

## Syllabus Spring 2010

CTCH 626-Assessment in Higher Education  
 CTCH 826- Advances Institutional/Program Assessment  
 Class: Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10 pm, ENT 420

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Office Hours: By Appointment (Afternoons are better)  
 Mason Hall – D 111F  
 See *Blackboard* for course activities and information

### 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, 20<sup>th</sup> 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 and 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- attention will be paid, and 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:

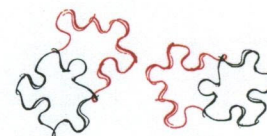
1. Write clear and assessable student learning goals/outcomes
2. Describe national, regional, state and professional contexts of assessment
3. Make judgments about appropriate and feasible methods for assessment

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, as part of a team, 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.*

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## Course Components



### 1. Readings & Presentations: presenting & discussing

- Discussion boards-An introduction and 3 discussions: 1) Topic response; 2)Feedback & conversation with your group; 3)course evaluation topic
- Discussion leader- One time (presentation of article or reading w/partner from your group)
- Weekly reading & use of CATS: (which *may* include an exchange of questions, feedback to me; compare to another article; explain meaning for 'assessment on the ground'; etc)
- Presentation of final project/paper

### 2. Papers

- 1 short paper (6-8 pages w/ annotated bibliography of 10 items. See separate directions and rubric) due Feb 24
- Final project report (15-20 pages, with annotated bibliography of 15-20 sources (see separate directions and **class developed rubric**) due April 28

### 3. Participation in class & study group- in class, asking questions, adding pertinent comments, and collaborative teamwork on project, in class and on line activities

### 4. Final Essay: bring no more than 3 single pages of notes/references to exam day, May 5; write essay in one blue book. 3 possible questions announced in advance. One will be chosen.

## Grading:

Readings & Presentations	20%
Papers	45%
short paper	15
Final paper	30
Participation	15%
Final Exam Essay	20



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. Speakers have been confirmed, but may need to be changed. I have built in time to consider new topics if they arise.

Date	Topic	Assignments	Readings for <b>FOLLOWING CLASS</b>	Additional Information
Week 1- January 20 <sup>th</sup>	Course Overview; What is Assessment? & When does it happen? Form Groups	During this week, please post your introduction on the Discussion Board (threading)	<i>Suskie, Ch 1-3</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 1 &amp; 2</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 1</i>	Using your texts The Final Project
Week 2- January 27	Assign Projects & discuss requirements <i>Topic: Regional Accrediting and Assessment</i>  Schedule leaders Discussion of reading	Develop Project Statement Due Feb 10  Short Paper: <i>see directions</i> for paper due February 24	<i>Suskie, Ch 4-6</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 3</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 2-4</i>	<i>See directions re Discussion Leaders</i>  Guest speaker: Dr. Karen Gentemann, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness

Date	Topic	Assignments	Readings for <b>FOLLOWING CLASS</b>	Additional Information
Week 3 February 3	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 &amp; Wood, Ch 5-7-4</i> <i>Stevens &amp; Levi, Ch 1-3</i>	
Week 4 February 10	Assessment Tools, Rubrics: & Scoring Guides  3-Discussion leaders	<b>Project Statement Due</b>	<i>Suskie, Review Ch 12</i> <i>Walvoord, Appendices</i>	
Week 5 February 17	Surveys and Focus Groups  Discussion leaders	Oral project status report due March 3 Post and discuss one of your sources for the short paper in your group discussion by <b>March 1</b>	<i>Suskie, Review Ch 2</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, see annotated bibliography</i> <i>Stevens &amp; Levi, Ch 4-7</i>	Guest Speaker: Dr. Ying Zhou, Director, Office of Institutional Assessment
Week 6 February 24	Assessment Standards, Ethics  <u>Possible Library Session</u> Discussion leaders	<del>Short paper due</del> <b>Now due Mar 3</b>	Walvoord, Ch 4 (and one additional journal article on using data in assessment)	
Week 7 March 3	Data and Assessment  Discussion leaders	<b>Oral project status reports due</b>	<i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 9-10</i>	
Week 8 March 17	Current Issues and Collaboration in Assessment-Making changes Discussion Leaders	Give feed back to group members  Work on Projects!	<i>Suskie, Ch 14-16</i>	
<b>NO CLASS SPRING BREAK</b>				
Week 9 March 24	Dissemination Reporting Results & Using Results?  Discussion leaders	Bring in news article @ distance education	<i>Stevens &amp; Levi, Review Ch 7 and appendices</i>	Potential chat with Rawa Jassem, Applications Analyst, OIA  See Presentation Directions

Date	Topic	Assignments	Readings for <b>FOLLOWING CLASS</b>	Additional Information
Week 10 March 31	Assessment & Distance Education Curriculum Maps & Concept Maps  Discussion Leaders	<b>News article due</b>  Exam essay question handout	TBA	Guest Speaker: Dr. J. Goodlett McDaniel, Associate Provost, Distance Education
Week 11 April 7	Maps, continued Case Studies	Work on Presentations; Projects	Peter T. Ewell, Presentation-see iupui website	Go over exam sheet
Week 12 April 14	Case Studies, Continued  Assessing Assessment Article Analysis	Prepare 2-3 questions for Provost  Post my Course Evaluation	TBA	
Week 13 April 21	View from the Top- Assessment & recent changes Rate presentations	Presentations second half		Dr. Peter Stearns, Provost
Week 14 April 28 Last Class	Rate Presentations	Presentations <b>Final papers due</b>  On line GMU Course Evaluation		
Final exam : May 5		Same Time/Same Place  Returned Papers at end of exam	<b>Essay</b> in one blue book! I will have the Blue books for you.	

## 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*. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](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. (2005). How to grade a dissertation. *Academe*. 96 (6).

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2005/ND/Feat/lovi.htm> retrieved January 7, 2010.

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*.4<sup>th</sup> 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 will be posted on Blackboard, and I ask you all to send in ones for posting.

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 a large part of the course. See participation grade above. 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 so we can discuss it. 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.

### ***Others policies & resources:***

- We will follow university decisions on any closings or changes to the schedules.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. Discussions and questions will take place in an atmosphere of collegial exchanges in a courteous academic manner. Teamwork and assistance is a part of Peer Teaching and 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.
  - Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course should see me and must see the office of disability services (<http://ods.gmu.edu>)

- o EMAIL : You must have your gm.u.edu email activated. That is the only email I will use. For course purposes, we will use that email in Blackboard. If you want messages forwarded to some other email, you must do that. I will only send to you *inside* of Blackboard and to your Mason address. Check Blackboard regularly.

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?

- 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 in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

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

Learning Partners & Contacts:

Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Faculty/staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Peer Group: \_\_\_\_\_

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