

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

College of  
EDUCATION  HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 



Promoting Learning  Development Across the Lifespan

**Summer 2012  
EDUC 674 Session A  
Assessing Learning and Teaching in Secondary School**

Instructor: Arvinder K. Johri, Ph.D.  
Day and Time: MWF 7:20-10:00 pm  
Class Location: Innovation Hall 137  
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Office hours: Email to set appt.

**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.

### **CEHD Core Values**

In 2006, the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) adopted five core values on which to focus: collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. This course supports each of these values by providing multiple learning experiences that necessitate collaboration. Students are afforded opportunities to reflect on their teacher leadership roles in school contexts; to design and engage in innovative research-based practice, and analyze and reflect on their pedagogies on a critical reflection level for social justice. These Core Values are aligned with course goals:

### **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; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE**
- Design, construct, and evaluate the following assessments [diagnostic, formative, summative, confirmatory, authentic performance task]; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE;**  
**INNOVATION**
- 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; **SOCIAL JUSTICE; INNOVATION**
- Design rubrics that will be used to evaluate student work; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE**
- Create a formal classroom grading policy; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE**
- Provide a rationale for assessment using the research on teaching and learning; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE**
- 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; **COLLABORATION**
- Examine the literature on teacher effectiveness and its link to student learning; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE**
- Understand teacher evaluation and the importance of teaching standards for professional growth; **RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICE**
- Reflect on teaching effectiveness and student learning while developing a Philosophy of Learning and Teaching appropriate for a professional portfolio; **ETHICAL LEADERSHIP**

### **Textbooks (all required)**

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

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

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]

\*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://mymason.gmu.edu>

### 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://mymason.gmu.edu>

\*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.

### Grading Criteria

*Please note that B- is not a passing grade in licensure courses. A student who receives an overall grade of B- must repeat the course.*

### Grading Scale

Grade	Standards	Grading	Grade Points	Graduate Courses
A	Meets Standard	93 – 100	4.00	Satisfactory / Passing
A-	Meets Standard	90 – 92.9	3.67	Satisfactory / Passing
B+	Approaches Standard	88 – 89.9	3.33	Satisfactory / Passing
B	Approaches Standard	83 – 87.9	3.00	Satisfactory / Passing
B-	Approaches Standard	80 – 82.9	2.67	Satisfactory* / Passing

## **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.

### **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.

#### ***I. Attendance/Participation (30%)***

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. Online discussions will count for 1/3 of the grade. You will read three articles from the list posted on Blackboard and will be responsible for initiating/participating in an online discussion. Attendance will be worth 10 points; classroom discussions will be worth 10 points; and online article discussions will be worth another 10 points.

#### ***II. Philosophy of Learning and Teaching (20%)***

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.

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

#### ***III. Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit (PBA) (25%) 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\*.
- the *Standards of Learning* and *national content standards* that match up with the theme in each of the core subjects; and *INTASC standards* covered in the unit.
- a *culminating project* (authentic performance-based assessment) that requires students to demonstrate mastery of content and performance standards in the core subjects.
- *Instrument, scoring rubric, and grading policy* 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; and the reasons for the culminating activity and its assessment. 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) (25%) 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 will be 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 UBD Assessment Plan includes:

1. The theme and essential questions of the interdisciplinary unit, and include the following:
  - a) Standards of Learning, national content standards, and INTASC 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,
  - d) a grading policy for the unit, and
  - e) a response to the Design Standards (Wiggins & McTighe, p. 28).
2. Appendices\*:
  - a) \*Diagnostic assessment instrument and assessment criteria.
  - b) \*Formative assessment instruments and assessment criteria or rubrics.
  - c) \*Summative assessment instrument and assessment criteria or rubric.
  - d) \*Confirmatory assessment instrument and assessment criteria.

<b>Exemplary (23-25 pts.)</b>	<b>Proficient (20-22 pts.)</b>	<b>Developing (17-19 pts.)</b>	<b>Undeveloped (less than 17 pts.)</b>
<p>Assessments are aligned with standards. The assessment plan includes a diagnostic, formative, summative, and confirmatory assessment. There is evidence of critical thinking/reflection in response to the Ubd Design Standards. Rationale for the assessment is clearly described. Concise yet comprehensive grading policy is included. The paper is exceptionally well-written and includes a table of contents.</p>	<p>Assessments are aligned with standards. The assessment plan includes 3 assessments. There is evidence of critical thinking/reflection in response to the Ubd Design Standards. Rationale for the assessment is clearly described. Concise grading policy is included. The paper is well-structured so that information is easily accessible and includes a table of contents.</p>	<p>3 of the 4 four assessments are aligned with standards. The assessment plan includes 2 assessments. Response to the Ubd Design Standards lacks critical analysis. Rationale for the assessment is not well developed. Grading policy is unclear or partially developed. The paper contains a few errors and includes a partial/unclear table of contents.</p>	<p>Assessments are not aligned with the standards. The assessment plan includes fewer than 2 assessments. Rationale for the assessment is vague. Information is missing or not accessible and the paper contains numerous errors.</p>

\*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.

## Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
05/21	Introductory Activities, Standards, Assessment Metaphor, Course Overview, Backwards Design, External Accountability, Conceptual Framework	<b>UBD2: Intro, 13 Content Standards</b>
05/23	Backwards Design, Essential Questions, Interdisciplinary Unit Planning Establishing Teams: PLTs for UBD	<b>UBD2: 1, 2 Content Standards</b>
05/25	Standards Movement, Prioritizing Framework, Six Facets of Understanding	<b>UBD2: 3, 4</b>
<b>05/28</b>	<b>Memorial Day</b>	
05/30	Identifying Essential Questions & Understandings, Interdisciplinary Unit: Formulating Essential Understandings	<b>UBD2: 5, 6</b>
<b>06/01</b>	<b>ONLINE Work on Philosophy of Learning &amp; Teaching</b>	<b>Article Discussion</b>
06/04	Criteria, Rubrics, Assessor Mind-Set Draft: Rubrics for PoLT, ITU, UBD	<b>UBD2: 7, 8</b>
06/06	Formative Assessment Techniques Coverage/Uncoverage, Instructional Strategies	<b>CFU: 1, 2, 3 UBD2: 10</b>
06/08	Formative Assessment Techniques The Design Process, Curriculum Framework	<b>CFU: 4, 5 UBD2: 11, 12</b>
<b>06/11</b>	<b>ONLINE Work on ITU Plan</b>	<b>Article Discussion Post PoLT</b>
06/13	1 Minute Presentation of PoLT PLTs Curriculum & Assessment Plan Presentations Individual Meetings with Instructor Web Search: Annotated Bibliography of Authentic Assessments	
06/15	Formative Assessment Techniques: Tests, Common Assessments Teacher Evaluation	<b>CFU: 6, 7 Afterword</b>



06/18 **ONLINE**  
**Work on UBD**

**Article Discussion**  
**Post ITU**

06/20 Presentations

06/22 Presentations

**Post & bring hard**  
**copy of UBD**