

Language Research Centre
Course Information Sheet
Second Language Tests, Second Language Testing
Foundations in measurement and testing for research and language teaching
LANG 599.04: Fall 2008 Location: CH D425 Time: R 14:00-17:00 pm

Instructor's Name & e-mail: Dr. Susanne Carroll susanne.carroll@ucalgary.ca

Office location & office hours: SS846; T 15:00-17:00 or by appointment

Contact Phone: 220-5492

Instructor's web page: <http://ling.ucalgary.ca/profiles/susanne-carroll>

Description:

Researchers in second language acquisition, educational administrators, policy-makers, language teachers, and language students themselves often want an answer to the question: "How good is their/my French?" (or Blackfoot, or Chinese, or ... -- put in your preferred language here). Providing an answer means resorting to existing language tests or creating new tests. Choosing the right test, or developing one's own, requires an understanding of a number of complex fundamental issues: How do we define knowledge of a language? How do we measure the ability to use language felicitously? What is the nature of measurement? What purpose shall we put the results of the test to? What are the contexts in which we test? How do emerging technologies influence test-taker behaviour? What broader issues of fairness and social justice might influence if we test, or how we test? This course will introduce students to these issues. It will serve as a basis for more specialised courses which will develop topics we just touch on briefly (specific types of tests, tests for particular populations, the use of computer technology in language testing, issues of language policy and planning).

Prerequisites:

Permission of the instructor

Distribution of Grades:

A+ = 95-100; A = 90-94; A- = 85-89; B+ = 80-84; B = 75-79; B- = 71-74; C+ = 67-70; C = 62-66; C- = 58-61; D+ = 54-57; D = 50-53; F < 50%

Grading Scale:

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|---------------------------|-----|
| Exercises | 40% |
| Case study | 30% |
| Term paper (first draft) | 15% |
| Term paper (second draft) | 15% |

Required Texts:

Bachman, Lyle F. 1990. *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.

Recommended Texts & Materials:

Brown, James Dean & Hudson, Thom. 2002. *Criterion-referenced language testing*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Chapelle, Carol A., & Douglas, Dan. 2006. *Assessing language through computer technology*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Students with Disabilities:

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor during the first day of classes.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that "plagiarism exists when:

- a) The work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- b) Parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- c) The whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) A student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of, or prior agreement of, the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources: footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.