# Auburn University College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Teaching

# CTES 7480 Assessment in ESOL Education, Fall 2025

## Instructor Contact Information

Name: Gwendolyn M. Williams, Ph.D.

Office Location: Education 2414

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Office Hours: 3:30- 4 PM Mondays 3-4 PM Wednesdays

I prefer to be contacted by email, and I will usually respond in 48 hours.

## General Course Information

Class Days/Time: Mondays 4:00-6:50 PM

Classroom: Education Room 2257

**Catalog Description:** Theoretical perspectives on assessment of English Language Learners. Developing, administering, and analyzing assessment instruments.

**Course Description:** The course is designed to assist practicing and prospective teachers of second language learners in developing a knowledge base and the skills necessary for designing effective and appropriate assessment of: a) academic achievement of English language learners in middle and high school content areas, or b) second language learning in high school or adult ESL/EFL settings. Class participants will evaluate language testing instruments, construct and administer testing instruments, and study how test scores are used in educational settings. The use of authentic assessment for ESOL students will also be a focus.

## Library Research Guides and Subject Librarians

The Auburn University Library can help you find information and conduct research. You can make an appointment with a librarian, get help online, or contact the Education librarian, Dr. Todd Shipman at [todd.shipman@auburn.edu](mailto:todd.shipman@auburn.edu)

## Canvas

Canvas is Auburn University's official Learning Management System (LMS). Canvas is the place where you will find the course syllabus, read posted announcements, participate in online class discussions with classmates, submit your assignments online and view the materials for this course. To access Canvas use your AU user ID and password to log into Auburn’s [Canvas homepage https://auburn.instructure.com/login/ldap](https://auburn.instructure.com/login/ldap). When you log in, you will be directed to your dashboard. Click on the link for this course (classes are listed by course name and number). Note: The Login link is also conveniently located in [AU Access www.auaccess.auburn.edu](http://www.auaccess.auburn.edu/) and many other university pages.

### Canvas Help and Student Computing Resources

#### Canvas and OIT Help Desk

Contact the [OIT Help desk https://oit.auburn.edu/helpdesk](https://oit.auburn.edu/helpdesk) if you need assistance with Canvas or other information about computing and information technology at Auburn. Three ways to contact the OIT Help Desk are:

* Call: 334-844-4944
* Email: [helpdesk@auburn.edu](mailto:helpdesk@auburn.edu)
* Visit Location: RBD Library, 2nd and 3rd floors

#### General Student Computing

Review the information posted at [OIT Computing Lab Locations http://www.auburn.edu/oit/labs/](http://www.auburn.edu/oit/labs/). There you will find computer use guidelines and a list of available computer labs.

## Course Format and Instructional Methods:

The course will be taught using multiple instructional methods. These methods will include group interactive activities, literature circles, lectures, and oral presentations with an associated critical discussion. Typically, course topics will be introduced through an interactive opening activity before moving to interpretive discussions. Lectures will be included to emphasize the theoretical foundation of educational practice. Students will engage in literature discussions about immigrant stories to explore a range of issues that immigrants might encounter as they settle in a new country and face the challenges of learning English. Video clips will be used to provide deeper understanding of course content.

## Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

### Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

1. Describe the role and function of assessment in the education of multilingual students
2. Identify types of tests and select those appropriate for language minority students and for the assessment goals for these students
3. Explain state and federal requirements for the identification, placement, monitoring, and exiting of MLs from ESOL programs.
4. Diagnose and remediate specific language difficulties experienced by ESOL students
5. Select and design appropriate instruments to assess the ML’s linguistic development in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
6. Discuss the functions and limitations of formal and alternative assessment in the education of ESOL and be able to use both in appropriate settings.
7. Explain test taking skills to MLs to prepare them for both classroom and institutional tests.

Required Text:

**Brown, H. D. & Abeywickrama, P. (2018). Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices (3rd. ed). Pearson Longman. ISBN:** 9780134860220

Required Readings: These will be posted on Canvas.

Bachman L. & Dambock, B. (2017). Chapter 2: Using classroom-based language assessments. In Language assessments for classroom teachers (pp. 8-26). Oxford.

Cohen, A. (2022). Chapter 5: Test taking strategies and task design. In  G. Fulcher & Harding, A. (eds). *The Routledge Handbook of Language Testing* (2nd ed.) (pp. 372-396.) Routledge.

Diaz-Rico, L.T. (2018). Chapter 12: Culturally and linguistically diverse learners and special education. In *The cross-cultural language and academic development handbook: A complete K-12 reference guide* (pp. 263-286). Pearson.

Green, R. (2017). Chapter 2: How can test specifications help?  In *Designing Listening Tests: A Practical Approach* (pp. 26-54).  Palgrave Macmillan.

Herrera, S. G., Cabral, R.M., & Murry. K.G. (2020). Chapter 5 Assessment of language proficiency. In *Assessment accommodations for classroom teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students, 3rd ed.* (pp. 130-171). Pearson.

Hill, K. (2017). Understanding classroom-based assessment practices: A precondition for teacher assessment literacy. *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment*, *6*(1), 1-17.

Isbell, D. & Sakai, M. (2022). Pronunciation assessment in classroom contexts. In J. L Levis, T.M. Derwing, and S. Sonsaat-Hegelheimer (Eds). *Second language pronunciation: Bridging the gap between research and teaching* (pp. 194-215). Wiley-Blackwell.

Lee, I (2017). Chapter 8 Portfolios in classroom L2 writing assessment. In Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts (pp. 105-122). Springer

Lee, I. (2017). Chapter 9 Technology in classroom L2 writing assessment and feedback. In Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts (pp. 123-146). Springer.

Nation, I. S. P. & Macalister, J. (2020). Chapter 6: Assessing reading. In *Teaching ESL reading and writing, 2nd ed*. (pp. 83-102). Routledge.

Schmitt, N, & Schmitt, D. (2020). Chapter 9: Assessing vocabulary. In *Vocabulary in Language Teaching, 2nd ed* (pp. 209-230). Cambridge University Press.

Staehr Fenner, D. S., Kester, J., & Snyder, S. (2019). *The Five Pillars of Equitably Grading ELLs*. Retrieved from https://www.colorincolorado.org/blog/five-pillars-equitably-grading-ells

Staehr Fenner, D. & Sydney, C. S.  (2017). Chapter 9 Formative assessment. In Unlocking English learners' potential: Strategies for making content accessible (pp. 229-258). Sage.

## Classroom Protocol

* + Be respectful of yourself and others. Talking while others are addressing the class (including the instructor) is not appropriate.
  + The class will start and end at the instructor’s designated time. If you arrive late or leave early, points will be deducted from your attendance and participation.
  + No unauthorized guests.
  + Cell phones, beepers, and pagers must be turned off or placed on vibrate mode. Inappropriate use of cell phones and other technology during class time will result in loss of points.
  + All students are expected to participate in all class discussions and participate in all exercises.
  + It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor if assignment deadlines are not met and for initiating arrangements for missed work.

## Course Expectations: Each of these assignments should be submitted electronically on Canvas. Feedback will be provided in Canvas for each assignment using the rubrics and in text comments.

You are expected to check Canvas often for assignments and announcements. The course is set up in weekly modules (see calendar for dates). The module starts on Thursday and written assignments work must be completed by 11:59 PM on Wednesdays. It is expected that the assigned readings are completed prior to class so that you can apply your learning in class. Instructions will be provided in Canvas.

All assignments must be typed unless otherwise noted by the instructor. If your assignment contains excessive writing errors *it will not be accepted*. Make sure to proof read any submitted work before turning it in. Typographical and grammar errors will result in the lowering of an assignment grade. All assignments will be submitted via Canvas. Only use PDF or Word files when uploading to Canvas.

**Course Assignments**:

1. Assessment Share-

This will be a presentation on a formative assessment that can be used in the classroom to assess English learners. Upload your handout to Canvas. Bring a sample if applicable. Signups for this assignment will occur on week 2. The presentations will occur after the week on classroom assessment.

1. Identify the construct being taught and assessed.
2. Explain the learning goals and the criteria by which you will judge the activity as being successful.
3. Explain how to do the activity.
4. Describe what evidence you will use to assess the student’s knowledge/level in relation to your learning goal.
5. Offer two alternatives on how this assessment could be adapted for higher and lower levels of proficiency.
6. Describe how this formative assessment would inform future instruction.
7. Assessment Task Design

For this assignment, you will create an assessment task to evaluate an EL students’ receptive skill (either **reading** or **listening**). The task must include directions for the students. After the task is described, you will write an analysis paper of your task.  This analysis must include the following:

1. A description of the audience of the task,
2. An explanation of how you constructed the task,
3. A description of how the task fulfills the five principles of language assessment (validity, reliability, washback, practicality, and authenticity.
   1. You should cite course readings for this part to support your description.
4. An analysis of the limitations of that assessment task.
5. Response Paper

This commentary assignment has three purposes. First, it shows me that you are keeping up with the readings. It also allows you the opportunity to reflect on our required readings and to apply the information from the readings to your own experiences and prior knowledge. Finally, it provides me with a way to dialogue about the readings to ask questions that you may not feel comfortable asking in class. You should NOT simply summarize the readings.  (You start with a summary of one of the required readings from the student responsibilities pages in Canvas, but then you explore the topic more on your own. You should also find four additional research articles that support that topic as you explore that issue on your own and cite them in your paper as part of your analysis of your independent learning on this topic. **The paper should be 4 pages long. Please see Canvas for the rubric for this assignment.**

1. **Concept test**- The concept test will be an open book take home assignment that includes short answer, and longer essay questions. The test will cover the content for weeks 1-8. The test will be posted on Canvas and you will have two weeks to complete it.
2. **English Learner Assessment Case Study**

You will conduct a case study of an English learner where you will assess the learner’s language proficiency in each of the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1. Provide an overview of what you know about the student prior to assessment.
2. Design and administer an assessment in each skill area and explain why you chose that particular assessment.
3. Interpret the results of the assessment (using examples from the data that you have gained from the assessment).  You must validate these results with a benchmark of ESOL proficiency (WIDA level or CASAS level)
4. Make recommendations for the placement of the student in a particular educational context.
5. Offer suggestions for the student as far as future instruction to help the student make progress towards greater language proficiency.

You should spend 10 hours of contact time with your student

You will present an overview of your case study in the last week of class, but the paper on the case study will not be due until finals week. You may use the feedback that you receive during your presentation to write your paper.

Course Schedule Fall 2025

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Module | Date | Topic | Required Readings | Assignments |
| 1 | 8/18 | Introduction |  |  |
| 2 | 8/25 | Purposes and Varieties  of Assessment | * B & A Ch. 1 & 2 |  |
| 3 | 9/1 | No Class-Labor Day |  |  |
| 4 | 9/8 | Processes of Assessment | * Bachman & Dambock, Ch. 2 * Hill |  |
| 5 | 9/15 | Proficiency Assessment  and Placement | * Diaz-Rico Ch. 12 * Herrera et al | Response Paper is Due |
| 6 | 9/22 | Classroom Assessment | * B & A Ch.3 & 4 * Staehr Fenner & Snyder |  |
| 7 | 9/29 | Assessing Listening | * B & A Ch. 6 * Green |  |
| 8 | 10/6 | Assessing Reading | * B & A Ch.8 * Nation & Macallister Ch. 6 |  |
| 9 | 10/13 | Assessing Speaking | * B & A Ch. 7 * Isbell & Sakai | Assessment Task Design is Due |
| 10 | 10/20 | Assessing Writing | * B & A Ch. 9 * Lee Ch. 9 |  |
| 11 | 10/27 | Assessing Vocabulary & Grammar | * B & A Ch. 10 * Schmitt & Schmitt | Rubric Assignment is Due |
| 12 | 11/3 | Assessment and Grading | * B & A Ch. 11 * StaehrFenner et al | Reaction to Feedback due |
| 13 | 11/10 | Alternative Assessment | * B & A Chap. 12 * Lee Chapter 9 |  |
| 14 | 11/17 | Standardized Testing & Test Taking Strategies | * B & A Ch. 5 * Cohen | Concept Test is Due |
| 15 | 11/24 | No Class- Thanksgiving Break |  |  |
| 16 | 12/1 | Wrap-up and Class Presentations |  |  |
| 17 | 12/8 | Finals Week |  | Case Study Paper is Due |
|  |  |  |  |  |

## Calendar of Assignments and Test Due Dates Fall 2025

| **Due Date** | **Assignments and Test** | **Points** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| When you sign up to present | Assessment Share | 15 |
| 9/15 | Response Paper | 35 |
| 10/13 | Assessment Task Design | 30 |
| 10/27 | Rubric Assignment | 35 |
| 11/3 | Rubric Feedback Response | 10 |
| 11/17 | Concept Test | 40 |
| 12/1 | English Learner Case Study Presentation | 25 |
| 12/8 | English Learner Case Study Paper | 40 |

## Grading Policy

Assignments will be graded according to the categories on the specified rubric in Canvas. Students may not revise and resubmit for higher grades. This course does not have extra credit, so it is important to complete each assignment carefully. Please ask me for clarification if you have a question about the readings or assignments. **Late work will be penalized 5 % per day**. There will be no final exam in this course.

Auburn University considers all of the following reasons to be an excused absence:

1. Illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family. The instructor may request appropriate verification.
2. The death of a member of the student’s immediate family. The instructor may request appropriate verification.
3. Trips for members of the student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for university classes, and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to such absences, but in no case more than one week after the absence. Instructors may request formal notification from appropriate university personnel to document the student’s participation in such trips.
4. Religious holidays. Students are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays.
5. Subpoena for court appearance.
6. Any other reason the instructor deems appropriate.

If you have an excused absence, it is your responsibility to contact the professor and make arrangements to make up the work that you missed.

The final grade for the course is based on the following:

90%-100%= A

80%-89% = B

70%-79% = C

60%-69% = D

Below 60% = F

\*Please note that this is only a plan; point totals for the course may change during the semester if assignments are added or deleted. Detailed instructions will be available in Canvas.

## University Policies

There are important university policies that you should be aware of, such as the add/drop policy; cheating and plagiarism policy, grade appeal procedures, accommodations for students with disabilities and degree requirements. Please see the following link for more information <http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/other/#generalregual>

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### Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, course loads/overloads, etc. <https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/GraduateSchoolPolicyonWithdrawingfromCourses.pdf>

### Campus Policy on Disability Access for Students

If you are a student with a disability, and think you may need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Accessibility, located in Haley Center, Room 1228, Phone: (344) 844-2096, as early as possible in order to avoid a delay in receiving accommodation services. Use of OA services, including testing accommodations, requires prior authorization by the Office of Accessibility. For more help see [Steps to Receive Accommodations https://cws.auburn.edu/Accessibility/cm/prospective](https://cws.auburn.edu/Accessibility/cm/prospective).

#### Emergency Evacuation

If you are a student with a disability and you think you may require assistance evacuating a building in the event of a disaster, you should inform your instructor about the type of assistance you may require. You and your instructor should discuss your specific needs and the type of precautions that should be made in advance of such an event (i.e. assigning a buddy to guide you down the stairway). We encourage you to take advantage of these preventative measures as soon as possible and contact the Office of Accessibility if other classroom accommodations are needed.

### Academic Integrity

Students should be familiar with the university’s [Academic Honesty Code https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/AcademicHonestyCode.pdf](file:///C:\Users\rennesr\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\RVZWJHZ4\Academic%20Honesty%20Code%20https:\sites.auburn.edu\admin\universitypolicies\Policies\AcademicHonestyCode.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at Auburn University and the university’s policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the university. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified.

## COVID Policies

**Physical Distancing**

Face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing. Students shall observe physical distancing guidelines where possible in the classroom, laboratory, studio, creative space setting and in public spaces.

Students should avoid congregating around doorways before or after class sessions. If the instructional space has designated entrance and exit doors students are required to use them. Students should exit the instructional space immediately after the end of instruction to help ensure social distancing and allow for the persons attending the next scheduled class session to enter.

**Face Covering Policy**

In response to COVID-19, and in alignment with Auburn University's Presidential directives, and local, state, and national health official guidelines face coverings are required at all times while on campus, except when alone in a private office. This includes the classroom, laboratory, studio, creative space, or any type of in-person instructional activity, and public spaces. "A “face covering” is defined as a “covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth, including without limitation, cloth face mask, surgical mask, towels, scarves, and bandanas.

If a student has a medical exception to the face covering requirement, please contact the Office of Accessibility to obtain appropriate documentation.

**Possibility of Going Remote**

In the event that the University is forced to move to fully online instruction, please be assured that the learning goals and outcomes of the course will not change; however, some aspects of the course will change in terms of the mode of delivery, participation, and testing methods. Those details will be shared via a Canvas Announcement within 24 hours of the announcement that we are going remote. Please be prepared for this contingency by ensuring that you have access to a computer and Internet.

**In the Event that a Student in the Class Tests Positive**Students must conduct daily health checks in accordance with [CDC guidelines (Links to an external site.)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html). Students testing positive for COVID-19, exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or who have been in direct contact with someone testing positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to attend in-person instructional activities and must leave the venue immediately. Students should contact the [Student Health Center (Links to an external site.)](https://cws.auburn.edu/aumc/) or their health care provider to receive care and who can provide the latest direction on quarantine and self-isolation. Contact your instructor immediately to make instructional and learning arrangements.

**In the Event that the Instructor Tests Positive**If I am unable to attend our F2F portions of the class, we will transition to a fully online course until I am allowed to return. If I become ill or unable to lead the class, a backup instructor will be identified and they will communicate any changes or updates to the course schedule or mode of instruction as soon as possible.

**Zoom Policies**

When we meet on Zoom, your attendance, attention, and participation are expected. Zoom participation requires you to keep your video on and your microphone muted when you are not speaking. Although you may be participating from your residence, our Zoom meetings are professional interactions. You should dress and behave as you would in a normal F2F classroom. To the extent possible, please minimize distractions in the background. I reserve the right to dismiss anyone from a Zoom meeting whose environment or behavior is distracting or problematic. If you have any issues with sharing your video feed, adhering to this policy, or anything else related to your use of Zoom please notify me via email in the first week of class. I’m happy to consider and provide accommodations, but you will need to be in communication with me.

**Attendance Issues Due to COVID**

Participation grades will be worth 30 points, and you will receive 2 points per class. To earn these points, you are expected to be active participants in all of the class activities. Class attendance and engaged participation are essential to achieving the goals of this course. Missing class is like skipping a chapter in a book—what follows is harder to understand. Excused absences are defined in the *AU Bulletin*: You may be excused for personal illness, a serious illness or death of someone in your immediate family, a field trip, a religious holiday (one week notice required), or a subpoena. For a provisional excuse, please notify me before the day you miss by leaving a message by e-mail or telephone (no documentation is necessary). For a fully excused absence (and full attendance/participation points), you will need to provide documentation for your absence.

You will earn points by attending class and arriving on time (see grading plan below). Late assignments lose 10% credit per day. If your absence is excused, any assignment will be due the following day and will begin to incur late penalties on the second day unless you provide daily updates of continuing excusing information. Assignments may be sent by course e-mail to avoid late penalties. If you do send work by e-mail, address it carefully and watch for error messages or for my acknowledgement. Note: *E-mail errors will not negate late penalties.*

Your health and safety, and the health and safety of your peers, are my top priorities. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you discover that you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms or who have tested positive, you should not attend in-person classes. You will not be penalized for such an absence nor will you be asked to provide formal documentation from a healthcare provider. My hope is that if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone with the virus, you will stay home to protect others. I don’t want the need for documentation to discourage you from self-isolating when you are experiencing symptoms.

Please do the following in the event of an illness or COVID-related absence:

* Notify me in advance of your absence if possible
* Keep up with coursework as much as possible
* Participate in class activities and submit assignments electronically as much as possible
* Notify me if you require a modification to the deadline of an assignment or exam

Finally, if remaining in a class and fulfilling the necessary requirements becomes impossible due to illness or other COVID-related issues, please let me know as soon as possible so we can discuss your options.

## Additional Resources

### Miller Writing Center

The Miller Writing Center provides free support on any writing you are doing while at Auburn, whether for a course or not. Trained consultants are available to work with you as you plan, draft, and revise your writing. For students in distance courses and students temporarily away from Auburn’s campus, the Miller Writing Center offers synchronous online consultations. Please check the Miller Writing Center website ([www.auburn.edu/writingcenter](http://www.auburn.edu/writingcenter)) for instructions and information about scheduling online appointments. If you have questions about the Miller Writing Center, please email [writctr@auburn.edu](mailto:writctr@auburn.edu) or call 334-844-7475 M-F 7:45am-4:45pm.

Please see the flyer for the Writing Center on Canvas for more information.

**Writing Center:**

### Student Counseling Services (SCS)

SCS is a unit of the Auburn University Medical Clinic. SCS offers confidential counseling to students experiencing personal problems that interfere with their academic progress, career or well being. The [SCS website http://wp.auburn.edu/scs/](http://wp.auburn.edu/scs/) provides information only. If you would like to talk with someone or make an appointment, please call (344) 844-5123 during business hours, or (344) 501-3100 after hours or on weekends.

**Professionalism:**

Faculty, staff, and students in professional settings are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are as follows: Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices; contribute to collaborative learning communities; model and nurture intellectual vitality.

**Student eHandbook:**

Please refer to <http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/> for all AU student policies.