

Preparing Michigan Educators in Assessment

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Michigan's Assessment Programs

- State Assessment Programs
 - Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)
 - Michigan Merit Examination (MME)
 - MI-Access (for students with disabilities)
 - English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)
- Secondary Credit Assessment System (SCAS)
 - A total of 17 end-of-course and interim benchmark exams to be created

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Practitioner Preparation

- There are two aspects to preparing practitioners in assessment:
 - Current practitioners, who may not have had much, if any, preparation in college
 - Future practitioners, especially teachers and administrators, who are enrolled in college
- The processes and experiences are similar, but a bit different, too

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Preparing Current Practitioners

- MSU College of Education is now offering a Certificate in Educational Assessment for Practitioners consisting of several courses:
 - CEP 823 - Balanced Assessment Systems
 - CEP 825 - Educational Assessments and Testing Programs
 - CEP 830 - Classroom Assessment
 - CEP 837 - Analyzing, Using, and Reporting Assessment Results
- Program began in the fall of 2008

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Certificate in Educational Assessment For Practitioners

- Courses will help educators better understand the educational assessments they administer and use.
- Are designed for educators with a minimum of statistical or technical background
- Will stress understanding of key measurement concepts found in practical settings.

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Certificate Requirements

- To earn the Certificate, students need to take the following courses
 - CEP 823 Balanced Assessment Systems
 - CEP 837 Analyzing, Using and Reporting Assessment Results
 - CEP 825 Educational Assessment and Testing Programs OR
 - CEP 830 Classroom Assessment

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Educational Assessment Certificate Courses

- **CEP 823 - Balanced Assessment Systems**

This course provides an overview of summative assessments (at the national, state, and local levels), interim benchmark assessments, and classroom-based assessments. (Offered Fall 08, Mondays 5-8 pm)

- **CEP 825 - Educational Assessments and Testing Programs**

This course provides more in-depth coverage of large-scale assessment programs at the national and state levels. It will also present information about interim benchmark assessments that may be used at the district and school levels. (Offered Spring 09, Mondays 508 pm)

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Overview of CEP 823

- Topics covered in this course include
 - What is a balanced assessment system?
 - Summative assessments given in Michigan
 - Interim assessments - what are they and why might they be used?
 - Formative assessments
 - Building high quality assessments of different types - multiple-choice, constructed-response, performance, projects, portfolios, and so forth

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Overview of CEP 825

- Topics covered in this course include
 - International assessment programs
 - National Assessment of Educational Progress
 - ACT assessments
 - College Board assessments
 - Commercial norm-referenced tests
 - Commercial interim assessments
 - Michigan assessments - MEAP, MME, MI-Access, ELPA, and Secondary Credit Assessment Program

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Educational Assessment Certificate Courses

- **CEP 830 - Classroom Assessment**

This course provides an overview of summative and formative assessment strategies that classroom teachers can use to assess students as they are teaching, as well as at the conclusion of units of instruction. Students will learn to use a variety of assessment methods to assess student achievement, including a number of less formal assessment methods. Learning will occur through reading, class discussion, individual and group projects, and student reflections on past assessment experiences and anticipated use of assessments in the future (Will be offered Spring 10)

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Overview of CEP 830

- Topics covered in this course include
 - Learning progressions
 - Using assessment during instruction to modify teaching
 - Various summative classroom assessments - multiple-choice, constructed-response, performance assessments, projects, and portfolios
 - Various formative assessment strategies - observation, personal communications, questioning

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Educational Assessment Certificate Courses

- **CEP 837 - Analyzing, Using, and Reporting Assessment Results**

This course will give hands-on experience in analyzing the results from national, state and commercial tests to determine trends in student learning and to determine weaknesses shown by the exams. Software designed to facilitate the analysis and use of assessment results will be reviewed. Using these analyses and the data to determine how schools can improve student learning, and report results to a variety of audiences, will also be presented. (Will be offered Fall 09)

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Overview of CEP 837

- Topics covered in this course include
 - Uses of assessment data at the student, classroom, school, district, and state levels
 - Reporting assessment results to students, parents, teachers, administrators, the school board, and the public
 - Software to assist in the analysis and reporting of assessment results
 - Teaching others how to analyze, use, and report assessment results

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Certificate to Master's Program?

- Certificate program may expand into a six-course sequence as part of a potential master's degree on educational assessment for practitioners
- Other courses that will be added:
 - CEP 831 - Administration of Educational Assessment Programs
 - CEP 836 - Assessment of Special Needs Population

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Other Courses

- **CEP 836 - Assessment of Special Needs Students**

This course will focus on the appropriate participation of students with disabilities and English language learners in national, state, district, and school level assessments, both to meet legislative requirements as well as to guide student learning.

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Other Courses

- **CEP 831- Administration of Educational Assessment Program**

This course provides students with information on how assessment programs are implemented at the district, school, and classroom levels. This will assist potential assessment coordinators to understand the procedures for administering the tests, and complying with state rules for procedures to be followed before, during and after testing.

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Pre-service Educator Formative Assessment Learning

- Work with the Teacher Education faculty on a three-part implementation:
 - Experience formative assessment in their college classes in the College of Education
 - Learn about formative assessment in a new class on formative assessment
 - Practice formative assessment when working with students and student teaching
 - Develop learning teams of student teachers in the same content area

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Experience a Variety of Assessments

- The goal is to have students observe college instructors using a variety of assessment methods in their classroom
 - Summative strategies used to assess the students
 - Interim, instructional-unit based assessments
 - Formative strategies used by the instructor to modify their instruction (and to let students know that this occurred so that they can readily see the "modeling" going on)

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Experience a Variety of Assessments

- One place where this work is certainly encouraged is through TEAC accreditation of the College of Education
- TEAC encourages each faculty to show evidence in support of its claims
- For example, if a faculty claims that it prepares students to become teachers, what evidence can the college muster to support this claim?
 - Grades is not enough

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Experience a Variety of Assessments

- This means that a college of education would need to collect performance data on recent graduates
 - Show that newly-minted teachers are actually effective (or not) in a real classroom of their own
 - Evidence collected during student volunteer work and internship year would also “count”

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Learn About a Variety of Assessments

- CEP 830
- Other teacher education courses in which classroom assessment strategies (especially formative assessment ones) are embedded
 - Reading
 - Science
 - Mathematics

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Practice Using a Variety of Assessments

- Student teaching at MSU lasts for an entire year (the internship year)
- Students typically have two school placements
- Student interns are supervised by someone from MSU (faculty member or adjunct)
- The internship year would be a good one to practice formative assessment embedded within student teaching

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Practice Using a Variety of Assessments

- Practice in assessment could be/should be mentored by the supervisor of the placement, perhaps in conjunction with other students
- Through in-person and electronic meetings, the interns and the supervisor could practice good assessment embedded in instruction, and through this, learn how to use formative assessment strategies well.

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Challenges in Learning About FA in College

- College teachers may not be inclined to use interim or formative assessments in their classes
- College instructors, as former K-12 teachers, may have had little or no training or experience with formative assessment
- Colleges already teach classes on classroom assessment, so the need for learning about FA may not be seen

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Challenges in Learning About FA in College

- Many individuals need to learn about formative assessment yet collaborative work is not the norm
- Colleges may not provide sufficient PD opportunities for their own faculty
- If PD opportunities were provided, would faculty avail themselves of the opportunities?
 - College faculty are rewarded for being “experts” and admitting shortcomings may hurt tenure chances

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Challenges in Learning About FA in College

- Typical online classes may be too structured or unstructured for modifying instruction to occur
- Some courses may not lend themselves to experiencing or practicing such strategies
- Even if intern supervisors know how to use formative assessment strategies, they may not know how to mentor others in their use
- Teachers in whose classrooms interns are placed may not support formative assessment work

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Overcoming the Challenges

- Offer assessment PD as something “new,” so existing faculty can learn in a non-threatening environment
- Colleges of education should work together to support each other as well as learn from one another
- Provide assessment literacy information and education in a variety of formats

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Overcoming the Challenges

- Work to provide assessment literacy information to a variety of audiences in as many different venues and formats as possible
- Create decent online learning opportunities for practitioners

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What are your ideas?

- How can assessment literacy best be provided to pre-service and in-service practitioners?

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