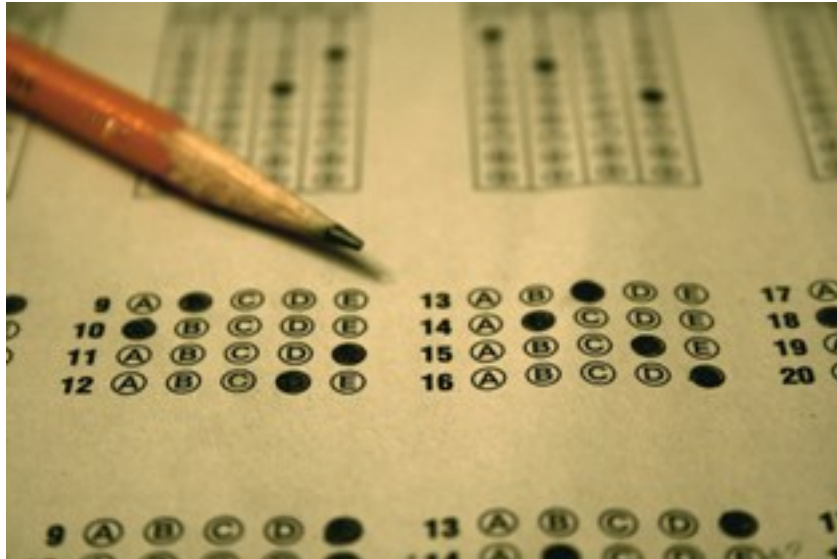


**Westminster Choir College of Rider University  
Department of Music Education**



***ME 595 - Assessing Music  
Learning  
Fall, 2010***

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# *Course Overview*

“Assessment” is not an indie pop punk rock group and “The Assessment” is not a character on *The Jersey Shore*. Assessment is, nonetheless, a component of pop and reality education. Assessment is THE most important concern of those concerned with education in the United States. Assessment drives instruction. Assessment drives instructional design. Assessment drives school funding and that drives the priorities schools place on music education. For students, performance on assessments are the gateway to higher education, becoming an education major, obtaining a license to teach, and more.

We can easily trace assessment practices to the early 1900's, and then as today, the US government was a predominant catalyst. IQ tests and other standardized tests became popular in public schools; although those examinations focused more on one's potential for learning than on one's achievement. SATs were created in the 1920's to determine a potential student's ability to benefit from higher education. SAT and ACT scores are still being used today for the very same purpose.

Assessment practices were key in the five waves of educational reform, which occurred during the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Tests were used to tack students as early as the 1950s; they measured program accountability in the 1960s; ensured that students met minimum competencies in the 1970s; aligned to school and district accountability of the 1980s; and were key in the standards-based accountability systems of the 1990s. In this century, the federal legislation known as NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND, signed into law in 2002, mandated that assessment move to the forefront of educational priorities.

This course addresses assessment practices in music education. For whatever reason, good or bad, music education has escaped the hegemony assessments have forced onto other core subjects. While there have been national assessments in music education, the National Assessment of Educational Progress was administered twice in the 1990s, the results had little impact on what teachers do, how grades are considered and how concerned parents, school administrators, the Federal government is for a child's achievement in music. Even National Standards for Music Education are voluntary. Teachers may address the benchmarks or not. Unlike the United Kingdom and other countries we do not have a national curriculum. Individual districts mediate music programs and even then, there is little consistency from school to school and teacher to teacher. One would be hard-pressed to find an instance of a child who was retained from one grade to another because of poor achievement in music. Even in high schools where a fine arts course is requirement for graduation, the assessments are soft. Participation and attitude are still the major criteria for a grade music class or ensemble in many places.

# *Learning Goals*

1. To know, understand and be able to explain the vocabulary of assessment in music education.
2. To know, understand and be able to critique the most current research on assessment in music education.
3. To write appropriate assessments for a variety of music learning experiences.
4. To understand assessment as it interfaces with 4MAT, Understanding by Design, Reciprocal Teaching and Critical Pedagogy for Music Education.
5. To understand the political implications of assessment.

# *What to expect*

Since this is a course within a professional sequence of pre -service music education courses, I expect that you will commit to the course expectations and master the course content with a professional attitude. I expect that you will stay on track with assignments and will be present during those times when we meet together synchronously using WEBEX and on campus October 16 and October 17. I will lower grades if you do not stay on track and participate as required. I expect that the work you submit will be your very best effort. I expect that you will meet deadlines and that all work will be submitted on time.

You may expect that I will approach the course with the commitment of a professional. In that regard, you may expect that each class will be thoughtfully prepared; that the materials selected for your purchase were chosen carefully and are important to your success in this course and beyond; and that your individual and collective learning needs will be addressed as appropriate. You may also expect that the course content will be thoroughly covered and that your assignments will be assessed fairly.

# *What to buy and what to have*

## ***Required texts for all students in ME 595:***

McCarthy, Bernice. *About Teaching: 4MAT in the Classroom*.  
Wauconda, IL: About Learning, Inc., 2000.

Brophy, Timothy S., ed. *The Practice of Assessment in Music Education: Frameworks, Models, and  
Designs*. Chicago, IL: GIA, 2011.

## ***Technology Requirements***

A computer with a dependable Internet connection.

Webcam and mic

SKYPE account

# *Prerequisites*

*ME 595* is a course designed for upper level undergraduates and all graduate students. It is recommended that students have junior status and are in or have taken a Praxis course.

# Grades

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Contributions to the live synchronous WEBEX sessions (10 points each) | 40 points  |
| September 14  |            |
| October 25  |            |
| November 8  |            |
| November 22   |            |
| Assignments (10 points each)  | 40 points  |
| Create a Multiple Choice Test   |            |
| Take a Multiple Choice Test   |            |
| Create Portfolio Criteria   |            |
| Create a Grading Policy for Ensembles                                 |            |
| Contributions to the live on campus sessions (25 points each)         | 50 points  |
| October 16  |            |
| October 17  |            |
| Final Project   | 70 points  |
| <hr/>   |            |
| TOTAL   | 200 points |

**Note: Regardless of the number of points you earn for the course, you will not pass if you do not attend both classes on campus – October 16 and October 17. You may not come late, and you may not leave early. In addition, you will lose points each time an assignment is late. With permission, you may redo an assignment for a higher grade, provided you submitted the original assignment on time.**

# Other Notes

Assessments are aligned to the Marzano Taxonomy.

This course meets the Standards of the NJ State Licensing Code as follows:

|                 |                               |                             |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Standard One:   | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, | 3.2,3.3                     |
| Standard Two:   | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, | 2.4,2.5 3.0                 |
| Standard Three: | 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, | 3.3,3.4                     |
| Standard Four:  | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.0, 3.1, | 3.2,3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 |
| Standard Five:  | 2.0, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4       |                             |
| Standard Six:   | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, | 3.1,3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 |
| Standard Seven: | 2.0, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5       |                             |
| Standard Eight  | 1.0, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, | 3.4                         |
| Standard Nine:  | 1.2,                          |                             |
| Standard Ten:   | 1.0, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3  |                             |

# Course Calendar

The course calendar for this course may be found in the *Course Information* section on Blackboard.

# Assignments

Assignments for each section of the course are listed in the *Course Information* section on Blackboard.

# *Plagiarism*

As you complete your assignments, take special care to differentiate your original thoughts and ideas from those of others. Cite the work of others properly. As you cut and paste research from the Internet or download excerpts from the library on-line resources, be careful to keep track of what is yours and what is not. In the unfortunate instance of plagiarism, the professor will follow the procedures outlined in *The Source*.

# *Course Expectations*

1. Prompt completion of all readings and reflective papers as they are assigned. All written work must conform to the guidelines for style as articulated in the appropriate style manual. It must be scholarly, well-written, and free of gender bias or jargon. Work that is poorly written will not be accepted and will significantly impact the final grade.
2. Purchase of all required materials.
3. That you will conquer the technology challenges on your own.
4. BHP students must arrange to be present for all synchronous classes on WEBEX and the on-campus classes **October 16** and **October 17**. The dates are listed on the course calendar posted on Blackboard.



# *Connecting Online*

Because a component of this course is online, there are no traditional office hours. Instead, you may contact me during my regular on campus office hours or on SKYPE at anytime you see me on-line. Generally, I am available to you later in the evening. A SKYPE account is available as a free download on the web. If your computer does not have a built in video camera and mic, you should purchase one. Staples, Best Buy, Target and other retailers have a wide range of choices. My SKYPE address is **f\_abrahams**. You need to add me to your contact list and request that I add you to mine.

You may also e-mail me at the Rider account. The address is **abrahams@rider.edu**. When the Rider servers are down, I use **frankabrahams@verizon.net** as my backup. However, I only check it when the Rider servers are down. Please send me an alternate e-mail address for you as well.

Deposit written work into the digital drop box inside Blackboard. Please remember to hit **SUBMIT** and also **OK**. Otherwise, your document is not saved. When sending attachments to the digital drop box, save them as .doc or .docx files. Include your name in the title of the file.

# *Meeting the Challenges of this Course*

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate fully in this course. Rider University counseling services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the web at [http://www.rider.edu/175\\_555.htm](http://www.rider.edu/175_555.htm).

If you have any learning issues that require an accommodation, you must inform me of these issues no later than the first day of the second week of classes. After that date, I may be unable to make the appropriate adjustments.

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