

EDCI 520 - Section 001
Assessment for Language Learners
Fall 2012

Thursdays, 4:30 – 7:10 p.m., Innovation Hall, Room 316

Associate Professor

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Office Location

Thompson Hall, Suite 1500, Rm. 1502

Office Hours

By appointment

If you are going to miss or be late to class, please call my office and leave a message on the same day: TEL: (703) 993-2050

To make an appointment, request, or ask a question: Email: lpierce@gmu.edu

To fax a document: FAX: (703) 993-5300

Course Description (GMU Catalog) Credits: 3

Examines innovative approaches to assessing language minority students and English [and foreign] language learners. Topics include identification, placement, monitoring of student progress, development of authentic performance-based measures, design of portfolios, application of measurement concepts, analysis of assessment instruments, and linking assessment to instruction. Prerequisite(s): EDCI 516 , 519 or 560.

Course Prerequisites

Candidates admitted to the ESL and FL Initial Teacher Licensure Programs and to the Multilingual/Multicultural Education M.Ed. degree programs are **required to have completed at least EDCI 516 and EDCI 519 (ESL Methods) or 560 (FL Methods)**. If you have not yet completed the prerequisite courses or are not in any of these programs, *you may not enroll in this course without my written approval.*

Introduction to Language Assessment

This graduate course provides an introduction to basic principles and current and innovative approaches to **classroom-based assessment of language learning students in ESL, bilingual education, foreign language, and grade-level classrooms in Grades PreK-12, Adult Education, and University programs**. The principles introduced in this course *are also applicable to native speakers of English in general education classrooms.*

Among the topics addressed are: applying research on language acquisition and teaching to instruction and assessment; embedding assessment of oral language, reading, and writing in daily instruction to monitor student progress; setting assessment purpose;

ensuring reliability and validity; scaffolding assessments in the content areas; designing and using portfolios; using assessment as feedback for learning; developing scoring

rubrics and other performance-based assessments; engaging students in peer and self-assessment; improving grading practices; reviewing language proficiency tests; assessing language learners with special needs; writing multiple-choice tests; using criterion-referenced vs. norm-referenced testing; and preparing students to take standardized tests.

Graduate students will have opportunities to both critically examine assessment tools used in current practice and to develop their own. **This course is required for both ESL and Foreign Language teacher licensure as well as for the endorsement of teachers who are already licensed. It addresses NCATE, TESOL and ACTFL Standards for Teacher Preparation in assessment.**

Course Objectives*

Teachers/graduate students completing EDCI 520 will be able to:

1. Compare ***purposes, advantages, and limitations*** of standardized achievement tests to those of classroom-based assessments;
2. Define ***basic concepts and terminology*** used in assessment and student evaluation;
3. ***Critically review language proficiency assessment measures*** for validity, reliability, and cultural bias, and make recommendations for use with English and foreign language learning students (and native speakers of English);
4. ***Identify issues in assessment of language learners with special needs***, such as learning disabilities or gifted and talented;
5. ***Critically examine and develop assessment procedures and tools*** for (a) the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and (b) the content areas;
6. ***Link assessment to instruction*** by designing a variety of assessments that are embedded within instructional activities;
7. ***Draft clear and objective performance criteria*** for language learning;
8. ***Add scaffolding to assessment and instruction*** for language learners and at-risk learners;
9. ***Prepare language learning students to take standardized tests.***

Instructional approaches include: Whole class mini-lectures and demonstrations, workshops, small group and peer feedback sessions, field projects, videos, and homework assignments for applying principles discussed in texts and class. *Interacting on assigned tasks and topics with other grad students/teachers during each class session is essential for success in this course.* Student papers and projects will be evaluated using performance-based, criterion-referenced scoring rubrics.

1. Students will be asked to use a personal computer for preparing course requirements, for accessing the course web site on BlackBoard, and for contacting the instructor and classmates through email. However, **computers (personal or GMU property, including Ipads, tablets, E-readers, laptops, cell phones) are not to be used during class for any purpose (checking email, surfing the Internet) other than taking notes.**

2. **Class Web Site:** Each student will access **Blackboard 9.1** using *his/her GMU email login name and password* to obtain course assignments, handouts, and other materials and also to submit course projects and other required tasks.

The only way to access Bboard 9.1 is through the myMason portal (<http://mymason.gmu.edu>) on the Courses tab.

If you have problems getting into BBoard 9.1, please contact < support.gmu.edu>, go to <http://itusupport.gmu.edu/STG/blackboard.asp> or call (703) 993-8870.

3. **GMU EMAIL ACCOUNTS:** Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

College of Education & Human Development: 5 Core Values



The College of Education & Human Development is committed to five CORE VALUES: *collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice.* Graduate students are expected to adhere to these values both in and out of class. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

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

Expectations for Students in this Course

HONOR CODE: NO PLAGIARISM.

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code. GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely.

What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work (online, published, printed handouts, personal communication) in any part of performing your assigned task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form.

Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification. [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].

Honor Code

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. (Mason catalog).**

Honor Code: Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members have a responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the learning and testing process. They should explain at the beginning of each semester what would be considered an integrity violation in their courses. Special attention should be given to the subject of **plagiarism**. Faculty members may actively proctor exams in situations that they believe warrant it. At the beginning of each semester, faculty members have the responsibility of explaining to their classes their policy regarding the Honor Code. They must also explain the extent to which aid, if any, is permitted on academic work.

Violations of the Honor Code include:

1. Copying a paper or part of a paper from a previous student (current or past);
2. Plagiarizing or copying the words of an author from a textbook or any printed source (including the Internet) without using quotation marks or not inserting a citation immediately following a paraphrase of these words;
3. Working with another individual (who is in this class or not) to prepare your papers or projects (you must write your own papers). Except for appointments to the GMU Writing Center, assistance with writing papers for this class is not allowed. As a prospective teacher, you are being graded on your own ability to write papers.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

- **OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

<http://ods.gmu.edu>

- **WRITING CENTER:** Robinson Hall A, Rm. 114; (703) 993-1200;

<http://writingcenter.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.

- **UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES** “Ask a Librarian”

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

- **COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS):** (703) 993-2380;

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

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.

- **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs.

Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

- 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 are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Cell Phones OFF: Students are required to keep all cell phones turned off during class, per university policy. In case of a campus emergency, the instructor will be notified on her cell phone.

Inclement Weather/Emergency Policy

In case of snow, hurricanes, other bad weather, or security emergencies, call 703 993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu for information on class cancellations and university closings.

MASON ALERT

Register for the MASON ALERT system to be informed of emergency situations on campus by cell phone and email. Go to <http://alert.gmu.edu>

Free English Language Improvement Programs Begin Soon

Multilingual students, faculty and staff who would like to improve their English language skills are invited to attend the English Language Institute's free support services programs:

The English Conversation Program offers participants the chance to improve their speaking skills by meeting in a small group for English conversation practice each week. Each group is facilitated by a conversation leader. For more information or to sign up, contact Johanna Koh at jbyrne2@gmu.edu.

English Workshop Program offers seven 12-week series, each focusing on different language skills. No registration is required for grammar, pronunciation, spelling, idiom, and discussion workshops. Registration for public speaking and graduate writing workshops will be held at the first session. For more information, contact Melissa Allen at malle2@gmu.edu or go to <http://eli.gmu.edu/>.

Course Requirements

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>	<i>Task Description</i>
1. Assessment Design Tasks	20%	Draft variety of assessment tool formats [Individual --due throughout the semester]
2. Language Proficiency Assessment Presentation	20%	Review language proficiency test used for identification & placement in programs [Team Project]* (due Week 5)
3. Special Needs Language Assessment Paper/Panel	25%	Critique Article & Panel Presentation [Individual AND Team]* (due Week 10)
4. Classroom-Based Assessment Project	35%	Develop & Administer Assessment Tools [Individual or Partner Project] (due Week 15)

**Maximum of 3 class members per team*

Please post all course requirements on our Blackboard web site under ASSESSMENTS (no paper copy needed). Above-listed requirements due before class meets on due dates posted in schedule.

Textbooks

Required Texts

Brown, H. D. & P. Abeywickrama. (2nd Ed). (2010). **Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices**. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman.

Additional Required Readings will be made available either online or in class.

Recommended Texts

O'Malley, J. M. and Pierce, L. V. (1996). **Authentic assessment for English language learners: Practical approaches for teachers**. New York: Pearson Longman.

Hughes, A. (2003). **Testing for Language Teachers**. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Blaz, D. (2001). **Collection of performance tasks and rubrics: Foreign languages**. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Basterra, M. R., Trumbull, E., & G. Solano-Flores (Eds). (2011). **Cultural validity in assessment**. New York, NY: Routledge.

Artiles, A. J. & A. A. Ortiz (Eds.) (2002). **English language learners with special education needs**. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Class Schedule

Please come prepared to discuss the assigned readings during the week in which they appear. You can check Blackboard for materials to review for each class.

Week	Dates	Topics	Readings to be discussed each week
1	8/30	INTRO TO THE COURSE: Course Objectives & Requirements. Variety of assessment purposes & tools. Matching assessment tool to purpose. Difference between instructional tasks and assessment. Terms, terms, and more terminology. Validity & reliability. Assessment OF vs. FOR Learning. 4 Skills: Receptive & Productive. Do's & Don'ts for Assessment Tools. <i>Demo: Designing Checklists.</i>	<i>Brown & Abeywickrama (B & A), Ch. 1</i>
2	9/6	ASSESSING LISTENING. Integration of skills. Macro- and micro-skills. 4 basic types of listening. Assessing Language Functions. Validity, reliability, & washback. <i>Designing listening tasks. Demo: Following directions.</i>	<i>B & A, Chs. 2 & 7</i> <i>Definitions of Validity & Reliability on Blackboard</i>
3	9/13	ASSESSING LISTENING. Designing assessment tools for listening comprehension. Designing Rating Scales. Task 1 due: Checklist.	<i>B & A, Ch.3 (pp. 52 – 67) & Ch. 7</i>
4	9/20	ASSESSING SPEAKING. Structured interviews for oral language assessment. Trends in Foreign Language Assessment. Demo: Information Gap. Fresh Start Interviews – Inter-rater reliability training session. Designing speaking tasks. Designing Holistic & Analytic Rubrics. Task 2 due: Rating Scale. CBA Action Plan due.	<i>B & A, Ch. 8</i> <hr/> <i>Thompson (2001), "Foreign Language Assmt.: 30 Yrs..."</i> http://www.cal.org/resources/archive/news/200012/assessment.html <hr/>
5	9/27	Language Proficiency Assessment for Program Placement & Accountability. Tests for ESL students. Tests for Foreign/World Language students. ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Due Today: Language Proficiency Assessment Presentations.	<i>(1) Abedi (2007) English Lang. Proficiency Assmt in the Nation; Porter & Vega, Overview of Existing Engl Lang Proficiency Tests, Appendix A. (Pages 81 – 102 and Pages 133 – 189)</i> http://education.ucdavis.edu/research/ELP_Report.pdf <i>(2) Liskin-Gasparro (2003), The</i>

			ACTFL Prof Guidelines and the Oral Proficiency Interview; (3) Thompson (2001), “Foreign Language Assmt.: 30 Yrs...” http://www.cal.org/resources/archive/news/200012/assessment.html (4) Malone , Research on the Oral Proficiency Interview; (5) Bibliography of Language Testing (ILTA) [See Bboard for readings not linked here]
6	10/4	ASSESSING SPEAKING. ASSESSING GRAMMAR & VOCABULARY. Designing assessment tools. Task 3 due: Analytic Rubric. Pre-test Drafts Due.	B & A, Chs. 8 & 11
7	10/11	ASSESSING READING. Cloze tests. Running Records. <i>Designing assessment tasks. Designing Multiple-choice Tests.</i>	B & A, Ch. 3 (pp. 67 – 82) & Ch. 9
8	10/18	ASSESSING READING. Informal and Analytic Reading Inventories. Designing assessment tools. Mid-Term Feedback Forms. Task 4 due: Multiple-choice test.	B & A, Ch. 9
9	10/25	ASSESSING WRITING. SELF-ASSESSMENT and PEER ASSESSMENT. The critical relationship between self-assessment & achievement. Designing assessment tasks. DEMO: Self-Assessment Workshop. Designing Rating Scales. Administer CBA Pre-tests.	B & A, Ch. 10
10	11/1	Diagnostic ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING DISABILITIES AND GIFTED AND TALENTED LEARNERS. What are the issues? What does valid and reliable assessment look like? Assessment Bias. Special Needs Language Assmt. Paper & Panel due.	(1) <i>Processes & challenges in identifying learning disabilities among students who are English language learners in three New York state districts.</i> http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2010085.pdf (2) <i>Preventing disproportionate representation: Culturally & linguistically responsive prereferral interventions.</i> (3) <i>Is there a ‘disability’ for learning a foreign language? (Sparks, 2006)</i> (4) <i>Special Needs Assmt. Readings List. (on Blackboard)</i>

11	11/8	ASSESSING WRITING. From sentence to essay. Text structures. Using Anchor Papers. Standards-based Assessment. DEMO: Portfolio Planning Workshop. EXPLODING a scoring rubric. Designing assessment tools. Task 5 due: Self-Assessment Rating Scale. Post-Test Drafts Due.	B & A, Chs 4 & 10
12	11/15	Self-Study: 7 Approaches to Scaffolding Assessments (on Blackboard). Assessment Toolbox Workshop.	See Bboard Scaffolding Self-Study folder.
13	11/22	NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday	
14	11/29	GRADING POLICY & PRACTICE. Converting rubrics into grades. Why Extra Credit is a bad idea. Administer post-tests this week. Analyze pre- to post-test changes; draft CBA paper.	B & A, Ch. 12
15	12/6	ASSESSMENT FOR ACCOUNTABILITY. What do Standardized Test Scores mean? Appropriate & Inappropriate Test-Preparation. 3 Teacher Responsibilities. Course Evaluation Forms. Feedback Forms. Materials Release Forms. DUE this week: Classroom-Based Assessment Project.	B & A, Ch. 5