WILLIAM PATERNSON UNIVERSITY
College of Education
Department of Special Education and Counseling

COURSE OF STUDY

Theme: Preparing Inquiring Educators: Knowledge, Understanding and Application

A. Course Title: SPED 543 Diagnosis of Learning Disabilities
   Credits: 3

B. Course Description: Beginning with an understanding of the nature of learning difficulties as deficits in information processing, this course introduces the theory and application of diagnostic testing of students with disabilities. Through classroom instruction and application of skills in a clinical setting, students become proficient in the administration of technically-sound, culturally sensitive psycho-educational tests and informal measures to determine functioning levels, underlying deficits and learning style in the areas of reading, written language, math and learning abilities. Test selection, administration procedures, interpreting and sharing results orally and in writing, and making recommendations are emphasized. The preparation of an educational evaluation is the capstone project of the course.

C. Prerequisites, Co-Requisites and Restrictions:
   § SPED 542 Foundations of Learning Disabilities

D. Course Objectives: LDT-C Candidates will...
   1. explain the implications for educational diagnosis of selected theories of learning
   2. explain the varied purposes of assessment and differentiate between formal diagnostic testing and functional or teaching assessments
   3. identify and define important concepts and terminology relating to testing: standardization, reliability, validity, standard deviation, standard scores, percentiles, age/grade equivalents, standard error of measurement, criterion-referenced testing, norm-referenced test, etc.
   4. review the NJ CCCS and general education curriculum in order to identify benchmarks of progress at different grade levels
   5. identify by name selected aptitude and achievement tests and the skills they measure.
   6. analyze categories of educational tests and individual measures to determine their advantages and limitations
   7. select standardized tests, based on knowledge of: (a) validity and reliability of the tests, (b) standardization, (c) other technical characteristics of the tests, and (d) presenting problems of the particular child.
8. develop functional assessments that identify levels of academic proficiency in areas of weakness
9. accurately determine the chronological age and grade placement of students
10. demonstrate appropriate social interaction with the student during test administration
11. administer standardized tests correctly
12. score test results accurately, using technology where appropriate
13. summarize and interpret test results in an educationally relevant manner by explaining how the student compares to others of the same age/grade level, functioning levels, patterns of strengths and weaknesses and the relationship between learning ability and achievement.
14. make recommendations for materials, general teaching strategies, remediation of specific skills, use of technology, and adaptations of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that are aligned with the NJ CCCS and appropriate to the student’s grade level and educational placement.
15. communicate diagnostic findings and recommendations clearly in oral and written form
16. examine standardized tests and functional assessments to identify content which may be unfamiliar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds and limits their ability to respond correctly
17. review current legislation governing diagnostic testing
18. adapt tests to accommodate students with disabilities
19. explain procedures for assessing students with limited English proficiency
20. identify procedures and instruments for individuals whose age or functioning level precludes standardized testing.

E. LDT-C Candidate Learning Outcomes: The LDT-C candidate will...
1. plan, and administer an educational diagnostic test battery to a child or adolescent, and prepare a written report describing the scores, interpretation of the results and recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LDT-C Candidate Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>CEC</th>
<th>NJ PTS</th>
<th>NJ CCCS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Evaluation</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8</td>
<td>3.1-3.5, 4.1-4.5, 9.1, 9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Course Content:
1. Learning theory – Developmental, behavioral, cognitive, social learning, information processing
2. Purposes of educational evaluations
3. Standardized, norm-referenced tests and functional, criterion-referenced assessments
4. Statistical methods and reliability and validity procedures for
standardized testing
5. NJ CCCS and general education curriculum
6. Selection, administration, and scoring of standardized educational tests
7. Development, selection, administration and scoring of functional assessments
8. Summarizing and interpreting test results
9. Preparation of recommendations
10. Format for educational evaluations
11. Implications of diversity for educational evaluations
12. Rules and regulations regarding educational evaluations - NJAC 6A: 14
13. Adaptations of tests for student with disabilities
14. Assessment of students with limited English proficiency
15. Assessment of preschoolers and students with moderate and severe disabilities

G. Teaching/Learning Methods:
- Lecture and discussion
- Case studies & review of educational evaluations
- Modeling and practice administrations of instruments
- Clinical experiences in educational assessment
- Preparation of written reports
- Small group discussion

H. Performance-Based Assessment:
1. A written educational evaluation based upon the results of battery of tests administered to a child or adolescent, as assessed on a rubric.
2. Other performance measures as designated by the instructor


J. Preparer’s Name: Peter Griswold, Ed. D.

K. Department Approval Date: PENDING

L. Current Revision: N/A

M. Current Department Approval Date: N/A

N. Selected Bibliography:
Beery, K. E. (2005). Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (5th ed.). Austin, TX: PRO-ED.


**Bibliography** (References)


