

**EDCI 520 - Section 002**  
**Assessment of Language Learners**

**SPRING 2010**

Thursdays, 7:20 - 10 p.m      Innovation Hall, Rm. 205

**Associate Professor**

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**Office Hours**          Thurs., 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. and by appointment on Mondays

***If you are going to miss class or be late today:***      TEL: (703) 993-2050  
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**Course Prerequisites**

Candidates admitted to the ESL and FL Initial Teacher Licensure Programs and to the Multilingual/Multicultural Education M.Ed. degree programs are ***required to have completed at least EDCI 516 and EDCI 519 (ESL Methods) or 560 (FL Methods)***. If you have not yet completed the prerequisite courses or are not in any of these programs, *you may not enroll in this course without my written approval.*

**Course Description**

This graduate course provides an introduction to basic principles and current and innovative approaches to **classroom-based assessment of language learning students in ESL, bilingual education, foreign language, and grade-level classrooms in Grades PreK-12, Adult Education, and University programs**. The principles introduced in this course *are also applicable to native speakers of English in general education classrooms.*

Among the topics addressed are: applying research on language acquisition and teaching to instruction and assessment; embedding assessment of oral language, reading, and writing in daily instruction to monitor student progress; setting assessment purpose; ensuring reliability and validity; scaffolding assessments in the content areas; designing and using portfolios; using assessment as feedback for learning; developing scoring rubrics and other performance-based assessments; engaging students in peer and self-assessment; improving grading practices; reviewing language proficiency tests; assessing language learners with special needs; writing multiple-choice tests; using criterion-referenced vs. norm-referenced testing; and preparing students to take standardized tests.

Graduate students will have opportunities to both critically examine assessment tools used in current practice and to develop their own. **This course is required for both**

ESL and Foreign Language teacher licensure as well as for the endorsement of teachers who are already licensed. It meets or exceeds NCATE, TESOL and ACTFL Standards for Teacher Preparation in assessment.

### Course Objectives\*

*Teachers/graduate students completing EDCI 520 will be able to:*

1. Compare **purposes, advantages, and limitations** of standardized achievement tests to those of classroom-based assessments;
2. Define **basic concepts and terminology** used in assessment and student evaluation;
3. **Critically review language proficiency assessment measures** for validity, reliability, and cultural bias, and make recommendations for use with English and foreign language learning students (and native speakers of English);
4. **Identify issues in assessment of language learners with special needs**, such as learning disabilities or gifted and talented;
5. **Critically examine and develop assessment procedures and tools** for (a) the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and (b) the content areas;
6. **Link assessment to instruction** by designing a variety of assessments that are embedded within instructional activities;
7. **Draft clear and objective performance criteria** for language learning;
8. **Add scaffolding to assessment and instruction** for language learners and at-risk learners;
9. **Draft a student assessment portfolio** and involve learners in self-assessment; and
10. **Prepare language learning students to take standardized tests.**

\*Students will be asked to use a personal computer for preparing course requirements, for accessing BlackBoard, and for contacting the instructor and classmates through email.

**Class Web Page:** Each student will access Blackboard using **his/her GMU email login name and password** to access course assignments and resource materials:  
<https://courses.gmu.edu/>

**Instructional approaches include:** Whole class mini-lectures and demonstrations, workshops, small group and peer feedback sessions, field projects, videos, and homework assignments for applying principles discussed in texts and class. *Interacting in meaningful ways with other grad students/teachers during each class session is essential for success in this course.* **Student reports and projects will be evaluated** using performance-based, criterion-referenced scoring rubrics.

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## **GSE Statements of Expectations/Behaviors/Attitudes**

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that *all students* abide by the following principles:

1. Students are expected to exhibit **professional behavior and dispositions**. See <http://gse.gmu.edu> for a listing of these dispositions.
2. Students must follow the guidelines of the **University Honor Code**. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC\\_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for the full honor code.
3. Students must agree to abide by the university policy for **Responsible Use of Computing**. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
4. Students with **disabilities who seek accommodations** in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.
5. **Cell Phones OFF:** Students are required to keep all cell phones turned off during class. In case of a campus emergency, the instructor will be notified on her cell phone.

### **Inclement Weather/Emergency Policy**

*In case of snow, hurricanes, other bad weather, or security emergencies, call 993-1000 or go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu) for information on class cancellations and university closings.*

### **MASON ALERT**

*Register for the MASON ALERT system to be informed of emergency situations on campus by cell phone and email. Go to <http://alert.gmu.edu>*

## Course Requirements\*

1. **Language Proficiency Assessment Poster**      30%    **Poster Presentation [Team Project]\***  
(due Week 6)
2. **Special Needs Assessment Review**      35%    **Critique of Spec. Needs Assmt. Article [Individual Project]\*** (due Week 10)
3. **Classroom-Based Assessment Project**      35%    **Develop Assmts. FOR learning [Team or Individual Project]** (due Week 15)

*\*Maximum of 3 class members per team*

*Save each project both on a CD-Rom and in a paper copy to submit to the Instructor, OR post your paper on our Blackboard web site under ASSIGNMENTS.*

## Textbooks

### Required Texts

O'Malley, J. M. and Valdez Pierce, L. (1996). ***Authentic assessment for English language learners: Practical approaches for teachers.*** New York: Pearson Longman.

Stiggins, R. (2008). 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. ***Student-involved assessment FOR learning.*** Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

*Additional Required Readings* available either online or in class.

### Recommended Texts

Arter, J. & J. McTighe. (2001). ***Scoring rubrics in the classroom.*** Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Blaz, D. (2001). ***Collection of performance tasks and rubrics: Foreign languages.*** Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Guskey, T. R. & J. M. Bailey. (2001). ***Developing grading and reporting systems for student learning.*** Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

## Class Schedule

Prepare to discuss the assigned readings during the week in which they appear.

| Week/<br>Date | Topics & Assigned Readings   |
|---------------|--|
| 1<br>1/21/10  | <p><b>INTRO TO THE COURSE: Course OBJECTIVES &amp; REQUIREMENTS.</b> Balanced assessment systems. Sound classroom assessment practices, student confidence, and student success. Classroom and program levels of assessment use. Variety of assessment purposes. Assessment used to BENEFIT student learning: Assessment FOR Learning. <b>Task: Design Checklists.</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b> O'Malley &amp; Pierce, Ch. 1; Stiggins, Intro. &amp; Chs. 1 - 2</p>  |
| 2<br>1/28     | <p>Defining Achievement Standards for Assessment. Designing Quality Assessments. Validity &amp; Reliability. <b>Task: Design Rating Scales.</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b> O'Malley &amp; Pierce, Ch. 2; Stiggins, Chs. 3 &amp; 4</p>  |
| 3<br>2/4      | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY for Program Placement.</b> Assessment for program placement. English Language Proficiency Tests. ACTFL Assessments. State-required Tests. <b>Task: Design Holistic Scoring Rubrics.</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b> Abedi, J. (2007) <i>English Lang. Proficiency Assmt in the Nation</i>; Porter &amp; Vega, <i>Overview of Existing Engl Lang Proficiency Tests, Appendix A. (Pages 81 – 102 and Pages 133 – 189)</i><br/> <a href="http://education.ucdavis.edu/research/ELP_Report.pdf">http://education.ucdavis.edu/research/ELP_Report.pdf</a><br/>           Liskin-Gasparro (2003), <i>The ACTFL Prof Guidelines and the Oral Proficiency Interview</i>; Malone, <i>Research on the Oral Proficiency Interview</i> (see Bboard Class Web Site for links)<br/>           Bibliography of Readings on Oral Proficiency Assessment (OPI)<br/> <a href="http://irc.cornell.edu/events/past/2001-2002/bib_opi">http://irc.cornell.edu/events/past/2001-2002/bib_opi</a></p> |
| 4<br>2/11     | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF ORAL LANGUAGE.</b> Trends in Foreign Language Assessment. <b>DEMO: Designing a valid &amp; reliable scoring rubric.</b> <b>Task: Design Analytic Scoring Rubric.</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b> O'M &amp; VP, Ch. 4<br/>           Thompson (2001), "Foreign Language Assmt.: 30 Yrs..."<br/> <a href="http://www.cal.org/resources/archive/news/200012/assessment.html">http://www.cal.org/resources/archive/news/200012/assessment.html</a></p>  |
| 5<br>2/18     | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF ORAL LANGUAGE FOR STATE STANDARDS.</b> Structured interviews for oral language assessment. Performance Assessment. <b>Demo: Information Gap. Video: Fresh Start Interviews.</b> <b>Task: Design Oral Language Interview.</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b> Stiggins, Ch. 7</p>  |
| 6<br>2/25     | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF READING.</b> Decoding skills. Assessing reading strategies. Cloze tests. Running Records. Anecdotal Records. Miscue Analysis. Common Test Techniques..<br/> <b>Language Proficiency Assmt. Poster Presentations.</b></p> <p><b>Readings</b> O'M &amp; VP, Ch. 5</p>  |

|    |      |   |
|----|------|---|
| 7  | 3/4  | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF READING, PART 2.</b> Comprehensible Input. Insuring validity and reliability. Selected Response Assessment. <b>Assessment Toolbox Workshop Self-Study: 7 Approaches to Scaffolding Assessments.</b> <i>Task: Add Scaffolding to an assessment task.</i></p> <p><i>Readings Stiggins, Ch. 5</i></p>  |
| 8  | 3/11 | <b>NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK</b>  |
| 9  | 3/18 | <p><b>Diagnostic ASSESSMENT OF READING FOR STATE STANDARDS.</b> Informal Reading Inventories. DRA , DRP, QRI. Testing Overall Language Ability. Selected Response Assessment. <i>Task: Design a Multiple-Choice Test.</i> Mid-term Feedback Forms.</p> <p><i>Readings Stiggins, Ch. 5</i></p>   |
| 10 | 3/25 | <p><b>Diagnostic ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING DISABILITIES AND GIFTED AND TALENTED LEARNERS.</b> What are the issues? What does valid and reliable assessment look like? Assessment Bias. Assessing Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners. <b>Due Today: Special Needs Assessment Critique &amp; Panel Discussions.</b></p> <p><i>Readings Readings assigned to each panel.</i></p>                                      |
| 11 | 4/1  | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF WRITING. SELF-ASSESSMENT and PEER ASSESSMENT.</b> The critical relationship between self-assessment &amp; achievement. <i>DEMO: Self-Assessment Workshop. ASCD Video: Self and Peer Assessment.</i> <i>Task: Design a Self-Assessment Tool for Ss.</i></p> <p><i>Readings O'M &amp; VP, Ch. 3; Stiggins, Ch. 6</i></p>  |
| 12 | 4/8  | <p><b>ASSESSMENT OF WRITING FOR STATE STANDARDS.</b> From sentence to essay. Text structures. Testing grammar &amp; vocabulary. Process writing. Using Anchor Papers. <b>EXPLODING a scoring rubric.</b> <i>Task: Design an Essay Test plus Exploded Scoring Rubric.</i></p> <p><i>Readings O'M &amp; VP, Ch. 6</i></p>   |
| 13 | 4/15 | <p><b>ASSESSMENT IN CONTENT AREAS. GRADING POLICY &amp; PRACTICE.</b> Content area standards. Converting rubrics into grades.</p> <p><i>Readings O'M &amp; VP, Chs. 2 (pp. 29-31) &amp; 7; Stiggins, Ch. 11</i></p>   |
| 14 | 4/22 | <p><b>PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT.</b> Types of portfolios. Essential elements of portfolios. Managing portfolios. Using portfolio results for improving instruction. Assessment as feedback. <b>Sample Student Portfolio. DEMO: Portfolio Planning Workshop.</b> <i>Task: Design a student Portfolio. Bring Draft of Classroom-Based Assmt. Project for Peer Feedback.</i></p> <p><i>Readings O'M &amp; VP, Ch. 3; Stiggins, Ch. 12</i></p> |
| 15 | 4/29 | <p><b>ASSESSMENT FOR ACCOUNTABILITY.</b> What do Standardized Test Scores mean? Appropriate &amp; Inappropriate Test-Preparation. 3 Teacher Responsibilities. <b>Course evaluations. Feedback Forms. Materials Release Forms. DUE Today or no later than Thurs., May 6. Classroom-Based Assessment Project.</b></p> <p><i>Readings Stiggins, Ch. 13</i></p>   |

