Course Goal & Objectives

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.

Course Goal

The goal of the course is to facilitate the acquirement of competencies and knowledge of students in education and other human service areas in the ethical use of educational assessment techniques and instruments in a multicultural public school context. The over-arching goal is the promotion of social justice in American public school education through the proper use of assessment methods and information.

Objectives

The course will adopt the learning objectives explicated in the Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students (STCEAS) to attain the course goal. The standards found in STCEAS 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).
After completion of the course, students will be skilled in –

1. Applying basic principles of sound assessment practices for addressing specific educational needs;
2. Selecting assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions;
3. Developing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions;
4. Administering, scoring, and interpreting the results of both externally-produced and teacher-produced assessment instruments;
5. Using assessment results in instructional planning, teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement;
6. Using pupil assessment results for valid grading procedures;
7. Communicating assessment results to varied stakeholders;
8. Recognizing and appropriately acting against the unethical, illegal, and otherwise, inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information; and
9. Recognizing the implications of educational assessment for social justice in our public schools.

Organization

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. The final segment of the class period will be devoted to small group work sessions designed to provide hands-on experiences with assessment methods. The small group work sessions will also enable students to work on their assessment development projects, although out-of-class time will be required as well.

The over-arching framework for the various topics in the course is the use of educational assessment to promote social justice. This focus is reflected in the end-of-unit postscript presentations by the Instructor and in the course requirements. Pedagogically, the conceptual or thematic organization of the class is evident in the instructional units found in the class calendar (see the class calendar in Appendix A). This appendix also lists the instructional unit topics, pertinent assignment due dates, and the chapter readings related to each instructional unit.

Requirements

Electronic Portfolio. Course outcomes are performance-based, requiring students to develop a product that gives durable evidence of accomplishments in the course. The electronic portfolio is the medium that will be used to capture these outcomes. The electronic portfolio will serve a number of purposes. Namely, it will provide:

1. performance-based evidence of attainment of course objectives;
2. evidence of competence for future professional assessment practices;
3. an important segment for future portfolio development to meet GSE requirements; and
4. documentation of competencies for employment considerations.
The electronic portfolio will be submitted on a CD the last class night that is reserved for exams. The portfolio will display the required student products and student-selected work. Copies of most of the required products (see below) will be submitted to the instructor as hard copies earlier in the semester for review and evaluation. These products can be revised for the portfolio. Appendix D provides details for the required student products and a schema for the organization of the electronic portfolio.

**Student Products.** Required student products and associated due dates are given below.

1. Two unit-based papers reviewing an article that relates one of the unit topics to principles of social justice. Each paper, 5 pages maximum, in length. (10 pts each; 20 pts total). **Due dates: Feb 24 & March 24,** respectively.
2. Review and evaluate two standardized assessment instruments (at least one achievement test) (10 pts.). **Due date: Both due April 21.**
3. Assessment Development Project: Development of a new assessment instrument (paper-and-pencil) or the improvement in an existing one. (40 points)¹ **Due last class period.**
4. Portfolio Organization and Innovative Quality (30 points): **Due last class period.**

**Evaluation and Grading Policies**

The following grading system will be used in the evaluation of students’ work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Quality Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98.0-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.5-97.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91.5-93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89.5-91.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.5-89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.5-83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78.5-80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75.5-78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72.5-75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt; 72.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required Textbook and Readings**


¹ See Appendix C for guidelines for the development of a new assessment instrument.
**Recommended Readings:**


**Web-Based Resources**

Buros Institute of Mental Measurements (University of Nebraska). Leading source on information on tests published in the United States, including reviews. [http://www.unl.edu/buros/]

Center for Research on Evaluations, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) (UCLA) Research Center that has devoted 36 years in the development of scientifically based evaluation and testing techniques. [www.cse.ucla.edu]

Chicago Board of Education Web Team. *The Rubric Bank.* In The Rubric Bank, you will find a wide variety of performance assessment scoring rubrics. [http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_an...]

Educational Testing Service & Wiggins, G. Software developed by ETS and Grant Wiggins, Associates to assist teachers in developing performance based assessments. Software has not been reviewed. [http://www.ets.org/wizard/quicktour/1_Launch_Assessment_Wizard.htm.]


Added: Jan 6, 2003 Also located at: [http://www.merlot.org/](http://www.merlot.org/) (Type: Authentic Assessment Toolbox in the Search Box located at the top of the web page)

National Center for Fair and Open Testing (Fair Test) (Cambridge, MA). Public interest group that focuses on issues of individual rights, public policy, and legality of assessment. [www.fairtest.org]

Queendom.com. This site contains one of the biggest collections of Personality tests on the Web. Some are purely for fun, most are of questionable reliability, but it generates a good discussion about whether testing is valid. [http://www.queendom.com/]

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APPENDIX A

UNIT ONE: FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT
(Associated Course Objectives: #1)

January 27  Introduction and Orientation to the Course
Mini-lecture: Introduction to educational assessment and the role of 
assessment in classroom instruction
Individual Class Work:
* Using self-assessments to understand basic principles 
* Initial draft of your assessment philosophy statement
Preparation Reading: Nitko, 1 & 5, Thomas article (2002)

February 3  Goal Clarification, Identification of Learning Targets & Determining 
the Relevance of Assessment Results
Mini-Lecture: Learning target taxonomies and their relationship to 
assessment methods
Small Group Work:
* Determining validity evidence in educational assessment.
* Specifying learning targets for assessment
Preparation Reading: Nitko, 2 & 3

February 10  Basic Methods of Determining the Reliability of Assessment Methods
Mini-lecture: Survey of approaches to estimating test reliability
Whole-Class: Assessment Development Project
Small Group Work:
* Interpreting Reliability Data
Postscript Lecture: Promoting Social Justice Through Appropriate 
Educational Assessment
Preparation Reading: Nitko, 4

UNIT TWO: DEVELOPING AND USING CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS
(OBJECTIVES 2-5)

February 17  Instructional planning with assessment in mind
Mini-lecture: Links among instruction, planning and assessment procedures
Small Group Work:
* Test blue printing
* Beginning the Assessment Development Project
Preparation Reading: Nitko 6 
* Social Justice Paper (SJP) #1 due next week

February 24  Preparing Short Answer and Selected Response Assessment Tests
Mini-lecture: Tests vs. other assessment methods & basic principles in test 
construction
Small Group Work:
* Critiquing the Selected- Response Test Items
* Writing & Evaluating Selected -Test Items
* Assessment Development Project
√ Submit SJP #1
March 3  
**Preparing Constructed-Response Exercises**  
**Mini-lecture:** Guidelines for developing good constructed-response exercises and scoring methods  
**Small Group Work:**  
  * Writing sound constructed-response items  
  * Scoring the constructed response exercise.  
  * Assessment Development Project  
**Preparation Reading:** Nitko, 7&8  

March 10  
**Assessing Higher-Order Thinking, Problem Solving, and Critical Thinking**  
**Mini-lecture:** Critical dimensions of higher order thinking  
**Postscript:** *Developing and Administering Classroom Assessments in the Interest of Social Justice*  
**Small Group Work:**  
  * Preparing and critiquing assessments for higher-order thinking, problem solving, and critical thinking.  
  * Assessment Development Project  
**Preparation Reading:** Nitko, 9  
**Home Work:**  
  * Reexamine your assessment philosophy statement and revise as needed  
  * Social Justice Paper (SJP) #2 due next class period  

**UNIT THREE: DEVELOPING AND USING PERFORMANCE & AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS & GRADING AND REPORTING (OBJECTIVES 2-5)**  

March 24  
**Preparing and Scoring Performance and Authentic Assessments**  
**Mini-lecture:** Strengths and limitations of performance and authentic assessments  
**Small Group Work:**  
  * Writing Performance Tasks  
  * Developing scoring rubrics  
  * Assessment Development Project  
**Submit SJP #2**  
**Preparation Reading:** Nitko, 10 & 12  

March 31  
**Utilizing Formative Assessment Results & Preparing Your Students for Informal and High-Stakes Assessments**  
**Mini-lecture:** Quantitative methods for the analysis of assessment results for improving assessment methods  
**Small Group Work:**  
  * Item analysis interpretations & analysis of procedures used to prepare students for high-stakes assessments  
  * Assessment Development Project  
**Preparation Reading:** Nitko, 11 & 14  

April 7  
**Using Assessment Results for Evaluating and Grading Students**  
**Mini-lecture:** Issues and procedures used in grading students  
**Postscript:** *Issues of Equity in the Evaluation and Grading of Students*
Small Group Work:
   * Assessment Development Project
Preparation Reading: Nitko, 15

UNIT FOUR: STANDARDIZED ACHIEVEMENT TESTING: ISSUES AND PRACTICES
(OBJECTIVES #4-8)
April 14 Survey of standardized achievement tests and common uses
Mini-lecture: Appropriate uses for standardized tests
Small Group Work:
   * Interpreting computer-prepared reports
   * Assessment Development Project
Preparation Reading: Nitko, 16 & 17

April 21 Finding and Evaluating Published Assessments
Mini-lecture: Critical elements to consider in evaluating published assessments
Small Group Work:
   * Evaluation on a published assessment
   * Assessment Development Project

● Test Reviews due next class period
Preparation Reading: Nitko, 18

April 28 - Survey of Other Standardized Tests Used in Educational Assessment
May 5 Mini-lecture: Achievement vs. aptitude assessment & assessment in the affective domain
Postscript: High Stakes Testing and Social Justice
Small Group Work:
   • Assessment Development Project
   • Portfolio Organization
√ Submit Test Reviews
● Home Work: Reexamine your assessment philosophy statement and revise as needed

MAY 12 INDIVIDUAL REPORTS
Portfolio Presentations
   • Your assessment philosophy
   • Synopsis of one of the social justice papers
   • Brief summary of assessment project
APPENDIX B

GENERAL GUIDELINES TO WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All course projects should be typed, double-spaced, and include a cover page. In addition, the text of the papers should be preceded by an abstract of no more than 250 words that provides a synopsis of the content, such as purpose, procedures, findings and conclusions. In terms of general style, the format provided in the fourth edition of Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (American Psychological Association, 2002) should be followed. The features that should be given close attention are:

! Margins ! Headings ! 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.

You should make a copy of your projects before submitting it to the instructor. In the case of the Applications Project, the instructor will keep the original. You are welcomed to make an appointment to see the instructor concerning the evaluation of the project.
APPENDIX C

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

I. Instrument Planning and Development

Course Requirement: Development of an assessment instrument. This project requires the student to develop a traditional paper-and-pencil achievement test or a performance assessment in a subject matter or professional development area of his or her choice.

I. Option A: Development of a Paper-and-Pencil Achievement Test


A. The major elements of the first section of the project (Introduction) are descriptions of the:

1) purpose of the test
2) characteristics of the individual or group to be tested
3) nature of the subject matter covered in instruction
4) instructional and learning activities involved
5) specific instructional content covered in the test
6) test blueprint

B. The major elements of the second section of the test development project (Administrator’s Guide) are:

1) general instructions for the administration of the test
2) the actual instrument, containing a combination of selective response type items (true-false, multiple choice, matching, etc.,) or a homogeneous set of one of the item types.
3) the test key

C. The final section (Evaluation) provides a summary of a self and peer-evaluation of the test, and any subsequently planned or actual revisions. Extra credit will be given for the actual administration of the test and the completion of an item analysis of the test.

D. References: List of all sources used in the test construction project, including your textbook, the students' textbooks, curriculum guides, etc. information that would be useful in understanding your project

2. Specific Description of Critical Elements.

a. Statement of Purpose. Provide a description of the general purpose of the test, its coverage (e.g., a two-week segment of a unit of instruction, comprehensive coverage of an entire instructional unit, etc.), and format (i.e., the number and types of test items).
b. **Description of Students, Patients, or Clients.** Describe the fictional or actual groups for which the test is appropriate. Your description should include grade level (if appropriate), age, the diversity in background (e.g., ethnicity level of prior knowledge, and social economic status), and the variability of their achievement status.

c. **The Subject Matter and Classroom Activities.** Give a general description of the subject matter area covered in instruction (e.g., American history, religious practices during the colonial period, a unit on normal pregnancy, etc.), along with the identification of the textbooks and other instructional resources used by the students. Imagine a scenario that captures the teacher's activities to facilitate learning and the types of learning activities that students might engage in during the teaching of the instructional unit. Write a brief description of these activities to serve as the context for the test.

d. **Description of Specific Content to be Tested.** Describe the specific instructional content covered in the test. This section should culminate with the presentation of the overall instructional goal, general objectives, and specific student learning target (outcomes) that clearly reflect their interrelationship. The learning targets should not only present the content and behaviors to be exhibited; they should also specify the cognitive skills involved, using either Bloom's Taxonomy or Marzano's Taxonomy. The linkage among the goal, general objectives, and specific outcomes may be presented as a tree diagram or a list. The general scheme using the tree diagram is illustrated in Figure I below.

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**Figure 1. Tree Diagram of Instructional Goals, Objectives, and Student Outcomes**

```
                         Overall Goal
                        ------
                   General Objective/Content A     General Objective/Content B
                                 -------     -------
                         Learning Target A.1 (Class.) Learning Target A.2 (Class.)
                         Learning Target A.3 (Class.)
                                 -------     -------
                                         Learning Target B.1 (Class.)
                                         Learning Target B.2 (Class.)
                   General Objective/Content C
                              -------
                         Learning Target C (Class.)
                           -------
                          Learning Target
```

You may find it more convenient to arrange the overall goal, general objective/content area, and student outcomes in a list similar to that illustrated in Table 1. You will note that the content in Table 1 is equivalent to that in Figure 1. The one difference is that the link between the overall goal and the three general objectives are not as apparent in Table 1 as in Figure 1. Note that each Learning Target is to be
classified (Class.) according to some taxonomic system such as Bloom’s (e.g., knowledge, comprehension, etc.).

Table 1.
Illustration of a the Instructional Goal, General Objectives, and Specific Outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement of Overall Goal of Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Statement of General Objective/Content A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Learning Target A.1 (class.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning Target A.2 (class.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learning Target A.3 (class.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Statement of General Objective/Content B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Learning Target B.1 (class.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning Target B.2 (class.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Statement of General Objective/Content C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Target C (class.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e. The overall goal statement may originate from a number of sources. It may be developed by you. It may be taken from a school district’s curriculum guide or a teacher’s edition of the textbook used in the unit of instruction.

f. The learning targets can be considered to be two dimensional: one involves a statement of content (condition), specific student behavior to be exhibited, and perhaps the criterion of mastery; the other dimension is the cognitive skills or processes presumed to underlie the exhibited behavior. The traditional source of classifying cognitive skills is found in Bloom et al (1956) and Gagné (1985) but more current sources include the Dimensions of Learning Model (Marzano, Pickering, and McTigh, 1993). An example of a learning target using the Bloom’s classification system is found below (Table 2), along with the identification of each critical component of the statement. Bloom et al (1956) used the term, “specific objectives” rather than learning targets in their taxonomy.

Table 2. An Example of a Statement of Specific Learner’s Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: Given a set of decimals, including whole numbers (mixed decimals), the student will be able to round off the values to the nearest hundredth.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) able to round off the values to the nearest hundredth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) (\uparrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) (\uparrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Application level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Components: (1) Content/condition; (2) specific student behavioral outcome; (3) Criterion of mastery (when feasible); (4) Classification based on Bloom’s Taxonomy
You should refer to the relevant chapter in your textbook for information on the classification of cognitive skills and general principles of writing instructional objectives.

g. **Test Blue Print.** An important feature that is required is the two-way table of test specifications, commonly referred to as the test blueprint. This table serves as a critical link between the instructional objectives, the targeted cognitive skills (as presented in Figure 1 or Table 1) and the content of specific test items. One dimension of the table lists the general objectives or unit topics to be tested and the other specifies the cognitive skills or processes that were learned and to be assessed. The body of the table contains the learning targets (usually coded for brevity) and the identification of the specific test items developed to assess each specific objective.

h. **Instructions to the User.** One way to assure that the test is unambiguous, both in terms of construction and administration, is to think in terms of it being administered by someone else. Will the substitute instructor, for example, be able to give the test appropriately? To assure clarity, you need to provide descriptions of any conditions, special materials, and general directions that are associated with the test administration. Examples include the amount of time estimated for test administration, the handling of answer keys, the need for test monitoring, and any special attention that must be provided to individuals with special needs or who are bilingual/multicultural. Any directions that are used to orient the students to the test, such as how they should handle the testing material, allocation of time, or recording their answers should also be included if appropriate. *The test key should be presented in this section of the paper.*

i. **The Actual Test.** The test may contain a combination of item types but must include some selected-response test items. The number of test items may range from 20-30. Please confer with me if these parameters are not appropriate for your targeted students or subject matter area. Both general directions (used to orient the students) and specific directions (used to guide student through specific sections of the test) should be included. Your textbook should be reviewed concerning the principles of test item construction. In formatting your test items on the test page, be sure that no item overflows to the next page; simply place the entire item on the next page, even if this may result in extra space at the bottom of the preceding page. The font size should not be smaller than 12 pitch.
II. Option B: Development of a Performance-Based Assessment

Background

An alternative assessment project that may be selected is the development of a performance-based assessment. Performance-based assessments are commonly used in public school education and are appropriate when the educator is focusing on skill outcomes under more or less realistic conditions (Gronlund, 1988). The skill outcomes include performances related to specific procedures, such as laboratory skills in science, demonstrations of communication skills, identification of crucial components in complex machinery, and the like. The performances may have both important motor and intellectual components (Carey, 1994). The performance assessment is among the major techniques that can be designed to provide authentic assessment of student learning, that is, an assessment of students’ accomplishments, skills, and knowledge in virtual or real-world conditions. Students planning to develop a performance assessment may wish to visit the Authentic Assessment Toolbox for ideas for developing performance tasks and rubrics. [http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox...]

A. Description and Organization of the Performance Assessment

The Performance Assessment Project consists of the development of a plan, the performance tasks, and scoring system or rubric.

The major sections of this project are outlined below:

I. Introduction

A. Description of the general purpose for the performance-based assessment or clinical evaluation and the reason why it is found to be a more appropriate method than other techniques. In your description of purpose, identify the type of performance technique you plan to develop:

1. Structured on-demand tasks for individuals, groups, or both
2. Naturally occurring or typical performance tasks
3. Longer-term projects for individual students, groups, or both
4. Portfolios (best work or growth and learning-progress)
5. Demonstrations
6. Experiments
7. Oral presentations and dramatizations
8. Simulations and contrived situations

B. Description of the subject matter area

C. Description of the specific instructional unit used in the planning, including the sequence of instruction associated with the expected performance.
D. Description of the students targeted for the assessment, particularly in terms of prior learning experiences and unique needs of certain students (your descriptions, of course, will be fictional)

E. Description of the Setting. Describe the conditions in which the students are to perform, including the amount of time allotted for the performance, and whether an audience will be present.

II. Specification of the Performance Outcomes to be Assessed
A. Statement of General Objectives
B. Associated Performance Outcomes
   Each General Objective should be paired with its respective set of specific skill learning targets (outcomes); these specific skill outcomes may include both intellectual and motor skills.
C. Selection of Performance Outcomes to be Targeted by Specific Performance Tasks
   All of the specific outcomes may not be used for a given performance assessment; indeed, many may not even be amenable to this technique. In this section identify those specific outcomes that will be the target of your performance assessment. Remember that these skill outcomes must be readily observable and reliably measured.

III. Description of the Performance Tasks (See General Description of The Performance Assessment Tasks)
   1. Describe with sufficient detail what students are suppose to do.
   2. Describe any equipment, props, or other reference resources that will be involved. Provide the actual stories, prompts, scenarios, etc., that students are to use in performing the tasks.
   3. Present the learning task(s) in the form that students will encounter in the performance assessment.

IV. Instructions Assume you are providing directions for a substitute teacher to follow in your absence. Your instructions should include the following points:
   A. Purpose of the Assessment
   B. List of equipment and materials to be used
   C. Testing procedure, including:
      1. Condition of equipment
      2. Controls (e.g., role of other students, if any; whether conducted in a group, etc)
      3. Description of the required performance
      4. Time limits, if any
      5. Method of scoring performance appraisal instrument
V. **The Performance Appraisal Instrument or Rubric**
Include the actual performance appraisal/rubric instrument that will be used in the assessment. The appraisal instrument may be in the form of an observational checklist, a procedures rating scale, a rubric, a product rating scale, or some combination of these formats. The instrument should be accompanied by a description, the rationale for the selection of the adopted format, and the standards for judging the quality of performance, if ratings are to be used. Go to [http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_an...](http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_an...) for examples of rubrics used in various subject matter areas.

VI. **Evaluation**
At minimum, you should conduct a self-evaluation of your plan. If possible, have a colleague to examine your plan as well. In each case, briefly respond to the questions below that refer to criteria for evaluating a performance assessment (Oosterhof, 1996):

1. Does the performance assessment present a task relevant to the instructional goal and general objectives?
2. Are the number and nature of qualities to be observed at one time sufficiently limited to allow accurate assessment?
3. Is each quality to be measured directly observable?
4. Are conditions under which the performance assessment will occur clearly established?
5. If the stimulus is structured, are instructions to the student concise and complete?
6. Does the scoring plan delineate essential qualities of a satisfactory performance?
7. Will the scoring plan result in different observers assigning similar scores to a student's performance?

**References**


APPENDIX D
GUIDELINES FOR THE ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

Specific Entries:

1. **Home Page** that:
   a. States Purpose of the Portfolio
   b. Guides Reviewer to Major Sections:
      i. Biographic sketch
      ii. Personal Philosophy
      iii. Assessment and Social Justice
      iv. Standardized Test Reviews
      v. Assessment Development Project
      vi. Student-selected Exemplars

2. **Biographic Sketch**
   a. Identification Information, such as name, undergraduate degree (type, date, school), current educational program, and expected date of completion
   b. Professional Information, such as current employment, career goals, and any employment-based training received
   c. Personal experience with assessment activities, both as a student or an administrator.

3. **Current Philosophy** related to Educational Assessment (don’t be concerned if you have little or nothing to say about your personal perspective at this point; you will have the opportunity to revise this statement over time). Areas that can be addressed include:
   a. Your definition of educational assessment
   b. The value (potential or actual) of assessment in your chosen professional field
   c. The role of educational assessment, if any, of improving public education in the United States
   d. The value of educational assessment in furthering the ideals of democracy in the United States

4. **Assessment and Social Justice**. The course topics are organized into four instructional units (see Appendix A). Students will select two of the topics from these units and research the literature on how the selected aspect of assessment is related to some dimension of social justice (e.g., equity, empowerment, expanding opportunity, eliminating bias, closing the achievement gap, etc.). For example, Unit One addresses such issues as ethical assessment practices, legal responsibilities, and valid use of assessment results. An array of possible themes can be entertained. Take for example 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 parameters for this requirement are:
a. Two papers required from separate instructional units
b. Each paper worth ten (10) points for a total of 20 points.
c. Each paper to be no longer than five (5) pages in length.
d. Double spaced in APA format.
e. The order of the major sections are
   i. Source: Written in APA format
   ii. Brief Introduction of the purpose of the article and nature (research, discussion paper, review of the literature, etc.)
   iii. Summary of Major Ideas, Arguments, or Findings
   iv. Your reflections on the article in terms of its relevance to advancing social justice in American education.

5. **Standardized Test Reviews.** All students will review and evaluate two (2) standardized assessment instruments, one of which must be an achievement test. The review and evaluation will be based on the suggested guidelines provided by Nitko (page 425). Access to test reviews can be done online via the GMU Library or by going to the official site for the Buros Institute of Mental Measurement, the nation’s leading source of published tests in the United States. [http://www.unl.edu/buros/](http://www.unl.edu/buros/)

6. **Assessment Development Project.** Students select one of the two options for the assessment development project or propose their own for instructor’s approval:
   a. **Option A. Development of an assessment method.** The student develops an assessment instrument. Two alternatives are available under this option: The development of a traditional paper-and-pencil test or the development of a performance assessment.
   b. **Option B. Revision/Improvement of an existing assessment instrument.** Examples of revising an existing instrument include the revision in formatting, and deletion or adding new items. *The revision must include the actual administration of the test to a group and an item analysis of the instrument.* Another example would be the translation of an existing instrument into a different language using appropriate methods for assuring test equivalence.

7. **Student-Selected Entries.** Students select additional entries to be included in the portfolio. These entries may be taken from the classroom work for the course, independent readings, homework and any other sources of the students’ chosen. Each entry should be accompanied by information describing its purpose, and the reason for its selection.
A SCHEMA FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

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