

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
“Assessing Learning and Teaching in Secondary School”
EDUC674 – Fall 2009

Instructor: Professor Mary Williams, Ed.D.

Office: Commerce II / Room 112

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-3:30pm, and by appointment

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Prerequisites: *Completion of the teacher licensure coursework for the Secondary Education Program [minimum of EDUC522 and 672, and EDCI5xx methods]. EDUC674 may be taken concurrently with EDCI6xx methods.*

Course Description and Relationship to Program Goals: EDUC 674 is a graduate course that supports beginning teachers’ design of assessment practices to promote student learning. The course focuses on the individual, classroom, teacher, school, and cultural factors that impact assessment; different types and purposes of assessment; and the relationship of assessment to national and state content standards. In this course teachers will integrate their knowledge from licensure courses and classroom practices to understand, develop, and implement assessment plans. This course highlights national standards for assessing teaching and learning in the content areas as outlined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). EDUC674 introduces concepts and methods used in action research in EDUC 675.

Learning Outcomes

By the completion of this course students will:

- Plan formal and informal assessments of student understanding of content area knowledge identified in state and national standards;
- Design, construct, and evaluate the following assessments [diagnostic, formative, summative, confirmatory, authentic performance task];
- Create multiple formats and strategies of assessment to target the diverse nature of learning in students and to encourage a variety of ways for students to exhibit understanding;
- Design rubrics that will be used to evaluate student work;
- Create a formal classroom grading policy;
- Provide a rationale for assessment plans using the research on teaching and learning;
- Apply integration of subject matter across disciplines to impact curriculum, teaching, and assessment and collaborate with cross-discipline colleagues to plan a unit of study;
- Examine the role of technology in classroom assessment and practice;
- Understand teacher evaluation and its’ link to INTASC standards; and
- Reflect on teaching effectiveness and student learning while developing a Philosophy of Learning and Teaching appropriate for a professional portfolio.

TEXTS (all required)

Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching (2nd Ed.)*. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Commonwealth of Virginia (1995). *Standards of learning for Virginia public schools*. Richmond, Virginia: Author. [available online]

McTighe & Wiggins, G. (2005). *Understanding by design, expanded 2nd ed.* Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

National Content Standards in your discipline (NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSES). [available online]

COURSE DELIVERY

In addition to classroom attendance and participation, students are expected to complete readings, whole class and small group discussions, group and individual projects, internet research, analyses of case studies in learning teams, and reflections on practice. GMU's BlackBoard course framework will be used regularly throughout the course (familiarity with BlackBoard is expected). The course can be accessed at <http://gmu.blackboard.com>

CEHD SYLLABUS STATEMENTS OF EXPECTATIONS

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

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See www.gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

ASSIGNMENTS & PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS (PBA)

Since this is a professional development course (post licensure), high quality work (i.e., "A" work) is expected on all assignments. Full in-class participation is expected. All assignments must be completed to successfully complete the course. Each assignment will be assessed using a scoring rubric, created by the class, and known to each student. For full consideration all assignments are due on the date designated in the Class Agenda.

I. Attendance/Participation (25%)

Attendance at **all** classes, for the entire class period, is a course expectation. Absences will affect the attendance grade. If you miss the equivalent of more than one class session you must see the

instructor about dropping the course. Being on time is also essential and lateness will affect the grade. Participation in discussions is integral to the theory/practice connections that will be made in this course [discussions of case studies count as 1/3 of the participation grade]. The ‘**participation rubric**’ and point system posted on the course website will be used to assess in-class and online participation.

II. Philosophy of Learning and Teaching (25%)

You will write a paper that serves as your philosophy of learning & teaching. You should use knowledge of all your licensure course work, readings, and classroom experience to address your beliefs about assessment and its’ impact on learning & teaching. Your philosophy should include your metaphor of assessment and learning, and must incorporate references to the INTASC standards and content standards.

The paper should express (1) how your philosophy influences your classroom practices, (2) examples of what you intend to do or have done related to educative assessment, (3) research to support your ideas {direct quotes from Wiggins, etc.}, and (4) how your philosophy has changed since you began the program. This paper is included as a major reflective piece in the graduate portfolio. **The scoring rubric for this assignment will be developed in class.**

III. Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit (PBA) (25%)

Given the following scenario: Your school has decided to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of subjects. Therefore, you have been asked to work with teachers in other disciplines at the same grade level to develop an interdisciplinary thematic unit for their students. The unit is an intensive interdisciplinary study that will span all four core curricular areas for four weeks. The unit includes an authentic culminating activity. Each learning team will use the “Backwards Design Model” to plan a unit that includes:

- a theme related to *social justice* that will meaningfully support teaching of the core secondary subjects; i.e., history, English, science, and mathematics;
- *essential questions* to guide student inquiry;
- a *rationale* to justify the unit plan using research and theory*;
- a *culminating project* (summative assessment) that requires students to demonstrate mastery of content and performance standards in the core subjects;
- the *Standards of Learning* and *national content standards* that match up with the theme in each of the core subjects;
- support *materials, resources, and tools* necessary to master standards in the unit; and
- *assessment instruments and scoring rubrics* for the culminating project/task which link to your essential questions.

*The rationale for the curriculum & assessment unit should include research and theory, such as levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and selection of learning styles; a description of ways the unit is interdisciplinary; the reasons for the culminating activity and its’ assessment; and the grading of the culminating activity. Each Learning Team will present their curriculum and assessment plan to the class for feedback and approval.

The scoring rubric for this assignment will be developed in class.

IV. UBD Assessment Plan (PBA) (25%)

Using the “Backwards Design Model,” each student will create all assessment instruments to be used with their students in their subject lessons throughout the interdisciplinary thematic unit (above). Students will take the thematic unit as a starting point and design an assessment plan for

each part of the unit that is completed in their content classes. NOTE: This is an *individual* project. You should use your unit teammates as a sounding board, as reviewer, and critic. Conversely, you will need to be a sounding board, reviewer, critic, etc. Each of you will submit your own written report and grades are assigned individually for this assignment. **The scoring rubric for this assignment will be developed in class.**

The UBD Assessment Plan includes:

1. A **conceptual overview** that describes how your content activities and assignments fit with the **theme** and **essential questions** of the interdisciplinary unit. The overview must include
 - (a) an **outline** that shows the timing of each assessment within the unit;
 - (b) **acceptable results** (e.g., 80% mastery), and
 - (c) a response to the **Design Standards** (Wiggins & McTighe).
2. **Appendices**:
 - a. **Diagnostic assessment** instrument and assessment criteria.
 - b. **Formative assessment** instruments and rubrics.
 - c. **Summative PBA (performance-based assessment)** and rubric.
 - d. **Confirmatory assessment** instrument and assessment criteria.
 - e. **Grading policy**.
3. *A **justification** statement for **each** type of assessment instrument *should include using research / theory such as levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and selection of learning styles for each question, along with reasons for the length or placement of the assessment, and arrangement of questions, etc.*

**All appendices (instruments, rubrics, and grading policy) must be submitted in 'camera ready' format.

POSTNOTE: Retain copies of all course products to document your progress through the Secondary Education Program.

Products from this course (the '**Philosophy of Learning & Teaching**,' '**Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit**,' and '**UBD Assessment Plan**') should be included in your exit **portfolio** for the M.Ed. program and can also become part of your professional portfolio used for job placement.

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Fall 2009 [agenda version 1.0*]

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Reading and Assignments</u>
09/02	Introductory Activities, Standards, HOT/Bloom Assessment Metaphor, Course Overview EGs: Curriculum & Assessment	UBD2: Intro Content Standards
09/09	Ethical Bottom Line, Backwards Design, Goals/Themes, Essential Questions, Performance Task LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning	UBD2: 1, 2, 3 Content Standards
09/16	Graphic Organizers, Summative Assessment, Rubrics LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Prep for P.O.L.T. – overview & examples	UBD2: 3, 4, 5, 6 Content Standards
09/23	‘Deep Understanding’, ‘Meta-Cognition,’ Standards Expert Groups: Discussion Online On your own: Respond to PoLT prep questions Online	UBD2: 8, 9, 11 POST Response: PoLT Prep
09/30	Differentiated Assessment, Accommodations Assessment Criteria LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning Draft: Rubric for Interdisciplinary Unit	UBD2: 7, 9, 10 Tomlinson (article)
10/07	LearningTeams: Case Study (Rhodes) LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit (article: Darling-Hammond & Ifill-Lynch) LearningTeams: Prep for Presentation of Unit	UBD2: 7, 9, 10 Case analysis Interdis Unit (draft)
10/14	Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit Presentations Final: Rubric for Interdisciplinary Unit Overview: UBD Assessment Plan	Interdis Unit Presentations PoLT (draft 1)
10/21	Teacher Made Tests, Formative Assessments, Standardized Tests, Portfolios Draft: Rubric for Philosophy of L&T LearningTeam: Unit POSTED	FINAL Unit POSTED
10/28	LearningTeams: Case Study (Hanover) On your own: UBD Assessment Plan (article: Darling-Hammond & Ifill-Lynch)	UBD2: 7, 9, 10 Case analysis

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| 11/04 | Effective Learning = Effective Teaching
Teaching Standards
On your own: UBD Assessment Plan
Expert Group Peer Review 2 nd draft of POLT | UBD2: 7, 12
INTASC
Danielson
PoLT (draft 2) |
| 11/11 | LearningTeams:
Case Study (Watson)
On your own: work on PoLT | Danielson
Case analysis |
| 11/18 | Teacher Assessment-Evaluation, Observation Checklists
LearningTeams: Peer Review Assessments for Plan
Draft: Assessment Plan Rubric
Final: Rubric for Philosophy of L&T | UBD2: 7, 9, 11
Danielson
Assessments (draft) |
| 11/25 | Thanksgiving Recess | |
| 12/02 | Teacher Assessment-Evaluation, Mentoring + Support Groups
Final: Assessment Plan Rubric
On your own: UBD Assessment Plan
On your own: PoLT | Danielson |
| 12/09 | Checking for Understanding, Next Steps
Philosophy of L&T Synopsis [1 minute]
POST a FULL draft of the Assessment Plan
On your own: Prepare the final version of the PoLT | UBD2: 12, 13
PoLT Synopsis
Assessment Plan (draft) |
| 12/15 | Philosophy of Learning & Teaching POSTED
Assessment Plan POSTED | Philosophy Paper
UBD Assessment Plan |

12/15/09 at 11pm is the last day to turn in any and all course assignments for consideration to be included in this semester's grade.

***A copy of the 'Philosophy of Learning & Teaching' paper must be included in your M.Ed. Portfolio.**