George Mason University
Graduate Course Approval/Inventory Form

Please complete this form and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. Complete the Coordination Form on page 2 if changes in this course will affect other units. If no other units are affected, simply indicate “None” on the form. After approval by the appropriate GSE program faculty and GSE Program Development and Evaluation Team (PDET), the Associate Dean for Outreach and Program Development will forward it as an email attachment to the Secretary of the Graduate Council. A printed copy of the form with signatures will be brought to the Graduate Council Meeting.

Please indicate:  __x___ NEW  ____ MODIFY  ____ DELETE

Local Unit: Graduate School of Education  Graduate Council Approval Date:

Course Abbreviation: EDCE  Course Number: 605

Full Course Title: Character Education Assessment and Evaluation

Abbreviated Course Title (24 characters max.): Char Ed Assess & Eval

Credit hours: 3  Program of Record: M.Ed.

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

Grade Type:

x__ GR: graduate grading, normal (A, A-, B+, B, C, F, IN, AB)


Activity Code (please indicate):

x__ Lecture (LEC) ___ Lab (LAB) ___ Recitation (RCT)

___ Studio (STU) ___ Internship (INT) ___ Independent Study (IND)

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

Maximum Enrollment: 20  For NEW courses, first term to be offered: Fall 2005

Prerequisites: EDCE 602, EDCE 603, EDCE 604.

Catalog Description (35 words or less) Please use catalog format and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses: Applies assessment standards and audit tools to analyze and evaluate formative and summative assessments of school/district/community/state-wide programs for character education. Utilizes a backwards design model.

For MODIFIED or DELETED courses as appropriate:

Last term offered:  Previous Course Abbreviation:  Previous number:

Description of modification:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

Submitted by:  _____ Mary M. Williams ________ email: __ mwilliat@gmu.edu __

Department/Program:  _____ Mary M. Williams __________ Date: __11/2/03________

College Committee:  ____Joan Isenberg_______________ Date: ___12/02/03_______

Graduate Council Representative: ________________________________ Date: __________________

Character Education Program  Specialization Course
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
Course Coordination Form  
Graduate School of Education  

EDCE 605 Character Education Assessment and Evaluation

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 it being submitted to the Graduate Council for approval. Submit a signed form or attach a copy of the email approval.

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Graduate Council approval: _______________________________________________ Date: ____________

Graduate Council representative: ___________________________________________ Date: ____________

Provost Office representative: _____________________________________________ Date: ____________
Instructor: Professors Mary Williams; Richard Johnston; Marvin Berkowitz
Office Hours: * announced in class
Telephone: Prof. Williams 703-993-2133; Johnston 703-993-2443; Berkowitz 314-516-7521
*Virtual office (24hrs) e-mail: mwilliat@gmu.edu or rjohnst3@gmu.edu or berkowitz@umsl.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Prerequisites: EDCE 602, EDCE 603, EDCE 604.

Educators will use assessment standards and audit tools to analyze and evaluate formative and summative assessments of school/district/community/state-wide programs for character education. A backwards design model will be utilized.

STUDENT OUTCOMES
At the end of this course students will be able to:

1. use the Internet to access information and resources about character education programs and assessment instruments.
2. use a backwards design model of planning that includes formative and summative assessments, data collection, and reporting of results of program effectiveness and student outcomes to demonstrate their understanding of character education assessment.
3. conduct a comparative analysis of student outcomes for character education using character education assessment standards and an audit toolkit to demonstrate their ability at application of theory-practice related to character education standards.
4. design an assessment plan for a character education program for a school, agency, or district that imbeds character, ethics, and values into the curriculum.
5. create a presentation of assessment results to stakeholders that convinces them to continue funding the character education program.

RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM GOALS
The goal of the character education program is to prepare educators to be character education resource specialists at the school, district, and state levels. EDCE 605 is a specialization course in the EDCE program. EDCE 605 is aligned with the NBPTS five core propositions, which provide the guiding principles for what teachers should know and be able to do:

I. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
II. Teachers know the subject they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
III. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
IV. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
V. Teachers are members of learning communities.

EDCE 605 provides an in-depth analysis of character education assessment and evaluation of programs and materials by applying assessment standards and an audit toolkit. Major course activities include: program assessment and evaluation; application of an audit toolkit, data collection and analysis; and reporting about effective school/district practices to stakeholders.

REQUIRED TEXTS

**RELATED RESOURCES**


‘Character Education Partnership’ Resources and Discussion online at [www.character.org](http://www.character.org)

‘Assessment Instrument Index’ & ‘Program Synopsis Database’.

**SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS** choose one of the following for the Assessment Book Report:


>This *guide for administrators* contains program standards, implementation standards, teacher evaluation standards, leadership standards, curriculum standards, partnership standards, and evaluation standards. The assessment chapter and resources section include detailed instruments that can be adapted for use in any classroom, school or district.


>Does your school or district ever wonder whether its character education initiative is having the intended effects? Do you see improvements in school climate and student behavior and desire to document them? Do you want to pinpoint what needs improvement in your initiative? Are those funding your initiative wanting to see hard data? If so, the *Character Education Evaluation Toolkit* can address your needs and concerns. Full of practical, user-friendly evaluation methods, the *Toolkit* provides beginning evaluators with background information and step-by-step instructions for implementing a useful, accurate and cost-efficient program evaluation. It includes rich examples of several schools’ evaluation designs and outcomes.


>The *Primer* is specifically designed for those character educators with limited experience in program evaluation. For those who question, “Is it working?” “What is it affecting?” “How can you tell?” this publication provides an orientation to the basics of program evaluation and supplies a series of questions that should be asked and answered when you are considering evaluating your efforts.


>The *Character Education Quality Standards* outlines key components of effective character education and allow schools and districts to evaluate their efforts in relation to these criteria. This instrument provides a means for educators, administrators, and community members to reflect on current practices, identify short and long-term objectives, and develop or improve a strategic plan.

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

EDCE 605 is totally web-based using distance learning. Through the whole class and small group discussion boards, students in EDCE 605 will conduct small and large group activities, consensus building and role plays, discussions, reviews of the literature, and evaluation of programs and curriculum materials, presentations and reflections, which will help students, learn to use standards to guide their assessment and evaluation of character education programs.

To meet course objectives, the delivery of this course is accomplished through a combination of experiential learning activities designed to help meet the needs of all learners and learning styles. These include:

- **Readings and reviews**;
- **Presentations** (i.e., mini-presentations assisted by Power Point);
- **Discussions and consensus building activities** (i.e., active involvement of students in learning by asking questions that provoke critical thinking and verbal interaction);
• **Collaborative learning and role plays** (i.e., heterogeneous groups in an interdisciplinary context);
• **Blackboard** web-based course management and portal system at [http://blackboard.gmu.edu](http://blackboard.gmu.edu)

**STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students who require any special accommodations or those with disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in the course are encouraged to work with the instructor to ensure their successful participation. This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the series, programs, or activities of all State and local Governments. Under ADA a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as: learning, working, walking, speaking, hearing, breathing, and/or taking care of oneself. If a student has disability and needs course adaptations or accommodations because of that disability, it must be established with the faculty, in writing, at the beginning of the semester so arrangements can be made. Please contact the Disability Resource Center for required documentation: (703-993-2474) or [http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In this course educators will analyze and evaluate formative and summative assessments of school/district/community/state-wide programs for character education. Character education curriculum and program assessments will be created and data will be analyzed. A wide range of character education programs and materials will be evaluated. Using assessment and evaluation standards and program audit tools educators will examine program design and evaluate the quality of program implementation. A backwards design model will be utilized to provide a comprehensive lens on curriculum and program development.

1. **Participation (20%)**
   This class requires full attendance and active and thoughtful preparation through involvement in activities and discussions. For this course to have professional meaning and to gain ethical perspectives everyone must gain from the ideas generated collectively. Being an active participant leads to increased learning. Students are responsible for reading texts prior to class, getting assignments in on time and catching up if absent. On-line discussion at [www.character.org](http://www.character.org) will enable students to ask questions, communicate with others around the U.S. and in other countries, and share ideas related to assessment and evaluation issues in character education initiatives. See the Participation Rating Form attached.

2. **Assessment Book Review (20%)**
   Choose one of the four books on the supplemental readings list. Each student will read and review a book. Students will prepare a New York Times style book review and post it on the course website. The book review must include a description of how or why the author’s ideas fit with program and assessment goals considered valuable in the research. Students will make a recommendation regarding the book’s value to character education specialists, and choose one of the books to use as a source for the assessment project. Be prepared to discuss classmate’s reactions to the book review. See Book Review Assessment Criteria attached.

3. **Program Evaluation Report/Presentation/Peer Review (30%)**
   Students will investigate at least 6 different character education assessment and evaluation instruments found in the CEP ‘Assessment Instrument Index’ and the assessment textbook chosen. Students will choose a school or district program to evaluate using CEP’s ‘Program Synopsis Database’ or a local program. Email the choice of program to the instructor to get approval in advance so there are no duplications. Students will assess and evaluate the program’s components (school-wide activities, parent activities, curriculum effectiveness, etc.) using adaptations of the instruments reviewed. Students will need to make a recommendation about the quality and effectiveness of the program, and present the program evaluation to at least one group in the class for peer review. The presentation should take about 10 minutes (including Q&A) and be organized to highlight the
program’s strengths and weaknesses based on the assessment instruments used. Each Program Evaluation Report should be 5 pages in length. See the paper evaluation rubric attached.

4. **Full Assessment Plan /Presentation to School Board (30%)**
Students will use the backwards design model proposed by Wiggins, the outline/guidelines posted online about assessing a character education program, and the ‘assessment standards’ and ‘audit toolkit’ from the ‘Guide for Administrators’, to prepare an assessment plan for a character education program. Students can adapt already existing assessment instruments for this assignment, although students may choose to integrate a portion of a packaged character education assessment instrument as part of the full assessment plan. Students will prepare a report and presentation to convince school board members of the saliency of the program so they continue funding. The grade on this project will be related to the depth and breadth of the assessment plan and its potential for assessing how well children/youth have learned values and ethics after going through the identified character education program. The project will also be assessed on how well students make connections to ONE of the four identified assessment texts and the strength of the argument made regarding program effectiveness and recommendations to the school board. Students must include direct quotes from the texts to support the rationale and activities in the assessment plan [see paper evaluation rubric] and include references for the assessment instruments used. The final written Assessment Plan should be about 10 pages plus attachments (attach all pre-tests, and formative and summative assessment instruments). Present a synopsis of the assessment plan (Report of Results to School Board) that includes the following: (a) rationale, (b) objectives, (c) a diagnostic instrument or pre-test, (d) at least one formative assessment instrument, (e) one summative assessment instrument, and (f) recommendations. Each student will present their assessment plan to classmates and answer questions related to the depth and breadth of the plan’s potential to evaluate program effectiveness with the identified students. The ‘assessment plan’ assignment includes the paper, the presentation, and the school board role play.

**NOTE:** In both the ‘group program evaluation report’ and the ‘assessment plan’ assignments, it is expected that each student will analyze programs and curriculum using the standards and guidelines in “Educating Hearts and Minds” and the “Guide for Administrators.” It is also expected that the role taken will be as the character education resource person for the school/district. If a student is currently working in a school, district, or agency – he/she should apply these assignments to that context.

**EVALUATION**
Evaluation rubrics for this course are attached.

**Grading Scale:**

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**HONOR CODE**
To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of their peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. For further information, please refer to the University Catalog or Website at [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).
Topics/Readings for weekly class sessions: EDCE 605

Week 1: Course Overview / Introduction to ‘Character Education Assessment’
- Components of High Quality Character Education Assessment
- Representative Sampling of assessment instruments
- Link between assessment and the effectiveness of character education programs
Readings: DeRoche & Williams (“Hearts & Minds” chapters 4-6) + (“Guide for Administrators” sections 1-2)
Read through the entire syllabus, so that you understand the course parameters and assignments. Post any questions about the syllabus or assignments on the class website.

Week 2: Components of Effective Character Education Assessment
- Present a rationale for a ‘character education audit’ and connect to relevant research
- Overview of ‘Audit Toolkit’
- Overview of acceptable CE assessment or evaluation books for report
Read: chapters 3-4 in ‘Guide for Administrators’

Week 3: Comparisons of High Quality Character Education Assessments
- Effective Program Assessments and Connections to school-wide reform
- Comparative review of assessment instruments and assessment standards for character education programs
- ‘Pre-tests’ [risk/benefit analysis]
- Pre-test exemplars
Read: Chapter 9 in “Educating Hearts and Minds”

Week 4: Assessment Instrument Review
- Review of at least 8 assessment instruments for character education
- Discuss the nature and types of effective assessment instruments on the course website and links to program effectiveness.
- Choose a Program to Evaluate with your group [send that to the course instructor]
Read: Character Education Resources and Annotated Program Review in ‘Guide for Administrators’ and “Educating Hearts and Minds”

Week 5: On-Line Discussion of Curriculum and Programs and Book Reviews
- ON-Line Discussion www.character.org
- Post Book Reports and share recommendations: Groups TBA
- Post synopsis and brief annotation to be included in course resources
- Readings: refer to all, focus on: “Educating Hearts and Minds” and “Guide for Administrators”
DUE: Book Report

Week 6: Group Program Evaluation Reports
- Post your Group Program Evaluation report
- Post a summary of findings
- Discuss your Program Evaluation and Recommendation with classmates for peer review
DUE: Program Evaluation Report

Week 7: Effective Character Education Assessment Overview
- Review character education assessment standards
- Review character education evaluation standards
- Compare assessment instruments and relate to curriculum and programs
Read: chapter 7 in ‘Guide for Administrators’, chapter 8 in ‘Educating Hearts and Minds’
Week 8: Effective Assessment for Character Education
- Assessment standards/rating and demonstration
- Assessment activity + debrief
- Prepare and adapt sample assessment instruments using Assessment Standards as a guide
- Review guidelines for assessment plan
- Procedures for accessing resources (link thru) to complete assessment plan
Read: chapters 5-6 in ‘Guide for Administrators’, chapter 6-7 in ‘Educating Hearts and Minds’

Week 9: Perspectives on Character Education Assessment
- Overview of Alternative Assessments for pre-tests, formative and summative assessments
- Assess & evaluate ‘Assessment program software’
- Prepare character education assessment plan
- Full Assessment Plan Demonstration
Read: complete ‘Guide for Administrators’, Chapter 9 in ‘Educating Hearts and Minds’

Week 10: Perspectives on Assessment and Link to Empirical Research
- Review perspectives on assessment as it relates to empirical research of effective character education curriculum and programs.
- Pre-tests, formative and summative assessments, and program audit: A Discussion

Week 11: Relating Character Education Assessment to Philosophy
- Discuss your personal philosophy as it relates to character education assessment
- Review of Principles for Assessment, Evaluation, and Audit
- Discussion of assessment resources from ‘Guide for Administrators’ and CEP ‘Assessment Instrument Index’

Week 12: Preparation of Assessment Plan Reports and Presentations
- Continue to work on Assessment Plan
- Add relevant urls to Resources section of course website
- ON-Line Discussion www.character.org

Week 13: Putting it all Together: Best Programs and Materials for Character Education
- A look back: Assessment for Effective Programs – Roundtable
- Continue to work on Assessment Plan
- Complete Assessment Plan Presentation

Week 14: Putting it all Together: Assessment Plans for Effective Character Education Programs
- Prepare for and participate in the ‘school board’ role play
- Course reflections and evaluation
DUE: Assessment Plan

*You must submit all papers electronically on the course website. The ‘Assessment Plan’ is the major performance-based assessment for this course. It is recommended that you keep a copy of the ‘Assessment Plan’ and ‘Program Evaluation’ to include in your program portfolio.
Paper EVALUATION Rubric

The following rubric will be used to evaluate written papers. All course papers will be graded on the three level rubric below:

1. Papers, which meet the demands of the assignment, will be graded with a **B+ or B**. These papers will include at least the following:

   --The paper is received **on time**;
   --Opinions, comments, and observations are offered **in depth**;
   --Each entry relates **clearly and directly** to the readings (with direct quotes);
   --Each entry demonstrates an **understanding** between discussions and course readings; and
   --An attempt is made at **reflection/transfer**.

2. Papers, which go beyond the demands of the assignment, will be graded with an **A+, A, or A-**. These papers will include all of the requirements for a B or B+. In addition, A entries:

   --Go beyond relating to the readings and demonstrate **insightful understandings**;
   --Provide strong, precise, and thoughtfully selected **support** for assertions;
   --Offer opinions and comments that are particularly **perceptive**, while also being supported by specific details and direct quotes from the readings;
   --**Synthesize** observation notes in order to **identify** and **reflect** on issues of importance as described in our course objectives;
   --**Link** earlier readings [from this course and other courses] and current readings to your experiences and reflections.

3. Papers, which do not meet the demands of the assignment, will be graded with a **B-, C, or F**. It is likely that these papers will:

   --Arrive **late**; or
   --Contain insufficient details; or
   --Not be clear or understandable; or
   --Not use direct quotes from readings or not relate to the readings in an appropriate and/or thoughtful way, or misrepresent them; or
   --Contain no evidence of reflection, synthesis, and/or transfer; or
   --Contain only opinion, with no descriptive details or supporting quotes.
PARTICIPATION RATING FORM
EDCE 605

Name: _______________________________________

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* The aspect (in capital letters) will be rated
  3 - Above average
  2 - Average
  1 – Poor
  0 – Not present

Feedback:
Objective: To engage learners thoughtfully and meaningfully with current writings in the field of character education assessment and to apply their emergent analyses and recommendations to practice.

The Book Review engages students in a thoughtful process to help them become critical consumers of the character education literature, and will bring current course readings in the field together with educational practice. The book review requires students formulate thoughts as they critique the text and connect it to the assessment plan. The book review should be approximately 5-8 pages. Students should reflect on what the reading means to them as a character educator, how they relate to the ideas of the authors, and how and why they can or cannot apply these ideas to the assessment plan. The book review should be comprised of three parts:

1) description,
2) analysis, application, and interpretation, and
3) reflection on the text and its meaning to the assessment plan and the student’s role as a character education specialist.

Procedures and Criteria for Assessment to guide the book review:

1) Description: (10 points) Describes the book in around a paragraph in length. This tells briefly what the book is about.

2) Analysis, Application, and Interpretation: (50 points) This section is where the student applies their knowledge to comment on the content and processes discussed in the book. It concerns the student’s interpretation of the material based on their experiences and assessment plan. This section tells how or why. In this section, critically reflect on at least one book, using correct APA style. Cite references within the text and include a References page at the end of the critique.

3) Reflection: (40 points) This is a section where you will connect the content of the book to yourself and your professional role. What does the author’s stand on assessment for character education mean to you? Reflect on the reading by synthesizing the material and evaluating your description and analysis, stating what this means to you as a character educator. Tell what you would/might do similarly or differently, and why, to relate to practice. Or, you may want to talk about what you learned through the reading that will help you in your particular assessment plan. This section personalizes the description, analysis, and interpretation to your individual context or assessment plan.

Grading: A+ = 97-100; A = 93-96; A- = 90-93; B+ = 86-89; B = 83-85; B- = 80-82; C = 75-79; F = < 75
EDCE 605

Procedures for course assignments:

Go to the course website at http://blackboard.gmu.edu
Read through and be familiar with the entire syllabus so that you understand the course parameters and assignments.
Assignments: see assignments posted online for due – dates for all papers/presentations
Due Dates will be posted in the course calendar.

You will be asked to participate in the on-going international discussion related to ‘character education’ by going to the Character Education Partnership’s (CEP) website: www.character.org and posting a question that reflects your understanding about effective programs or assessment of character education initiatives. Feel free to respond to other people’s questions as well. For this course you will also access the CEP ‘Assessment Instrument Index’ and ‘Program Synopsis Database’.

You will need to choose a program to assess and evaluate from CEP’s ‘Program Synopsis Database’. You will choose, adapt, or create assessment instruments for the program from the CEP ‘Assessment Instrument Index’. You will present your Program Evaluation to classmates for peer review. Small groups of students will be assigned to review each other’s recommendations as they role play character education committee members voting on the program.

You will read one of the four identified books related to character education assessment and evaluation. The written book review must include a recommendation.

You will prepare an assessment plan that integrates the assessment of character and ethics into your program’s long range plan. You will need to prepare a pre-test, at least two formative assessment instruments, and a summative assessment instrument to include in your plan. You will post your full assessment plan on the course website and present a synthesis of your findings to the class (you will present your plan as if you were convincing a school board of the saliency of your program based on the strength of the assessment plan). Small groups of students will be assigned to review each other’s recommendations as they role-play school board members.