George Mason University
Graduate School of Education

COURSE SYLLABUS

EDRS 630 Educational Assessment

Spring 2012

Instructor:	Charles L. Thomas, PhD
Class Day & Time:	Tue, 7:20 – 10:00 pm
Location:	L08 Thompson
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Office Hours:	Tue, & Thur. 2:30-3:45
	Other Times arranged by appointment

Catalog Description

630 Educational Assessments (3:3:0*). Examines research theory and practice relevant to assessments. Focuses on assessment strategies for students including developing the skills to select, score, and interpret educational assessments.*

Specific Course Description
EDRS 630 is a graduate introductory course in educational assessment which ……

Prerequisite: None

Course Goal

The goal of the course is to facilitate each student reaching a level high of competence and professional-level understanding of assessment practices used in educational settings. The general instructional objective is to facilitate student engagement in learning experiences that will lead to the attainment of the course goal. Social justice and equity throughout the process of schooling represents the conceptual framework for course content.

Student Outcomes & Relationship to Professional Standards

The Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students (AFT, NCME, NEA, 1990) and the Standards for Competence in Student Assessment (AASA, NAESP, NASSP, NCME, 1990) guide the course content and emphasis for reaching the learning objectives.   The former standards are the culmination of the joint efforts of three major educational organizations: the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), and the National Education Association (NEA). The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), and the National Council on Measurement in Education

(NCME) developed the latter standards. Appendices D and E summarize the standards. For additional reading related to their development, see *Recommended Readings*.

Those standards deemed most relevant to addressing the learning targets for the course are those that state that *students will have the knowledge, skill and disposition to:*

1. Apply basic principles of sound assessment practices for addressing specific educational needs
2. Select assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions
3. Develop assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions
4. Administer, score, and interpret the results of both externally-produced and teacher-produced assessment instruments
5. Use assessment results in instructional planning, teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement
6. Communicate assessment results to varied stakeholders
7. Recognize and appropriately act against the unethical, illegal, and otherwise, inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information.
8. Recognize the implications of educational assessment for social justice in our public schools.
9. Discern critical issues related to the role of assessment in public school accountability and high stakes testing

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The program goals are consistent with areas of expertise associated with the following learner-centered psychological principles (APA Division 15) outlined by the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force in Education.

- Principle 1: The Nature of Learning Process
- Principle 2: Goals of the Learning Process
- Principle 3: Construction of Knowledge
- Principle 4: Strategic Thinking
- Principle 5: Thinking about Thinking
- Principle 6: Context of Learning
- Principle 13: Learning and Diversity

Please see:
American Psychological Association (1997). Learner-Centered Psychological
Principles*: Guidelines for the Teaching of Educational Psychology in Teacher Education Programs*.
Retrieved October 14, 2002 from http://www.apa.org

Nature of Course Delivery

Learning Experiences

A variety of learning approaches will be used to engage students in classroom learning. The primary modes will be small group and whole-class discussions. Mini-lectures will generally open each class period to set the focus for the evening's session, followed by whole-class discussion. While the mini-lectures are relevant to specific chapters in the required textbook, they are not taken exclusively from this source. Moreover, the topics extend beyond the content of the textbook and require competing the required readings.

See **Class Schedule** for the list of instructional units, pertinent assignment due dates, and the chapter readings related to each instructional unit.

Associated Learning Resources

Required Textbook

Nitko, A.J. & Brookhart, S. (2011). Educational assessment of students. Boston: Pearson.

Required Readings

Addressing achievement gaps (2009). Policy notes. News from the ETS Policy Information Center. 17 (1), Winter. Retrieved January 12 at http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICPN171.pdf

Assessment Basics http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/assessmentBasicsTabAction?p=underAssess

Cumming, J. J. (2008). Legal and educational perspectives of equity in assessment *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 15 (2), 123-135.*

Dimensions of Learning. Blackboard.

Nitko, A.J. (2007). Using Mental Measurement Yearbook Review and other materials to evaluate a test. Retrieved January 21, 2007 at: http://www.unl.edu/buros/bimm/html/lesson02.html

Kirpes, A. L. & Price, C. (2009). Demystifying assessments: Understanding the test development process in large-scale assessments. *Edge*, January/February, 4 (3), 3- 19.

Southwest Regional Development Laboratory. Reading assessment database-overview. Retrieved January 13, 2011 at http://www.sedl.org/reading/rad/.

Stiggins, R. (2008).Assessment For learning. The achievement gap and truly effective schools. Portland: ETS Assessment Training Institute. Retrieved January 16, 2012 at http://www.ets.org/Media/Conferences_and_Events/pdf/stiggins.pdf

Thomas, C.L. (2002). Avalioano educacional nos Estados Unidos: um impeto para areforma da Escola Pablica (Educational assessment in the U.S.A.: An impetus for public school reform). In *Associao de Professores de Portuguese (Ed.), Portugue Association de Professores de Professores propostas para o futuro 3*. Lisboa, Portugal: Associao de Professores de Portuguese

Wren, S. (2001). *The cognitive foundations of learning to read: A framework. Austin, TX.* Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. [On Blackboard]

Wren, S. (2011). Methods of assessing cognitive aspects of early reading development. Retrieved January 13, 2011 at: The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory • www.sedl.org

Plake, B. S., Buckendahl C. W. & Impara, J. C. (2004). **Classroom-based assessment system for science: A model.** Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences. [On Blackboard]

Suggested Readings

Busick, H. & Stone, E. (2011). Recommendations for conducting differential item functioning (DIF). Analyses for students with disabilities based on previous DIF studies.. ETS RR-11-34.

Diederich, P. B. (1973). Short-cut statistics for teacher-made tests. Retrieved January 20, 2007 at: http://www.unl.edu/buros/biaco/pdf/teachermade.pdf

Koelsch, N., Estrin, E., & Farr, B. (1995). *Guide to developing equitable performance assessments*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd
.

Additional Text-Based Resources:

American Association of School Administrators. (1997). Competency standards in student assessment for educational administrators. Retrieved January 21, 2007 at: http://www.unl.edu/buros/bimm/html/article4.html

American Psychological Association. (2002). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association**. *(5th Ed.)*.** Washington, DC: Author.

American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Measurement in Education & National Education Association. (1990). Standards for teacher competence in educational assessment of students. Retrieved January 21, 2007 at: http://www.unl.edu/buros/bimm/html/article3.html

Bloom, B. S. (Ed.). (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives, handbook I: Cognitive domain. New York: McKay

Ennis, R. H. (1987). A taxonomy of critical thinking dispositions and abilities. In J.B.

Baron and J. J. Sternsberg (Eds.) Teaching thinking skills: Theory and practice. New York: W. H. Freeman.

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D., & McTighe, J. (1993). Assessing student outcomes. Performance assessment using the dimensions of learning model. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Quellmalz, E. S. (1987). Developing reasoning skills.   In J.B. Baron and J. J. Sternsberg (Eds.)
Teaching thinking skills: Theory and practice. New York: W. H. Freeman.

Web-Based Resources

The primary platform for web-based resources is **Black Board** where students have access to handouts and web links associated with the course. Additional resources can be found on the web in numerous sites including:

Educational Testing Service Network
. Presents substantial practical and research information on standardized testing in schools, test preparation, accountability, and school achievement. Includes standardized testing arguments and controversies as well as special segments for students, parents, educators, and policymakers. Retrieved January 12, 2012.

Thomas B. Fordham Foundation Offers research articles covering standards tests and accountability as well as other education topics such as charter schools and school choice. Covers standardized testing arguments and debates about the significance of testing.
. Retrieved January 12 at: Retrieved January 12, 2012.:

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory Applied research articles about assessment contained in the "Pathways to School Improvement" segment. Covers assessment and school reform and integrating assessment and instruction. Includes information on standardized testing in schools, standardized testing arguments and other topics. Retrieved January 12, 2012.

Use of Assessment Case Studies

O'Neill, G., Huntley-Moore, S., Race, P. Case studies of good practices in assessment in student learning in higher education. AISHE Readings 2007: Number 1. Retrieved January 11, 2011 at: http://www.aishe.org/readings/2007-1/aishe-readings-2007-1.html.

Oxford Brookes University. Assessment under pressure-14 innovative case studies. Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development. Retrieved January 11, 2012 at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsld/resources/aup14pr.html

Teams Educational Resources. Case studies. Retrieved January 11, 2011 at http://teams.lacoe.edu/reading/cases/cases.html.

Teacher Vision. Assessment accommodations: Case studies. Retrieved January 11, 2011 at: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/teaching-methods/educational-testing/4133.html.

Additional Web-based Resources

Center for Research on Evaluations, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST-UCLA). (A research center that has devoted 36 years in the development of scientifically based evaluation and testing techniques.) Retrieved January 20, 2007 at: www.cse.ucla.edu

Landgraf, K. Positioning assessment for the 21st century. Retrieved January 21, 2012 at
http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/flash/video/video.html

Multimedia Educational Resources for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT). (A useful site for accessing a number of assessment tools such as scoring rubrics and performance assessment tools.) Retrieved January 20, 2007 at: http://www.merlot.org/merlot/materials.htm?keywords=Rubrics

National Center for Fair and Open Testing (Fair Test) (Cambridge, MA). (A Public interest group that focuses on issues of individual rights, public policy, and legality of assessment.) Retrieved January 20, 2007 at: www.fairtest.org

TeacherVision**.** Assessment accommodation. Index of type of assessment accommodation. Access January 12, 2011 at: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/teaching-methods/educational-testing/4170.html.

Course Requirements

1. **Personal Philosophy Statement (10 %)**. This product includes an initial, amended, and final statement of your beliefs about the role, instructional value and ethics of educational assessment. Students will write an initial statement prior to or on the first day of class but will not submit it to the instructor. Students will submit a**n amended version instructor for initial credit (S or U-resubmit).   A final statement is due at the end of the semester**. This statement is not viewed to be incorrect, inappropriate, or judged for lack of prior knowledge about educational assessment. It represents where you are at the beginning of the course prior to study of the many facets of classroom assessment, and subsequent growth throughout the semester. There are no length specifications, but generally, approximately 2-3 pages long have been the modal length for concisely written statements in the past.

2. **Assessment and Social Justice (15%).** .This paper is a review of two (2) articles related to some aspect of social justice in educational assessment and one of the topics of study you have found particularly of interest from this perspective. *The paper should be no longer than 5-6 pages, double-spaced.*

3. **Case Studies (30%).** Two case studies related to classroom and large scale assessments are required. Each case study is worth 15%. Students can access guidelines for the case studies on Blackboard. An assessment report involving the actual administration of assessments in an educational assessment may be substituted for one of the case studies.

4. **Assessment Paper (35%).** The assessment paper is the major project required for the course. The paper is expected to be a product that exhibits several critical dimensions in an area of assessment of personal/professional interest:

    a. Professional understanding of the principles, arguments, status or justifications for the assessment issues selected as the topic for the paper
    b. Integration of basic assessment concepts and principles with the issues that are the central focus of the paper (e.g., concepts of social justice, validity, learning theory, etc).
    c. Contemporary literary evidence such as from journals (text or e-journals), monographs, or books where at least three-fourths were published after 2005.
    d. Explicitly connected to personal or professional interests or goals

Specific guidelines will be posted on Blackboard.

5. **Oral Presentation (5%).** An executive summary will be distributed o the paper and accompanied by a maximum of 7 minute oral presentation on Exam **Night.**

Class Participation and Attendance (5%) are essential. These elements of behavior will reflect the professional attitude implied in the course goals and *will account for 5% of the course grade*. If it is necessary to miss a class, you must notify me (preferably in advance) and you are responsible for completing all assignments and readings for the next class.

Evaluation and Grading Policies

Evaluation of student work will be performance-based and guided by grading rubrics. Final letter grades are based on the cumulative percentages shown in the table below.

Table 1. Letter Grade Equivalent for Quality Percentage Points

Letter Grade	Quality Percentage
A+	98.0-100
A	93.5-97.9
A-	91.5-93.4
B+	89.5-91.4
B	83.5-89.4
B-	80.5-83.4
C+	78.5-80.4
C	75.5-78.4
C-	72.5-75.4
D	< 72.5

Note:
- All written assignments must be typed and must follow APA format
- Grading on written work will take into account the following factors: quality of written work, knowledge of content area, and adherence to requirements of assignment. All work must be turned in on the assigned dates. A late assignment is subject to a penalty of 10% of the award for every day that it is overdue

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/].

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu/].

- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].

GSE faculty may add at the conclusion:
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See http://gse.gmu.edu/].

RHT faculty may add at the conclusion:
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See http://rht.gmu.edu].

DATES	Lecture/Classroom Discussion topics & Textbook Chapter Readings	Associated Readings, Class Activities & Assignment Due Dates
Jan 24	**Introduction and Orientation to the Course** • Purpose and Context of Educational Assessment (1, 2) • Educational Assessment and Social Justice	**Independent Assignments & in Class Activities** • *Sharing Perspectives on Educational Assessment* •Video: Positioning assessment for the 21st. century (Kurt Landgraft, Pres. ETS) **Associated Reading**: Cumming (2008)
Jan 31	**Fundamentals of Sound Educational Assessment** • Assessment **FOR** Learning vs. Assessment **OF** Learning • Clarity and Relevance (2) • Organizing Frameworks Standards	* **Video** Stiggins on Classroom Assessment * **Class Session 2**: Group Work: Ethical, Statutory and Legal Basis for Educational Assessment **Associated Readings:** Assessment Basics (Blackboard) Stiggins, R.(2008). Dimensions of Learning - Blackboard Reading
Feb 7	• Evidence of Technical Integrity :Evidential Basis of Assessment Meaning (3)	Nitko, (2007)
Feb 14	▪ Evidence of Technical Integrity : Evidential Basis of Assessment Consistency (4)	• **Social Justice Paper Due** Concept Mapping Activity
Feb 21	**Informal Measures in Classroom Assessment** • Integrating Principles of Learning Cognition and Assessment	Wren, S. (2001). Southwest Regional Development Laboratory (2011). Wren (2001) Mislevy Themes and XX (Blackboard)
Feb 28	• Integrating Assessment Practices with Classroom Instruction(6) • Diagnostic and Formative Assessments (7)	Plake et al (2004) Teams Educational Resources (2011)
Mar 6	• Assessment for Basic Understanding and Assessment Formats (8,9)	**Case Study 1:** Classroom Assessment Case Study **Due** **Case Study Presentation**
Mar 20	• Assessments pf higher-order Thinking, Problem Solving and Critical Thinking (10,11,)	Concept Mapping Activity
Mar 27	• Performance and Product –Base Assessment (12)	Concept Mapping Activity
April 3	*The achievement gap & Large Scale Assessment*	Thomas, (2002). Addressing achievement gaps (2009) Kirpes and Price (2009); • Amended Draft of Assessment philosophy Due
April 10	*The achievement gap & Large Scale Assessment (Con"t)*	**Case Study 2:** Description of a Formal District-Level Assessment Program **Due**
April 17	**Using Assessment Results to Make Educational Decisions** • Preparing Students for assessments (13) • Using Assessments to Improve Instruction (13) • Making Accountability Decisions • Evaluating and Reporting Student Progress (14)	TBA
April 24	**Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA)** • Reading Assessment	**Wren, S. (2001)**
May 1	• Mathematics Assessment • Science Assessment	Plake, B. S., Buckendahl C. W. & Impara, J. C. (2004). **Final Statement of Assessment Philosophy Due**
May 8 May 15	Presentation and Submission of Major Paper	

EDRS 630. Educational Assessment: Scoring Rubric for Major Paper

Quality Elements	4 Outstanding	3 Competent	2 Minimal	1 Unsatisfactory
Cover Page and Abstract			**Exhibits basic protocols as described in guidelines**	**Does not Exhibit basic protocols as described in guidelines**
Introduction of the Major Focus of the Paper	**Major focus is concise with an justification based on personal experiences, timely professional literature, or social narratives**	**. Major focus is concise BUT the justification is unclear in a few instances**	**Major focus is concise but the justification basis is not well defined or described**	**Either the major focus is unclear or the justification basis is not well defined or described**
Specific Purpose(s)	The Specific purpose is clearly connected to the paper's major focus employing such devices as questions to be addressed; arguments to be identified and addressed; policies to be critiqued, etc.	The Specific purpose is clearly connected to the paper's major focus But the employment of narrative devices were too brief or not well established in some cases	.The Specific purpose is vaguely connected to the paper's major focus OR the employment of narrative devices were too brief or not well established in some cases	.The Specific purpose is vaguely connected to the paper's major focus AND the employment of narrative devices were too brief or not well established
Description of procedures	A section is provided that clearly explains the steps taken to gather information pertinent to the paper, including personal communications and popular media	A section on procedures is provided that clearly explains the steps taken to gather information pertinent to the paper, but lacks documentation in some minor instances	The section on procedures is unclear in explaining the steps taken to gather information pertinent to the paper,OR lacks documentation in some many instances	The section on procedures is omitted ,OR lacks documentation
Discussion	The discussion section is clearly organized in a manner that the reader can see the connections between the specific purposes(s) and the narrative and contains sufficient and appropriate citations when warranted.	The discussion section is clearly organized in a manner that the reader can see the connections between the specific purposes(s) and the narrative but contains insufficient or appropriate citations	The discussion section is clearly organized in a manner that the reader can see the connections between the specific purposes(s) and the narrative but contains insufficient and appropriate citations	The discussion section is unclearly organized in a manner that the reader is unable to discern the connections between the specific purposes(s) and the narrative AND contains insufficient and appropriate citations

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Summary			The paper provides a concise summary of the general purpose and major points discussed in the discussion section	The paper does NOT provide a summary of the general purpose and major points discussed in the discussion section
Conclusions and Reflections	Conclusions drawn from the project are clearly linked to what was found and discussed AND reflections are given related to the personal justification for selecting the theme for the project	Conclusions drawn from the project are clearly linked to what was found and discussed BUT reflections are insufficiently related to the personal justification for selecting the theme for the project	Conclusions drawn from the project are clearly linked to what was found and discussed BUT reflections are not presented	Conclusions drawn from the project are not connected to what was found and discussed OR reflections are not presented
Appropriate Use of APA format			Exhibits the basic APA formatting requirements as specified in the General Guidelines in Appendix C of the syllabus.	Does Not exhibit the basic APA formatting requirements as specified in the General Guidelines in Appendix C of the syllabus.
Clarity of Writing	Excellent demonstration of clear and well organized writing free of grammatical or editorial errors	Competently written, demonstrating clarity and organization with few grammatical or editorial errors	Writing meets minimum standards, demonstrating lack of clarity or organization with few grammatical or editorial errors	Writing below minimum standards, demonstrating lack of clarity and organization with many grammatical or editorial errors

Guidelines for Major Products

Assessment and Social Justice

Current literature on the role and value of educational assessment is replete with articles discussing such issues as fairness, equity, barriers to advancement (e.g., toward economic independence), etc. Moreover, a number of organizations have emerged over the years prompted by concerns over the unintended negative consequences of testing. Much of their focus has been on the potential impact on racial, ethnic and language minority children. For example, The National Center for Fair and Open Testing (Fair Test) began as a social monitor of assessment practices in the public schools as related to equity issues. Many of these issues reflect issues within the conceptual framework of *social justice*. In this vein, all of the topics have implications for social justice.

 Students will select one of the topics of study from the textbook and research the literature for its relevance to f social justice (e.g., equity, empowerment, expanding opportunity, eliminating bias, closing the achievement gap, etc.). For example, take the issue of valid use of assessment methods. You may link this unit topic with such issues as "valid use of classroom assessment methods for … (*English as Second Language students (ESL)*), (*ethnic minority students*), (*improving the self-esteem of ethnic/racial minority students*), etc.   The paper will provide a *brief summary* of two authors' articles on the topic of choice and *reflections* of the implications of their perspectives for classroom practice from your point of view. *Both aspects are important elements for the paper*.

The parameters for this requirement are:
   a. One paper drawn from one of the topics listed in the schedule of study (Appendix A)
   b. Paper worth ten (10) points.
   c. Paper should be no longer than six pages in length.
   d. Double spaced in APA format.
   e. The order of the major sections are
        i. Brief introduction of the purposes and types (research, discussion paper, review of the literature, etc.) of articles reviewed
       ii. Summary of major ideas, arguments, or findings
      iii. Your reflections on the articles relative to advancing social justice in educational assessment in American education.
       iv. References

Assessment Case Studies (2)
An assessment case study is a descriptive narrative of the use of assessment to address a specified problem or educational objective for a given individual or educational program. **Guidelines** t**o be posted on Blackboard.**

Major Paper. Guidelines to be distributed on Blackboard.

APPENDIX C

GENERAL GUIDELINES TO WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All course projects should be typed, double-spaced, and include a cover page. Include an abstract (250 works maximum) that provides a synopsis of the content, such as purpose, procedures, findings and conclusions. In terms of general style, the format provided in the sixth edition of **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association** (American Psychological Association, 2010) should be followed. Students should pay close attention to:

■ Margins   ■Headings/Subheadings   ■Citations in the Text ■Reference Page

The *cover page* should include the title of the assignment, the standard course requirement statement, your name, date, and institutional affiliation information.

An abstract should be included in all written work that provides a concise synopsis of the purpose, content and conclusions of the submitted report.

Provide a running heading that includes your name and title of the paper. The paper should be be in 12 pitch font and 11/2 spaced. Papers will be submitted via Blackboard and should include in the file name> your name.course number, and assignment notation such *as jsmith.edrs630.casestudy1*. You should make a copy of your projects before submitting then to the instructor.

APPENDIX D

Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students

1. **Teachers should be skilled in choosing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions.**

   Skills in choosing appropriate, useful, administratively convenient, technically adequate, and fair assessment methods are prerequisite to good use of information to support instructional decisions. Teachers need to be well acquainted with the kinds of information provided by a broad range of assessment alternatives and their strengths and weaknesses. In particular, they should be familiar with criteria for evaluating and selecting assessment methods in light of instructional plans.

   Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. They will be able to use the concepts of assessment error and validity when developing or selecting their approaches to classroom assessment of students. They will understand how valid assessment data can support instructional activities such as providing appropriate feedback to students, diagnosing group and individual learning needs, planning for individualized educational programs, motivating students, and evaluating instructional procedures. They will understand how invalid information can affect instructional decisions about students. They will also be able to use and evaluate assessment options available to them, considering among other things, the cultural, social, economic, and language backgrounds of students. They will be aware that different assessment approaches can be incompatible with certain instructional goals and may affect quite differently on their teaching.

   Teachers will know, for each assessment approach they use, its appropriateness for making decisions about their pupils. Moreover, teachers will know of where to find information about and/or reviews of various assessment methods. Assessment options are diverse and include text- and curriculum-embedded questions and tests, standardized criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests, oral questioning, spontaneous and structured performance assessments, portfolios, exhibitions, demonstrations, rating scales, writing samples, paper-and-pencil tests, seatwork and homework, peer- and self-assessments, student records, observations, questionnaires, interviews, projects, products, and others' opinions.

   2. Teachers should be skilled in developing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions.

   While teachers often use published or other external assessment tools, the bulk of the assessment information they use for decision-making comes from approaches they create and implement. Indeed, the assessment demands of the classroom go well beyond readily available instruments.

   Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. Teachers will be skilled in planning the collection of information that facilitates the decisions they will make. They will know and follow appropriate principles for developing and using assessment methods in their teaching, avoiding common pitfalls in student assessment. Such techniques may include several of the options listed at the end of the first standard. The teacher

will select the techniques which are appropriate to the intent of the teacher's instruction.

Teachers meeting this standard will also be skilled in using student data to analyze the quality of each assessment technique they use. Since most teachers do not have access to assessment specialists, they must be prepared to do these analyses themselves.

3. The teacher should be skilled in administering, scoring and interpreting the results of both externally-produced and teacher-produced assessment methods.

It is not enough that teachers are able to select and develop good assessment methods; they must also be able to apply them properly. Teachers should be skilled in administering, scoring, and interpreting results from diverse assessment methods.

Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. They will be skilled in interpreting informal and formal teacher-produced assessment results, including pupils' performances in class and on homework assignments. Teachers will be able to use guides for scoring essay questions and projects, stencils for scoring response-choice questions, and scales for rating performance assessments. They will be able to use these in ways that produce consistent results.

Teachers will be able to administer standardized achievement tests and be able to interpret the commonly reported scores: percentile ranks, percentile band scores, standard scores, and grade equivalents. They will have a conceptual understanding of the summary indexes commonly reported with assessment results: measures of central tendency, dispersion, relationships, reliability, and errors of measurement.

Teachers will be able to apply these concepts of score and summary indices in ways that enhance their use of the assessments that they develop. They will be able to analyze assessment results to identify pupils' strengths and errors. If they get inconsistent results, they will seek other explanations for the discrepancy or other data to attempt to resolve the uncertainty before arriving at a decision. They will be able to use assessment methods in ways that encourage students' educational development and that do not inappropriately increase students' anxiety levels.

4. Teachers should be skilled in using assessment results when making decisions about individual students, planning teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement.

Assessment results are used to make educational decisions at several levels: in the classroom about students, in the community about a school and a school district, and in society, generally, about the purposes and outcomes of the educational enterprise. Teachers play a vital role when participating in decision-making at each of these levels and must be able to use assessment results effectively.

Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. They will be able to use accumulated assessment information to organize a sound instructional plan for facilitating students' educational development. When using assessment results to plan and/or evaluate instruction and curriculum, teachers will interpret the results correctly and avoid common misinterpretations, such as basing decisions on scores that lack curriculum validity. They will be informed about the results of local, regional, state, and national assessments and

about their appropriate use for pupil, classroom, school, district, state, and national educational improvement.

5. Teachers should be skilled in developing valid pupil grading procedures which use pupil assessments.

Grading students is an important part of professional practice for teachers. Grading is defined as indicating both a student's level of performance and a teacher's valuing of that performance. The principles for using assessments to obtain valid grades are known and teachers should employ them.

Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. They will be able to devise, implement, and explain a procedure for developing grades composed of marks from various assignments, projects, inclass activities, quizzes, tests, and/or other assessments that they may use. Teachers will understand and be able to articulate why the grades they assign are rational, justified, and fair, acknowledging that such grades reflect their preferences and judgments. Teachers will be able to recognize and to avoid faulty grading procedures such as using grades as punishment. They will be able to evaluate and to modify their grading procedures in order to improve the validity of the interpretations made from them about students' attainments.

6. Teachers should be skilled in communicating assessment results to students, parents, other lay audiences, and other educators.

Teachers must routinely report assessment results to students and to parents or guardians. In addition, they are frequently asked to report or to discuss assessment results with other educators and with diverse lay audiences. If the results are not communicated effectively, they may be misused or not used. To communicate effectively with others on matters of student assessment, teachers must be able to use assessment terminology appropriately and must be able to articulate the meaning, limitations, and implications of assessment results. Furthermore, teachers will sometimes be in a position that will require them to defend their own assessment procedures and their interpretations of them. At other times, teachers may need to help the public to interpret assessment results appropriately.

Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. Teachers will understand and be able to give appropriate explanations of how the interpretation of student assessments must be moderated by the student's socio-economic, cultural, language, and other background factors. Teachers will be able to explain that assessment results do not imply that such background factors limit a student's ultimate educational development. They will be able to communicate to students and to their parents or guardians how they may assess the student's educational progress. Teachers will understand and be able to explain the importance of taking measurement errors into account when using assessments to make decisions about individual students. Teachers will be able to explain the limitations of different informal and formal assessment methods. They will be able to explain printed reports of the results of pupil assessments at the classroom, school district, state, and national levels.

7. Teachers should be skilled in recognizing unethical, illegal, and otherwise inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information.

Fairness, the rights of all concerned, and professional ethical behavior must undergird all student assessment activities, from the initial planning for and gathering of information to the interpretation, use, and communication of the results. Teachers must be well-versed in their own ethical and legal responsibilities in assessment. In addition, they should also attempt to have the inappropriate assessment practices of others discontinued whenever they are encountered. Teachers should also participate with the wider educational community in defining the limits of appropriate professional behavior in assessment.

Teachers who meet this standard will have the conceptual and application skills that follow. They will know those laws and case decisions which affect their classroom, school district, and state assessment practices. Teachers will be aware that various assessment procedures can be misused or overused resulting in harmful consequences such as embarrassing students, violating a student's right to confidentiality, and inappropriately using students' standardized achievement test scores to measure teaching effectiveness.

Synthesis of Competency Standards in Student Assessment for Educational Administrators

Competencies associated with *assisting teachers:*

- 1. Have a working level of competence in the *Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students.*
- 2. Know the appropriate and useful mechanics of constructing various assessments.

Competencies associated with *providing leadership* in developing and implementing assessment policies:

- 3. Understand and be able to apply basic measurement principles to assessments conducted in school settings.
- 4. Understand the purposes (e.g., description, diagnosis, placement) of different kinds of assessment (e.g., achievement, aptitude, attitude) and the appropriate assessment strategies to obtain the assessment data needed for the intended purpose.
- 5. Understand the need for clear and consistent building- and district-level policies on student assessment.

Competencies needed in using assessments in *making decisions* and in communicating assessment results:

- 6. Understand and express technical assessment concepts and terminology to others in nontechnical but correct ways.
- 7. Understand and follow ethical and technical guidelines for assessment.
- 8. Reconcile conflicting assessment results appropriately.
- 9. Recognize the importance, appropriateness, and complexity of interpreting assessment results in light of students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and other out-of-school factors in light of making accommodations for individual differences, including disabilities, to help ensure the validity of assessment results for all students.
- 10. Ensure the assessment and information technology are employed appropriately to conduct student assessment.
- 11. Use available technology appropriately to integrate assessment results and other student data to facilitate students' learning, instruction, and performance.
- 12. Judge the quality of an assessment strategy or program used for decision making within their jurisdiction.

Important 2012 Academic Dates Revised

Dates listed on this page are for full semester courses only. For add/drop deadlines for courses that meet less than a full semester, see Non-standard Sections Dates.

January 1 Day of Week	*Sunday*
Martin Luther King Day (no classes)	Mon Jan 16
First day of classes; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed	Mon Jan 23
Summer 2012 Graduation Intent Available via Patriot Web	Mon Jan 30
Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Tues Jan 31
Last day to add classes—all individualized section forms due	Tues Jan 31
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Tues Feb 14
Last day to drop with a 67% tuition penalty	Fri Feb 24
Last day to drop	Fri Feb 24
Last day to file your Spring 2012 Graduation Intent	Fri Feb 24
Immunization Record Deadline	Tue Mar 1
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	Mon Feb 20 - Fri Mar 23
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	Mon Feb 27 - Fri Mar 30
Spring Break	Mon Mar 12 - Sun Mar 18
Incomplete work from Fall 2011 due to instructor**	Fri Mar 30
Incomplete grade changes from fall 2011 due to registrar**	Fri Apr 6
Dissertation/Thesis Deadline**	Fri May 4
Last day of classes	Sat May 5
Reading Days	Mon May 7 & Tue May 8
E**xam Period** (beginning at 7:30 a.m.)	Wed May 9 - Wed May 16
Commencement and Degree Conferral Date	