

**George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Secondary Education Program**

**EDUC 674  
Assessing Learning and Teaching in Secondary School  
Summer Session 2011**

Instructor:           **Liz Baynard, PhD**

Date and Time:       **M, W, F 7pm – 10:05pm**

Class Location:      **West 1001**

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Office Hours:        **By appointment**

**Course Description and Relationship to Program Goals:**

EDUC 674 is a graduate course that supports beginning teachers' development and design of assessment practices for promoting student learning. The course focuses on the individual differences and classroom, teacher, school, and cultural factors that impact assessment; different types and purposes of assessment; and the relationship of assessment to national and state standards. Teachers enrolled in the course will integrate their knowledge from the licensure courses and classroom practices, to understand, develop, and implement assessment strategies. This course focuses on implementing state and 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 teachers to ideas and methods they will need to complete action research in EDUC 675.

**Course Objectives:**

The learner will:

- Plan formal and informal assessments of student understanding of content area knowledge identified in state and national standards;
- Design and construct assessment instruments;
- Create multiple formats and strategies of assessment to target the diverse nature of learning in students and to encourage a variety of ways to exhibit understanding;
- Create and/or reformat scoring rubrics that will be used to evaluate student work;

- Defend assessment plans using the research on teaching and learning;
- Reflect on teaching practice to develop professional skills.

**Required Texts:**

Commonwealth of Virginia (2007) Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools. Richmond, Virginia: Author.

Fisher, D., & Frey, N (2007). Checking for Understanding: Formative Assessment Techniques for your Classroom. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Popham, J. W. (2003). Test Better, Teach Better. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

National Standards in your discipline (NCSS, NCTE, NCTM, NSTA).

**Articles Provided:**

Fluckiger, J., Vigil, Y., Pasco, R., & Danielson, K. (2010). Formative Feedback: Involving Students as Partners in Assessment to Enhance Learning. *College Teaching*, 58(4), 136-140. doi:10.1080/87567555.2010.484031

Guskey, T. R. (2003). How Classroom Assessments Improve Learning. *Educational Leadership*, 60(5), 6.

O'Connor, K. (2010). Grades: When, Why, What Impact and How? *Education Canada*, Spring, 50(2), 38-41.

**Online Resources:**

- National Assessment of Educational Progress <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>
- Sample NAEP Questions, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/booklets.asp>
- State of Virginia Standards of Learning Test Information, [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/index.shtml)
- TIMSS Achievement Items, <http://nces.ed.gov/timss/educators.asp>
- National Content Standards, <http://nsta.org/> <http://ncss.org/> <http://nctm.org/> <http://www.ncte.org/>

**CEHD Course Expectations:**

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://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](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](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

### **Course Delivery:**

In addition to classroom attendance and participation, students are expected to complete readings, whole class and small group discussions, group, pair, and individual projects, internet research, analyses of case studies, and reflections on practice. I will use GMU's web-accessible Blackboard course framework regularly throughout the course.

### **Grades:**

Since this is a professional development course (post licensure), high quality work (i.e., "A" work) is expected on all assignments and in class participation. All assignments must be completed. Each graded assignment will be assessed using a scoring rubric, created by the class, and known to the student. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due, unless otherwise announced.

### **Written and Oral Assignments:**

All written assignments are to be word-processed (Times New Roman 12 and double spaced) and submitted electronically. Some of them will be posted on the course Blackboard site for others to see. On the cover page include your name(s), course title, project title, date, and as appropriate describe the target student population including the grade level, subject, and unit of study. Make each project something that you could eventually use in your teaching. Oral presentations need to be professional, and should include effective use of media/technology and stay within the time frame allocated for the presentation/oral report.

**1. Preparation of Assessments** (25% of grade): As we complete the traditional forms of assessment, you will prepare a sample assessment of five items for each type that indicate to me you understand the concepts underlying each form. We are trying out each one because you will need a variety of forms of assessment to ensure fairness and equity across the student population you teach. You will complete one set each for: selected-response, e.g., matching, true/false or fact/opinion; multiple choice; and completion and constructed response with a sample "scoring guide." Each item needs to be aligned to the VA SOL. Also, indicate how the item could be used as a diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, or summative assessment.

**2. Web search** (25% of grade): You will prepare an annotated bibliography of seven authentic and performance assessments in your discipline. Select a unit topic that is included in the Virginia Standards of Learning, widely taught in your discipline, and with which you are comfortable. Many teachers and professional associations around the country have posted their assessments on the World Wide Web. I would like you see what others are doing with your discipline. The format for the annotation is: Author. Date. Title. URL. Retrieved on date, and a description of the assessment and how it is scored.

**3. Philosophy of Assessment** (25% of grade). You will write a 3-5 page paper that serves as your philosophy of assessment. You should use knowledge from all your licensure course work, readings, and classroom experience to address your beliefs about assessment. The paper should express (1) your philosophy of assessment, (2) examples of what you intend to do or have done, and (3) research to support your opinions and plans. This paper should be included in your portfolio\* and will be used as a major reflection piece in the graduate portfolio. The scoring rubric for this assignment will be developed in class.

**4. Individual Unit Assessment Project and Report** (25% of grade). You will work collaboratively with another student in your subject area to design the assessment plan for a unit of instruction. You will identify a topic and corresponding standards you will or may be teaching during the school year. This project can be a unit you will use later in your teaching career. Please plan accordingly.

NOTE: This is considered to be an *individual* project, but one of your most valuable planning and design references is the other teacher with whom you partner. You should use this teacher as a sounding board, as a reviewer, a critic, a friend. Conversely, you need to be a sounding board, reviewer, critic, a friend, etc. Although you will work collaboratively with a partner on this project, each of you will submit your own written/oral report and grades will be assigned individually. The scoring rubric for this assignment will be developed in class.

**Written Report/Commentary:** Each student will complete a written report with a conceptual overview and the sections that follow.

1. The conceptual overview includes topic and essential questions, corresponding state and national standards, acceptable results (e.g., 80% mastery), evidence of learning, outline of curriculum unit and assessment plan.

2. \*\*Diagnostic assessment instrument and rubric, including justification using research and theory.

3. \*\*Formative assessment instruments and rubrics, including justification using research and theory. [A variety of formative assessment instruments and rubrics should be used to assess the developing understanding of secondary students while the unit is being taught. Both formal and informal instruments (graded and non-graded instruments for student and class assessment) should be used for formative assessment. Multiple short assessments work best.]

4. \*\*Summative assessment instrument and rubric, including justification using research and theory. [The summative assessment is the one you will use to assess student learning at the end of the unit.]

5. \*\*Confirmatory assessment instrument and rubric, including justification using research and theory. [Confirmatory assessment is assessment done well after the unit of study is complete, such as at the end of the school year. This assessment will help you find out what knowledge the students retain, long term, about the topic.]

\*\*All assessment instruments and rubrics should be submitted in photocopy ready format for students. *The rationale/justification for each instrument should include research and theory such as levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and reasons for the length of the assessment and arrangement of questions, and timing within the unit of study. For comparison of student growth across the unit, consider using some of the same questions on the diagnostic and summative instruments for a pre-post comparison of student understanding. Three formats for assessment are ideal for research triangulation. However, common sense needs to align subject matter, pedagogy, time,*

*and resources. Therefore two, four, or some other number of assessment formats may be used to assess what students know and can do related to the essential questions for the unit.*

**Presentation:** Each individual will have 8 minutes to report on the assessment unit. There is not time to cover everything during this presentation. Therefore, provide an overview and then pick carefully an instrument or two that you choose to highlight. You **MUST** include the culminating project assessment. The presentation should be informative to your colleagues.

POSTNOTE: Retain copies of all course products to document your progress through the GSE Secondary Education Program. Products from this class (especially the ‘philosophy of assessment’ and ‘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.

## Tentative Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment Due/Readings Due</u>
5/23	Introductions, create rubrics, Accountability, Data-based decisions at all levels	Introductions on blackboard Read TBTB Preface
5/25	Reliability, Validity, Feedback; Every task is an opportunity for feedback;	Read TBTB Ch1-4 Read CFU Ch 1 Read Fluckiger Article
5/27	Traditional Forms of Classroom-based Assessment Diagnostic, Formative, and Summative Assessment Overview	Read Guskey Article
5/30	Memorial Day	Happy Memorial Day!
6/1	Work on Assignments	Read TBTB Ch 5-11
6/3	Post and Feedback on Blackboard	Assignment 1
6/6	Building Tests/Writing Good Items; Selecting Instructional Goals and Objectives	Online Search “SMART Goals.” Read an online resource about SMART goals.
6/8	Authentic Assessment	Read CFU Ch 2-5
6/10	Checking for Understanding	Assignment 2 Read CFU Ch 6-7 and Afterword
6/13	Standards Assessment in the Content Areas (What do your standards say?)	Read the National and State Standards for your content area (what do they say about assessment?)
6/15	Rubrics	Assignment 3
6/17	Unit Work	Work on Unit
6/20	Grading and Reporting Grading. . .tools available (whiteboards, survey monkey, turning point)	Read O’Connor Article
6/22	Presentations	
6/24	Presentations	