



EDCI 520 6AC [CRN: 20904]
ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE LEARNERS
SPRING 2013
January 28th - May 13th

Table with 2 columns: Course Information and Meeting/Contact Information. Rows include Credit Hours, Professor, Office, and Class Meetings.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines innovative approaches to assessing language minority students and English language learners. Topics include identification, placement, monitoring of student progress, development of authentic performance-based measures, design of portfolios, application of measurement concepts, analysis of assessment instruments, and linking assessment to instruction.

COURSE OVERVIEW

EDCI 520 provides an introduction to basic principles and current, innovative approaches to classroom-based assessment of language learners in ESL, bilingual education, foreign language, and grade-level classrooms in grades PK-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; 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.**

### **COURSE DELIVERY**

Course delivery is accomplished in a combination of ways in order to meet the needs of all learners and learning styles. Methods of instruction include teacher led class discussion, small group activities, student led discussions of selected research topics, database search of research-based articles and online posting of results. It also includes presentations, videos, webcasts, cooperative learning activities, hands-on field experiences, power point presentations, technology integration, discussion boards, and wikis. The course is delivered face to face and some of the work will be delivered through the Blackboard 9.1™ web-based course management system.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Brown, H.D. (2010). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Pearson Education

Gottlieb, M. (2006). *Assessing English language learners: Bridges from language proficiency to academic achievement*. Corwin Press

### **STUDENT OUTCOMES & PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

Students completing EDCI 520 will be able to:

1. **Compare purposes, advantages, and limitations** of standardized tests to those of alternative assessments; compare purposes, advantages, and limitations of standardized tests to those of alternative assessments;
2. **Define concepts and terminology** used in traditional assessment and in innovative approaches to assessment;
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 and/or gifted and talented;
5. **Critically examine and develop assessment procedures and tools** for (a) the four domains (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;

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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;
10. **Prepare language learning students to take standardized tests**

### **RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS & PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

EDCI 520: Assessment of Language Learners is a three-credit course designed for graduate students seeking a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, with tracks in bilingual/multilingual and multicultural education, foreign language education, and teaching English as a second language and/or ESOL endorsement. It is one of the master's degree and licensure programs and is required of all program participants. It primarily reflects the Core Values of *Research Based Practice* and *Social Justice* of CEHD. The relationship of EDCI 520 to GMU–GSE **program goals** is as follows:

1. ***Diversity***. Learn the basic concepts and develop the necessary skills to successfully assess learners of differing linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
2. ***Classroom teaching***. Candidates should be able to understand that there are multiple paths to learning and demonstrate skills and competency in assessing students from different linguistic backgrounds and varying learning styles.
3. ***Democratic principles***. Candidates should be able to adopt assessment practices, which reflect democratic principles and support creating and sustaining democratic Culturally Linguistically Diverse (CLD) learning environments.
4. ***Knowledge base for teaching in diverse and inclusive classrooms***. Candidates will learn the fundamental concepts pertaining to the assessment of CLD students.
5. ***Utilization of research***. Candidates will critically evaluate theories of bilingual education and second language acquisition and engage in systematic investigations of the knowledge base to inform their own or others' language and content assessment practices for CLD students.
6. ***Curriculum***. Candidates will develop the skills needed to design, implement, and evaluate programs to enable them to work comfortably with students from different linguistic backgrounds.

#### **Academic Standards:**

Licensure courses are aligned with TESOL/NCATE *Standards for the Accreditation of Initial Programs in P-12 ESOL Teacher Education* as well as with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Standards, which represent those principles that should be present in all teaching environments, regardless of the subject or grade level, and serve as a framework for the systematic reform of teacher preparation and professional development programs. The standards aim to provide consistency in teacher education programs across the United States in terms of what ESOL teachers need to know and can do (i.e., knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively teach of culturally and linguistically diverse students).

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Effective teachers of all disciplines, subjects, and grade levels model and apply the National Education Technology Standards for Teachers (NETS-S) as they design, implement, and assess learning experiences and as they engage students in the classroom to enhance and support learning while they provide positive models for ethical and effective use of technology to students, colleagues, parents, and the community. Evidence of the degree to which the academic standards have been met is compiled in a program participant's Professional Development Portfolio (refer to PDP Guidelines) throughout the licensure component of the program.

### **TESOL/NCATE and NETS-T Standards Addressed:**

1. **TESOL Domain 1. Language** - Candidates know, understand, and use the major theories and research related to the structure and acquisition of language to help English language learners' (ELLs') develop language and literacy and achieve in the content areas. Issues of language structure and language acquisition development are interrelated.
  - a. *Standard 1.a. Language as a System* - Candidates demonstrate understanding of language as a system, including phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics and semantics, and support ELLs as they acquire English language and literacy in order to achieve in the content areas.
2. **TESOL Domain 2. Culture** - Candidates know, understand, and use major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to the nature and role of culture and cultural groups to construct supportive learning environments for ELLs.
  - a. *Standard 2.a. Nature and Role of Culture* - Candidates know, understand, and use major theories and research related to the nature and role of culture in their instruction. They demonstrate understanding of how cultural groups and individual cultural identities affect language learning and school achievement.
3. **TESOL Domain 3. Planning, Implementing, and Managing Instruction** - Candidates know, understand, and use evidence-based practices and strategies related to planning, implementing, and managing standards-based ESL and content instruction. Candidates are knowledgeable about program models and skilled in teaching strategies for developing and integrating language skills. They integrate technology as well as choose and adapt classroom resources appropriate for their ELLs.
  - a. *Standard 3.a. Planning for Standards-Based ESL and Content Instruction* - Candidates know, understand, and apply concepts, research, and best practices to plan classroom instruction in a supportive learning environment for ELLs. They plan for multilevel classrooms with learners from diverse backgrounds using standards-based ESL and content curriculum.

4. **TESOL Domain 4 – Assessment** - Candidates understand issues of assessment and use standards-based assessment measures with ESOL students.
  - a. *Standard 4.a. Issues of Assessment for ESL.* Candidates understand various issues of assessment (e.g. cultural and linguistic bias, political, social, and psychological factors) in assessment, IQ, and special education testing (including gifted and talented); the importance of standards; and the difference between language proficiency and other types of assessment (e.g. standardized achievement tests of overall mastery), as they affect ESOL student learning.
  - b. *Standard 4.b. Language Proficiency Assessment.* Candidates know and use a variety of standards-based language proficiency instruments to inform their instruction and understand their uses for identification, placement, and demonstration of language growth of ESOL students.
  - c. *Standard 4.c. Classroom-Based Assessment for ESL.* Candidates know and use a variety of performance based assessment tools and techniques to inform instruction.
5. **TESOL Domain 5. Professionalism** - Candidates keep current with new instructional techniques, research results, advances in the ESL field, and education policy issues and demonstrate knowledge of the history of ESL teaching. They use such information to reflect on and improve their instruction and assessment practices. Candidates work collaboratively with colleagues and the community to improve the learning environment, provide support, and advocate for ELLs and their families.
  - a. *Standard 5.b. Professional Development, Partnerships, and Advocacy* - Candidates take advantage of professional growth opportunities and demonstrate the ability to build partnerships with colleagues and students' families, serve as community resources, and advocate for ELLs.
6. **NETS-T Standard 1** - Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity: Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments. [NETS-T 1b].
7. **NETS-T Standard 2** - Design and Develop Digital Age Learning Experiences and Assessments: Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessment incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes, identified in the NETS-S. [NETS-T 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d].

8. **NETS-T Standard 3** - Model Digital Age Work and Learning: Teachers exhibit knowledge, skills, and work processes representative of an innovative professional in a global and digital society. [NETS-T 3a, 3b, 3d].
9. **NETS-T Standard 5** - Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership: Teachers continuously improve their professional practice, model lifelong learning, and exhibit leadership in their school and professional community by promoting and demonstrating the effective use of digital tools and resources. [NETS-T 5c].

**Relationship of EDUC 537 to INTSAC Principles:**

*Principle #1:* The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) she or he teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

*Principle #2:* The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.

*Principle #4:* The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

*Principle #5:* The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

*Principle #6:* The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

*Principle #9:* The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

**Relationship of Assignments to Standards:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Grade Value in Points</b>	<b>TESOL Standards</b>	<b>NETS-T Standards</b>
Class Participation	15	1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5b	1b, 3a, 3d, 5c
Language Assessment Round Table Presentation	25	1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 5b	1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3b, 3d, 5c
Performance-Based Assessment Project	15	1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 4b, 4c	1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3b, 3d
Field Experience	10	2a, 3a, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5b	1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3b, 5c
Classroom-Based Assessment	30	1a, 2a, 4a, 4b, 4c	1b, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3c, 3d, 5c
CBA Presentation	5	1a, 2a, 4a, 4b, 4c	1b, 2b, 2d, 3a, 3d, 5c

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

Anderson, L. W. (2003). *Classroom assessment: Enhancing the quality of teacher decision making*. Lawrence Elbaum

Falk, B. (2000). *The heart of the matter: Using standards and assessment to learn*. Heinemann

Grassi, E.A. & Barker (Bulmahn) H.B. (2009). *Culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional students: Strategies for teaching and assessment*. Sage

Hughes, A. (2003). *Testing for language teachers*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Cambridge University Press

McMillan, J. H. (2010). *Classroom assessment: Principles and practice for effective standards-based instruction* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson

Nitko, A. J. (2010). *Educational assessment of students* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson

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

Popham W. J. (2011). *Classroom Assessment: What Teachers Need to Know*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson

Stiggins, R.J.& Chappuis, J. (2011). *An introduction to student-involved assessment FOR learning* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson

Valdes Pierce, L. (2003). *Assessing English language learners*. Student Assessment Series. National Education Association

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING

*Performance Based Assessment (PBA) Requirements:* All FAST TRAIN licensure courses have required PBAs. The required PBAs for this course are: **Classroom Based Assessment Project**, and the **Field Experience Log** and **Evaluation Forms**. These PBAs must be posted to TaskStream where they will be reviewed and graded. [See FAST TRAIN Resources website at: [http://fasttrain.gmu.edu/resources/taking\\_courses](http://fasttrain.gmu.edu/resources/taking_courses) ].

### A. COURSE ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION (15 points)

Participation is expected of each student in every class. You are expected to arrive in class on time and to actively contribute to the activities and discussions by critically analyzing issues, asking questions, or making observations about and reflecting on the readings indicating your thorough preparation for the class. You are responsible for all assigned coursework and readings. If there is an emergency that affects your attendance, please inform the professor prior to the absence. It is your responsibility to obtain copies of any materials distributed in any class you may have missed. The

guidelines and expectations for Class Participation are outlined in detail in the “**Course Requirements and Assignments**” document and are posted on Bb.

### **B. FIELD EXPERIENCE - CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE and RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES** (Hours Required: 20; 10 points)

In order to achieve the EDCI 520 Field Experience objectives, participants will engage in a minimum of 20 hours of school-based field experiences. Students will engage in observations, interactions with students, and teacher interviews in the school setting regarding the use of culturally responsive teaching methods. During their field experience students will keep a professional reflection journal to record findings and lessons learned. They can use their recordings from their journal for class discussions and reflections when they comment and respond to the discussion board. Students must document the 20 hours of field experience using the **Fieldwork Log of Hours Form** and the **Evaluation Form** available on the FAST TRAIN website: <http://fasttrain.gmu.edu/current-students/field-req/>. This is a **PBA and the Log and Evaluation Forms should be submitted to TaskStream**. The guidelines for the Field Experience are outlined in detail in the “**Course Requirements and Assignments**” document and are posted on Bb.

### **C. LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT ROUND TABLE PRESENTATION** (25 points)

In small groups, you will be assigned a topic of language assessment from the textbook, *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices by Brown, D.H. and Abeywickrama, P. (2010)*. You will also select two more readings (peer reviewed articles or studies) on the same topic and a related language performance based assessment that is being used in your school or district. Based on your study, analysis, and research of your topic you will prepare a Round Table presentation/demonstration of your findings using technology and hands-on activities to the class. You will prepare a set of activities, strategies, handouts and materials to share with your peers to inform them about your language assessment research topic and help them prepare to effectively implement what they have learned from your presentation in their own classroom. The guidelines for this assignment are outlined in detail in the “**Course Requirements and Assignments**” document and are posted on Bb.

### **D. PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT PROJECT** (15 points)

The Performance-Based Assessment Project is an assessment prototype. It is a proposal for something that you plan to do with your students. The Performance-Based Assessment Project will demonstrate each candidate’s ability to apply the required readings to a self-selected project. You will provide support for developing the project through citations to assigned and outside readings. In this project, build on what you have learned from your work in this course. The process of developing your own project is just as important as the product of your work. You will design a set of assessment activities and tools to assess students’ content knowledge and language of that content area. The guidelines for this assignment are outlined in detail in the “**Course Requirements and Assignments**” document and are posted on Bb.



### **E. CLASSROOM BASED ASSESSMENT PROJECT (CBA) (30 points)**

In this assessment, you will use your knowledge of the issues and concepts of assessment of ELLs to create, implement and evaluate at least two assessment instruments in a language learning classroom. [TESOL standards addressed in this assignment are 1.a, 2.a, 4.a, 4.b, 4.c.]. For this project, you will identify an assessment need of an ESL classroom (using your own classroom or working with a cooperating teacher) and discuss the level/age/grade/content you will be assessing. You will select two assessments, one language based assessment and one performance-based assessment in the content area that will evaluate the identified assessment need. You will find ways in which you will scaffold the assessments to your language learners' age and proficiency levels. You will implement each assessment with a minimum of five language learners and collect data. You will then analyze the results of your assessments to identify their validity and reliability. You will compose a report and submit it, along with your complete assessments. This is a **PBA and the Log and Evaluation Forms should be submitted to TaskStream**. The guidelines for the CBA Project are outlined in detail in the "**Course Requirements and Assignments**" document and are posted on Bb.

### **F. CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT PROJECT PRESENTATION (5 points)**

The purpose of this presentation is to build awareness and knowledge across issue groups, so that your peers who have focused on other areas can benefit from what you have learned and improve their own development as teachers. Your CBA presentation should provide an overview of your classroom assessment project, including key findings, problems identified in your school or workplace, possible solutions, suggestions from your colleagues, and your own reflections/conclusions and recommendations. The guidelines for the CBA Project Presentation are outlined in detail in the "**Course Requirements and Assignments**" document and are posted on Bb.

## **GRADING**

At George Mason University course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The university-wide system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>GRADING</b>	<b>Grade Points</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>A+</b>	=100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
<b>A</b>	94-99	4.00	
<b>A-</b>	90-93	3.67	
<b>B+</b>	85-89	3.33	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
<b>B</b>	80-84	3.00	
<b>C*</b>	70-79	2.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course
<b>F*</b>	<69	0.00	

Note: "C" is not satisfactory for a licensure course

"F" does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

For more information see: <http://jiju.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/gradstandards.html>

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Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are in good standing but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including the summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of 'IN' is changed by the registrar to an 'F'. Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the FAST TRAIN office.

ESL Students & The Professional Development Portfolio and Elementary Students and The Anthology: The Professional Development Portfolio and the Anthology is a collection of carefully selected materials and targeted reflections that provide a record of teaching experiences and growth. It documents a teacher candidate's knowledge, skills, and ability to teach. As a performance-based document, the portfolio synthesizes learning from the teacher candidate's coursework and school-based experiences and includes multiple sources of data that should be gathered and developed in the teaching and learning process.

### **TASKSTREAM REQUIREMENTS**

Every student registered for any Curriculum and instruction course with a required PBA is expected to submit it to TaskStream (regardless of whether the course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the PBA by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

All assignments are due on the date indicated in the syllabus. ***Projects must be submitted to the TaskStream portal no later than 5:00pm EST on the due date.*** Late assignments will not be accepted unless there is a prior arrangement made between the student and the professor and only in exceptional circumstances for non-academic reasons beyond reasonable student control. Projects or papers submitted for credit in one course cannot be used for a grade in a different course, even they have been revised. It's unethical.

### **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code> ].

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- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- c. 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.**
- d. 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> ].
- e. 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/>].
- f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- g. 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> ].

### **ABSENCES**

FAST TRAIN students are expected to attend **all** class periods for face to face courses and participate every week on the discussions and activities for online courses for which they registered. Students should contact the professor ahead of an absence or non-participation online. Only approved (see Mason catalog) absences will not result in a grade penalty.

### **COURSE WITHDRAWAL WITH DEAN APPROVAL**

For graduate and non-degree students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's academic dean, and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion (Mason Catalog). Students must contact an academic advisor in FAST TRAIN to withdraw after the deadline. There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Avoid plagiarism, which is using an author's words without citing the author in your paper. Please review APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) citation guidelines in order to correctly cite your sources. Plagiarism is unethical and illegal and violates the GMU Honor Code. It is grounds for dismissal from the program and from GMU.

## **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

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

## **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles [See <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values> ].