

ADE/B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary

Syllabus

Classroom Assessment

Semester 4

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Technical Support: Education Development Centre (EDC); Teachers College, Columbia University

Syllabus: Classroom Assessment

SEMESTER:	Year 2/Semester 4
DURATION:	48 Hours (16 weeks)
CREDITS	03
PREREQUISITES:	Successful completion of Semester 3 courses

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Historically, the practices of testing and teaching have been conducted separately. A shift in schools throughout the world from the practice of testing to the practice of assessment is an effort, in part, to integrate assessment and instruction. Experienced teachers know that when a lesson ends, the teacher does not know exactly what each student learned. (The fact that the teacher taught does not necessarily mean that the students learned.) The only way to know what the students actually learned is to check in some way (written quiz, homework assignment or, perhaps, oral questions from the teacher that individual students answer when called upon.)

Fortunately, educational researchers, working in many countries throughout the world, have proven something that some teachers learned from experience. These researchers have shown time and again that students earn significantly higher scores on major tests when their teachers check for learning during and/or immediately after lessons than do similar students whose teachers do not check for learning while students are learning but wait until it is time for a major test. Checking for learning continuously rather than assuming it has occurred is the essence of several practices that educators call *Classroom Assessment*.

The emphasis in this course is on interactions between instruction, assessment, and learning. The goal of the course is to persuade you that integrating assessment activities into lesson plans improves learning. You will practice writing assessment criteria and assessment methods into lesson plans. You will study and critique links between assessment and instruction.

Assessment, done properly, is a continuous process. The information gathered is used to remove obstacles to learning, improve instruction, and enable students to progress to increasingly complex mental work. The teacher who is assessing learning uses a diverse array of methods, including tests. It is unlikely that a student enrolled in a class where the teacher understands the process of continuous assessment will sit in a classroom very long without learning.

You will practice giving constructive feedback, a major component of assessment, to each other throughout the semester. You will learn about the steps involved in test construction and practice writing questions for classroom tests. You will have the opportunity to study and discuss different types of assessment methods. Throughout the course, you will be encouraged to think about and discuss your own beliefs and judgments about classroom assessment. By the end of the course, you should have a commitment to your own version of a philosophy of assessment in the classroom.

This course is based on the belief that wise decisions are a teacher's most important skill. Good assessments are at the core of wise decisions.

COURSE OUTCOMES

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- explain and defend the claim that professional judgment is the essence of classroom assessment
- explain error in assessment, identify potential sources of error, and describe how teachers can compensate for error in assessment
- create classroom scenarios that illustrate links between instruction, assessment, and learning.
- explain the difference between formative and summative assessments
- list the characteristics of constructive written feedback accompanied by an example produced by you on an elementary school student's achievement test
- explain why the data obtained from an assessment always has to be interpreted and shared with relevant stakeholders

TEACHING AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK

This course introduces prospective elementary school teachers to two complex practices that characterize effective teaching: 1) constructing a test, using it, scoring it, interpreting the scores, and providing feedback to students: and 2) integrating assessment into lesson plans through establishing criteria for judging if learning objectives have been attained and selecting appropriate assessment tools.

Notions of Assessments are learned through practice, coaching, feedback and reflection in a classroom. Since these are complex teaching practices, rather than expecting you, the student teacher, to practice the finished act you will practice component parts which can be integrated as you achieve proficiency. You will have models to guide you and access to cued practice. Most of this practice can take place in college and university classrooms with peers providing feedback to each other. The learning framework for the course is guided practice and reflection. You will work in pairs and small groups. Class discussions will aim at identifying indicators of quality in the work done by you and your colleagues.

SEMESTER OUTLINE

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT: CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT (3 weeks, 9 hours)

The Unit will begin with begin by pushing you to explore your personal experiences with assessment as a way to orienting you to the broader forms and functions of assessment as a tool that measures, and also facilitates, learning. You will review research that explains the positive role of teacher feedback on learning and also look at assessment in the light of broader curriculum. In exploring concepts of assessment, you will learn how tests may be used formatively or summatively and how they may be checked for reliability and validity. Finally, you will evaluate how a culture of testing differs from a culture of authentic assessment and all that this entails.

By the end of this unit you can expect to:

- Know what research reveals about teacher feedback before, during and after assessment.
- Differentiate between the formative and summative uses of assessment.
- Understand the concepts of validity and reliability as they apply to assessments conducted in the classroom.
- Compare and contrast a culture of testing versus a culture of assessment

Week 1: Overview of course and ideas

Session 1 and 2

- Overview of course
- Revisit Assessment practices in schools in Pakistan
- Personal experience with tests in school
- The distinction between assessment *of* learning and assessment *for* learning

Session 3

- Review of research on the positive effects of continuous assessment
- Possible causes of those effects: motivation; feelings toward self; improved instruction
- Review of research on the effects of a teacher's feedback on learning

Week 2: Assessment concepts and underpinnings

Session 1

- Curriculum: goals, objectives, standards, targets
- Pakistan National Curriculum (2006-2007): standards, benchmarks, learning outcomes

Session 2

- Formative and summative Assessments
- Distinguishing between the two through real examples

Session 3

- Assessments concepts: The relationship between reliability and validity

Week 3: Cultures of testing and assessment

Session 1

- Shift from a culture of testing in schools to a culture of assessment

Session 2

- Assessment practices and policies in elementary schools in Pakistan

Session 3

- How might the culture of classrooms change if formative assessment becomes a routine part of instruction? How might the roles of teachers and learners change? Might this pose challenges?

UNIT 2: ASSESSMENT IS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN TEACHING AND LEARNING (5 Weeks/ 15 hours)

This unit will give you the chance to develop a valid and reliable test based on 4 to 6 lesson units in a subject of their choice. You will work with peers, either in pairs or triads, developing lessons that incorporate assessment. These assessment tasks can be a combination of Selected-Response items (multiple choice, true-false and matching) and Constructed-Response items (completion and short-answer). The test will have to be balanced not only among these types of test items but also across the mental demands of knowing, understanding and reasoning. You will have a chance to practice each step in test construction, using models to guide you (a model learning unit, model table of test specifications, and model test).

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe both objective and subjective item types used in assessment.
- Write Selected-Response and Constructed-Response test items following the rules and produce good examples of those test items.
- Prepare a test specification table showing proportional representation among content topics and among different mental demands.
- Prove that test items map onto lesson objectives.
- Compile items into a test in accordance with the distribution on the table of test specifications.
- Write clear instructions for a test.

Week 4: Constructing the Unit upon which the test will be based

This week you will work with your partner(s) to construct the 4 to 6 lessons unit upon which your test will be based. Between Sessions 1 & 2 write the learning objectives for your content outline. Again, check the National Curriculum and textbook to be sure your objectives are consistent with these sources.

Session 1

- Study the subject textbooks to select the unit and determine the subject and topic for your unit with partner(s)
- Outline the content for your unit with your partner(s)

- Check your content outline with the National Curriculum content for your subject, topic and grade level

Session 2

- Write the first lesson for your unit with your partners

Session 3

- Groups exchange their unit , read each other's lessons and give feedback
- Write lessons 2 and 3 for your unit.

Week 5: Principles and rules for writing Selected-Response and Constructed-Response objective test questions

Session 1

- Study directions for and practice writing short answer and completion questions for your test(for the lessons that you have constructed)

Session 2

- Study directions for and practice writing true-false, alternate-choice and matching questions for your test(for the lessons that you have constructed)

Session 3

- Study directions for and practice writing multiple choice items for your test(for the lessons that you have constructed)

Week 6: Assembling your test

Session 1

- Writing and constructing answers to sentence completion and short answer questions

Session 2

- Writing and constructing answers to true-false, alternate-choice and matching questions

Session 3

- Writing and constructing answers to multiple questions
- Writing directions for the test

Week 7: Assembling your test

Session 1

- Building a Table of Specifications I

Session 2

- Finishing a Table of Specifications II

Session 3

- Checking for balance in the coverage of learning objectives
- Determining the length of the test

Week 8: Essays - One way to assess complex learning and achievement

Session 1

- Forms and uses of essay questions
- Restricted-Response essay questions
- Extended-Response essay questions

Session 2

- Scoring rubrics for Restricted and Extended-Response essays

Session 3

- Advantages and limitations of essays
- Suggestions for constructing essays

Week 9: Making sense of the test items

By now you and you and your partner(s) will have gained enough experience on how to write a good test and connect it with SLO's. You can now analyze the type of test items that you see in textbooks for the same unit or a teacher made test.

Session 1

- Item analysis of the test.
- Report on the results of the item analysis
- Decide which items to eliminate/improve.

Session 2 and 3

- Research on students' reactions to the kinds of tests that they are given by the teachers as a means of feedback on tests items .

UNIT 3: INTEGRATING AND SHARING ASSESSMENT RESULTS (3 weeks, 9 hours)

You have been in school for 13 years, at least. During those years you were given feedback about your academic performance but you may not be fully aware of the influence that feedback had on your attitude and motivation toward learning and your feelings about yourself as a student. This unit will introduce you to the importance of feedback and the types of feedback that have the most positive effects on learning and motivation. Motivation has been included in two previous courses you have taken, i.e. *Methods of Teaching* and *Classroom Management*. This unit will reinforce what you already know about motivation while showing you the critical role that teacher feedback plays in this.

Feedback is a term that educators borrowed from biologists and electrical engineers. Used by teachers, feedback means giving information to a student in response to an action on the part of the student. You will learn in this unit there is more than one type of feedback. To be useful to a student, feedback must make him or her think.

In this unit you will work with partner(s) on the test you created in the previous unit, share it with a cooperating teacher in a school and with his/her support, administer it to a group of students. You will provide two or three rounds of feedback to students based on their performance in this test and evaluate the effects that your feedback had on their next performance.

Unit Outcomes

By the end of this unit you will:

- Know what makes feedback particularly effective.
- Be able to provide feedback that enables learning.
- Appreciate parents' need for information about their child's performance on tests and other assessments and give it to them effectively.

Week 10: Characteristics of effective and ineffective feedback

Session 1

- What is feedback?
- What are some ways in which teachers provide conscious and unconscious feedback to students? How might these affect learning?
- Conclusions from research on feedback in the classroom

Session 2

- Characteristics of effective feedback
- Consequences for students from effective feedback on assessments
- Examples of effective feedback
- Characteristics of ineffective feedback
- Examples of ineffective feedback

Session 3

- Guidelines for writing effective feedback
- Ways to avoid ineffective feedback statements
- The role of feedback in increasing students' learning and confidence

Develop a mock conference with a student in which you provide feedback on his/her recent assignment. Peers will critique each others' feedback strategy.

Week 11: Sharing assessment results with others

Session 1

- How might you provide feedback to a parent in a way that facilitates the environment of teaching and learning at home
- Develop a mock parent teacher conference, keeping cultural considerations in mind.
- Role-play various parent teacher conference scenarios

Session 2 and 3

Develop a mock teacher student session following points to be considered

- Sharing assessment results with students
- Integrate test performance with classroom performance.
- Develop some feedback statements that you would give students on their assignments

Week 12: Practice - Feedback to students and assessment results to parents

This week follows the practical administering of a test to students in a lab school. Bring the test results including transcripts of any oral or written feedback you provided.

Session 1

- Half the class presents their feedback.
- Members of the class critique the feedback presentations

Session 2

- The other half of the class presents their feedback.
- Members of the class critique the feedback presentations

Session 3

- Feedback Framework: Medal, Mission and Goals
- review the feedback received in different courses against this framework

UNIT 4: THE ARRAY OF AVAILABLE ASSESSMENT TASKS (4 weeks/12 hours)

Teachers are assessing their students all the time but such assessment is often neither systematic nor recorded and the teacher may or may not remember what s/he learned about a particular student or a group of students. In this unit alternate forms of assessment will be discussed, you will receive information about the variety of assessment tasks that are available to you in addition to tests. At the end of the Unit you will review your understanding of assessment and how this course has helped you in constructing new knowledge regarding assessment. You will further enhance your knowledge of assessment testing and evaluation when you will study a second course in Year 3 of the 4 year B.Ed. Hons.

Week 13 Informal Performance Assessment

- Anecdotes in teacher journals.
- Homework
- Written work produced in class
- Informal behavioral observation with check lists and rating scales
- Class discussions.
- Academic Tasks (Running Oral Reading Records, for example)

Weeks 14 Restricted and Extended Performance Assessment

- Essays, Experiments, Projects, Demonstrations, Performances
- The Best Apple: an example of a Restricted Performance Assessment
- The Green Bean Race: an example of an Extended Performance
- Rubrics
- Learning objectives for Performance Assessments
- Strengths and weaknesses of Performance Assessments

Weeks 15 Portfolios

- Purpose of Portfolio Assessment
- Supply content
- Evaluation of Structure
- Evaluation of Content
- Illustrations of Portfolio Assessment: Your Semester 3 Student Teaching Portfolio

Week 16 Review

- You know more about assessment now than you knew 15 weeks ago when you had the discussion about a shift from a culture of testing in schools to a culture of assessment. Go back to that discussion now. Do you believe such a cultural shift can take place in classrooms in Pakistan? How?
- Though the topic was not covered in this course, there is some evidence that students earn higher scores on a test if they write test questions and answer them before taking the test prepared by the teacher. This is a good course in which to try this out. See if you can devise an assessment task for the course that you are taking and share it with your professor.

Practice Exercises

This course was developed around a series paper and pencil exercises designed to help you acquire the knowledge and skill to conduct classroom assessment. We recommend to your teachers that you do these exercises in class. We also recommend that you exchange with partners and use your partner's work to practice giving constructive feedback.

Appendix A of the instructor's guide for this course contains a set of materials (learning objectives for a unit on the solar system; the 8 lesson unit; a table of specifications for the test; an answer key; and a spread sheet with 32 students' answers keyed to whether the answer was correct or incorrect.) You will be given a copy of these materials when you receive this syllabus. You will use these materials throughout the semester to learn about relationships between assessment and instruction as well as the process of test construction. The materials were developed for this course by two teachers.

Course Assignments

Assignments will be listed on a separate handout. These assignments will count toward your grade.

Examples of assignments are:

- Interviews with school officials about assessment practices at the district and provincial levels
- Designing alternate assessments to those in students textbooks
- An information sheet for parents explaining the difference between formative and summative assessment
- Creation and administration of a test
- Providing informative feedback to students on the test they have taken that you developed

- Creating formative assessments for lessons in the unit you developed and used to create a summative assessment

Grading Policy

The university and its affiliated colleges will determine the course grading policy which will be shared with students at the beginning of the course. It is recommended that at least 50% of the final grade be determined by course work carried out by students preparing to be teachers. Course work may include assignments completed in schools

Suggested Textbooks and Resources

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2010). *Assessment for learning: Putting it into practice*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Clarke, S. (2008). *Active learning through formative assessment*. London, UK: Hodder Education

McMillan, J. H. (2011). *Classroom assessment: Principles and practice for effective standards-based instruction (5th ed)*. Boston: Pearson.

Miller, M.D., Linn, R.L., & Gronlund, N.E. (2009). *Measurement and assessment in teaching (10th ed)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Stiggins, R., Arter, J., Chappuis, J., & Chappuis, S. (2006). *Classroom assessment for student learning: Do it right-Using it well*. Boston: Pearson. This text has a DVD and CD.

Wiliam, D. (2011). *Embedded formative assessment*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

There are several website addresses to use for the course that are recorded on the handouts where they are to be used. They were last checked during the week of December 3, 2012 and were active.