Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology

Assessment and Data Based Decision Making  
Course Number 18:820:526  
Spring 2023

Online  
Canvas Site: https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/228891

Instructor:
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Office: Psychology A345
Office Hours: by appointment only

Course Format & Canvas Site:

As a fully online course, learning, discussion, activities and assignments are all delivered in an asynchronous format. Students will complete weekly learning modules, participate in discussions, and complete course assignments at their own pace within course deadlines. The semester is split up into 3, 5-week units. These units are developed to assist with time management and easy navigation of course assignments. Each unit will consist of a series of discussion questions and brief writing assignments. Units and corresponding assignments are described in more detail in the ‘Course Calendar” and “Assignments” sections below.

There is a Q & A Parking Lot set up on Canvas where students can ask general questions about the course requirements, materials, assignments, and anything else that would be beneficial for everyone in the class to know. There will also be two virtual “meet-ups” scheduled over the course of the semester, one at the end of the first and second units for one hour each. These “meet-ups” are not mandatory, but are scheduled for the purpose of meeting each other, answering questions, and/or general discussion on MTSS topics of interest. Students can log in to the Canvas website using their Rutgers RUID and password. The URL for this course is: https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/228891. If you have any difficulties with Canvas, please go to the “Technology Support” section in the syllabus for Canvas Help Desk information and resources.

Purpose of the Course:

The purpose of this course is to provide students with the foundational knowledge and applied skills required to engage in multiple forms of assessment used within a MTSS framework, and to use data collected from such assessments to guide decision making and consultation at the individual and systems levels. This course will help students learn the basics of educational and behavioral measurement, assessment, and evaluation, and will familiarize students with current best-practices in data-based decision making. It is expected that students completing this course will be able to translate findings from research into data practices that guide and improve services for all learners.

Revised 1/14/23
Key learning objectives:

- Students will know the differences between measurement, assessment, and evaluation, plus the ways in which each is used throughout MTSS frameworks.
- Students will be able to define and explain the four basic methods of assessment, and the four common sources of information for assessments in school systems.
- Students will be able to demonstrate comprehension of the basic concepts in educational and behavioral measurement (reliability, validity).
- Students will become critical users of educational and behavioral tests or assessment procedures, and will become critical consumers of assessment research.
- Students will be able to guide and administer school-wide screening processes for student academic and behavioral outcomes, and be able to interpret the results of screening assessment to plan and evaluate instruction/intervention.
- Students will be able to administer and use general outcome measures to monitor student progress in different contexts and skill areas; students will be able to train other school staff on administration of said measures.
- Students will be able to select, administer, and interpret various assessments useful for diagnosing instructional or behavioral/intervention needs.
- Based on their technical knowledge of data collection, common assessment instruments, interpretation of data, and knowledge of MTSS, students will understand how to evaluate a LEA's implementation of MTSS.

Readings, Assignments, Grading, and Course Expectations

Required Textbook:

The textbook for this class was selected for its practical application and usefulness beyond the timeframe of this course. Additional readings (in PDF format) will be posted on the course website in the “Readings” folder for each week of class. It is recommended that students begin their weekly online learning with the assigned readings.


NOTE: eBook version is available at Rutgers Library: The Data Driven School: Collaborating to Improve Student Outcomes

Online Readings and Other Media:

In addition to chapters assigned from the textbook, supplemental readings, presentations, videos and other media will be assigned for each week. Students can find these readings embedded within the weekly modules. Once a module is released, you will have access to the readings. You can also find the readings listed by week in the “Files” tab on Canvas.

Revised 1/14/23
Assignments:

Assignments for this course will be utilized to demonstrate your knowledge, skills, and abilities in the area of Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making. Due to the nature of the course most assignments will require some type of written response. Additionally, page guidelines are provided to assist students to keep responses focused and manageable. Papers should not be less than the minimum or stray too far from the maxim page requirements. Below you will find basic descriptions of each assignment. More detailed information can be found on the course website within the weekly modules. All written assignments should include citations along with a reference section at the end of the paper/posting. All written assignments should be submitted using the standard APA style.

Reflective Journal Entries (Word Document/1-2 pages): This is your opportunity to address issues that are important to you or raise questions to your particular area of interest. Entry topics will be assigned and linked to readings or other course materials. Responses should be research-based (where possible), thought-provoking, and include well-constructed ideas. This is also an opportunity for direct instruction-student interaction. I will respond to your entries and then you will have 48 hours to address my comments and questions.

Threaded Discussions (Completed in the “Discussion” section on Canvas/3-4 paragraphs): Threaded Discussions are a key aspect of the course allowing for you to interact with your peers concerning important issues that relate to assessment and data-based decision making. Your objective is to post well developed, research-based concepts while remaining focused on the assigned discussion topic. Please note, Threaded Discussions are the only assignments with 3-internal due dates. For each Threaded Discussion students are required to complete the following within the assigned week:

➢ Due Date 1: Post an initial response to the posted questions.
➢ Due Date 2: Respond to three of your classmates initial responses
➢ Due Date 3: Review your classmates' responses to your initial post and respond to three of them.

Video/Report Reaction Papers (Word Document/1-2 Pages): Critiques of assigned videos and/or national reports should be concise, well-thought out, research-based and reflective of your position on the issues as addressed.

Assessment and DBDM Challenge Questions (Word Document/2-3 pages): Responses to challenge questions should focus on your critical interpretations of significant implications from the readings and provide research support for your positions. Papers should not simply restate or summarize the readings.

Unit Assignments (Format based on Assignment): Unit assignments are project-based and allow students to apply some aspect of what they have learned within a unit. Assignment format will vary for each unit such as a PowerPoint presentation, creating a protocol, or program plan.

Revised 1/14/23
**Determination of Course Grades:**

**Grading Criteria:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Introduction (1)</td>
<td>5 Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflective Journal Article (3)</td>
<td>90 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaded Discussion (3)</td>
<td>90 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Reaction Paper (3)</td>
<td>90 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Question (3)</td>
<td>75 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Assignment (3)</td>
<td>150 Points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grading will follow Rutgers’ criteria:

- **A** 450-500
- **B+** 425-449
- **B** 400-424
- **C** 350-399
- **F** 0-349

**Student Feedback:** Students will be provided with regularly through the grading of assignments and the student-instructor interaction during the reflective Journal Entry Assignment. Students are encouraged to contact me if they have any questions or concerns regarding their performance in the course.

**Course Rubrics:** Rubrics are available for each type of assignment utilized throughout the course for the purpose of setting assignment expectations and to guide students through each assignment. Prior to beginning assignments, students should review the corresponding rubric.

**Late Assignments:** Assignments and discussion posts/responses are to be submitted by 11:59 on the date they are due. Any assignment that is not submitted on time will be considered late and one day will be added for each additional 24 hours until the assignment is submitted. There will be a deduction of 5 points per day for late assignments. Late assignments must be emailed directly to the instructor. Please note that discussion questions are time sensitive and will be inaccessible once the deadline has passed.

**Course Expectations:**

- ✔ All assignments must be completed on time. As noted previously, assignments received after due dates will receive a 5-point reduction per day.
- ✔ All Submissions are to be made directly on the Canvas course site in the designated area.
- ✔ All written assignments, including discussions, should include proper citations throughout and a reference section at the end to the body of work.
- ✔ APA Style 6th Edition must be used with all written assignments. See link to most up to date APA version: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/).
- ✔ The quality of student writing (see rubrics) will be considered in the grade. Please write in a formal (rather than conversational) manner. Review all written assignments to correct/address grammatical errors.
- ✔ All students must review the Rutgers University policy on academic integrity (see link below).

Revised 1/14/23
# Course Calendar, Topics, Readings and Assignments:

Learning objectives for this course have been arranged within “units” (displayed in the tables below). For each unit, you will find the learning objectives and type of assignment due each week. Readings, presentations, and videos have been assigned for each week and can be found by week on the home page. The dates and contents of lectures are estimated based on class mastery of materials and are subject to change as determined by the instructor. Every effort will be made to minimize these changes and students will be notified of any changes in a timely manner.

## UNIT 1 (Weeks 1-5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Learning Objectives/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1:</strong> 1/17/23</td>
<td>Learning objectives for the week include:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Course Overview &amp; Introduction to Online Environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Introduction to Multi-Tiered System of Support</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Talking about data, defining assessment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Assessment for learning: Summative &amp; formative assessment/evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ The four purposes of assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>➢ Student Introductions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Reflective Journal Entry</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2:</strong> 1/24/23</td>
<td>Learning objectives for the week include:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Using a problem solving model to guide DBDM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ The four methods &amp; four sources of assessment (RIOT &amp; ICEL)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Questions that need answering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>➢ Threaded Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3:</strong> 1/31/23</td>
<td>Learning objectives for the week include:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse populations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>➢ Challenge Question</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4:</strong> 2/7/23</td>
<td>Learning objectives for the week include:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Review of Reliability &amp; Validity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Characteristics &amp; Validation of Screening Assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>➢ Video/Report Reaction Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5:</strong> 2/14/23</td>
<td>Learning objectives for the week include:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Using screening assessment to identify levels of academic or social, emotional need.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Selection of Screening Assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>➢ Unit 1 Assignment: Protocol for Assessment Selection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## UNIT 2 (Weeks 6-10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Learning Objectives/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 6:</strong> 2/21/23</td>
<td>Learning objectives for the week include:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Universal Screening for Academics, Behavior, and Social Emotional Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>➢ Reflective Journal Entry</td>
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***A Mid-course feedback survey will be posted for students to provide feedback about the course thus far in the semester. I will share the results with students the following week.***

Revised 1/14/23
| Week 7: 2/28/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Introduction to behavioral assessment  
▶ Class-wide behavioral assessment  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Threaded Discussion |
| Week 8: 3/7/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Tier 1 data to plan and evaluate instruction  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Challenge Question |
| **Spring Break 3/11/23 to 3/19/23** |
| Week 9: 3/21/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Introduction to progress monitoring with General Outcome Measures (GOMs)  
▶ Example GOMs for general outcomes in literacy, mathematics  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Video/Report Reaction Paper |
| Week 10: 3/28/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Diagnostic assessment (Curriculum-Based Assessment for Instructional Design)  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Unit 2 Assignment: District Assessment Toolkit Review |

### Unit 3 (Weeks 11-15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Learning Objectives/Assignments</th>
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| Week 11: 4/4/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Using Tier 1 data to plan and evaluate instruction/prevention programming  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Reflective Journal Entry |
| Week 12: 4/11/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Reviewing existing assessment practices in school districts  
**Assignments:**  
▶ Threaded Discussion |
| Week 13: 4/18/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Communicating about data with leadership & community  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Challenge Question |
| Week 14: 4/25/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Evaluating MTSS implementation and needs for training/development  
▶ Evaluating MTSS Outcomes  
**Assignments:**  
▶ Video/Report Reaction Paper |
| Week 15: 5/2/23 | Learning objectives for the week include:  
▶ Building Capacity for a Data Driven School  
**Assignment:**  
▶ Unit 3 Assignment: Data Driven School Plan |

Revised 1/14/23
**Additional Course Information:**

**Names and Pronouns:** Class rosters are provided with student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Person-First Language:** Please refer to the APA Publication Manual (7th Edition, Section 5.4) for guidelines related to using person first or identify first language when writing and speaking about individuals with disabilities and/or special needs ([https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability))

**Respect for Diversity:** The intention of this course is to serve students from all backgrounds and perspectives, remaining respectful of diversity including gender identity, disability, sexuality, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Suggestions for making the course or content more inclusive are welcomed.

In addition to student learning in the area of Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making, it is my intent to assist students with developing their own values and beliefs about equity, diversity and inclusion. Leading with moral purpose is about developing a belief system based on one’s personal experiences as well as the experiences of those populations we serve. It is essential to continuing efforts to break down discrimination and exclusionary practices. In working with students, I will support their growth in this area through encouragement of critical self-reflection and continuous examination of situations from the perspectives of others.

**Academic Dishonesty and Unprofessional Conduct:** Students are expected to abide by the APA Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct and the ethical code of conduct and policies regarding academic dishonesty/plagiarism. The University’s academic integrity policy, to which this class will adhere, can be reviewed at: [https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/](https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/)

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture handouts, videos, assessments (papers, projects, assignments), in class materials may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have the instructor’s explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. Rutgers is aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported.

Plagiarism is taken very seriously at Rutgers. If you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise, you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course.

**Student Success:** The faculty and staff at Rutgers are committed to your success. Students who are successful tend to seek out resources that enable them to excel academically, maintain their health and wellness, prepare for future careers, navigate college life and finances, and connect with the RU community. Resources that can help you succeed and connect with the Rutgers community can be found at [Student Success](https://studentsuccess.rutgers.edu) and [Student Support | Rutgers University](https://studentsupport.rutgers.edu)
Technology Support:
- Canvas HelpDesk email: help@canvas.rutgers.edu
- Canvas HelpDesk phone number: 877-361-1134 (Available 24/7)
- Link to Canvas Student Orientation Tutorial
- Link to Canvas Student Guide

Disability Accommodation: 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: Documentation Guidelines | Office of Disability Services. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you and your instructor with a Letter of Accommodations. Please discuss the accommodations with your instructors as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the registration form.

Course Evaluation: Rutgers University issues a survey that evaluates both the course and instructor. Students will complete this survey toward the end of the semester, and students’ identities cannot be connected to their responses. The aggregated numerical results are public, and the numerical results and comments are shared with the instructor, and GSAPP. This survey will also be used by GSAPP to conduct a mid-point evaluation, the results of which are confidential to the instructor and school.

Land Acknowledgement:
“The land upon which we gather is part of the traditional territory of the Lenni-Lenape, called "Lenapehoking." The Lenape People lived in harmony with one another upon this territory for thousands of years. During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed west and north, but some also remain among the continuing historical tribal communities of the region: The Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation; the Ramapough Lenape Nation; and the Powhatan Renape Nation, The Nanticoke of Millsboro Delaware, and the Lenape of Cheswold Delaware. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory. In our acknowledgment of the continued presence of Lenape people in their homeland, we affirm the aspiration of the great Lenape Chief Tamanend, that there be harmony between the indigenous people of this land and the descendants of the immigrants to this land, “as long as the rivers and creeks flow, and the sun, moon, and stars shine.”

For more information about the Lenape Tribal Nation, please visit Our History – Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation