

Syllabus Fall 2011

CTCH 626-Assessment in Higher Education
 CTCH 826- Advances Institutional/Program Assessment
 Class: Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10 pm, Engineering 1108

Mary E. Zamon, PhD

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4-6 (please call ahead) or
 By Appointment

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Introduction

Some Philosophy to begin:

- ✦ Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead they should embark together on a journey down the water. Thorough and active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning how to learn. *Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994) Early Childhood Educator*
- ✦ The proper aim of education is to promote significant learning. Significant learning entails development. Development means successively asking broader and deeper questions of the relationship between oneself and the world. This is as true for first graders as graduate students, for fledging artists as graying accountants. *Laurent A. Daloz, 20th Century Educator*
- ✦ There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure. *Colin Powell, General and Secretary of State*

Or as my father said, the eraser is the thinking end of the pencil. *Robert J. Nelsen, Dentist, Inventor*
- ✦ Education is not filling a pail, it is lighting a fire. *William Butler Yeats, English poet*

Some Assumptions:

- All students can learn- it is the teacher's work to find ways to assist that process.
- Assessment matters, answers we find will have effects on what happens in education at some level.
- Assessment is a collaborative process.

Learning Outcomes for the Course:

Students will be able to:

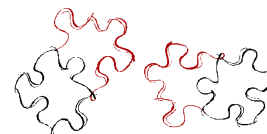
1. Write clear and assessable student learning goals/outcomes



2. Describe national, regional, state and professional contexts of assessment
3. Make judgments about appropriate and feasible methods for assessment
4. Evaluate and recommend specific strategies for different levels and types of assessment
5. Critique and design a rubric, a survey and focus group protocol
6. Design a portfolio for assessment purposes
7. Apply ethical standards to collection, analysis and reporting of assessment data
8. Evaluate and critique the quality of an assessment plan and research resources on assessment issues or topics
9. Plan and conduct, with partners, an effective assessment of a student related outcome in a program at the institution.
10. Present assessment information and results at a professional level in written and oral forms

If you are wondering why we have a particular assignment or activity, refer to this list. Ask if you cannot see any relationships.

Course Learning Components



1. Readings: presenting & discussing

- Discussion boards-as developed for your group- some topics will be on a whole class discussion board
- Discussion leaders- One time -presentation of selected reading w/partner-see separate directions and schedule
- Weekly reading & assessment (which *may* include an in-class exchange of questions, feedback to me; comparison to another source; explain meaning for 'assessment on the ground'; etc)

2. Papers

- Master's level 1 short paper with annotated bibliography of 10 items.(See separate directions and rubric)
- Doctoral level publishable topic paper (See separate requirements)
- Both Master's and Doctoral levels: Final project report (with annotated bibliography of 15-20 sources (see separate directions and **class developed rubric**

3. Groups and Participation/ in class

- Doctoral level Learning Communities – ongoing reading discussions
- Masters level study group
 - in class participation asking questions, adding pertinent comments
 - collaborative teamwork on project
 - group meetings during class hours

4. Final Presentation

Presenting project results to class and interested partners

Grading:

Doctoral Level

Learning Community/ Class Presentation	20%
Papers	50%
Topic paper	30
Final project paper	20
Participation	15%
Final project presentation	15%



Masters Level:

Study Group and Class Presentation	20%
Papers	50%
Short responses (3)	10%
Short Paper	20%
Final Project Paper	20%
Participation	15%
Final project presentation	15%

I use letter grades and a 4 pt scale as follows – rounded to the tenth. You will receive a letter grade on graded assignments, and conversion will be made as below.

4.4	A+
4.0	A
3.8	A-
3.4	B+
3.0	B
2.8	B-
2.4	C+
2.0	C

University allowable grades: Graduate grading A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, F, IN, AB

Topics and Initial Schedule: This schedule may be modified, depending on how course questions and opportunities develop. Additional *short readings* may be added for some classes either as part of in class work or homework. I am open to your suggesting readings or class resources to share. Speakers have been invited but may need to change at last minute. Please be aware of any re-organization of the schedule! Notices will be emailed & posted. I have built in time to consider new topics if they arise or to rearrange items. At this level of your education, we do not need to march in a lock step but rather to be open to new directions based on core topics. Changes will be posted in course announcements and emailed to you. Readings prepare you for the NEXT class activities and discussion.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Date	Topic	Assignments	Readings for the FOLLOWING CLASS	Additional Information
Week 1- August 31	Course Overview; What is Assessment? & When does it happen?	Write me a 'memo' about your academic interests to help me assign projects-email to me by Sept 5th	<i>Suskie, Ch 1-3</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 1 & 2</i> <i>Driscoll & Wood,</i> <i>Ch 1</i>	Using your texts The Final Project
Week 2- Sept 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign Projects & discuss requirements <i>Topic:</i> Accreditation & Assessment: Allies or Opponents? Form Groups Schedule leaders for discussion of readings 	Develop Project Statement Due Sept 28 Short Paper: see <i>directions</i> and due dates: ADD YOUR DUE DATE TO THE SYLLABUS!	<i>Suskie, Ch 4-6</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 3</i> <i>Driscoll & Wood, Ch 2-3</i>	Guest speaker next week: Dr. Leah Matthews, Vice President for Recognition Services CHEA http://www.chea.org/
Week 3 Sept 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we 'do' assessment? For whom? By Whom? Assessment & Grades 2-Discussion leaders 	Project statement, signed by faculty or staff partner due next week	<i>Suskie: Ch 7-13</i> <i>Driscoll & Wood, Ch 4-7</i> <i>Stevens & Levi, Ch 1-3</i>	Dr. Leah Matthews, CHEA
Week 4 Sept 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Tools, Rubrics: & Scoring Guides 3-Discussion leaders 	Project Statement Due	<i>Suskie, Review Ch read so far</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 4 and Appendices</i> <i>Driscoll & Wood, see annotated bibliography</i>	See http://gmutant.gmu.edu/highered/
Week 5 Sept 28	LIBRARY SESSION Location TBA <i>3 Solid Sources required</i>	Oral project status report due Oct 12	<i>Suskie, Review Ch 2</i> <i>Stevens & Levi, Ch 4-7</i>	Anne Driscoll, Education Liaison
Week 6 Oct 5	Assessment Standards, Ethics Surveys and Focus Groups Discussion leaders	Bring in a journal article on topic of interest to you for sharing Please print it out	<i>Driscoll & Wood, Ch 8-10</i>	In class short writing
Week 7 Oct 12	Data and Assessment Discussion leaders	Oral project status reports due Journal Article due	Catch up on reading or read ahead!	We will try to dismiss early so you can work on projects

Date	Topic	Assignments	Readings for the FOLLOWING CLASS	Additional Information
Week 8 Oct 19	Current Issues and Collaboration in Assessment-Making changes Mid Term feedback Discussion Leaders	Give feed back to group members Work on Projects! 626 short papers due	<i>Suskie, Ch 14-19</i>	Guest Speaker, Dr. Bethany Usher , Associate Director CTE Flexible class activity to include discussion leaders as needed
Week 9 Oct 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination Reporting Results Using Results? Presentation requirements Discussion leaders	Bring in news article @ distance education	<i>Stevens & Levi, Review Ch 7 and appendices</i>	Guest Speaker, Dr. Karen Gentemann , Associate Provost, Institutional effectiveness
Week 10 Nov 2	Assessment & Distance Education Curriculum Maps & Concept Maps Discussion Leaders	News article due Prepare 2-3 questions for Provost	<i>Driscoll & Wood, Ch 11</i>	Meet with groups
Week 11 Nov 9	Maps, continued Case Studies	Work on Presentations; Projects Reminder: Final papers due Dec 7	Peter T. Ewell, Presentation-see http://www.planning.iupui.edu/695.html	Guest: Dr. Peter Stearns, Provost
Week 12 Nov 16	Case Studies, Continued Assessing Assessment Article Analysis Group work	Prepare reports and presentations Visit one of the Weblinks or find a new one , write a 1 page review to share- email to class by Nov 20		Invite your partners to your presentation
Thanksgiving Break				
Week 13 Nov 30	Conclusions about Institutional Assessment and Future Possibilities Rate presentations	Presentations second half of class		All student will rate presentations
Week 14 Dec 7	Rate Presentations	Presentations Final papers due On line GMU Course Evaluation		

Readings

Required Books:

Suskie, Linda. 2004. *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Boston: Anker (Basic textbook)

Walvoord, B. 2004. *Assessment clear and simple: A practical guide for institutions, departments and general education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (guide for developing assessment at various levels)

Driscoll, A. & Wood, S. 2007. *Developing outcomes-based assessment for learner-centered education: A faculty introduction*. Sterling, VA: Stylus (reflects the new eye on assessment.)

Stevens, D & Levi, A. (2005) *Introduction to rubrics: An assessment tool to save grading time, convey effective feedback and promote student learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus (excellent tool for 'doing' assessment)

Suggested Readings: These are just a few of the MANY resources on assessment. You are encouraged to find additional ones!

Angelo, T & Cross, K.P. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Banta, T. and associates. (1993). *Making a difference: Outcomes of a decade of assessment in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. (Compare this to the following book for a little 'history').

Banta, T., Jones, E. and Black, K. (2009). *Designing effective assessment: Principles and profiles of good practice*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. (current examples of best practice).

Allen, D. & McDonald, J. (2003) *The tuning protocol : A process for reflection on teacher and student work*. Coalition of Essential Schools.

http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/54

Gladwell, M. (2002). *The tipping point: How little things can make a difference*. New York: Back Bay.

Leskes, A. & Wright, B..(2005) *The art & science of assessing general education outcomes*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

Lovitts, B.E. (2007). *Making the implicit explicit: Creating performance expectations for the dissertation*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Mabry, L. (1999). *Portfolios plus: A critical guide to alternative assessment*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Maki, P. (2004). *Assessing for learning: Building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Nitko, A.J. (2004). *Educational assessment of students*. 4th Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Tufte, E.R. (1997). *Visual explanations: Images and quantities, evidence and narrative*. Cheshire, CN: Graphics Press. (and any of his other works).

Web Resources

Additional ones are posted on Blackboard, and I ask you all to send in ones you regard as useful and informative for posting. I will send the list on one you think most useful to the Higher Education Portal.

Chronicle of Higher Education:

<http://chronicle.com/section/Home/5> If you are asked to subscribe, go through the Mason library instead .

Inside Higher Ed

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news>

Assessment at George Mason

<https://assessment.gmu.edu> Includes many resources

Curriculum Matrix examples

<http://planning.iupui.edu/pul/matrix/MatrixListByDepartment.aspx>

APA on line guide

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

IUPUI Assessment Institute Handouts

<http://www.planning.iupui.edu/695.html>

Policies

Policy on attendance/ late work: I expect every student in every class. You all have a lot to offer one another, and in-class work is an essential part of the course. See participation grade above. I use a sign in sheet for every class. Let me know in advance if you will not be in class. If you are ill or there is some other major issue not in your control, please contact me as soon as possible. *One absence is permitted without any notice.* Attendance is taken at the start of the class, and any assignments due are due at the start of the class. Late work is not permitted. Since this course already has carefully chosen assignments for which I expect your best efforts, I do not offer extra credit or make up work. It is not my policy to give the incomplete grade except in very extraordinary circumstances.

Others policies & resources:

- We will follow university decisions on any closings or changes to the schedules and amend course work as necessary.

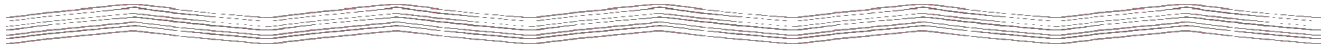
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior, ethical academic work and dispositions. The university honor code applies. Discussions and questions take place in an atmosphere of collegial exchanges. Teamwork and assistance is a part of shared learning and is expected in the course.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu>
- Other Resources:
 - WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>
 - 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>
- UNIVERSITY POLICIES
 - The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs. You can also consult the university Policy website, <http://univeristypolicy.gmu.edu>.
 - Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course should see me and must see the office of disability services (<http://ods.gmu.edu>), 703-993-2474.
- EMAIL : **You must have your gmU.edu email activated. That is the only email I will use.** If you want messages forwarded to some other email, you must do that. I will only send to your Mason address. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu>
- Check Blackboard regularly. At minimum it will be used for course materials and discussion groups. We will talk more about how to make it useful to all of us. You sign in from your MyMason page – be sure to go to this link:

If you have any questions regarding this syllabus or policies, please see me.

GMU is an Honor Code university; 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?

- when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task.
- when you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form
- when completing assignments, directions regarding group work will be given
- when in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.



Learning Partners & Contacts:

Class

Partner: _____

Project: _____

Project Partner: _____

Faculty/Staff Partner: _____

Peer

Group/LearningCommunity: _____
