

# Syllabus FALL 2012

CTCH 626-Assessment in Higher Education  
 CTCH 826- Advances Institutional/Program Assessment  
 Class: Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10 pm, ROOM: 1001 West

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 4-6 (please call ahead) or  
 By Appointment  
 University Hall 3621

See Course [CTCH-626-001 / CTCH-826-001 \(Fall 2012\)](#) MyMason for course information, announcements and changes to schedule or assignments.

## 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, 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.



## Basic Course GOAL

Students in this course will acquire professional level concepts and skills that enable them to assist institutional assessment efforts in *making it more likely- by our design\** that students at that institution achieve what faculty intend them to achieve. \* *paraphrase from Understanding by Design, <http://ubdexchange.org>*

## Learning Outcomes for the Course:

Students will be able to:

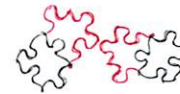
1. Write clear and assessable student learning goals/outcomes
2. Describe national, regional, state and professional contexts of assessment
3. Evaluate assessment plans using best practices and knowledge of assessment methods
4. Make judgments about appropriate and feasible methods for assessment
5. Evaluate and recommend specific strategies for different levels or types of assessment
6. Critique / design a portfolio, a rubric, a survey and focus group protocol for assessment
7. Apply ethical standards to collection, analysis and reporting of assessment data
8. Evaluate and critique the quality of research resources on assessment issues or topics
9. Plan and conduct, with partners, an effective assessment project relating to students or 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 relationships.*

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## Course Learning Components



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

- Discussion boards-as developed for your group- some topics may on a whole class discussion board
- Discussion leaders- One time –lead in-class discussion of selected reading with a partner-see separate directions and schedule
- Weekly readings & assessment (which *may* include in-class exchange of questions; feedback to me; comparison to another source; explanation of 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. Group work and Participation in class**

- Doctoral level Learning Communities
  - Ongoing discussions based on class-selected topics (in class and on line)
  - Leadership in classroom discussion based on close reading of assigned material
  - Collaborative teamwork on projects
- Masters level study group
  - In class and on line participation (asking questions, adding pertinent comments)
  - Collaborative teamwork on project
  - Group activities during class hours
  -

#### 4. Final Presentation

Presenting project results to class and interested partners

#### Grading:



##### Doctoral Level

Learning Community	10%
Class Presentation on Readings	15%
Papers	50%
Topic paper	30
Final project paper	20
Class Leadership & Participation	10%
Final project presentation	15%

##### Masters Level:

Study Group –Discussion Responses	15%
Class Presentation on Readings	15%
Papers	40%
Short Paper	15
Final Project Paper	20
Class participation	15%
Final project presentation	15%

Students earn letter grades on graded assignments; conversion will be made as below for Final Grade. Graduate students require 3.0 average in their program. See <http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4068>

4.4	A+	Satisfactory/Passing
4.0	A	Satisfactory/Passing
3.67	A-	Satisfactory/Passing
3.33	B+	Satisfactory/Passing
3.0	B	Satisfactory/Passing
2.67	B-	Satisfactory/Passing
2.0	C	Unsatisfactory/Passing

University allowable grades: Graduate grading A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, F, IN (incomplete), AB (Absent with permission) from Catalog

**Topics and Initial Schedule:** This schedule may be modified, depending on course direction /opportunities and availability of speakers. 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 other resources to share. Speakers have been invited but may need to be changed. University schedule changes may affect class, particularly regarding weather. We will follow all university decisions.

***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.

*Readings are listed the week before and prepare you for the NEXT class activities and discussion.*

### Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Date	Topic	<b>FOR THE NEXT CLASS</b>	Advance notice of Future Assignments	Additional Information
Week 1- August 29	-Introductions -Course Overview; What is Assessment? & When does it happen? DUE	<i>Suskie, Ch 1-3</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 1 &amp; 2</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 1</i> <u>'memo' about your academic interests -email to me before class Sept 4th</u>		Using your texts The Final Project
Week 2- Sept 5	-Assign Projects & discuss requirements -Topic: Accreditation & Assessment: Allies or Opponents? -Form Groups -Schedule leaders for discussion of readings DUE: before class 'memo'	<i>Suskie, Ch 4-6</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 3</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 2-3</i>	Develop Project Statement Due BEFORE <b>Sept 26</b> <b>via email</b>	Guest speaker next week from CHEA
Week 3 Sept 12	-How do we 'do' assessment? For whom? By Whom? -Assessment & Grades -Discussion leaders	<i>Suskie: Ch 7-13</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 4-7</i> <i>Stevens &amp; Levi, Ch 1-3</i>	Project Statement Due BEFORE <b>Sept 26</b> <b>via email</b> (signed by faculty or staff partner )	<b>Dr. Leah Matthews,</b> <b>CHEA</b> Vice President for Recognition Services <a href="http://www.chea.org">http://www.chea.org</a>
Week 4 Sept 19	-Assessment Tools, Rubrics: & Scoring Guides -Discussion leaders -Short paper directions(due by Oct 24)	<i>Suskie, Review Ch read so far</i> <i>Walvoord, Ch 4 and Appendices</i> <i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, see annotated bibliography</i>	Project Statement Due BEFORE <b>Sept 26</b> <b>via email</b> (signed by faculty or staff partner )	See <a href="http://gmutant.gmu.edu/highered/">http://gmutant.gmu.e du/highered/</a>
Week 5 Sept 26	LIBRARY SESSION Location TBA <i>3 Solid Sources required</i>	<i>Suskie, Review Ch 2</i> <i>Stevens &amp; Levi, Ch 4-7</i>	Oral project status report due October 17	<b>Anne Driscoll,</b> <b>Education Liaison</b>

Date	Topic	<b>FOR THE NEXT CLASS</b>	Advance notice of Future Assignments	Additional Information
Week 6 Oct 3	-Assessment Standards, Ethics -Surveys and Focus Groups Discussion leaders	<i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 8-10</i> Bring in a journal article on topic of interest to you for sharing- Please print	Ongoing : Give feedback to group members Work on papers/projects!	In class short writing
Week 7 Oct 10	-Data and Assessment  -Discussion leaders DUE: Journal Article Exchange	Catch up on reading or read ahead! Oral project status report due October 17	Ongoing : Give feedback to group members  Work on papers/projects!	We <i>may</i> dismiss early so you can work on projects/paper or see me individually
Week 8 Oct 17	-Current Issues and Collaboration in Assessment-Making changes <b>-Mid Term feedback</b> -Discussion Leaders as needed DUE: Oral project report	<i>Suskie, Ch 14-19</i> Short Paper Due Before class next week	Ongoing : Give feedback to group members  Work on papers/projects!	Flexible class activity
Week 9 Oct 24	-Dissemination, Reporting Results & Using Results? -Presentation requirements -Discussion leaders Due: Before Class --Short Papers	<i>Stevens &amp; Levi, Review Ch 7 and appendices</i>  Bring in news article @ distance education	Ongoing : Give feedback to group members  Work on Projects!	Guest Speakers, <b>Dr. Karen Gentemann</b> , Associate Provost, Institutional Effectiveness and <b>Dr. Kris Smith</b> , Associate Provost, Institutional Research & Reporting
Week 10 Oct 31	-Assessment & Distance Education -Curriculum Maps & Concept Maps -Discussion Leaders Due: <b>News article</b>	<i>Driscoll &amp; Wood, Ch 11</i> Prepare 2-3 questions for Provost	Ongoing : Give feedback to group members  Work on Projects!	Meet with your groups
Week 11 Nov 7	-Maps, continued  -Discussion leaders -Schedule presentations	Explore Assessment: <a href="http://www.planning.iupui.edu/aboutus/">http://www.planning.iupui.edu/aboutus/</a>	Work on Presentations; Projects <b>Reminder: Final papers due DEC 5</b>	<b>Guest: Dr. Peter Stearns, Provost</b>  <b>Arrives @ 5:30-6:00pm</b>
Week 12 Nov 14	-Case Studies -Assessing Assessment -Article Analysis Group work	Visit one of the Weblinks or find a new one , write a 1 page review to share- <b>email to class by Nov 20</b>	Prepare reports and presentations	Invite your partners to your presentation

NOV 21! THANKSGIVING 				
Week 13 Nov 28	Conclusions about Institutional Assessment and Future Possibilities Rate presentations		<b>Presentations</b> second half of class	All students will rate presentations
Week 14 Dec 5	Rate Presentations <b>Final papers due</b>		<b>Presentations</b>	On line GMU Course Evaluations

## Readings

### Required Books:

1. Suskie, Linda. 2004. *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Boston: Anker (Basic textbook)
2. 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)
3. 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.)
4. 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. (examples of best practice).

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.

Maki, P. & Borkowski, N., eds. (2006). *The assessment of doctoral education: Emerging criteria and new models for improving outcomes*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Mayrath, M., Clarke-Midura, J., Robinson, D. & Schraw, G. , eds. (2012). *Technology-based assessments for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills: Theoretical and practical implications from modern research*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

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

Rhodes, T. ed. (2010). *Assessing outcomes and improving achievement: Tips and tools for using rubrics*.

Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

Sternberg, J. & Hawkins, C. with Reed, S. (2011.) Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

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

## Web Resources

These and additional links will be 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 ones you think most useful to the Higher Education Portal for posting to the library site.

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> and <http://irr.gmu.edu> Include many resources

Curriculum Matrix examples

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

marks courses match with selected outcomes- can you find what those are?

APA on line guide

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

## Policies

**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 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 without any notice is allowed.* Attendance is taken at the start of the class, and assignments due as stated. 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.

### Other 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. <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>
- Discussions and questions take place in an atmosphere of collegial exchange. Teamwork and peer feedback are parts of shared learning and are expected in the course.

- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu>
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- WRITING CENTER: (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>
  - UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES “Ask a Librarian” <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>
  - HIGHER EDUCATION PORTAL <http://gmutant.gmu.edu/highered/>
  - 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 gm.u.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: CTCH-626-001 / CTCH-826-001 (Fall 2012)

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, follow directions regarding group work
- 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/Learning Community: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Welcome to opportunities to learn and to practice what you learn!*