

Assessment #2 CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: Masters in Special Education Comprehensive Examination

1. Description of Assessment: Students complete comprehensive examinations before graduation when they have completed 30+ hours of coursework. Questions are developed for the following key areas: (1) Knowledge and Applications of Evaluation Procedures; (2) Knowledge and Application of Laws; (3) Knowledge and Understanding of Learners with Disabilities including Cultural and Linguistic Diversity; (4) Knowledge and Application of Learning Theory; (5) Knowledge of Current Issues in Special Education; (6) Demonstration of Best Practices in Evaluation; Interpretation, and Intervention. The students have two weeks to develop written answers to questions on their comprehensive examinations. After faculty members have evaluated written comprehensive examinations, then an oral examination is scheduled to address specific areas of weaknesses on the comprehensive examinations. Successful performance on this assessment is based on a percentage rate of 75% or better. The examination measures prerequisite knowledge and skills as an entry level educational diagnostician as well as the measurement of content measured in the beginning level special educator standards.

2. A description of how this assessment specifically aligns with the standards it is cited for in Section III.

Students are given 6 questions to respond to as indicated:

Question (1) is selected from Knowledge and Application of Evaluation Procedures. The content of this question is aligned to **CEC standard 8** – Assessment; specifically ED8S1; ED8S4; and ED8S11; ICC8K8K3; ICC8S3; ICC8S5; ICC8S6; ICC8S8; ICC8S9; ICC8S10; and GC8S4.

Question (2) is selected from Knowledge and Application of Laws. The content of this question is aligned to **CEC standard 1**- Foundations; specifically ED1K2; ICC1K1; ICC1K4; ICC1K5; ICC1K7; CG1K1; and GC1K5

Question (3) is selected from Knowledge and Understanding of Learners with Disabilities including Cultural and Linguistic Diversity. The content of this question is aligned to **CEC Standard 2**- Development and Characteristics of Learners; specifically ED2K2; ICC2K2; ICC2K3; ICC2K4; ICC2K6; GC2K1; GC2K2; GC2K3; and GC2K4. In addition, this question is aligned to **CEC Standard 3**- Individual Learning Differences; specifically ED3K1; ICC3K2; and ICC3K5.

Question (4) is selected from Knowledge and Application of Learning Theory. The content of this question is aligned to **CEC Standard 1** – Foundations; specifically ED1K1; ICC1K1; ICC1K5; and ICC1S1. In addition, this question is aligned to **CEC Standard 4**- Instructional Strategies; specifically, ICC4K1; ICC4S2; ICC4S3; ICC4S4; GC4K2; and GC4S2.

Question (5) is selected from Knowledge of Current Issues in Special Education. The content of this question is aligned to **CEC Standard 4** – Instructional Strategies; specifically, ICC4K1; and ICC4S4. In addition, this question is aligned to **CEC Standard 5**- Learning Environments and Social Interactions; specifically, ICC5K4; ICC5S1; ICC5S2; ICC5S3; ICC5S8; GC5K1; and GC5S3.

Question (6) is selected from Demonstration of Best Practices in Evaluation, Interpretation, and Intervention. The content of this question is aligned to **CEC standard 8** – Assessing Basic Academic Skills; specifically ED8S3: Score assessment instruments accurately; ED8S4: Select or

modify appropriate assessment procedures and instruments to ensure non-biased results; ED8K7; ED8S11; ED8S12; ICC8K2; ICC8K3; ICC8S1; ICC8S2; ICC8S5; ICC8S6; ICC8S8; ICC8S9; and ICC8S10.

3.A brief analysis of the data findings

As noted in the Comprehensive Exam Data Table, and the Rubric correlated with it, candidates scores (percentages) over the past three and one half years show improvement in many areas, yet also show a decline in specific domains, specifically in 2006 when only 70% of candidates met the expectation under Best Practices in Evaluation, Intervention and Interpretation. This domain correlates with Standard 8. However, Domain 1 correlates with Standard 8 and candidates did extremely well with a 92% meeting or exceeding the standard assessed in 2006. The inconsistency in results, especially with the decline in the area of assessment interpretation in 2006 was evaluated further and it was concluded that candidates responded well to knowledge and application of evaluation procedures, but struggled with responses pertaining to interpretation of assessment. This was most likely contributed to the discussion regarding a change in the determination of eligibility. Much confusion existed on to how to respond to questions. Many candidates responded according to the existing state eligibility criteria while others responded to the projected plan for determining eligibility. This, of course, was reflected over several domains. At oral examinations, those candidates who responded to the question using projected eligibility criteria were asked to respond again based on current state rules and regulations. This information was clarified prior to the distribution of the following years comprehensive examinations. This was primarily because the adoption of the new rules and regulations had yet to occur. In addition, specific assessment questions of both exemplary and weak responses were reviewed for a variety of components including validity and cultural bias. After oral exams, 100 % of candidates in 2006 and 2007 met the standard measured by each of the domains. The data above also required the program area to focus on content throughout our coursework that deals specifically with interpreting data results and linking such results to learning differences when designing interventions. Since this time, new state rules and regulations have been adopted and these rules and regulations are now being embedded into coursework.

4.An interpretation of how that data provides evidence for meeting standards

The specifics of the data analysis are provided in number three above; however, the percentages above indicate that most candidates (85%-96%) attained or exceeded the expected program level of proficiency for CEC standards 1,2,3,4, 5 & 8. In each of the measured domains the range of scores meeting or exceeding levels of proficiency were 70%-100% with the year 2008 results indicating improvement in overall performance with 100% of candidates meeting or exceeding expected program area level of proficiency.

5(a) the assessment tool or description of the assignment

Students complete comprehensive examinations before graduation when they have completed 30+ hours of coursework. Questions are developed for the following key areas: (1) Knowledge and Applications of Evaluation Procedures; (2) Knowledge and Application of Laws; (3) Knowledge and Understanding of Learners with Disabilities including Cultural and Linguistic Diversity; (4) Knowledge and Application of Learning Theory; (5) Knowledge of Current Issues in Special Education; (6) Demonstration of Best Practices in Evaluation; Interpretation, and Intervention. The students have two weeks to develop written answers to questions on their comprehensive examinations. After faculty members have evaluated written comprehensive examinations, then an oral examination is scheduled to address specific areas of weaknesses on the comprehensive examinations. Successful performance on this assessment is based on a percentage rate of 75% or better. The examination measures prerequisite knowledge and skills as an entry level educational diagnostician as well as the measurement of content measured in the beginning level special educator standards.

A sample question for each of the Domains assessed is below. Alignment between questions and standards can be found on scoring rubric and narrative.

Sample of Question 1: Hannah is a five-year-old girl with cerebral palsy who has been served non-categorical early childhood (NCEC) since age three. She has been enrolled in a state-recognized inclusive early education program since age three and is nearing her sixth birthday. It is now April and her family has moved into your district. They expect her to be in an inclusive kindergarten next year and are very apprehensive about her upcoming evaluation. Records from her last school indicate that she attended half-day classes.

Hannah is able to produce 12 one-symbol utterances on her DynaVox which was purchased by her family. Her family provides for all of her occupational and physical therapy needs through a private therapy firm using a neurodevelopment approach. Hannah enjoys the company of her peers and is a very sociable young lady who smiles responsively, laughs at appropriate times, and taps peers on the shoulder for attention. Hannah is able to remove food with her lips from a spoon held by an adult, indicate when she needs a diaper change, and drink from a straw. She is able to use her hands to indicate one of two choices by touching the preferred object. She follows these simple directions: open your mouth, close your eyes, hold your head up, raise your hand, and give me five.

Discuss the following:(1) an appropriate evaluation for Hannah, (2) a quality program designed to meet her academic needs and (3) the steps that the school should take to ensure that a quality program will be sustained for Hannah.

Sample of Question 2: Federal law states that public school districts must develop and provide appropriate special education services for all eligible children between the ages of 3 and 21. States are required to identify and evaluate children from birth to age 21 even if the state does not provide educational services in the 3 to 5 age range. Discuss your school district's special education program for the age group of birth to 3 years and the group of 3 to 5 years. Consider the following in your discussion: (1) How does your district go about finding children in the community who may have disabilities? (Child Find); (2) Discuss the various services available for each age range. (3) Is there a method that transitions children when they turn 3 into a different program?

Sample of Question 3: Compare and contrast the characteristics and needs of children with mental retardation, learning disabilities, and emotional and behavioral disorders by defining and describing each of the following: Eligibility and etiology; Developmental characteristics including physical and health issues; Best practices in assessment and evaluation; Learning traits and styles; Best practices in instructional strategies; and A discussion of the role of families and additional support systems

Sample of Question 4: Design an instructional program for Rick, a fourth-grade student with Learning Disabilities in Reading and Written Language. He demonstrates difficulties in the following areas: basic literacy skills, use of cognitive processes, motivation, and application of skills in other academic content areas. State your: (1) theoretical perspective supporting the rationale for selecting the specific approaches, (2) informal assessments chosen for instruction, (3) and the expected outcomes.

Sample of Question 5: Discuss the philosophy of inclusion and how it has developed historically. Include a discussion of: (a) the philosophical underpinnings of inclusion; (b) the evolution of inclusion over the past 30 years; (c) best practices in inclusion; (d) administrative support for inclusion; (e) related services; and (f) the philosophy of inclusion versus LRE.

Sample of Question 6: Miguel is a 13-year-old boy in the sixth grade. He was retained in first grade because of reading problems. The family moved several times during his first grade year due to the break-up of his mother's marriage with his abusive stepfather. Miguel has been a poor reader since he began school. When he was younger he took Ritalin for hyperactivity, but it had little effect on his behavior. He was tested for special education in second grade but was not eligible even though he was still reading at a readiness level. Currently, he reads at the 3rd grade level. Math is at the fifth grade level.

When Miguel was younger he had very disruptive behavior in the classroom. Now he slouches in the back of the room and refuses to work. He is not disruptive if left alone. He mostly draws and sketches Goth type drawings. He says that school sucks and he can't wait until he is old enough to quit. Lately, his art teacher has suspected that he may be smoking cigarettes and marijuana due to the smell of his clothing. His mother also has been very elusive at home, and he has been hanging out with older kids in the apartments where they live. He is physically more mature than the other sixth graders. At home, Miguel has experienced severe mood swings and has difficulty sleeping. He confided in his art teacher that he has racing thoughts, feels wired, and feels like crying for no reason. His mother has trouble getting him up for school in the morning, but so far is managing to get him there by waking him up long before the bus comes.

Miguel lives with his mother, older sister, and older brother. Although the family speaks Spanish, the parents both speak English and were schooled in the U.S. one the Home Language Survey, English was checked as the primary home language. His father left when he was an infant. Miguel's mother is a waitress at a local steakhouse and works nights. The children stay with their aunt while their mother is at work. Money is always a problem and the children have little access to medical care. Miguel has severe allergies and middle ear problems but no access to medical care since his mother is among the "working poor". His mother helps him with his school work when she can, but Miguel rarely asks for help anymore. She feels like she is losing

him, but does not know what to do. His sister is married and has a baby but still lives at home, and his brother is in a technical program for computer servicing and is doing well.

Design an evaluation and intervention for Morris. Be sure to include the following: (a) formal and informal evaluation procedures; (b) possible diagnoses for Miguel; (c) interventions for the classroom, both general and special education; (d) possible related services; and (e) supports for the family and community.

Special Education/ Educational Diagnostician Comprehensive Exam

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Special Education (M.Ed. – Educational Diagnostician)

Answer each question as thoughtfully and completely as possible. Your paper should be based on research and best practice, not on local district implementation. Opinions should be supported by citations from appropriate journals and texts. Your goal is to demonstrate understanding of current principles and practices as well as command of exemplary resources in special education which are cited in your answers. Length of answers should be a minimum of 8 pages per each question.

Write the question at the beginning of your answer. At the end of each answer, include a list of references which should include research articles. While resources from the worldwide web may be cited occasionally, the majority of your references should consist of articles from current educational journals. A minimum of ten references are required for each question.

Use APA format for each question including in-text citations and references. Submit your answers in a notebook with dividers between each of the questions. Make sure your name is on the first page of your notebook.

Be aware that some questions contain multiple parts. Each part of the question must be answered completely. Comprehensive exam questions are aligned specifically to CEC Beginning Level Educational Diagnostician and CEC Generalized Individual Curriculum Standards. Each part of the question may address different standards; therefore omitting one part of the question would not accurately reflect your knowledge of all standards assessed.

The following codes indicate the alignment between the Accountability domains and the scoring rubric. Each question is preceded by the course number which most closely represents where course content was obtained.

All comprehensive exams should be submitted on the scheduled date. No examinations will be accepted late. All exams are mailed certified mail and dated. DO not ask to pick up exams on campus.

CODES FOR QUESTIONS:

Course Number. Question number. Accountability Domain (ex. 535.Q1.Issues)

Evaluation	=	Domain 1: Knowledge and Application of Evaluation Procedures
Laws	=	Domain 2: Knowledge and Application of Laws
Characteristics	=	Domain 3: Knowledge and Understanding of Learners with Disabilities
Theory	=	Domain 4: Knowledge and Application of Learning Theory
Issues	=	Domain 5: Knowledge of Current Issues in Special Education
Practice	=	Domain 6: Demonstration of Best Practices in Evaluation, Interpretation, and Intervention

5(b) the scoring guide for the assessment:

Assessment # 2 Comprehensive Examinations Evaluation

Area	Criteria	Credit 0/1/2	Points
Knowledge and Application of Evaluation Procedures (Case Study) Question# _____ Evaluator: _____ ED8S1,ED8S4, ED8S11,ICC8K3, ICC8S2,ICC8S3, ICC8S4,ICC8S5, ICC8S6, ICC8S8, ICC8S9,ICC8S10, GC8S3, GC8S4 Conceptual Framework: CF1,CF4	Provides rationale for evaluation	2 = rationale is specific & appropriate 1 = rationale lacks 1 feature 0 =lacks both features	
	Uses variety of appropriate methods	2 = uses 3+ methods 1 = uses 2 methods 0 = uses 1 method	
	Evaluation is matched to learner characteristics	2=closely matched to learner 1= matched to learner 0= not matched to learner	
	Demonstrates insightful interpretation of evaluation	2= Interpretation individually determined, accurate 1= Interprets based on numbers only, accurate 0 not accurate	
	Uses multiple appropriate resources	2= 5 or more related journal articles 1= 3-4 related journal articles 0= less than 3 related journals	
Knowledge and Application of Laws Question# _____ Evaluator: _____ ED1K2,ICC1K1 ICC1K4,ICC1K5, ICC1K7,GC1K1, GC1K5 Conceptual Framework: CF1	Demonstrates knowledge of current laws	2= answer reflects current laws accurately & explicitly 1= answer reflects current laws 0= major omission or misconception	
	Demonstrates understanding of multiple interpretations of law	2 = states 2 or more ways that law can be interpreted 1 = states 1 way law is interpreted 0 = major omission or misunderstanding of law	
	Demonstrates knowledge of how laws affect multiple systems	2 = explains how issue affects 3+ systems (schools, families, adult services, society) 1= explains how issue affects 2+ system 0 = = explains how issue affects 1 system	
	Applies laws appropriately to specified situations	2 = Law is accurately and insightfully applied 1 = Law is accurately applied 0 = Major misunderstanding of law	
	Uses multiple appropriate resources	2= 5 or more related journal articles 1= 3-4 related journal articles 0= less than 3 related journals	

Knowledge and Understanding of Learners with Disabilities Question# _____ Evaluator: _____ ED2K2,ICC2K2, ICC2K3, ICC2K4 ICC2K6,GC2K1 GC2K2,GC2K3 GC2K4,ED3K1 ICC3K2,ICC3K5 Conceptual Framework: CF1,CF5	Demonstrates knowledge of characteristics of disabilities	2 = Accurate understanding of disability 1 = Basic understanding of disability 0 = Major misunderstanding of disability	
	Demonstrates knowledge of how disabilities affect multiple areas	2 = States how disability affects 3+ areas: academic, social, physical, vocational, family 1 = States how disability affects 1- 2 areas 0 = Not addressed	
	Demonstrates knowledge of educational needs	2 = Educational recommendations are specific, comprehensive 1 = Recommendations are appropriate 0 = Recommendations are general or not appropriate	
	Demonstrates knowledge of families and support systems	2 = Demonstrates understanding of involvement of families and support system 1 = Addresses families and support system 0 = Not addressed	
	Uses multiple appropriate resources	2= 5 or more related journal articles 1= 3-4 related journal articles 0= less than 3 related journals	
Knowledge and Application of Learning Theory Question# _____ Evaluator: _____ ED1K1,ICC1K1, ICC1K5,ICC1S1, ICC4K,ICC4S2, ICC4S3,ICC4S4, GC4K2 Conceptual Framework: CF1	Demonstrates depth of knowledge of learning theory	2= explains theory thoroughly, accurately 1= basic explanation of theory 0= explains but misses 2 or more major concepts	
	Demonstrates knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of theories	2= explains both strengths and weaknesses clearly 1= explains strengths and weaknesses 0= does not address both strengths and weaknesses	
	Provides examples of impact/implications for students	2= Provides 2+ examples of impact/implications for students 1= Provides 1 example 0= Not addressed	
	Applies theory to current practices	2= clearly explains how theory affects current practices 1= explains generally how theory affects practice 0= does not apply to current practices	
	Uses multiple appropriate resources	2= 5 or more related journal articles 1= 3-4 related journal articles 0= less than 3 related journals	

Knowledge of Current Issues in Special Education Question# _____ Evaluator: _____ ICC4K1,ICC4S4, ICC5K4, ICC5S1, ICC5S2,ICC5S3 ICC5S8,GC5K1 GC5S3 Conceptual Framework: CF1,CF2	Demonstrates accurate knowledge of current issues	2= Issue is clearly and accurately explained 1 = Issue is generally accurate 0 = Not addressed	
	Demonstrates knowledge of how issues impact learners and systems	2= Impact is clearly and accurately explained 1 = Impact is explained 0 = Not addressed	
	Demonstrates understanding of implications for schools	2= Implications is clearly and accurately explained 1 = Implications are explained 0 = Not addressed	
	Demonstrates understanding of positive and negative aspects of issues	2= Clearly explains positive and negative impact 1 = Addresses positive and negative impacts 0 = Not addressed	
	Uses multiple appropriate resources	2= 5 or more related journal articles 1= 3-4 related journal articles 0= less than 3 related journals	
Demonstration of Best Practices in Evaluation, Interpretation, and Intervention (Case Study) Question# _____ Evaluator: _____ ED8S3, ED8S4, ED8K7, ED8S11, ED8S12, ICC8K2, ICC8K3, ICC8S1,ICC8S2, ICC8S5,ICC8S6, ICC8S8,ICC8S9, ICC8S10 Conceptual Framework: CF1,CF4	Applies knowledge of best practices to case study	2= Application of best practices are explained clearly 1= Application of best practices are addressed 0= Not explained	
	Evaluates learner using best practices	2= Best practices in evaluation are used and clearly explained 1= Best practices in evaluation are addressed 0= Not explained or used	
	Interprets evaluation according to best practices	2= Interpretation is accurate and specific 1= Interpretation is accurate 0= Interpretation is not accurate	
	Plans interventions according to best practices	2= Intervention is specific and related to evaluation 1= Intervention is general and related to evaluation 0= Intervention is not related to evaluation	
	Uses multiple appropriate resources	2= 5 or more related journal articles 1= 3-4 related journal articles 0= less than 3 related journals	
			Total /60

Interpretation of Scoring Criteria:

Component	Standards	Point Range	Interpretive Category
Knowledge and Applications of Evaluation Procedures Conceptual Framework: CF1 CF4	8- ED8S1,ED8S4,ED8S11,ICC8K3, ICC8S2,ICC8S3,ICC8S4,ICC8S5,ICC8S6, ICC8S8,ICC8S9,ICC8S10,GC8S3, GC8S4	7-10 4-6 0-3	Exceeds Expectations Meets Expectations Expectations Not Met
Knowledge and Application of Laws Conceptual Framework: CF1	1- ED1K2,ICC1K1,ICC1K4,ICC1K5, ICC1K7,GC1K1,GC1K5	7-10 4-6 0-3	Exceeds Expectations Meets Expectations Expectations Not Met
Knowledge and Understanding of Learners with Disabilities Conceptual Framework: CF1 CF5	2,3- ED2K2,ICC2K2,ICC2K3, ICC2K4 ICC2K6,GC2K1,GC2K2,GC2K3 GC2K4,ED3K1,ICC3K2,ICC3K5	7-10 4-6 0-3	Exceeds Expectations Meets Expectations Expectations Not Met
Knowledge and Application of Learning Theory Conceptual Framework: CF1	1,4- ED1K1,ICC1K1,ICC1K5,ICC1S1,ICC4K,ICC4S2 ICC4S3,ICC4S4,GC4K2	7-10 4-6 0-3	Exceeds Expectations Meets Expectations Expectations Not Met
Knowledge of Current Issues in Special Education Conceptual Framework: CF1 CF2	4,5- ICC4K1,ICC4S4, ICC5K4, ICC5S1, ICC5S2,ICC5S3,ICC5S8,GC5K1 GC5S3	7-10 4-6 0-3	Exceeds Expectations Meets Expectations Expectations Not Met
Demonstration of Best Practices in Evaluation; Interpretation, and Intervention Conceptual Framework: CF1 CF4	8- ED8S3, ED8S4, ED8K7, ED8S11, ED8S12, ICC8K2, ICC8K3,ICC8S1,ICC8S2, ICC8S5,ICC8S6,ICC8S8,ICC8S9,ICC8S10	7-10 4-6 0-3	Exceeds Expectations Meets Expectations Expectations Not Met

