IL 2253-1030: Principles and Practices of Foreign Language Testing and Assessment
Fall 2016

Course Information
Meeting time: Mondays: 4:30PM-7:10PM
Meeting place: 4300 WWPH

Instructor Information:
Instructor: Dr. Veronica G. Sardegna
E-mail: sardegna@pitt.edu
Office: WWPH 5108
Office hours: by appointment only (online sign-up)

Course Description
The purpose of this course is to teach you how to develop appropriate and effective assessments for your second/foreign (L2/FL) language classrooms. Throughout the course, you will learn how to create standards-based, integrated, and dynamic assessments that are suitable for your teaching context; critique assessments with regards to test usefulness, validity, reliability, practicality, and interactivity; and engage in collaborative assignments that will require you to develop language assessments for a variety of teaching contexts following the most current language testing and assessment principles and procedures.

Course Objectives
During this course, you will:
- demonstrate an understanding of the difference between assessment and testing;
- identify the most current language testing and assessment principles and procedures;
- distinguish among different assessment types and purposes;
- design performance-based assessment rubrics;
- create and critique standards-based, dynamic, and integrated assessments;
- identify the benefits and drawbacks of alternative assessments, such as portfolios, journals, conferences, interviews, observations, and self-and peer-assessments;
- evaluate a variety of language testing instruments with regards to their usefulness, validity, reliability, practicality, interactiveness, and washback effects; and
- develop assessment tools that are suitable for your teaching context.

Assignments

1. **Discussion Facilitation Assignment (DFA)**
   Choose and sign up for one article marked with ** from the list of required readings. Lead the discussion of this article with two other classmates on its assigned day (see Schedule). Write a review of the article in which you summarize and critique the study (2 pages maximum; double spaced; 12-point font). Submit the critique before the class discussion via the Assignment Link on CourseWeb. Although you can prepare the class discussion with your group members, each should submit an individual review for grading.

2. **Test Critique Assignment**
   Select and describe a teaching context; choose a commercially available assessment or classroom test for your chosen teaching context; and critique the test with regards to its usefulness, validity, reliability, practicality, interactiveness, and washback effects. Please provide a link to the test/resource or a paper copy if it is not currently available online. Conclude with a justification for either using the test in its current form or making changes to it to improve its overall quality and effects on the selected teaching context.

3. **Assessment of a Receptive Skill**
   With a classmate, select one teaching context and design together a language test to evaluate your imagined learners’ reading or listening comprehension skills. This assignment requires you to select and describe a foreign language teaching context and purpose for assessment, develop a reading or listening comprehension test (select one skill, please); and both explain and justify the grading criteria and the kind of feedback you will provide to the learners.

4. **Assessment of a Productive Skill**
   With a classmate, select one teaching context and design together a language test to evaluate your imagined learners’ speaking or writing skills. This assignment requires you to select and describe a foreign language teaching context and purpose for assessment, develop a speaking or writing test (select one skill, please), provide a sample outcome, and both create a rubric and justify its use for grading and feedback.
5. **Final Project**
   This is a multi-part assignment that comprises (a) the development of an integrated performance assessment— one submission per group of three, (b) an oral group presentation that describes the assessment in detail as well as the context and principles that guided the construction of the assessment, and provides a critique in terms of its usefulness, practicality, reliability, and validity; and (c) an individual reflection.

6. **Participation**: Your active participation during classroom discussions of readings and assessments, and on the wiki for the DFA assignment count towards this grade.

The following table shows the assignment point distribution as well as the number of components and competencies assessed for each assignment. Detailed assignment guidelines, due dates, and grading criteria for the different component parts are posted on CourseWeb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Competencies Assessed*</th>
<th>Components:</th>
<th>Total points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discussion Facilitation Assignment (DFA)</td>
<td>IV. B, G</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Test Critique Assignment</td>
<td>IV. B, G</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assessment of a Receptive Skill</td>
<td>IV. A, B, E</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assessment of a Productive Skill</td>
<td>IV. A, B, E</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Final Project</td>
<td>IV. A, B, E</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Participation</td>
<td>IV. B, G</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
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*Competencies listed below

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**By the end of this course, ESL Program Specialists should demonstrate the following competencies:**

**IV. Assessment**

A. Use multiple and appropriate formative and summative assessment measures for a variety of purposes, including classroom and student self-assessment and technology-based assessment (e.g., audio, video, computer) at various grade levels.

B. Apply appropriate testing practices for English language learners including:
   1. Determination of the validity and reliability of tests to make assessment related decisions for ELLs;
   2. Knowledge and application of alternate and multiple assessment measures to ascertain what ELLs’ know and can do;
   3. Appropriate interpretation and use of data to support ELLs;
4. Assessment of ELLs’ test-taking challenges and creation of strategies and scaffolding techniques to address these challenges.

E. Implement a variety of assessment tools as part of classroom instruction (observation checklists, reading logs, video spreadsheet software, self- and peer-assessment, among others) planning for classroom practice of each technique, to record progress towards ELLs’ English language proficiency and academic achievement.

G. Identify accountability measures and assessment targets in order to analyze real-time ELL data in order to make programmatic and instructional adjustments.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 – 76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>Failing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A “B” or better is expected in graduate classes.

Required Texts


Links to Standards

- WIDA Standards: [https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx](https://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx)

Additional Required Readings


**Technology**

All projects and assignments completed outside of class must be submitted electronically. All work will be posted to the Class CourseWeb. A CourseWeb site has been established for this course; the site contains a copy of this syllabus and schedule, project guidelines, readings which are not in your textbooks, general course information, and external links. I will post announcements, updates, and new documents during the course.

**Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is mandatory. Given the short amount of time for courses and the nature of classroom instruction in a professional program, missing one 3-hour class can result in serious deficits to your knowledge and can have effects on your understanding of future classes. Graduate courses require your active participation in class activities and discussion, your responsibility to a group for completion of projects, and your contribution to the class in terms...
of presentations and demonstration lessons. There is NO WAY to make up work missed in a graduate class.

The following attendance policy has been established for the PY, MAT, and MED program.

1) **You are permitted ONE EXCUSED ABSENCE per course per term.** An excused absence means that you have communicated with your instructor that you will miss or have missed a class and have the necessary documentation to allow your instructor to make a decision on whether the absence is excused or unexcused. It is NOT up to you to decide whether your absence is excused and simply telling the instructor that you will miss a class does not excuse you from the class. You must receive verbal or written confirmation from the instructor that your absence has been excused. The one excused absence will not have an effect of your final course grade. You are, however, responsible for finding out what you missed from other students in the class. Lack of knowledge about course content because of an absence is not excusable or reasonable for a graduate student. If you do not receive confirmation from the instructor that your absence is excused, you may assume that your absence is unexcused and will have an impact on your course grade (see #3).

2) **Two days of lateness or early exit exceeding 30 minutes also count as one absence.** In other words, if you are late or leave early twice without being excused by your instructor, an unexcused absence will be recorded, resulting in a lowering of your final course grade. While I understand that the parking situation is difficult at Pitt, please keep in mind that we have a limited amount of time for each class and will start each day on time. Chronic lateness of less than thirty minutes (i.e., being late on a regular basis) may also constitute an absence.

3) **Beyond the one excused absence, additional absences will result in the lowering of your final course grade by one letter grade for every unexcused absence.** Keep in mind that in graduate school you may be required to re-take a course for which you have received a C. A grade of C is not an acceptable grade for a graduate student. The expectation is that you will do exemplary work in all your courses. A GPA of 4.00 should not be an unreasonable expectation for you. In the future, you will be seeking strong letters of recommendation for positions and mediocre work in courses does not permit an instructor to recommend you highly with no reservation.

4) **During the course of the semester, it is also possible that absence from and tardiness to class is necessary beyond the reasonable one absence policy.** In these cases, the absence or tardiness must be excused by the instructor, must be documented, and will be given for only extenuating circumstances such as death in the family or serious illness that requires medication and/or hospitalization (headaches, a slight cold, or fatigue do not count as serious illnesses). Excused absences and tardiness will not be given for cars breaking down, traffic congestion, family obligations, routine doctor or dentist appointments, a planned family vacation, or delays at your school site. We all teach classes, work in schools, have family responsibilities, and deal with transportation issues. These matters must be planned for in advance so they do not interfere with your responsibilities as an intern and a graduate student – BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE. If absence or tardiness beyond the reasonable one absence policy is necessary and approved by the instructor, a work plan must be discussed and agreed upon to make up missed class time. An excused absence or tardy beyond the first will not result in a lower grade if all work due or assigned for the class and work plan is completed.
Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

Disability Services

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you need to notify both the instructor and Disability Resources and Services no later than the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services, call (412) 648-7890 (Voice or TTD) to schedule an appointment. The Disability Resources and Services office is located in 140 William Pitt Union on the Oakland campus.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

DIL Departmental Grievance Procedures

The purpose of grievance procedures is to ensure the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students in their relationships with each other. When a student in DIL believes that a faculty member has not met his or her obligations (as an instructor or in another capacity) as described in the Academic Integrity Guidelines, the student should follow this procedure:

1. The student should talk directly to the faculty member to attempt to resolve the matter.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the student should talk to the relevant program coordinator.
3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should talk to the associate chair of DIL (currently Dr. Patricia Crawford).
4. If needed, the student should next talk to the SOE associate dean of students (currently Dr. Michael Gunzenhauser).
5. If the matter still remains unresolved, the student should file a written statement of charges with the dean’s designated Academic Integrity Administrative Officer (currently Dr. Michael Gunzenhauser).