Department of Education Studies
EDUD 7060 Critical Issues in English Language Assessment (3,3,0)

Prerequisite
Nil

Course Description
This course aims at providing students with fundamental information for developing their conceptual understanding towards theory, rationale and practices of English language assessment in both L1 and L2 contexts. It introduces critical issues in the field of language assessment including compatibility of assessment principles, usefulness of school-based assessment, washback of large-scale testing, synergy of summative and formative assessment, development of language assessment literacy, pros and cons of web-based assessment, etc. It also includes a small-scale and independent investigation of significant issues in English language assessment environments.

Aims
Specifically, the course aims
- To provide participants with fundamental information to develop understanding of theory, rationale, and practices of current language assessment issues;
- To enrich participants’ knowledge base for investigating a problematic assessment issue identified in authentic language classrooms;
- To develop participants’ philosophies, knowledge, and skills to identify, understand, and evaluate critical issues within a wider English language assessment landscape.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

| CILO 1 | Demonstrate an understanding of fundamental concepts, rationale, and practices of language assessment, and the role of language assessment in the teaching and learning process and its larger non-Anglophone educational contexts |
| CILO 2 | Evaluate critically relevant theories, practices and key issues in the field of language assessment |
| CILO 3 | Conduct a mini project on a problematic issue in language assessment |
| CILO 4 | Critique published research in relation to current trends and issues in language assessment |
| CILO 5 | Exhibit a critical inquiry stance when implementing various assessment methods frequently applied in language classrooms |
### Course Content

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<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Teaching &amp; Learning Activities (TLAs)</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Assessment Concepts and Principles</strong>&lt;br&gt;A. Validity&lt;br&gt;B. Reliability&lt;br&gt;C. Practicality&lt;br&gt;D. Authenticity</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Tutorial Task&lt;br&gt;Forum</td>
<td>1, 2, 5</td>
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<td><strong>Critical Issues in Language Assessment</strong>&lt;br&gt;A. Implementation of assessment innovations in Confucian-heritage settings&lt;br&gt;B. Promotion of sustainable assessment against the backdrop of product-based assessment practices&lt;br&gt;C. New approaches to synergizing summative and formative assessment&lt;br&gt;D. Inclusion of self-reflexivity in assessment process within teacher-dominated educational settings</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Tutorial Task&lt;br&gt;Forum</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
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<td><strong>Large-Scale Testing</strong>&lt;br&gt;A. Validity of large-scale testing&lt;br&gt;B. Development process of large-scale testing&lt;br&gt;C. Issues of ethics and fairness in language testing</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Tutorial Task&lt;br&gt;Forum</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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<td><strong>Alternative Assessment</strong>&lt;br&gt;A. Characteristics and types of alternative assessment&lt;br&gt;B. The relationship between alternative assessment and large-scale testing (e.g., school-based assessment)&lt;br&gt;C. Research on applications of alternative assessment in non-Anglophone education settings</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Tutorial Task&lt;br&gt;Forum</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5</td>
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<td><strong>Language Assessment Literacy</strong>&lt;br&gt;A. Definitions and roles of language assessment literacy&lt;br&gt;B. Trends of language assessment literacy research&lt;br&gt;C. Impact of language assessment literacy on teacher professional development and assessment reforms</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Tutorial Task&lt;br&gt;Forum</td>
<td>2, 4, 5</td>
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<td><strong>Technology in Assessment</strong>&lt;br&gt;A. Trends of web-based assessment&lt;br&gt;B. Its effectiveness and reliability&lt;br&gt;C. Possible benefits and challenges of its wider applications&lt;br&gt;D. Future trends of language assessment</td>
<td>Lecture&lt;br&gt;Discussion&lt;br&gt;Tutorial Task&lt;br&gt;Forum</td>
<td>2, 4, 5</td>
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### Teaching & Learning Activities (TLAs)

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<tr>
<th>Teaching &amp; Learning Activities (TLAs)</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>The goal of lectures aims to introduce theory, rationale, and principles of diverse assessment topics and issues. The delivery is enhanced by dynamic use of PowerPoints, handouts, video clips, and websites regarding the critical issues under study.</td>
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Discussion 1, 2, 4, 5

This mode aims to promote quality interactions among participants and between the tutor and learners. Participants are expected to be actively involved in various in-class discussion tasks for developing confidence in and exposure to critical language assessment issues relating to the course objectives.

Tutorial Task 1, 2, 4

Tutorial tasks intend to provide participants with additional opportunities to consolidate the learned theory, principles and issues of language assessment in each class meeting. They also help participants to reflect upon whether these assessment issues contradict with current practices in the local context.

Forum 1, 2, 4, 5

This is an out-of-class activity which promotes blended learning in an informal environment. Participants are required to actively share their opinions and assessment experience with peers on this e-learning platform.

### Assessment Methods (AMs)

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<th>Type of Assessment Methods</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>It refers to learner active participation in classroom discussion tasks, responses to critical issues, and dynamic interactions with coursemates during class meetings. It also includes regular contributions to the forum, e.g., composing and responding to forum posts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mini Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>It refers to a small-scale project which expects participants to investigate a problematic assessment issue in their work contexts with theoretical rationale, empirical data, and alternative suggestions on how the challenging issue can be effectively resolved.</td>
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<td>Academic Essay</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5</td>
<td>It requires the production of a well-argued academic essay which critically reviews one of the key issues discussed in the course. The paper includes a title, aims, research problems, theoretical background, discussion, implications and a conclusion.</td>
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### References

**Refereed Journal Articles**


**Scholarly Books**


**International Journals on Language Assessment Issues**

Annual Review of Applied Linguistics
Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education
Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice
Assessing Writing
Journal of Second Language Writing
Language Assessment Quarterly
Language Testing
Studies in Educational Evaluation
Studies in Higher Education
TESOL Quarterly
TESOL Journal