

COLLEGES OF WORCESTER CONSORTIUM, INC.
Certificate in College Teaching

CT 914: Learner Centered Assessment (1 credit)
Fall 2011 Syllabus

Location:

Worcester State University

Sullivan Hall – Rooms 202 and 209

All Tuesday class meetings will be in Sullivan 202; the one Wednesday class meeting will be in Sullivan 209.

Instructor:

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INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

This course will focus on the fundamental elements of learner-centered assessment in higher education. We will explore the contrasts between the traditional teacher-centered paradigm (which focuses on what is taught) and a learner-centered paradigm (which focuses on what students learn). The assessment process plays a key role in shifting to a learner-centered approach by asking such questions as “What have our students learned and how well have they learned it?” Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences. The assessment process culminates when results are used to improve subsequent learning. Students in the course will develop learner-centered intended learning outcomes, devise appropriate classroom assessment techniques, incorporate course assignments/activities that address intended learning outcomes and construct grading rubrics designed to focus on and promote student learning. The course will include readings, lectures, discussions, and individual and group activities.

Prerequisite: CT 901: Seminar in College Teaching helpful but not required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is intended to aid students in further development of their course design for the Teaching Portfolio project included in the Seminar in College Teaching.

At the successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Integrate the 4 steps of the assessment process in their course syllabus and course materials.
2. Incorporate the elements of the Integrated Course Design model in their course syllabus, course outline and instructional materials.
3. Exhibit the key principles a Learner Centered Paradigm as contrasted with the traditional Teacher-Centered Paradigm in course materials.
4. Develop discipline-related Essential Questions and learner-centered Intended Learning Outcomes in the course syllabus to form the basis of assessment of student learning.
5. Construct a repertoire of effective CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques) which will provide feedback from students about their learning.

- Design effective grading rubrics for key components of the course to provide expectation guidelines, assess student work and promote student learning.

COURSE MEETINGS

The course will consist of 4 weekly classroom meetings (face-to-face format) and weekly asynchronous web-based learning components utilizing the Blackboard course management system at Worcester State University. Four face-to-face class meetings will be held from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27; Tuesday, October 11; Wednesday, October 26; and Tuesday, November 15. The web-based, asynchronous sessions will occur during the weeks of October 3-7, October 17-21, November 7-11, and November 16-25, with online participation available through Friday, December 2. An amount of course content equivalent to that engaged in the face-to-face format will be included in the online instruction during the weeks between the class meetings. The final due date for all course projects is Friday, December 2.

REQUIRED TEXT

Angelo, T. & Cross, K.P. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (New and used copies are available through Amazon.com.)

OTHER COURSE MATERIALS

Supplemental articles related to course content will be distributed in class or posted on the Cicada course site.

GRADING PROCEDURES

Grading for this course will include:

- Final Project (components graded separately)
- On-Line participation

1. Final Project – Using Integrated Course Design Model * (Due Friday, December 2, 2011)

Project Components:

Teaching Goals Inventory and Summary	10%
Essential Course Questions & Intended Learning Outcomes Statements	20%
Classroom Assessments to support Learning Outcomes	10%
Grading Rubrics for Assessing Course Components	20%
Integrated Course Design for Syllabus and Course Outline	20%
Total Project	80%

2. In-class and online participation

In class participation	10%
Responses to Reflection Questions and weekly asynchronous sessions	10%

Course Total 100%

Assignments will be graded with number grades. Your final course grade will be determined as follows:

The grading system for graduate studies at WSU employs the letter grades A (94-100), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B-(80-83), C+(77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73), U (below 70, unsatisfactory work, no credit awarded), W (withdrawn), and I (incomplete). I will round up between whole numbers.

*** Description of Final Project Components:**

- Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI) and Summary (10 points)

To assess and improve instruction, faculty must first clarify exactly what they want students to learn in their courses. As a first step in course design, faculty must know what their instructional goals are and have determined the relative importance of those goals. Students will complete the self-scoring Teaching Goals Inventory to determine essential course goals on which they will focus. These goals form the teaching priorities upon which learning outcomes and classroom assessments will be based.

Students will submit the completed TGI with a narrative summary of the results.

- Essential Questions and Intended Learning Outcomes for the Course (20 points) Essential Questions have proven to be an effective way to frame a course or an entire program of study. Students will develop Essential Questions for their course which represent key understandings, topics and controversial issues in the field of study. From these, students will devise appropriate Intended Learning Outcomes which reflect a clear articulation of what students in their courses can be expected to know or be able to do upon successful completion of the course. Using the guidelines presented in the course readings and class presentations, students will develop learning outcomes which are related to the key understandings desired from students in their courses.

- Classroom Assessment Techniques (10 points)

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT's) assist faculty in obtaining useful feedback on what, how much and how well students are learning in the course. The central aim of CAT's is to assist students in learning more effectively and efficiently. CAT's represent a formative (rather than summative) approach to assessing student learning, and form the beginning of a "feedback loop" which provides faculty with data from students on their learning. Faculty then provide feedback to the students on how to improve their learning and repeat the CAT process to again assess the learning cycle.

Students in this course will design at least 10 appropriate CATs for their course to assess student learning. The CAT's will be reflected in the course outline and address key areas of learning (as reflected by Essential Questions and Intended Learning Outcomes).

- Grading Rubrics (20 points)

Rubrics represent a set of guidelines for evaluating students' work. Typically, a rubric consists of a set of scoring guidelines for evaluating students' work on a continuum of quality or mastery. Rubrics make explicit the standards by which a student's work is to be judged and the criteria on which that judgment is based.

Students in the course will develop scoring rubrics for assignments in their courses. Rubrics will reflect best practices as discussed in class and in assigned readings.

- Integrated Course Design for Syllabus and Course Outline (20 points)

Integrated course design highlights the inter-relatedness of expressed learning goals, feedback and assessment procedures (both formative and summative), and appropriate teaching and learning activities to achieve the course goals. Students will develop an integrated syllabus and course outline which reflects the key components of Integrated Course Design.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

Participation in class and in online activities

Due weekly

This requirement will be met by the following activities:

- participating thoughtfully in class and in online discussions and responding to others' postings;
- participating in reflection and response sessions with well crafted, thoughtful responses to questions posed.

Evaluation: In class and online activities are worth 20% of your course grade (10 points each).

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

There are no tests in this course, only take-home assignments. You are encouraged, and even required, to complete many assignments collaboratively. Thus, many of the traditional concerns about academic honesty are not relevant here. However, the collaborative nature of the work in this course does require that clear guidelines about collaboration be set.

When an assignment is done individually, you may consult any people you wish during the thinking and planning phases of the assignment. At the point at which you begin to write, your work is expected to be your own.

When an assignment is done collaboratively, all group members are expected to contribute approximately equally to the planning, execution, and reporting of the work. The inclusion of your name on a piece of submitted work is interpreted as your certification that you did your fair share of the group work. (This is generally not an adequate safeguard against "freeloading" in an undergraduate course, but in a course of this nature, it is usually sufficient.)

When making use of external sources such as books, published papers, web resources, etc., you are expected to cite sources of ideas and information that are not your own, and to enclose in quotation marks and properly attribute any material that you take verbatim from other sources. Such quotations should generally be brief, a few sentences at most.

Consult Worcester State University's Academic Honesty Policy at:

http://worchester.edu/Academics/Shared%20Documents/academicpoliciesprocedures.aspx?PageView=Shared#academ_honesty for additional details and for penalties and procedures in case of violations.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you believe that you may need accommodations in this course, and if you have not already done so, please contact the Disabilities Services office at 508-929-8733 or go to the Disabilities Services office on the WSU campus in the Student Center Building, Room 206.

Also, consult Disability Services information at WSU:

<http://www.worcester.edu/CampusLife/Shared%20Documents/StuServ/DisabilityServices.aspx>

If you would like to discuss how your accommodations will be implemented during this course or if you would like to share information unrelated to accommodations, please make an appointment to talk with the instructor as soon as possible.