who completes and reports on the assessments? What is your specific role in the Child Study Team? How is assessment information utilized?
6. How do Child Study Team members coordinate the results to make decisions about eligibility for special education?
7. What are some of the benefits of the Child Study Team process?
8. What are some of the problems with the Child Study Team process?
9. How are parents and students involved in the process?
10. What changes would you make to the process to improve it for parents, teachers, and fellow Child Study Team members?

Observation: (50 points)

Observe at least one Child Study Team meeting. You should seek permission from all involved to observe, and you should not be a participant in the meeting (do not sign attendance sheet).

Specific areas to observe

1. Who is in attendance (including parent/guardian and student)?
2. What appears to be the role of each person? What is the purpose of the meeting?
3. What does each person report and what is the source of the information (e.g., assessment instruments, observations, informal class work)?
4. Who coordinates the meeting? What does he/she do to make the meeting run smoothly?  
What might make the meeting run better if needed?
5. Depending on the purpose of the meeting, how was the need for an assessment determined? How was eligibility determined?
6. What appears to be the climate of the meeting? How are members of the Child Study Team interacting?

Written Summary: Summarize your findings from the interview and the observation. Rather than providing a list of question and responses or a play-by-play of the meeting, integrate the information into a cohesive essay describing the Child Study Team process from the view of the LDTC. Support your conclusions with examples, if possible. To maintain confidentiality, use pseudonyms for all participants in your report. Your written summary should be three to five pages~ double-spaced.

## 2. Classroom Observation (50 points)

**Classroom Observation:** Observe a student for at least 30 minutes. This can be one of your students, a student from another class, etc. but the observation cannot occur while you are teaching. If you are unable to access a school-aged student, this assignment may also be completed in a college/university class.

**Step 1:** Observe the classroom (at least 5 minutes) Observe the classroom environment and instruction

- How many students? How many teachers?
- Where is the targeted child in the classroom - relationship to teacher, board, other students, materials, windows or door?
- What is the instructional activity? What subject? What are all students expected to be doing?
- What is the overall classroom climate (calm, loud, structured)?

**Step 2:** Observe the targeted student (at least 10 minutes)

- What is he/she doing related to instruction (positively or negatively)?
- What is he/she doing behaviorally (positively or negatively)?
- Identify behaviors that appear to be helping or hindering him/her academically or behaviorally. Define the behavior. Determine how they can be measured (frequency, duration, latency, other)

**Step 3:** Measure behavior (at least 15 minutes)

- Choose one behavior to measure
- Identify two to three targeted students that might be a typical or random student
- Collect data on that behavior for the targeted child and the comparison student(s)

**Step 4:** Examine or collect other relevant information

- Collect samples or description of classwork, assignments, etc.
- Identify areas of strength and weakness in terms of classroom performance and/or behavior
- What examples can you use to support your observation?

Ideally, the observation steps would occur on the same day. However, if it is necessary to split the observation time, Steps 1 and 2 should be completed together and Step 3 can be completed at a later point. If you choose to split up the observation, you should include components of Step 4 at both observations. You can use some of the supplementary data collection sheets to help.

Write a summary of the observation. You should include two parts. The first part should include a one-page description of your observation of the child's performance (academic and behavior). Do not write more than one double spaced page. This should be in paragraph form. The second part should include your definition of the behavior on which you collected data and a summary

of that data. After describing the selected student's performance, compare his/her performance to two peers (use data to support as well). This does not need to be in paragraph form (i.e., it can be in list or table format). Use the antecedent, behavior, consequence framework for behavior.

### **3. Review of Records (50 points)**

**Review of Records:** You will request to access a student's child study team. You will review the student's file and summarize the following each in one paragraph. You will use a pseudonym in your report. (10 points per section)

Paragraph 1 Reason for Referral/Background: Why was the student initially referred for special education and related services? What is the student's classification? What types of services is the student receiving and what is their current placement?

Paragraph 2 Review of Previous Evaluations: Review and summarize any previous educational testing conducted. You should include what tests were administered and a summary of the student's performance in each.

Paragraph 3 Review of Academic Records: Review and summarize the following: student's performance on current report card, achievement tests (NJSLA) any curriculum-based assessments (DRA2, DIBELS, math test).

Paragraph 4 Review of Writing Sample: Review a writing sample from the student. Use the WJ Writing Evaluation form to evaluate the writing and create a summary of your findings.

Paragraph 5 Teacher Report: Have the student's teacher complete one of the WJ Teacher Report forms provided on canvas. You will then summarize any relevant findings of the teacher report.

### **3. Test Review Assignment (200 points)**

Select a norm referenced test to review from the sign-up sheet and prepare a written report and an oral presentation for the class. Tests may be substituted with instructor permission. Although it is not required that you have access to the test, it will make life easier if you do. We do have some tests in our supply which you may borrow for this assignment.

Prepare a 15-20 minute presentation for the class.

Your presentation (100 points) should include :

1. An overview of the test (including background info such as previous editions)
2. Purpose of the test
3. Subtests (if there are subtests)
4. Types of scores
5. Scoring procedures (computer~ hand, combination, qualitative or rating scoring, ease of scoring)
6. Information on technical adequacy (norms, reliability, validity).
- \*7. Interactive component which allows the class to experience the test or a demonstra-**

**tion of one of the subtests.**

8. Prepare a handout that classmates can use as a reference guide.

Prepare a 3 to 4 page paper on your test (100 points).

This can include information from your presentation in more detailed form. You should also research the test and provide summaries/reviews of the test by others. At minimum, you must use 3 outside resources (plus the review in your textbook). Include a list of references. Conduct an ERIC Search and you must use *The Mental Measurements Yearbook/Tests in Print*. Burros' Mental Measurement Yearbook can be accessed by going to the libraries home page. Select View All Data Bases. The book is online and you can access it with your Rutgers ID and password.

**4. Test Administration/Report Assignment (400 points)**

The purpose of this assignment is to provide practice and application in educational assessments. You will administer, score, and interpret the WJIV.

Student selection: There are several criteria for student selection. First the student can be kindergarten to college age. Thus, their effort should be genuine, rather than having someone pretend to test as if they were in elementary school. Second, the student cannot be your own child (son, daughter). Third, best practice is not to assess someone with the same measure within a six-month period. If your child has been assessed recently, you may want to consider using the alternate form of the test, if available.

You should have verbal permission from parents/guardians. Parents should be aware that the purpose of the testing is a course project and that the results of the testing should not be used for any educational decisions.

Your student does not have to be a special education student or even a low-achieving student. However, your results might be more interesting and typical of what you may see in future practice as a LDTC if the student is classified.

Test administration: Choose an appropriate setting and time for administration. Consider the distractions of the environment as well as the best time of day for your examinee. It may take two or more sessions to complete the testing. You should administer the academic subtests of the WJIV standard battery (1-13) and Oral Language Battery.

- Grades PK-1: WJ ACH Tests: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13; WJ OL: 1-9
- Grades 2-Adult: WJ ACH Tests: 1-13; WJ OL: 1,2 ,5 6
- In addition to in-class practice, you should practice test administration until you are comfortable with providing directions, identifying basals and ceilings, identifying start points, etc.
- Included in your assessment should be an informal component as required by the state. You can use the WJ parent, self and teacher forms for this section or the writing or handwriting evaluation forms.

## Test report

Information to be included:

1. Background information (age, grade) and other relevant information (medical history, grade, educational placement, previous testing if available), parent or teacher interview, if possible, use the WJ forms provided. We will do this together as a class.
2. Reason for testing (to practice the administration)
3. Assessment methods- list the tests you are using both formal and informal
4. Behavioral observations, including whether or not the testing performance appears to be representative of the student's true academic performance; use the framework provided on your WJ protocol.
5. Results (subtest and cluster scores) and Interpretation of Performance. Each subtest should be grouped by area (all reading tests together). Begin each section with a description of the area and end each section with a paragraph that states the performance level and discusses scores in terms of strengths and weaknesses. A short description should be given of the subtest (found in your texts) and then an error analysis should be included for each test. (Discuss what student could and could not do – grade level will determine your discussion.) Also explain the student's score in terms of ranges (average). You should also include an explanation of the Variations and Comparison, as well as a discussion of Skill, Fluency and Applications. You will be provided a template to use.
6. Summary - should be one paragraph and an outline will be given.
7. Recommendations- you will use the WJ Recommendations text to make evidence-based recommendations. You will cite which page number you located your recommendation. These recommendations should be driven by your test score data, and be age appropriate.

Sample reports will be provided.

Once you are done testing, I will review and evaluate your testing protocol to make sure it is correct. After you have completed your protocol correctly, you will be given a log in for the WJ Online Score software.

You may adapt your report to meet your specific school district requirements (order of information, format) but your report must include the listed information.

\*You must score a 360 or higher, otherwise you will need to revise and resubmit your report.

### **COMPLETE ASSIGNMENT:**

You should upload to Canvas:

1. Completed test record and student response sheet (in person or scanned to me)
2. WJ Score Printout (run as a word doc and put it at the end of your evaluation)
3. Educational Evaluation Report (upload to Canvas)



**5. Quiz-** You will be given a take home quiz on assessment terms and concepts. (100 points)

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

The Office of Student Conduct supervises issues related to violations of academic integrity (see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>). Please familiarize yourself with the university policy on academic integrity at

[http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI\\_Policy\\_2013.pdf](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf)

**Office of Disability Services:**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

**Tentative Schedule:**

**Mathers- Essentials of WJIV Tests of Achievement (Read Carefully)**

**Reading -Additional Readings or Sites**

**KML – Assessing Students with Special Needs (Recommended-Skim Chapters)**

Date	Topic	Reading and Assignments
9/7	Review Syllabus -Legal basis for assessment in New Jersey, review of federal laws regarding assessment and classification, parental rights in procedural safeguards, changes in assessment re IDEA 2004 <b>Child Study Team Interview Assigned</b> <b>Test Review Assigned</b>	KML Chapter 1 & 2
9/14	- Introduction to assessment procedures and WJ4 Administration and Scoring <b>Assessment Quiz Assigned</b>	Mathers Pages 1-40
9/21	Conducting Functional Assessments -Review of Records -Classroom Observations -Teacher, Parent, Student Interviews -Testing Observations <b>Review of Records Assigned</b> <b>Classroom Observation Assigned</b>	KML Chapter 4 & 5
9/28	Administration of the WJ Oral Language Assessing English Language Learners <b>Assessment Quiz Due</b>	KML- Chapter 12 Mathers Pages 159-203
10/5	Administration of the WJ4-Reading <b>Review of Records Due</b>	KML- Chapter 13 Mathers Pages 40-68 (Tests 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 17) WJ Bulletin Dyslexia Evaluation
10/12	Administration of the WJ4- Writing Functional Review of Writing	KML-Chapter 15 Mathers Pages 40-68 (Tests 3, 6, 11, 14, 16)
10/19	Administration of the WJ4- Mathematics and Achievement <b>CST Interview Due</b>	KML-Chapters 11&14 Mathers Pages 40-68 (Tests 2, 5, 10, 13)
10/26	WJ Online Scoring Interpreting Test Scores Making Evidence Based Recommendations	Review Educational Evaluation Template Review WJ Recommendations Text
11/2	No Class Meeting- Asynchronous Dyslexia Module <b>Classroom Observation Due</b>	NJDOE Dyslexia Handbook WJ Assessing Dyslexia

11/9	Administration of the WJ Test of Cognitive Abilities	KML-Chapter 7
11/16	Administration of the WJ Test of Cognitive Abilities	KML- Chapter 9
11/23	Individual Conferences Work on Testing Reports	
11/30	Supplemental Test Presentations Assessment Report Review <b>Test Review Assignment Due-All Students (paper and presentation)</b>	WJ Recommendations Text
12/7	Supplemental Test Presentations <b>Assessment Report Due</b>	
12/14	Supplemental Test Presentations Review Practicum Requirements	Review Practicum Module



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