

Meeting 15 • 23 February 2010

Version:
2/23/10

Today • my deadline page

numbers in () = minutes planned for activity/ topic

√ = topic / activity that was adequately dealt with during the class

+ = topic needs more attention & will be resumed at next / subsequent meeting(s)

- = a topic / activity that was proposed but not carried out (but will be taken up later)

~~Struck through text like this~~ = a topic / activity that was proposed but not included / is not going to be taken up after all*Italic text like this* = comments after the meeting

Handout included
work samples of
BIMP from OSW
Assessment course
(scores 4.1 + 5.9);
also Faculty Vitality 02
setup + scoring guide
(0313)

	Main topic(s): Rubrics; Teaching and Testing Writing
(10)	assessment in the news! Obama & NCLB - changes in school assessment (0782); Santa Cruz assesses languages as unnecessary (reason: too expensive)
(60)	more about ACTFL Guidelines for Writing (0013); introduction to Oregon standards for everything (0023 chronology), for second languages (0698), for math (0695), and for writing (0698); outstanding article about teaching writing (Barnett, 0009); setup for FLL 2002 assessment of 300-level writing proficiency (0313)
(20)	Assignment: create a scoring guide for a language activity, with reflection; more comments about the "BIMP"; photocopied work samples; I'm considering including this in a panel discussion that replaces the final exam (perhaps with invited guests from the FLL Assessment Committee)
(10)	adjust outline for rest of course: possible topics include course assessment, curriculum assessment, program assessment, department assessment, technology-based assessment

Upcoming class meetings

23 & 25 Feb.: assessing writing (L2, of course; but how about L1?); teaching writing; same for listening and reading; much more about rubrics (and an assignment to create one); course, curriculum, program assessment; thinking about the BIMP

Upcoming assignment(s)

This section offers a PREVIEW, not activated assignments. Assignments are made, with announcement of their deadlines, both in class and on the "schedule" page.

Reading for upcoming topics: 0699 ACTFL "Blueprint for Action on Language Education (2005); Donato, et al, "Literary Discussions and Advanced Speaking Functions: Researching the (Dis)Connection" (FLA 37.2, 183-9; here 0104abs the abstract); ••more to come

Announcements

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Misc.

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Assignment: Major Project - A "Big Idea" about an Assessment Activity

last modified:
2/23/10

Purposes: 1) show integrative understanding of assessment, broadly defined, in the profession of language teaching; 2) encourage attitudes and practice the skills that develop leadership in the profession in the area of program development, research, and acquisition of resources.

Outline: Produce a "Big Idea" for a professional activity that involves assessment. The core of the project will be a draft PROPOSAL for exploring, through assessment, a question of interest in the area of language teaching and learning (either or both). The assessment should NOT focus on "lab-experiment" testing, but rather on classroom teaching and learning. REPEAT: The project is a PROPOSAL; you don't actually carry out the project.

Products: Description of the assessment activity and its related background, justification, secondary literature, and assessment tools (whether you find them or make them). The entire package should not take up more than 10 pages (appendices OK); remember that proposals for million-dollar grants are often restricted to just 30 pages, with very precise specifications for font, text size, margins, etc.

Due: end of quarter

I can entertain considerable variety in your ideas, within two large specifications: The projects have to be about language-related assessment, and they cannot be conventional term papers. Narrower specifications: 1) The project needs a focus - what are you aiming to learn / do about assessment? 2) There must be investigation of the secondary literature. 3) There must be a narrative about what you plan to do in the way of assessment. 4) There must be a reflective element. The project can take various exposition forms, such as: a project proposal; a grant proposal; a skeleton MA thesis proposal. Plan to have an "idea statement" (paragraph) or a request for help with an idea within a week from when the assignment was activated. "Language-related assessment" can include program, curriculum, (e-)textbook, student attitudes, even testbank assessment as well as straightforward language assessment. You do NOT have to carry out research with learner populations; a PROPOSAL for such research would be sufficient.

If it will help give you perspective on your project, think of it as an idea that could be carried out with the support of a \$1000 grant, such as PSU indeed has for assessment projects. Proposals for such grants are often only a few pages long, and the labor they envision is often what could be accomplished by a graduate student earning the \$1000 at \$25/ hr., with a professor doing a similar amount of work, though of course not paid from the grant.

Evaluation: The following link is to the scoring guide for this assignment. If you read the scoring guide before you complete your assignment, you will know exactly what to do to get the score and grade you want.

Here, mostly as abstracts from professional journals, are some examples of what such "Major [or Super-Major] Projects" are like when they are actually carried out:

Bernhardt about web-based placement testing (0100abs); Donato about lack of progress in language learning in upper-division courses (0104abs); Gascoigne about effect of feedback on writing activities (0173abs); Price et al about students' perceptions of language study and requirements (0177abs);

About the language you write: English is preferred; if that is your native language, use it. If English is not your native language, you may use any of the following without further consideration: Spanish, French, or German.

Problems? If you do not understand the terms of this assignment, or for some other reason encounter some obstacle in carrying it out, contact the course instructors. Such contact, at least until the process is abused, will count as "on-time" completion of the activity.

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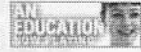
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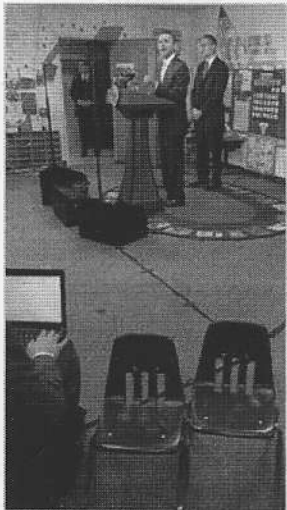
0782

Administration Outlines Proposed Changes to 'No Child' Law

By SAM DILLON
Published: February 1, 2010

The Obama administration said on Monday that it would ask Congress to raise education spending by about \$3.5 billion, a 7.5 percent increase, for the 2011 fiscal year, even as it sought to limit other categories of domestic spending.

Enlarge This Image



Stephen Crowley/The New York Times
President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, shown last month, will seek to eliminate parts of the main education law that teachers and school boards find most objectionable.

In outlining its budget request, the administration also said it would seek an extensive rewrite of the main federal law governing public schools, known as No Child Left Behind, and would seek to replace the law's much-criticized system for rating schools based on student test scores.

The administration proposed replacing that system, known as adequate yearly progress, with a new accountability system that officials said would more fairly characterize schools' academic progress.

"We want accountability reforms that factor in student growth, progress in closing achievement gaps, proficiency towards college and career-ready standards, high school graduation and college enrollment rates," Education Secretary Arne Duncan said in announcing the proposed changes. "We know that's a lot to track, but if we want to be smarter about accountability, more fair to students and teachers and more effective in the classroom, we need to look at all of these factors."

The administration asked for \$49.7 billion in discretionary spending increases for the Department of Education for the 2011 fiscal year, up from \$46.2 billion in the current year. Those figures do not include mandatory spending on programs that require no annual Congressional appropriation, a category that includes Pell grants for

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Readers' Comments



"This law must be completely overhauled. Enough is enough. Children are indeed humiliated and labeled failures through no fault of their own or their teachers."

Gloria Endres, Philadelphia
Read Full Comment »

college students. The administration's budget includes an additional \$34.9 billion request for Pell grants.

A total of \$1.3 billion of the additional money requested for the department would finance a third round of Race to the Top, a competitive school improvement grant program. The department said the rest of the increase, about \$2.2 billion, would go toward, among other things,

efforts intended to intervene in failing schools, encouragement of [charter schools](#) and programs for teacher recruiting and training.

About 40 states are competing in the first round of Race to the Top, and a second round begins this year. Congress has approved \$4 billion to finance those two rounds.

The adequate yearly progress system issues the equivalent of a pass-fail report card for every school each year. Critics say the system fails to differentiate among chaotic, chronically failing schools, those that are helping low-scoring students improve, and better-scoring schools that may, nonetheless, be failing to help raise some students' achievement.

So far, the system has identified some 30,000 schools as needing improvement, a euphemism for failing, far more than states or districts have the capacity to improve. Unless Congress acts to change the law, thousands more schools will be labeled as failing each year until 2014, the deadline by which schools are required to bring every student to proficiency in reading and math.

Mr. Duncan referred to the 2014 deadline as a utopian goal in a September speech, and administration officials have told educators in meetings since then that they want that deadline eliminated. But Mr. Duncan told reporters on Monday that he and his aides had not reached a final decision on eliminating the deadline.

It is not clear how the administration could retain the deadline if Congress were to agree to replace adequate yearly progress with a new school accountability system. The adequate yearly progress system is deeply intertwined with the law's timeline leading to the 2014 deadline.

"Each state shall establish a timeline for adequate yearly progress," the law says. "The timeline shall ensure that not later than 12 years after the end of the 2001-2002 school year, all students in each group will meet or exceed the proficient level."



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