

Exhibit 2.3.c: Assessment Fairness Review

The unit is concerned with the fairness of all of the assessments used within the unit. All internal and external assessments including course and University and state mandated assessments that involve undergraduate and graduate candidates must be designed, developed, administered, and used with fairness so that candidates know that they are bias-free, and that data results are valid, reliable, fair, and used for the purpose for which they were collected.

All assessments used in the unit conform to institutional standards which include the mission and goals of the University and unit, the unit's conceptual framework, state mandates, and national educational standards. Fairness is also promoted in the unit through the publication of its program policies and procedures in online documents: University catalogs (undergraduate and graduate), course schedules, unit handbooks, brochures, and announcements. Other types of communications--the university-wide advisement week, seminars, Teacher Education Club meetings, sessions with advisors, seminars/workshops--inform candidates about unit program requirements, policies, and procedures; and transition point assessments (Exhibit 2.3a) and standardized assessments (the Praxis Series). Common unit practices such as class discussions of course syllabi and scoring guides for the various assessments promote understanding of course content and assessments. This understanding preserves fairness and consistency.

This type of understanding is carried to the degree plans for each program that are developed through departmental curriculum committees and approved by the Teacher Education Committee (the unit's governance body), dean, vice-chancellor for academic affairs, Faculty/Senate and chancellor. This type of attention for inclusiveness, uniformity, accuracy, and appropriateness promotes consistency and fairness. Also, candidates keep the same degree plan they were given at their admission to a degree program unless there are changes made by the state's department of education. This promotes fairness by having candidates following the same degree plan if they are in the same degree program until they exit from a program.

Fairness also involves the appropriateness and suitability of an assessment, including instrument validity, reliability and consistency of performance. Assessments are considered valid if the data analyses are appropriate and legitimate. Unit assessments have the following qualities: clearly recognizable constructs (what is to be measured), purpose, intended interpretation (an indication of mastery), and a specified test-taking population. Additionally, faculty include rubrics for course assessments so that candidates are informed of assessment criteria prior to submission of an assessment.

Faculty use a "fairness" checklist to assure that they have taken the appropriate steps toward having assessments that are fair, valid and reliable (Figure 1). All faculty, an average of sixteen faculty members from fall 2008-spring 2011, reported that they routinely used the self-evaluation checklist for their course assessments. Data indicate that faculty assessments had "fairness" (Table 1). Table 1 indicates the number of faculty members who answered "yes" of the fairness self-assessment checklist. Also, faculty members submit their course syllabi and final examinations to their department chairs for the chairs' assessment (Figure 2). Data also indicate that chairs assessed final examinations as being fair, valid and reliable (Table 3).

FIGURE 1: Faculty Assessment Fairness Review: Fairness, Validity, and Reliability Checklist

Faculty Self-Evaluation of Final Course Assessment

Date: _____ Semester: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Name and Number of Course: _____

Question	Yes	No
1. Did you prepare a course syllabus that details what assessments (assignments and tests) that candidates must complete and give each candidate a copy at the beginning of the semester?		
2. Did your course syllabus set forth measurable course objectives?		
3. Did you instruct (explain, emphasize, discuss, demonstrate) the course content to the candidates enrolled in this course according to the objectives listed on the syllabus?		
4. Is the assessment that you submitted to your department chair a good example of what you taught during this course? (In other words, is this assessment an adequate measure of candidates' knowledge, skills and dispositions that should be mastered during this course?)		
5. Is this assessment appropriate for the inferences that you will make as a result of looking at candidate performances on this assessment? (Can you with confidence say that the candidate has mastered the objectives of this course based on the type of assessment that was administered?)		
6. Does this assessment have evidence of content-related validity (test items on this assessment matched the objectives for this course)?		
7. Is this assessment's format well-designed, neat, and easy to read (word-processed)?		
8. Have candidates been required to produce similar items or to perform similar thinking activities during the course as are required on this assessment?		
9. Was the time needed for candidates to complete this assessment sufficient enough to cover the time-constraints for this assessment?		
10. Are you confident that both the course syllabus and the final assessment of this course are aligned with the unit's conceptual framework?		

Signature of Instructor of Course: _____ Date _____

RESULTS FROM SELF-ANALYSES:

1. Revisions needed in course syllabus: _____
2. Revisions in instructional emphases: _____
3. Number of questions that need revising: ____ Which ones? _____
4. Number of questions that need to be eliminated: ____ Which ones? _____

COMMENTS:

Table 1: Faculty Self-Assessment Fairness Review: Fairness, Validity, and Reliability Checklist

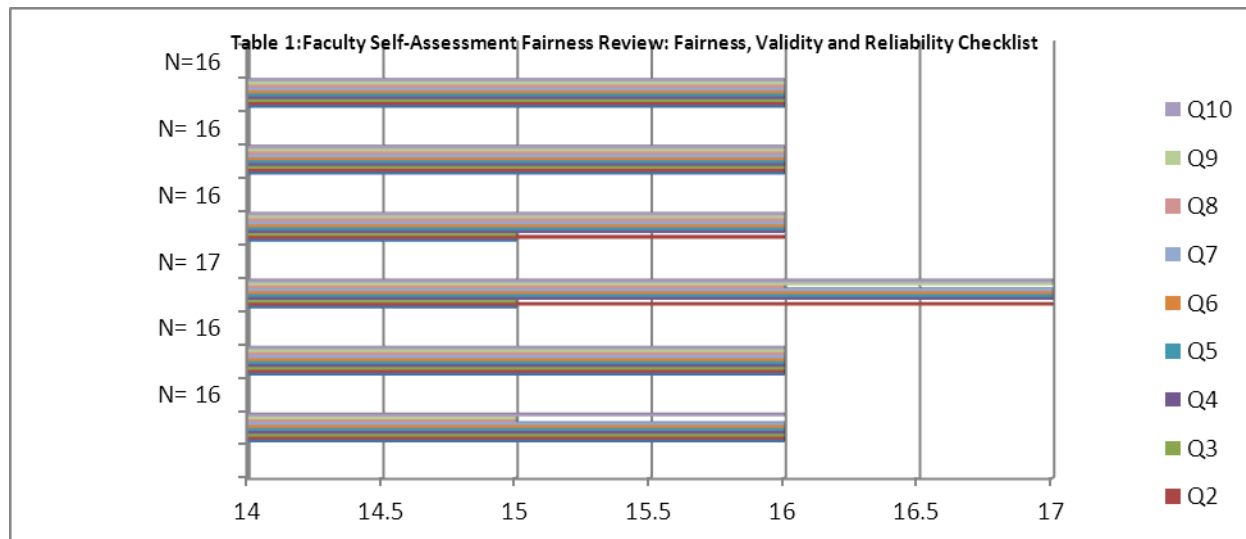


FIGURE 2: Department Chair's Evaluation of Final Assessment for a Course

Date: _____ Semester: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Name and Number of Course: _____

Question	Yes	No
1. Did the faculty member submit a course syllabus and final examination for each course taught this semester?		
2. Did the course syllabus set forth measurable course objectives?		
3. Does the assessment have face validity (Example: Does it look like a mathematics exam if it is an exam for a mathematics class?)		
4. Is this assessment's format well-designed, neat, and easy to read (word-processed)?		
5. Does this assessment have evidence of content-related validity (test items on this assessment matched the objectives for this course)?		
6. Is this assessment appropriate for the inferences that the instructor will make as a result of looking at candidate performances on this assessment?		
7. According to the syllabus, have the candidates been required to produce similar items or to perform similar thinking activities during the course as is required on this assessment?		
8. Was the time allotted for the completion of this assessment made with consideration of the time-constraints for this assessment?		
9. Are you confident that the course syllabus and the final assessment of this course are aligned with the unit's conceptual framework?		

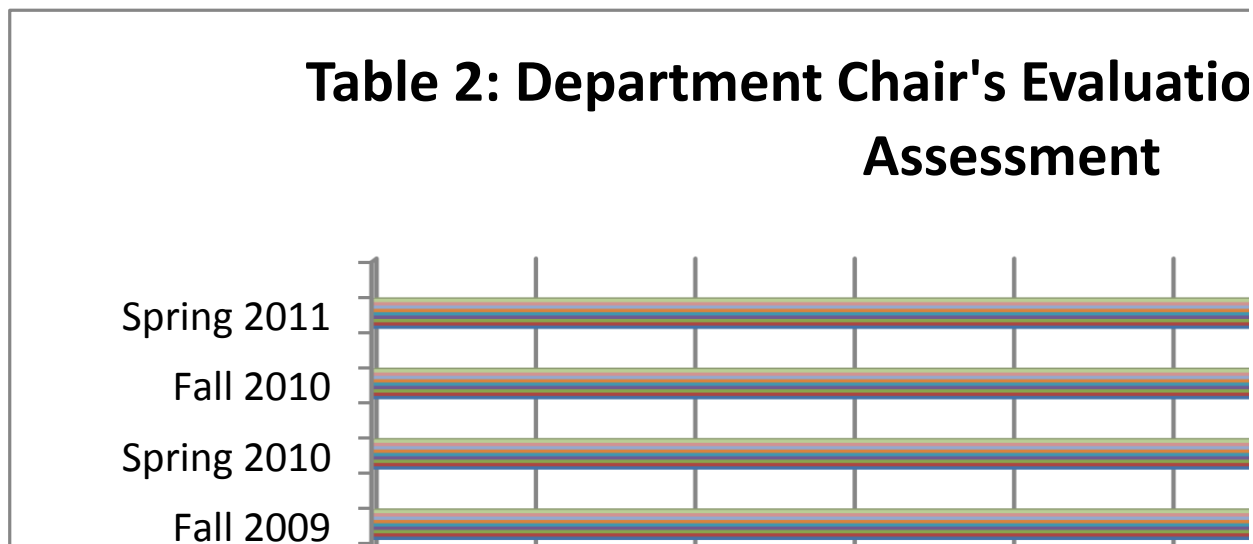
Signature of Department Chair: _____ Date _____

RESULTS FROM CHAIR'S ANALYSES:

1. Revisions needed in course syllabus: _____
2. Revisions in instructional emphases: _____
3. Number of questions that need revising: ____ Which ones? _____
4. Number of questions that need to be eliminated: ____ Which ones? _____

COMMENTS:

Table 2: Department Chair's Evaluation of Faculty's Final Assessments



For external sources, faculty and candidates have been a part of the development and administration of the Praxis Series. Two faculty members have been Educational Testing Service (ETS) Minority Scholars and have worked on the fairness of ETS's test questions.

Faculty and candidates have also attended workshops that were facilitated by ETS. Additionally, candidates have participated in norming groups for ETS prior to their establishment of cut scores. The unit has a lab designed for Praxis Series preparation that is open daily to 8:30 p.m. and staffed by a research associate, coordinator, and graduate assistants. This type of familiarity with the ETS test process and with Praxis test criteria also promote fairness.

All assessments used with teacher candidates within the unit must be reliable, that is, the resulting data from the assessments used must be consistent, stable and dependable. One way that the unit addresses reliability is with the field experience component in all method classes where classroom situations are generalized to field situations. Consistency is achieved through the use of common rubrics and checklists and the use of experienced preschool through grade twelve field teachers. Extensive communication with supervisors of clinical practice is accomplished as specified by the unit's assessment plan and contributes to overall assessment consistency of evaluations of candidates. The use of multiple measures and multiple evaluators throughout the assessment process also adds to the overall ability of the unit's assessment system to be fair and consistent with the unit's candidates. When meaningful group differences in performance are indicated by assessment instruments in a particular assessment, the assessment criterion is investigated. Specialized workshops, seminars and laboratories are used to assist candidates with the Praxis Series because data have indicated a low first time passage rate.