



Course Syllabus: Special Education Evaluation: Interpretation and Communication

West College of Education and Professional Studies
 SPED 6513 Section X10
 Fall 2026
 Aug 24-Dec 11

Contact Information

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Instructor Response Policy

I will respond to emails within 24 hours unless it is the weekend or a holiday. If you send an email during the weekend or a holiday, I will respond no later than the first business day after the weekend or holiday.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Sattler, J. (2024). *Assessment of Children: Cognitive Foundations and Applications* (7th edition). Sattler Publishing.

Course Description

Interpreting and integrating formal and informal data collected during the special education evaluation and communicating results. Includes an overview of the assessment process, statistical concepts, and data sources specific to disability categories.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

Specific learning objectives for the course derive from the TExES Examination Framework/Standards and Texas Ed Diag Standards. This course provides teacher candidates with a knowledge base of the environment in which they may serve as a diagnostician. Satisfactory completion of the course will document that students have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Explain the evaluation process.

2. Understand ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities of a diagnostician.
3. Critically examine collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies, and related service personnel.
4. Understand student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision-making.
5. Know eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.
6. Select, administer, and interpret appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.
7. Examine of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.
8. Know skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.
9. Synthesize students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.
10. Knows appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.

See Appendix A for a complete list of standards/competencies and Appendix B
for assignment/standards alignment matrix

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading/Assessment

Table 1: Assignments

Assignments	Points
Text Book Questions	100
Interpretation/Communication (IC) Exercises (10)	250
Lecture Notes (6 at 25 pts each)	150
Midterm Exam	100
3 Full reports @ 100 pts each	300
Final Exam	100
Total Points	1000

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	920-1000
B	850--919
C	780-849
D	600-780
F	Less than 600

Course Schedule

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
8/24	Syllabus Overview 5:30-7 (8/26) Lecture 1 Posted	NA
8/31	Lecture 2 Posted by	NA
9/7	Course Requirements	Lecture notes 1 and 2 due 9/8
9/14	Lecture 3	NA
9/21	Course Requirements	IC Exercise 1-3 Due 9/23
9/28	Course Requirements	NA
10/5	Course Requirements	Textbook Questions 1-10 due (10/5)
10/12	Lecture 4 (Midterm Exam)	Midterm window Oct 12-14
10/19	Lecture 5 Posted by 3/16	NA
10/26	Course Requirements	IC Exercises 4-6 Due 10/26; Lecture Notes 3-5 Due 10/27
11/2	Lecture 6 and 7 Posted by 3/30	Full Report 1 due (11/2)
11/9	Lecture 8 Posted by 4/6	Full Report 2 due (11/9)
11/16	Course Requirements	Textbook Questions 11-20 (due 11/16)
11/23	Course Requirements	Lecture 6 due 11/23 Full Report 3
11/30	Course Requirements	IC Exercises 7-10 Due 11/30
12/7	Final Exam	Due 12/8

***Hard due dates, you will be counted late if not turned in on the exact due dates (one day 25%, 2 days 50%, 3 days 75%)**

Note: To get a passing grade in this class, ALL work must be completed at a master's level. Missing assignments will result in "F" for the class.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Students may use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT or similar technologies) as support for brainstorming ideas, organizing thoughts, clarifying concepts, or revising language. However, all submitted work must represent the student's own original thinking, understanding, and voice. AI tools may not be used to generate entire

assignments, analyses, or responses submitted for credit, nor may they be used to bypass the learning process. Students are responsible for ensuring the accuracy, originality, and academic integrity of their work.

When AI tools are used, students must clearly disclose how the tool was used (e.g., idea generation, outlining, grammar review, or clarification of concepts). Failure to appropriately disclose AI use or using AI in a manner inconsistent with these guidelines may be considered a violation of academic honesty policies.

Interpretation/Communication (IC) Exercises (10)

These exercises will consist of demonstrating competence in various topics related to interpretation

Book Questions

The questions will cover chapters 1-20. Please respond to each question in a comprehensive yet succinct manner. We expect graduate-level responses.

Full Reports

You will be expected to write three complete psychoeducational reports.

Lecture Notes

You will complete lecture notes for 6 lectures in this course. The notes can be either typed or handwritten. You will submit completed lecture notes into the drop boxes in D2L by due dates, titled the same titles as the corresponding drop box in D2L. Please ensure that you clearly label your notes and submit them in the appropriate Dropbox folder.

Mid-Term Exam

The midterm will cover all the activities and lectures from the 1st half of the semester. Questions will be TF, Multiple Choice, and short answer.

Final Exam

The midterm will cover all the activities and lectures from the 1st half of the semester. Questions will be TF, Multiple Choice, and short answer.

Following Instructions

An educational diagnostician must be able to follow written instructions. You will only receive partial credit or even no credit if you do not follow the instructions. If you do not understand an assignment, it is your responsibility to seek clarification.

Late Work

Late will only be accepted in extreme circumstances (death in the immediate family, illness, etc.). I must be contacted before the assignment due date, and appropriate documentation must be provided. One day late will result in 25% deduction, 2 days, 75%, 3 days or more 100% **(you must turn in ALL assignments to get a passing grade for the class)**.

Make Up Work/Tests

Make up work will only be accepted in extreme circumstances (death in the family, illness, etc.). I must be contacted prior to the due date and appropriate documentation must be provided.

Important Dates

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: Aug 27 [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: Oct 5 [Academic Calendar](#).

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" Nov 23 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

This course is an online course. Students must login to the D2L site for this class at least 2 times each week. Although it is not required, attendance for live zoom meeting is highly recommended. If you are not able to attend the live zoom meeting, it will be recorded for you to view later. Lecture notes for all lectures, live or recorded, are required.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. **Assignments and**

tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.

Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Inclement Weather

This is an online class, so inclement weather will not alter due dates.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

Note: There will not be any “incompletes” given unless there is a documented serious or life-threatening medical issue

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide

appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "*Run. Hide. Fight.*" which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report

to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick
 Title IX Coordinator
 Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
 940-397-4213
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#). Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#).

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

References/Scientifically-Based Research/Additional Readings:

- Alt, M., Gray, S., Hogan, T. P., Schlesinger, N., & Cowan, N. (2019). Spoken word learning differences among children with dyslexia, concomitant dyslexia and developmental language disorder, and typical development. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 50*(4), 540-561.
- Fletcher, J. M., & Miciak, J. (2017). Comprehensive cognitive assessments are not necessary for the identification and treatment of learning disabilities. *Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology, 32*(1), 2-7.
- Fletcher, J. M., & Miciak, J. (2019). *The identification of specific learning disabilities: A summary of research on best practices*. Austin, TX: Texas Center for Learning Disabilities.
- Fuchs, D., Hale, J. B., & Kearns, D. M. (2011). On the Importance of a Cognitive 5/15/2024 9 Processing Perspective: An Introduction. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 44*(2), 99-104.

- Gresham, F. M., & Vellutino, F. R. (2010). What is the role of intelligence in the identification of specific learning disabilities? Issues and clarifications. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 25*(4), 194-206.
- Hale, J., Alfonso, V., Berninger, V., Bracken, B., Christo, C., Clark, E., ...Schultz, E.K. (2010). Critical Issues in response-to-intervention, comprehensive evaluation, and specific learning disabilities identification and intervention: An expert white paper consensus. *Learning Disabilities Quarterly, 33*, 223-236.
- McGill, R. J. & Busse, R. T. (2016). When theory trumps science: A critique of the PSW model for SLD identification. *Contemporary School Psychology, 21*(1), 10-18.
- Miciak, J., Taylor, W. P., Denton, C. A., & Fletcher, J. M. (2015). The effects of achievement test selection on identification of learning disabilities within a pattern of strengths and weaknesses framework. *School Psychology Quarterly, 30*(3). 321-334.
- Peterson, R. L., Boada, R., McGrath, L. M., Willcutt, E. G., Olson, R. K., & Schrank, F. A., Mather, N., & McGrew, K. S. (2014). Technical Manual: Woodcock-Johnson IV. Itasca, IL: Riverside Publishing.
- Schultz, E.K., & Stephens-Pisecco, T.L. (2018). Using the Core-Selective Evaluation Process to identify a PSW: Integrating Research, Practice, and Policy, Special Education Research, Policy & Practice, Fall 2018
- Whittaker, M, & Ortiz, S.O. (2020). What a specific learning disability is not: examining exclusionary factors [White paper]. New York, NY: National Center for Learning Disabilities.
- Woodcock, R.W., Miller, D.C., Maricle, D., & McGill, R.J. (2017). Evidence-Based Selective Assessments for Academic Disorders. School Neuropsych Press: Middletown, MD.

Appendix A: Standards/Competencies/Assignment Alignment

Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency	Assignment
Explain the evaluation process.	I, 001	Exam, Lectures, Reports
Understand ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities of a diagnostician.	II, 002, 007	Exam, Lectures,
Critically examine collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies, and related service personnel.	III, 006	Report Writing
Understand student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.	IV, 002, 004, 005	Exam, Lectures, Interpretation Exercises
Know eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.	V, 001, 002, 007, 008	Exam, Lectures, Interpretation Exercises, Report Writing
Select, administer, and interpret appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.	VI, 002, 007	Exam, Lectures, Interpretation Exercises, Report Writing
Examine of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.	VII, 001,002,003, 004,005,006	Exam, Lectures, Interpretation Exercises, Report Writing, Text Questions
Know skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.	VIII, 006	Lectures, Exams
Synthesize students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.	IX, 002, 005	Report writing
Knows appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.	X, 004, 005	Report writing

Appendix B: Standards/Competencies

Competencies/Standards:

TEA: <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/sbecrules/tac/chapter239/ch239c.html>

Domain I—Identification and Assessment

Competency 001 (Identification for Special Education Evaluation and Services): The Apply knowledge of requirements for identifying students who meet disability criteria and for determining the need for specially designed instruction and related services.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of federal and state criteria and identification procedures for determining students' eligibility for special education services, including all components of Child Find mandate requirements.

Competency 002—(Evaluation, Planning, Selection, and Administration): Apply knowledge of the functions and principles of assessment, assessments used to make educational and instructional decisions about students, and procedures and considerations in selecting and administering appropriate formal and informal assessments for individual students.

For example:

- Demonstrate the ability to choose relevant and appropriate assessments based on the technical quality of the instruments, referral concerns, data needed to make decisions, and individual student characteristics (e.g., ethnic, cultural, linguistic, age, or socioeconomic factors), and demonstrate knowledge of how to ensure fairness and equity in assessment results.
- Apply knowledge of administration and scoring procedures for various standardized assessments (e.g., basal, ceilings, testing the limits) and nonstandardized assessments.
- Apply knowledge of procedures and strategies for effectively collaborating with families and with other professionals in assessing and evaluating students with disabilities.

Competency 003—(Interpretation and Reporting of Evaluation Results): Apply skills for interpreting, reporting, and communicating the results of the Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE).

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the uses and limitations of various types of formal and informal assessment and evaluation data. Uses assessment and evaluation information to assist in identifying.

Domain II- Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

Competency 004—(Academic Instruction and Strategies): Apply knowledge of educational implications of disabilities, appropriate curricula, and instructional strategies, including accommodations, modifications, and interventions, for students with disabilities.

For example:

- Apply knowledge of characteristics and educational implications of disabilities for students of different ages, in various environments, and from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
- Demonstrate knowledge of targeted instructional strategies, technology, and curriculum materials to address the individual needs of students with disabilities within the continuum of services.
- Analyze individual results of assessments, evidence-based practices, interventions, and previous recommendations to assist with making decisions about individualized instruction for students.

Competency 005— (Functional Skill Instruction and Strategies): Understand the use of appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies for developing students' social, behavioral, communication, and adaptive skills.

For example:

- Apply knowledge of functional skills (e.g., social, behavioral, communication, adaptive) that students need in order to participate in and contribute effectively to their school, home, community, and work environments.
- Applies skills for evaluating and interpreting information derived from formal and informal instruments and procedures in the areas of cognitive ability, adaptive behavior, and academic skills.

Domain III—Professional Responsibilities

Competency 006 - (Consultation and Collaboration): Understand strategies and approaches for effective consultation and development of collaborative relationships with students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and other professionals and apply skills for scheduling and management of timelines and reporting requirements.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of effective culturally responsive consultation and collaboration skills (e.g., knowledge of family systems, parents/guardians supporting student development and educational progress).
- Apply understanding of the special education process to assist parents/guardians and school staff in navigating through initial referral,

Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, reevaluations, transition planning.

- Apply knowledge of the roles of students with disabilities, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in collaborating on and planning Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students.
- Apply knowledge of legal and regulatory timelines, schedules, and reporting requirements; methods for maintaining eligibility folders; and strategies for organizing, maintaining, accessing, and storing records.

Competency 007 - (Legal and Ethical Practice): Apply knowledge of professional practices, roles, and responsibilities and the legal and ethical foundations of evaluation related to special education.

For example:

- Apply knowledge of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to the roles and activities of the educational diagnostician, including the assessment and evaluation of individuals with educational needs and The Instructor reserves the right to modify the course content and sequence.
- Apply knowledge of issues, assurances, and due process rights related to evaluation, eligibility, and placement within a continuum of services (e.g., least restrictive environment) and of effective communication with parents/guardians on these issues.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, schools, students, teachers, and other professionals in relation to students' individual learning needs.

Domain IV—Analysis and Response

Competency 008 - (Analysis and Response): In a written response, analyze qualitative and quantitative data to identify a given student's strengths and needs, provide a thorough evaluation, and determine evidence- and research-based recommendations for meeting the student's educational needs.

For example:

- Analyze and interpret assessment information on a given student, including qualitative and quantitative assessment data (e.g., anecdotal notes, student work samples, parent/guardian checklists) from a variety of formal and informal assessments (e.g., cognitive, academic, communicative, social, physical, functional, adaptive, emotional) to identify the student's strengths and needs, including the presence or absence of a disability according to state and federal eligibility criteria. Knows the organizations and publications relevant to the field of educational diagnosis and demonstrates awareness of the importance of engaging in activities that foster professional competence and benefit individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, and/or colleagues.

- Synthesize data and information on the individual student to generate one recommendation for evidence-based instruction and/or intervention.