

“Assessing Learning and Teaching in Secondary School”
EDUC674 – Spring 2011

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Prerequisites: *Completion of the teacher licensure coursework for the Secondary Education Program [minimum of EDUC522 and 672, EDCI5xx methods, and 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 using the research on teaching and learning;
- Integrate subject matter across disciplines to impact curriculum, teaching, and assessment and collaborate in cross-discipline Professional Learning Teams to plan a unit of study;
- Examine the literature on teacher effectiveness and its link to student learning;
- Understand teacher evaluation and the importance of teaching standards for professional growth; 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]

***Danielson and McTighe & Wiggins can be accessed** through Mason libraries. The link is:

<http://magik.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=2018116>

Scroll down to "Links: Electronic resource available..." and click on the link.

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 Secondary Education Program Resources:

- For additional information about the Secondary Education Program in the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/gsemasters/>]

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://bb-gmu.blackboard.com>

OUT-OF-CLASS SESSIONS and USE of the INTERNET

Some class sessions will be held out-of-class [online]. Online classes are considered regular instructional time and the assignments given are the equivalent of a full in-class session. The online classes involve research, use of professional web sites, asynchronous discussions [during a specified time frame], email with the instructor and learning teammates, readings, projects, writing chronicles/ blogs, exploring plans, and other assignments. GMU's BlackBoard course framework will be used regularly throughout the course. Online discussions and collaborative work will take place at: <http://bb-gmu.blackboard.com>

*Access to the Internet to search for resources, lesson/unit plans, and to engage in online discussion is required at least 3x a week.

**Your GMU email address is required for communication with the course instructor – your GMU email account must be active by the first week of class.

ASSIGNMENTS & PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS (PBA)

Since this is a professional course (post licensure), high quality work (i.e., “A” work) is expected on all assignments. A mastery approach is implemented in this course. 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. All assignments are due on the date designated in the Class Agenda. Attendance at each class is mandatory. Full in-class and online participation is expected.

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 online 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 learning & teaching & assessment. Your philosophy should include your metaphor or a conceptual framework for learning, and must incorporate references to the INTASC standards and content standards.

The paper should express (1) how your philosophy influences (or will influence) your classroom practices, (2) examples of what you intend to do or have done related to educative assessment, and (3) research to support your ideas {direct quotes from Wiggins or Ed Psych, etc.}.

This assignment includes a reflective blog about how your philosophy has changed since methods I as a model of professional growth and development.

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

III. Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit (PBA) (20%) TEAM grade

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 professional learning team (PLT) 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*** (authentic performance-based 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; and
- ***summative assessment (instruments and scoring rubrics)*** for the culminating project/authentic performance-based task which link to your essential questions.

*The rationale for the interdisciplinary thematic unit should include research and theory, such as levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and differentiation; 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 PLT 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) (30%) Individual grade

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 use 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. The **theme** and **essential questions** of the interdisciplinary unit, and include the following:
 - (a) **Standards of Learning** and **national content standards**,
 - (b) an **outline** that shows the placement of each assessment within the unit,
 - (c) a description of **why** each instrument was chosen and **how** it assesses student learning,
 - (c) a **grading policy** for the unit, and
 - (d) a response to the **Design Standards** (Wiggins & McTighe).
2. **Appendices** *:
 - a) ***Diagnostic assessment** instrument and assessment criteria.
 - b) ***Formative assessment** instruments and assessment criteria or rubrics.
 - c) ***Confirmatory assessment** instrument and assessment criteria.

*All appendices (assessment 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 ‘**Assessment Plan**’) could be included in the **Best Practice Showcase** for the M.Ed. program and can also become part of your professional portfolio used for job placement.

**EDUC674 “Assessing Learning and Teaching in Secondary Schools”
Spring 2011 Class Agenda [version 1.0] ***

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Reading and Assignments</u>
01/24	Introductory Activities, Standards, HOT/Bloom Assessment Metaphor, Course Overview LTs: Curriculum & Assessment LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning	UBD2: Intro Content Standards
01/31	Online LearningTeams: Discussion ‘Deep Understanding’, ‘Meta-Cognition,’ ‘Standards’ On your own: Respond to PoLT questions Online LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning	UBD2: 8, 9, 11 POST Response: PoLT
02/07	Ethical Bottom Line, Backwards Design, Goals/Themes, Essential Questions LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning	UBD2: 1, 2, 3 Content Standards
02/14	Graphic Organizers, Summative Assessment, Rubrics Standardized Tests, Performance Tasks, Criteria LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning Draft: Rubric for Interdisciplinary Unit	UBD2: 3, 4, 5, 6 Content Standards
02/21	Online LearningTeams: Discussion Case Study (Rhodes) LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning	UBD2: 7, 9, 10 Case analysis
02/28	Differentiated Assessment, Accommodations Teacher Made Tests, Formative Assessments LearningTeams: Interdisciplinary Unit Planning Final: Rubric for Interdisciplinary Unit	UBD2: 7, 9, 10 Tomlinson (article) PoLT (draft 1)
03/07	Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit Presentations Overview: UBD Assessment Plan Draft: Rubric for Philosophy of L&T	Unit Presentations Peer Review
03/14	Spring BREAK	
03/21	Online LearningTeams: Discussion Case Study (Hanover) On your own: UBD Assessment Plan On your own: work on PoLT	UBD2: 7, 9, 10 Case analysis (article: Darling-Hammond & Ifill-Lynch) Grading Policy (draft) Interdis Unit (final)

