George Mason University
Graduate Course Approval/Inventory Form

Please complete this form and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. Forward it as an email attachment to the Secretary of the Graduate Council. A printed copy of the form with signatures should be brought to the Graduate Council Meeting. Complete the Coordinator Form on page 2, if changes in this course will affect other units.

Please indicate: _____ NEW  ___X__ MODIFY  ____ DELETE

Local Unit: Community College Education  Graduate Council Approval Date:

Course Abbreviation: CTCH  Course Number: 626

Full Course Title: Assessment in Higher Education

Abbreviated Course Title (24 characters max.): Assessment in Higher Ed.

Credit hours: 3  Program of Record: DACCE

Repeatable for Credit? ___ D=Yes, not within same term Up to hours ___ T=Yes, within the same term Up to hours ___X_ N=Cannot be repeated for credit

Activity Code (please indicate): ___ Lecture (LEC) ___ Lab (LAB) ___ Recitation (RCT) ___ Studio (STU) ___ Internship (INT) ___ Independent Study (IND) ___X__ Seminar (SEM)

Catalog Credit Format 3 : 3 : 0  Course Level: GF(500-600) ___X__ GA(700+)

Maximum Enrollment: 18  For NEW courses, first term to be offered: Fall 2004

Prerequisites or co requisites:

Catalog Description (35 words or less) Please use catalog format and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses.: Focuses on the political and historical context of assessment in higher education and teaches strategies for different levels of assessment, including classroom, program and institutional. Students develop skills in survey and focus group research and learn how to develop and implement an assessment plan.

For MODIFIED or DELETED courses as appropriate:
Last term offered: Previous Course Abbreviation: HELA  Previous number: 626

Description of modification: Change course code and description as directed by CAS Council.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:
Submitted by: ________________________________ email: gkettlew@gmu.edu

Department/Program: ________________________________ Date: __________________

College Committee: ________________________________ Date: __________________

Graduate Council Representative: ________________________________ Date: __________________
Approval from other units: NONE

Please list those units outside of your own who may be affected by this new, modified, or deleted course. Each of these units must approve this change prior to its being submitted to the Graduate Council for approval.

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Graduate Council approval: ___________________________ Date: ____________

Graduate Council representative: ______________________ Date: ____________

Provost Office representative: ________________________ Date: ____________
Rationale:

Assessment is a major factor in educational reform and some form of assessment exists on most U.S. campuses. Institutional assessment is often required by state legislators and is required by all regional and most specialized accrediting agencies. Institutions also rely on assessment to evaluate curricular and student life programs. Responsible administrators, committed to educational improvement use assessment as a tool for making informed decisions about programs. Faculty committed to student learning use assessment as a tool to improve their instruction.

This course will give students an opportunity to learn valuable applied research skills and to design and implement an assessment plan. Students will work on real projects with George Mason departments and offices.

Student Learning Goals

Students in this class, most of whom wish to work in higher education, will be able to do the following:

- Students will know and be able to apply the principles of assessment.
- Students will be able to describe the national, regional and local context of assessment.
- Students will know and be able to apply both quantitative and qualitative research methods to resolve or illuminate educational questions.
- Students will be able to distinguish and recommend specific strategies for different levels of assessment such as classroom assessment, program assessment and institutional assessment.
- Students will be able to write learning goals.
- Students will be able to distinguish between ethical and unethical assessment behavior.
- Students will be able to prepare and implement an assessment plan that includes the following elements:
  - Identification of a problem
  - Plan to involve and motivate others
  - Selection of methodologies
  - Data collection
  - Data analysis
  - Dissemination of results
  - Organizing to use the results

Teaching Methodologies

Lecture, discussion, group projects, presentations, homework assignments, readings, peer critiques
**Course Outline by Week:**

1. Introductions; My expectations regarding computer literacy, attendance, participation, reading, presentations; My goals for class; Review of syllabus; Student goals; How to write a learning goal. Reading assignment with related tasks

2. Brief discussion of reading assignment; What assessment is and is not; Principles of assessment; Appropriate questions for assessment; External and Internal Factors; Introduction of group projects; Reading assignment with related tasks

3. Brief discussion of reading assignment; Academic and Student Life Assessment (Invited guests from Mason units who have been engaged in assessment); Create working groups and provide handout on guidelines for working groups; In Week 5, groups identify potential projects (using list of depts and programs)

4. Levels of assessment: Classroom Assessment and Program Assessment; Reading assignment with related tasks; Status of group projects

5. Reports from groups on planned projects; Levels of assessment: Program Assessment and Institutional Assessment

6. Competencies; Accreditation Groups present their assessment plans and begin to implement plans

7. Applied research (quantitative and qualitative)—survey research, focus groups, interviews, unobtrusive measures; Workshop on survey research; Status of projects

8. Continue workshop on survey research; Workshop on focus groups and unobtrusive measures; Status of projects; Brief discussion of reading assignment;

9. Managing an assessment project—who should be involved, local culture, working within a budget, responsibility for assessment, motivation, timelines, brainstorming; Group status reports

10. Elements of an Effective Assessment Plan; Group status reports

11. Data analysis and data presentations; Group status reports

12. Human Subjects Review and Ethics; Group status reports

13. Closing the Loop, Feedback (Invited guests from Mason units that have used assessment data) Begin final reports and critiques

14. Final Group Reports and Critiques

**Readings** (Haven’t finalized this list; not all of these will be included.)

*Designing and Assessing Courses and Curricula* 1998 by Robert Diamond (very detailed but nonetheless good ideas)

*Students at the Center: Feminist Assessment*, edited by Caryn McTighe Musil, 1992, AAC (very well written and intriguing)

Making a Difference: Outcomes of a Decade of Assessment in Higher Education 1993 Trudy Banta & Associates

Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education 1999 Catherine Palomba and Trudy Banta (This book is very logical and readings could be spread out over the length of the course)

Assessment in Practice: Putting Principles to Work on College Campuses 1996 Trudy Banta, et. al.


Grading

Grades will be based on the following:
Group Project: 80 points
  Criteria:
  Peer Evaluation 5 points
  Project Status Presentations 15 points
  Final Report 60 points
Class Participation: 20 points