

Assessment for Measurement Professionals

EPSY 561 (CRN: 33126)

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Office Hour: By appointment via video-conferencing

Course Overview

Assessment is an integral part of teaching. Instructors use **informal** and **formal** assessments on an ongoing basis to make decisions about their students, evaluate the success of their instruction, and monitor classroom climate. They collect various sources of information through their assessment activities; based on their interpretation of that information, they determine appropriate courses of action. The typical instructor spends about a third of his/her professional time engaged in assessment-related activities. Because assessment is so critical to the instructional process, learning about assessment is essential to learning about teaching.

The course will provide an opportunity for you to gain hands-on experience crafting different types of assessment instruments to measure a variety of learning outcomes. You will learn about

- **characteristics of various types of assessments—formative & summative**
- how to select assessment methods that are most appropriate for **particular purposes**
- how to **develop specifications for assessments**
- constructing **performance (or product) assessments** and tools to evaluate performances or products
- critically considering the selection and use of standardized achievement tests and identify **appropriate and inappropriate uses of scores** from such tests.
- different forms of **cheating**, approaches to detecting cheating, and steps that instructors can take to reduce cheating
- **assessment bias**, why it is problematic, and how to reduce bias
- **reliability** and **validity** and why these concepts are so central to assessment.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

1. An understanding of the role of measurement and assessment in the instructional process.
2. Knowledge and understanding of assessment-related terms.
3. Skills in writing and identifying well-stated goals and objectives that will facilitate the construction of appropriate assessments.
4. An understanding of the process of aligning objectives, instruction, and assessment so that the relationship of assessments to teaching and learning outcomes will be clear.
5. An understanding of the concepts of validity and reliability and the roles they play in the construction, selection, interpretation, and use of assessments.
6. The ability to select assessment methods that are appropriate for measuring learning related to specific objectives.
7. Skills in crafting assessments to measure a variety of different types of learning outcomes, from simple to complex.

8. Knowledge and understanding of the characteristics, strengths/limitations, and advantages/disadvantages of various types of assessments.
9. Knowledge and understanding of ways that one can modify assessments to accommodate students with various disabilities, and students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.
10. The ability to administer and score assessments properly.
11. The ability to obtain information from a variety of assessment tools and to interpret assessment results appropriately, with awareness of their meaning and the ever-present error of measurement.
12. The ability to select published assessments that are most appropriate for a given purpose.
13. Knowledge and understanding of assessment bias and ways to detect and minimize bias in assessments
14. Knowledge and understanding of different approaches to grading and reporting on student progress.
15. Knowledge and understanding of key court cases, laws, and legislation that affect assessment programs.
16. Knowledge and understanding of trends and issues that arise in using externally mandated assessments
17. Knowledge and understanding of assessment issues (e.g., the use of formative assessments, controversies surrounding certain test preparation practices and the provision of assessment accommodations, strategies for preventing cheating, the Common Core State Standards Initiative)

Learning Approach

I strongly recommend following approach to accomplish the learning objectives in each module:

1. Refer to the **Schedule** for an overview of all tasks in each module;
2. Go to the **module folder** on Blackboard (Bb), and download the **Study Guide**;
3. Complete all tasks following the detailed instructions by the **Study Guide**;
4. Plan for **10-16 working hours** to complete all tasks in each module.

My Expectations & Our Responsibilities

As your online instructor, I will assume responsibility for preparing an organized course of study, prompting online discussions, and facilitating the learning process.

As students in the course, you are expected to, each week, complete all tasks in the module folder and submit work per the course schedule.

DO NOT CRAM: Students who wait until the day before an assignment is due to begin work will very likely have challenge keeping pace with the course. Please realize that if you wait until the last minute to begin asking questions about an assignment, then you will likely not receive a response in time for submission by the deadline.

Course Materials

Required texts:

1. **Miller, M. D., Linn, R. L., & Gronlund, N. E. (2012). Measurement and assessment in teaching (11th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc. (ISBN-13: 9780132689663)**

Note that we will be using the 11th edition of this textbook. It is available in hard cover, as an e-textbook, or in a paperback international edition. (The international edition covers the same content as the U.S. edition.) There are also a number of used copies of this textbook available for purchase online.

2. **American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). Standards for educational and psychological testing. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association (ISBN: 0-935302-35-6)**

Note that we will be using the new 2014 edition of the Standards. If you are a member of AERA or NCME, you are eligible for a member discount on this book. To receive the discount, place your order at the AERA website:

<http://www.aera.net/Publications/Books/StandardsforEducationalPsychologicalTesting%282014Edition%29/tabid/15578/Default.aspx>

3. **Additional materials will be made available on the course Blackboard site.**

Required Technology:

- You will need regular access to a computer with a stable **connection to the Internet**. All course materials will be delivered on the course Blackboard site, so if you have difficulty accessing the course website, it is imperative that you take action immediately to solve the problem. It is **your** responsibility to maintain connectivity throughout the entire length of the course regardless of where you are (this includes vacations, travel, etc.)
- Internet browser is compatible with Blackboard.
- PDF reader.
- You will need to have access to The Microsoft Office suite of software. This includes Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.
- A text editor (e.g., TextEdit on Mac, and NotePad on PC).

Communication Policies

To ensure proper and efficient communication, you are required to

- 1) Use the *Discussion Board* for course content related questions. See the Discussion Board Guidelines in the section “Course Assignments” below.
- 2) Use the Blackboard email system OR use your **uic.edu** email to communicate with the instructor about personal requests.
- 3) Write the subject of your email starting with “EPSY561”, and
- 4) Write your email professionally (Read this post to learn about how to write an email professionally <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-silly-emails-essay>), e.g., address me “Dr. Dai”, not “hey there” or “yo.”

Emails that fail to meet the criteria above-mentioned will NOT be responded to.

I will return e-mail within 36 hours unless informed otherwise or the university is closed.

Course Assignments

Students in this course will complete the following assignments:

Assignment Type	Quantity	Total Weight (%)
Icebreaker DB forum	1	0
Module activities required posting on DB	6	18
Reviews of peers’ module activities on DB	5	10
Assessment assignments	5	50
Midterm exam	1	20
Questions & Reflection posts on DB	≥ 5	2
TOTAL:		100

- **Module Activities.** The goal of these assignments is to provide a hands-on experience with some content taught in the modules.

Each **Study Guide** provides the specifics about the activity/activities in each module.

Four of the module activities are to be posted on Discussion Board, so that peer students can provide feedback on, evaluate, and/on ask questions about them. Reviews of the posted activities are required. See the **Study Guides** for details about these posts and reviews. Other module activities are for practice purposes only, and not required to be posted or submitted for review.

- **Assessment Assignments.** The five assignments provide an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in planning assessments that are closely aligned with objectives and instruction in various contexts. Detailed information on the assignments is included in the “Assessment Assignment” domain on our Blackboard site.

- **Midterm Exam.** The midterm exam will cover material presented in Modules 1-7 (covering material presented in selected chapters from our textbooks and the additional readings.) I will provide you with a set of objectives that I have used to build the exam to help you better target your study efforts. Answering the questions in the **Study Guides** will assist you in preparing for the midterm.

The exam will contain a mixture of item types, including selection-type items (i.e., multiple-choice, matching, interpretive exercises) and supply-type items (i.e., short-answer and completion items, restricted-response and extended-response essay questions).

The exam is an open-book timed-exam. Once you start the exam, you will have **4 hours** to complete it within the four-day window during which the exam is available.

Detailed instructions about the exam will be provided a week prior to the midterm-exam week. You must notify me by **at least 3 days in advance** of the submission deadline if that date poses problems for you.

- **Discussion Board Forum “Questions & Reflections.”** The goal of this forum is for you to actively engage in learning.

You are expected to share your thoughts and ideas during the learning process, ask your questions, and respond to others’ questions and ideas.

Please follow the **DB Guidelines** for writing your posts:

1. **Follow this format for the subject line** of your new thread—start with the subject topic and follow with specifics, e.g., “Reliability: Why is .70 not always good” “Assessment Assignment 2: Total weight of the specification table.”
2. If your post is a question, expect it to be answered **within 48 hours**. E.g., if a question must be answered in order for you to submit an assignment, you should ask it at least 48 hours in advance of the assignment due time.
3. **Everyone should contribute to answering** the questions. The instructor will check the answer by a student to ensure whether it is correct. If you know the answer to a question asked, do not hesitate to participate in the discussion. Learning occurs in active engagement!
4. **Check the existing posts before you create a new thread.** You may find a resource already shared, a question already asked, etc. In this case, you should reply to the thread “ditto” or state that you have the same question. Do NOT start a new thread to ask a question that has already been posted. If you are not sure whether a posted question is what you are after but you suspect it is, simply reply to it and state your version of the question.

No Extra Credit:

There will be no extra-credit opportunities.

Late Assignments:

The course schedule contains due dates for the assignments for this course. I expect you to keep to the schedule and turn in your assignments on time so that I can provide you with timely feedback on your work. Any special arrangement (e.g., extension) for completing assignments need to be approved by the instructor at least **3 days prior** to the due date. No extension for a past-due assignment will be granted. Late assignments without a granted extension will be graded with a **10% deduction for each day late**. If your system crashes, or your Internet provider loses connectivity just as you are getting ready to send in your work (and you cannot use an alternate system), contact the instructor and explain the circumstances as soon as possible.

Grading Scale

A	90 – 100%	Excellent	The student's work demonstrates excellent grasp of all the learning outcomes associated with the course.
B	79 – 89%	Good	The student's work demonstrates mastery of the majority of learning outcomes associated with the course.
C	68 – 78%	Average	The student's work demonstrates mastery of approximately two-thirds of the learning outcomes associated with the course.
D	57 – 67%	Poor	The student's work demonstrates mastery of fewer than half of the learning outcomes associated with the course.
F	56% and Below	Failure	The student's work does not sufficiently demonstrate that he or she has adequately grasped any of the learning outcomes associated with the course.

Incomplete Grade: I will consider giving incompletes ONLY to students who have extenuating circumstances; however, I will not consider poor performance on assignments as a legitimate reason for giving an incomplete.

Drop or Withdrawal from the Course

If a student wishes to drop or withdraw from a course, it is the student's responsibility to meet the deadline within the current semester (https://registrar.uic.edu/current_students/calendars/). Please consult the University registration policy (https://registrar.uic.edu/registration/policies_procedures.html).

Tech Support

If you are having technical problems with the course, please click on the "**Technical Support**" link in the Blackboard course site to submit a request for assistance or call **1-(312) 996-5948**. A staff member will respond to inquiries Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Central Time and Saturday - Sunday, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. US Central Time.

Academic Integrity

UIC is committed to upholding academic integrity among all of its students, faculty, staff, and administration. The students and instructor of this course share this responsibility by not engaging in behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty and misconduct. Examples of such misconduct include cheating, taking an examination by proxy, plagiarizing, and submitting another person's work as your own. To detect instances of plagiarism and similar infractions, your work in the course may be scanned with plagiarism detection tools (such as SafeAssign). When evidence of plagiarism or other academic misconduct occurs, the instructor and University will take action in accordance with the Student Disciplinary Policy. Students who violate the policies governing academic dishonesty are subject to penalties such as receiving a failing grade for the course and dismissal from the University. You should review the policy and frequently asked questions from the following link:

<http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/docs/Student%20Disciplinary%20Policy.pdf>

Student Code of Conduct

UIC's *Student Disciplinary Policy* outlines the University's process in handling allegations of misconduct by UIC students. It addresses both academic and behavioral misconduct. The main purpose of the conduct process is to insure that students receive due process, which means that every student should have a fair opportunity to express his or her side of the story before any decisions are made about the disciplinary case. The conduct process is designed to be educational in nature.

Student Disciplinary Policy: (<http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconductprocess.shtml>).

Religious Observances

As your instructor, I will make every effort to avoid scheduling examinations or requiring that assignments be turned in or completed on religious holidays. Students who wish to observe your religious holidays should notify me in writing **at least 5 days in advance** if you will need extension for assignments due to a religious holiday. I shall make every reasonable effort to honor the request.

ADA Policies

UIC strives to ensure the accessibility of programs, classes, and services to students with documented disabilities. Reasonable accommodations can be arranged for students with various types of disabilities, such as documented learning disabilities, vision or hearing impairments, and emotional or physical disabilities. If you need accommodations for this course, be sure to register with the Office of Disability Services [1190 SSB, 312-413-2183 (voice), 312-413-0123 (TTY)].

Counseling and Mental Health Services

The UIC Counseling Center provides diverse services to help students deal with stress, handle a crisis or trauma, cope with the transition to college, gain strength from gender and cultural identity, or manage serious mental illness and many other issues. Their counselors can help students increase resilience and positive well-being by developing effective coping and problem-solving skills.

The Counseling Center is supported by the Health Service Fee as assessed to all students enrolled at the university, and therefore enrolled students are eligible for Counseling Center mental health services without additional cost.

For more information, access the Counseling Center's website: (<http://counseling.uic.edu/>) or give them a call at (312) 996-3490.

Sexual Misconduct

UIC is committed to maintaining a campus environment free from sexual misconduct. Our community's standards for all interpersonal relationships and interactions are based upon values of mutual respect, dignity, responsibility, open communication, and clear consent. Sexual misconduct violates our shared values and is a barrier to fulfilling the university's mission and goals. It is critical that everyone feel safe and respected on our campus.

UIC developed the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy to address sexual misconduct including sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence, and domestic violence. The policy states that sexual misconduct "will not be tolerated at the University of Illinois at Chicago and is expressly prohibited." The policy applies to all UIC students and student participants in university-sponsored programs.

UIC has created Student Sexual Misconduct website, <http://sexualmisconduct.uic.edu>, in response to federal laws requiring universities to develop policies and provide education to the campus community related to sexual misconduct. If you have been a victim of sexual misconduct or would like additional information, please contact the UIC Title IX Coordinator at <http://oe.uic.edu/TitleIX/> in the Office for Access and Equity or call 312-996-8670.