



Course Syllabus

COURSE NUMBER: COMM 5311.01	COURSE TITLE Principles and Practices of Language Testing	TERM: FALL 08
SITE: Webster Hall	INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION:	CREDIT HOURS: Three
CLASS TIME: Tuesdays, 5:00-9:00 pm	lonela Bock, MA Phone #: 217-649-9246 E-mail: lonela.bock@yahoo.com lonelabock73@webster.edu	

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar introduces and analyzes different formats and types of language tests as a reflection of varied linguistic contexts, language teaching and language acquisition goals. Assessment techniques, practices and procedures are discussed in close relation to test validity and effectiveness. The class also covers the design, writing and administration of assessments. Prerequisite: Theories in SLA OR teaching experience OR consent of instructor.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Course Outcomes	Program Goals	MoSTEP/Prof Standards Addressed
Design test specifications that reflect information taught in class or overall language teaching skills.	To understand the importance of test design, by taking into account test validity, test reliability, test fairness, ethics, etc. To design different forms of assessment, specifications and grading criteria for various linguistic skills and levels, depending on case.	MoSTEP #1: Understand central concepts, tools of inquiry and structures of the discipline and create meaningful learning experiences.
To design various extensive grading criteria for oral and written assessments and to ensure grading fairness and consistency.		MoSTEP #8: Understand and use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.
Analyze existing tests by using the reverse-engineering method.		MoSTEP #9: A reflective practitioner who continually assesses the effects of choices and actions on others and

<p>Design assessments from previously designed test specifications.</p> <p>Correctly administer assessments with the view of reducing testing variables such as test anxiety, discomfort, etc.</p>		<p>actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.</p> <p>MoSTEP #9: Foster relationships with colleagues, parents and educational partners in the larger community to support student learning and well-being.</p>
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3. Schedule of required readings, class preparations and assignments, lectures, discussions, student presentations, out-of-class assignments and exams.

Week 1

- Student information forms
- Group activity: test design based on a picture (I)
- Lecture 1: Introduction to language testing: The Importance of Tests, Types of Tests, Test Validity and Reliability, Bias in Testing, Grading Criteria
- Group/partner tasks and questions

Week 2

- Lecture 2: Classroom Assessments, The Assessor Roles, Objective vs Subjective Assessment, Grading Criteria, Multiple-Choice Testing, Testing Grammar, Constructed Response Testing, Alternative Tests
- Group/partner tasks and questions

Week 3

- Lecture 3: Testing Vocabulary and Reading– Assessment Principles and Possible Formats.
- Readings: Course book, chapters 1 and 2: Test Specifications and Test Design
- Group/partner tasks and questions

Week 4

- Lecture 4: Building Test Specifications, The Reverse Engineering Method
- Readings: Course book, chapters 3 and 4
- Group/partner tasks and questions
- Midterm group activity (I)

Week 5

- Lecture 5: Oral Production Testing – Oral Tests: Types and Formats, Grading Criteria
- Group/partner tasks and questions
- Midterm group activity(II)

Week 6

- Lecture 6: The Mandate and the Team

- Readings: Course book, chapters 5 and 6
- Group/partner tasks and questions
- Final project (I)

Week 7

- Lecture 7: Testing Administration and Training, Test Fairness and Ethics
- Readings: Course book, chapter 7
- Group/partner tasks and questions: Case Study on Administering a Large Scale Test
- Final project (II)

Week 8

- Final project presentations (III)
- Individual activity: Test design based on a picture (II)
- Comparison of initial test design based on a picture with final test design based on the same picture
- Preparation of individual portfolios**

* The weekly syllabus is subject to change.

** Portfolios are to be handed the last day of class.

Subjects covered:

1. Factual Introductory Information on Language Testing
2. Types of Tests
3. Test Validity
4. Test Reliability
5. Large-scale and Classroom Testing
6. Testing Grammar, Vocabulary, Listening Comprehension, Reading Comprehension, Oral Production, Writing
7. Test Specifications and Test Design
8. The Reverse Engineering Method
9. Testing – Procedural Steps
- 10 Scoring Language Tests: Designing and Using Grading Criteria
11. Test Administration and Training
12. Test Fairness and Ethics
13. Subjective and Objective Testing

4. RESOURCES:

Required Text:

Davidson, F., & Lynch, B.K. (2002) Testcraft: a Teacher's Guide to Writing and Using Language Test Specifications. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Other sources:

Davidson, F., & Fulcher, G. (2007) Language Testing and Assessment: an Advanced Resource Book. New York, NY: Routledge

Heaton, J.B. (1975) Writing English Language Tests. London: Longman

Brookhart, S.M. & Nitko A.J. (2008) Assessment and Grading in Classrooms. New Jersey: Pearson Education

Supplemental Bibliography:

- Allen, Harold B. and R.N. Campbell, Eds. (1972) Teaching English as a Second Language, 2nd Ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, pp. 313-321. .
- Davidson, F. and B. K. Lynch. 2002. Testcraft: Writing and Using Language Test Specifications. Yale University Press.
- Fox, J. 2004. Test decisions over time: Tracking validity. Language Testing 21:4, 437-466.
- Heaton, J.B. 1975. Writing English Language Tests. London: Longman
- Peirce, B.N. 1992. Demystifying the TOEFL Reading Test. TESOL Quarterly 26:4, pp. 665-689.
- McNamara, T. 2000. Language Testing. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press. (Series name: Introductions to Language Study)
- Shohamy, E. 2001. The Power of Tests: A Critical Perspective on the Uses of Language Tests. Harlow: Longman.
- Anastasi, A. 1986. Evolving concepts of test validity. Annual Review of Psychology 37, pp. 1-15.
- Angoff, W.H. and A.T. Sharon. 1971. A comparison of scores earned on the Test of English as a Foreign Language by native American college students and foreign applicants to U.S. colleges. TESOL Quarterly 5:2, pp. 129-136.
- Bachman, Lyle F. 1990. Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing. Oxford University Press.
- Bachman, L.F. and A.S. Palmer. 1982. The construct validation of some components of communicative proficiency. TESOL Quarterly 16:4, pp. 449-465.
- Bachman, L.F. and A.S. Palmer. 1996. Language Testing in Practice. Oxford University Press.
- Barnwell, D.P. 1996. A History of Foreign Language Testing in the United States from its Beginnings to the Present. Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Press.
- Brookhart, S.M. & Nitko A.J. 2008. Assessment and Grading in Classrooms. New Jersey: Pearson Education
- Chapelle, C. 1999. Validity in language assessment. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, Vol. 19, pp. 1-19.
- DuBois, P.H.: 1970, A History of Psychological Testing. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gould, Stephen Jay. 1996. The Mismeasure of Man (Revised and Expanded). New York: W.W. Norton.
- Gronlund, N. E. 1993. Chapter 10: "Validity and Reliability". How to Make Achievement Tests and Assessments. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- International Language Testing Association (ILTA). 2000. ILTA Code of Ethics. Downloadable from: <http://www.iltaonline.com>
- Kevles, Daniel J. 1995. In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity (With a New Preface by the Author). Harvard University Press.
- Lowenberg, P. 1993. Issues of validity in tests of English as world language: Whose standards? World Englishes 12:1, 95-106.
- Moss, P. A. 1994. Can there be validity without reliability? Educational Researcher, 23(2), 5-12. .
- Resources in Language Testing. A webpage managed by Prof Glenn Fulcher of the University of Leicester, UK. <http://www.le.ac.uk/education/testing/ltr.html>
- Spolsky, Bernard. 1995. Measured Words. Oxford University Press.
- Spolsky, Bernard. 1993. Testing across cultures: An Historical perspective. World Englishes 12:1, 97-94.

5. EVALUATION: Your role in this class will be important. You will be graded on your participation in group work and in class discussion, on your ability to answer questions on class readings, on your group and individual project.

Class Participation/Discussions and Attendance – 25%

Tasks and Short Essays 25%

Midterm Group Project – 25%

Final Group Project – 25%

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations contact the Director of the Academic Resource Center, Barbara Stewart at (314) 968-7495.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students at Webster University are expected to practice academic honesty.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism is intentionally claiming that another person's work is his/her own or implying that another person's work is his/her own (through inadequate or inaccurate citations of reference material.)

Students:

- Should not copy whole portions of text from another source as a major component of papers or projects.
- Should identify the title, author, page number/webpage address, and publication date of works when directly quoting small portions of texts, articles, interviews, or websites.
- Should appropriately identify the source of information when paraphrasing (restating) ideas from texts, interviews, articles, or websites.
- Should follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association Style Guide when referencing all research sources.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty:

For further information about the consequences of academic dishonesty please consult the Webster University Student Handbook.

ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

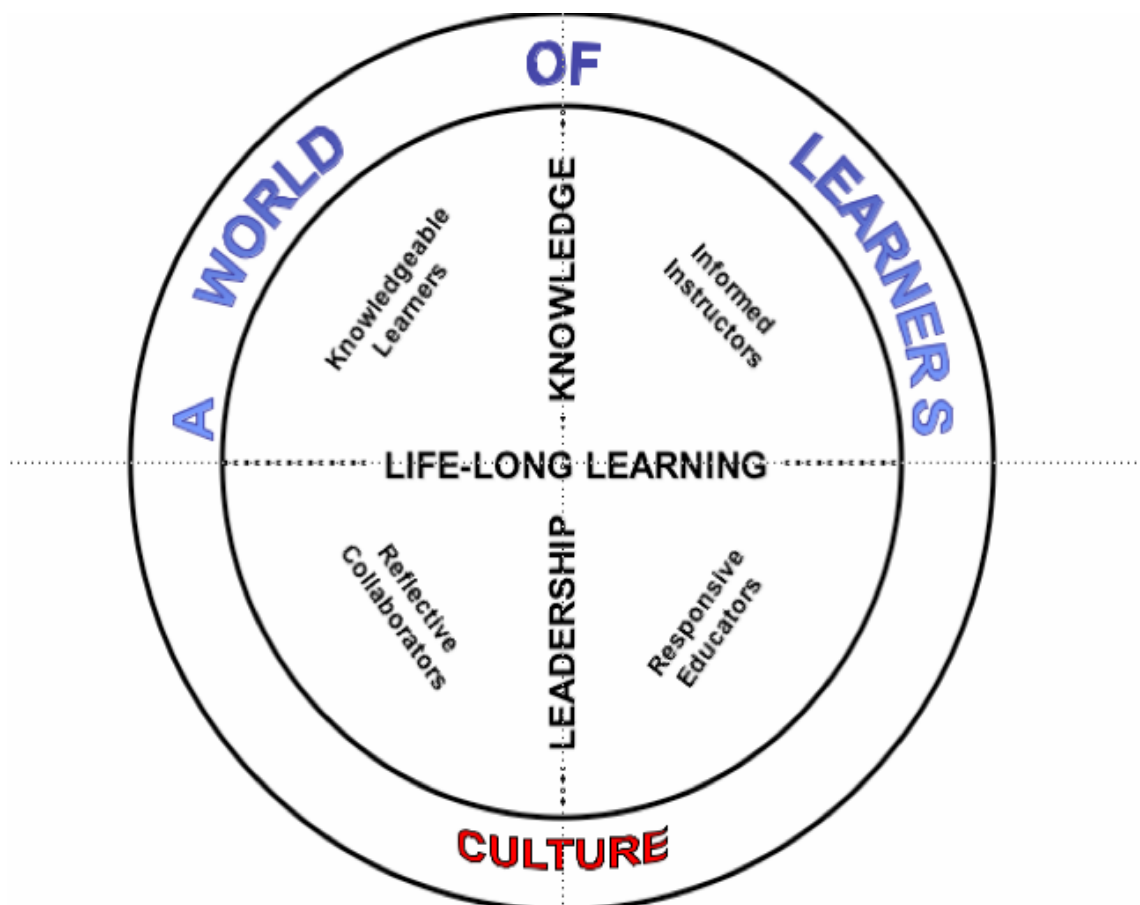
If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations contact the Director of the Academic Resource Center, Dr. Pat McLeese, at (314) 968-7495.

**Webster University
School of Education**

Vision: “. . . We all must work to make this world worthy of its children.” (Casals, 1970)

Mission: The School of Education at Webster University provides its students with the knowledge, experiences, and practical tools that help them guide both themselves and others toward lifelong learning. The School of Education is a community of educator-scholars who apply critical reflections and creative energies to enhance learning in schools and other educational settings. The faculty strives to support this community by modeling effective teaching practices based on sound theory and research. Personalized approaches create a challenging, yet supportive environment that permits the risk-taking necessary for learning and growth. The School of Education encourages its faculty and students to work actively toward this end, keeping in mind that action must be rooted in visionary, yet realistic, thinking. This thought and action process underscores the development of an inner-directed self-understanding, an outer-directed global perspective, and an appreciation of human diversity that arises from both.

Theme: Developing a world of learners through knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning.



The universal mandala (a circle with intersecting vertical and horizontal lines) graphically represents the conceptual framework of the School of Education. The outer circle provides the framework for a “world of learners” in cultural settings. The two axes represent the theme components of knowledge, leadership, and life-long learning. These lines are broken to emphasize the fluid relationship of the goals and integrated concepts. Each quadrant represents one of the school’s four goals for its candidates: to develop knowledgeable learners, informed instructors, reflective collaborators, and responsive educators.

School of Education Goals

1. Education candidates will demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of the learner, and knowledge of pedagogy based on inquiry and scholarship.

The knowledgeable learner:

- 1.1 knows content that supports conceptual understanding;
 - 1.2 applies tools of inquiry to construct meaningful learning experiences;
 - 1.3 identifies developmental factors in student learning; and
 - 1.4 understands theoretical principles of effective instruction to plan learning experiences.
2. Education candidates will incorporate multiple assessment and instructional strategies to support effective educational practices based on research and theory.

The informed instructor:

- 2.1 designs curriculum based on students' prior knowledge, learning styles, strengths, and needs;
 - 2.2 understands and uses a range of instructional strategies;
 - 2.3 uses a variety of communication modes, media, and technology to support student learning; and
 - 2.4 employs a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor learning and modify instruction.
3. Education candidates will reflect on the roles educators take as leaders of change through collaboration with colleagues, students, and families in schools and communities.

The reflective collaborator:

- 3.1 values and integrates reflection to grow as a professional;
 - 3.2 promotes communication and collaboration with colleagues, families, and community leaders;
 - 3.3 seeks relationships with families and students to support student learning; and
 - 3.4 initiates change that benefits students and their families.
4. Education candidates will demonstrate respect for diversity through responsive teaching and learning that values individual differences.

The responsive educator:

- 4.1 understands and responds appropriately to issues of diversity
- 4.2 acknowledges social and cultural contexts to create effective teaching and learning environments;
- 4.3 adapts instruction to the learner's knowledge, ability, and background experience; and
- 4.4 identifies resources for specialized services when needed.

School of Education Dispositions

NCATE defines dispositions as “the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. “ (Professional Standards, p. 53) There is significant value in focusing attention on qualities that make an effective teacher.

1. Understands and Respects Self
 - 1.1 Understands and respects that s (he) may be different from others
 - 1.2 Embraces an openness to change (adaptability, flexibility)
 - 1.3 Exhibits curiosity
 - 1.4 Engages in reflection
2. Understands and Respects Others
 - 2.1 Understands, respects, and responds appropriately to diversity in a variety of settings
 - 2.2 Exhibits empathy
 - 2.3 Commits to fairness and honesty
 - 2.4 Listens respectfully to other points of view

3. Understands and Respects Professional Communities
 - 3.1 Commits to professional behavior in university and school cultures
 - 3.2 Practices informed decision-making in university and school cultures
 - 3.3 Communicates and collaborates in university and school cultures
 - 3.4 Accepts academic rigor (willingness to work/ high expectations)
 - 3.5 Affects change with courage and confidence