

**Title of Session:** Classroom Assessment

**Moderator:** Maryann Durland

**Title of File:** 20090212assessment

**Date:** February 12, 2009

Room: Classroom Assessment Group

**MaryannDu:** how is everyone tonight?

**KellyP:** good thanks how are you

**MaryannDu:** thanks!

**CarleeK:** doing good, you?

**MaryannDu:** good.

**BJB2:** kind of windy here today...need an anchor!

**MaryannDu:** here too

**MaryannDu:** all last night

**BJB2** nods.

**BJB2:** shall we start with introductions, Maryann?

**MaryannDu:** ok

**BJB2:** Carlee and Kelly, can you please tell Maryann where you are located and what you teach?

**MaryannDu:** I am Maryann Durland and I am an independent researcher and evaluation specialist with a special interest in assessment. I am currently in WV

**BJB2** . o O ( I saw you logged in earlier today, Maryann...did you put anything on the web window that we should look at? )

**MaryannDu:** no

**CarleeK:** I am currently in Boulder, CO...I am a junior at the University of Colorado. I am not a teacher, but I am in an education class and one of our assignments is to poke around Tapped In and participate in some of the events they put on

**MaryannDu:** nice. my masters degree is from UC at Boulder

**KellyP:** I am in the same class as Carlee in Boulder. and I hope to teach 2nd grade when I graduate

**BJB2:** what do you hope to teach, Carlee?

**CarleeK:** I actually hope to become a school counselor

**MaryannDu:** good

**BJB2:** oh, wonderful!

**BJB2 . o O** ( did I tell you about the school counselor's group, Carlee? )

**CarleeK:** No, you haven't

**BJB2:** ok...I'll do that later ;-)

**CarleeK:** thank you

**MaryannDu:** lol

**BJB2:** btw, I'm a retired communication and art teacher located in Pennsylvania

**MaryannDu:** will you both do student teaching, etc

**BJB2 . o O** ( and on Tapped In helpdesk )

**KellyP:** I am studying communication as well :)

**KellyP:** yea I will do student teaching

**MaryannDu:** ok

**CarleeK:** I'm not sure yet

**MaryannDu:** ok

**MaryannDu:** so what did you find intriguing about classroom assessment?

**MaryannDu:** not that classroom assessment isn't just the best topic ever!

**KellyP:** I think tracking is interesting

**BJB2** winks at Maryann

**CarleeK:** Well I don't really know that much about it, since I am in my first education class right now, but I guess just that different assessments work well for different people, and trying to figure out what those are

**KellyP:** I agree

**MaryannDu:** tracking student progress???

**KellyP:** more specifically the tracking done on standardized tests

**KellyP:** I don't feel like I was tracked during school, but once learning about it in my last education class, I'm sure I was

**MaryannDu:** ok, so placing students in groups based on test scores like standardized tests

**KellyP:** yes

**MaryannDu:** ok

**CarleeK:** hmm interesting

**MaryannDu:** by the way you have some really super people in assessment at cu. I think Bob Linn is still there

**MaryannDu:** he is very good

**CarleeK:** good to know

**KellyP:** for example my teacher said that some students would not be allowed to sign up for certain classes based on their scores, but I didn't feel like my school enforced that, granted it might be because i do ok on tests that i was not held back from taking any course

**MaryannDu:** right

**MaryannDu:** this is really more than tracking

**KellyP:** what is it?

**BJB2:** Maryann, perhaps you should explain what assessment involves and its purpose

**MaryannDu:** it is barring students from learning information that they may be able to get, but not be able to do well on a test on

**CarleeK:** got it

**MaryannDu:** there are several different kinds of tests.

**MaryannDu:** one kind, achievement tests measure what has been learned.

**MaryannDu:** but

**MaryannDu:** standardized tests are created as a sample of all the things out there in a subject, say math, that could be learned

**MaryannDu:** so this big test

**MaryannDu:** is a sample of a bigger area

**CarleeK:** so they aren't specified to a specific school, classroom, teacher's curriculum, etc?

**MaryannDu:** now we get to the difficult part

**MaryannDu:** norm referenced tests, like a standardized achievement test were created to be nationally normed

**MaryannDu:** on a construct - like k-6 math

**MaryannDu:** then we began creating what we called criterion referenced tests in the 70's or so

**MaryannDu:** these tests were created in addition to normed referenced tests. so if a district or state had standards that they wanted all students to meet, it was a criterion referenced test

**KellyP:** ok..

**CarleeK:** oh ok

**MaryannDu:** criterion referenced means that the test is based on a criterion of some sort - a bit of knowledge, so such

**MaryannDu:** everyone is expected to get it.

**MaryannDu:** normed is developed so that you can have a curve, where do the best go and where do the worst go

**MaryannDu:** but remember, a norm is relative

**MaryannDu:** if you have 40 genius in a room, there is still a curve, and some are higher

than others, no one is equal all the time

**CarleeK:** k

**MaryannDu:** but that curve is really on the high end of a test!

**MaryannDu:** then as we got more and more into standards based education, defining what we wanted children to know

**MaryannDu:** which is one thing

**MaryannDu:** then we decided that the criterion referenced tests, now should be normed

**MaryannDu:** so you might have a criterion test normed for your class, school, grade, etc

**MaryannDu:** some companies have a bank of items that they use all over the country so they can give national norms also.

**CarleeK:** are these criterion reference tests like finals at the end of the semester for high schools?

**MaryannDu:** if that test is based on standards

**MaryannDu:** for example

**MaryannDu:** otherwise it is just a classroom test

**CarleeK:** ok

**MaryannDu:** if a teacher teaches history for 20 years and gives the same test with variations over time that teacher could norm that test

**MaryannDu:** do an item analysis, see what most students get right, what the top students get, what was not taught well enough etc

**CarleeK:** oh ok

**KellyP:** I see

**MaryannDu:** one problem is that assessment is really about what has been taught, not ability. that is a big factor

**MaryannDu:** but we use the tests as if they were meters of a person's learning worth

**MaryannDu:** that is an enormous issue

**CarleeK:** so a lot of the score is due to a student's teacher

**MaryannDu:** yes

**KellyP:** I feel like test should show individual growth in learning, and that is what should be the focus

**MaryannDu:** individual growth occurs due to learning.

**MaryannDu:** yes

**MaryannDu:** but what is the opportunity to learn

**MaryannDu:** many students learn no matter what

**MaryannDu:** they read, get it, take a test, do fine

**MaryannDu:** some think about it, figure it out

**KellyP:** I don't work like that

**MaryannDu:** how do you work?

**KellyP:** I have to use repetition and be able to understand the step by step to something, or really understand the concept in order to do well on tests

**MaryannDu:** I have to get it, really understand it

**MaryannDu:** me too

**KellyP:** I cant usually just read it and get it

**MaryannDu:** right

**MaryannDu:** but some kids, may not really get it, but can pass the test

**MaryannDu:** and some have no clue, but could if they had a way to figure it out

**KellyP:** yeah like just memorizing something for a test and then forgetting it

**MaryannDu:** but they don't know how to figure it out

**MaryannDu:** a classroom test can help to find these things out

**KellyP:** oh, ok

**MaryannDu:** say I want kids to know the 10 most important dates in our history

**MaryannDu:** facts

**MaryannDu:** memorize and move

**MaryannDu:** most kids could do this, some very easy, but some would need flash cards, or a method to remember

**MaryannDu:** but it would be reasonable to have everyone have at least 7 out of 10

**MaryannDu:** at least to pass on this test

**MaryannDu:** if I as a teacher create ways to help the memory, of each student they will be able to do it (of course there may be memory issues, that are beyond class, but in general

**MaryannDu:** and it is the same with each level of knowledge we want kids to learn. Individual ability helps, and will always be a factor, but all kids can learn if there are opportunities that make sense to them

**MaryannDu:** so in the case you mentioned first, the kid you got 7 out of 10 of the facts would be barred from the higher class. but in reality could really do well

**MaryannDu:** ok I am going on.....

**CarleeK:** sounds good

**MaryannDu:** lol

**MaryannDu:** schools do use tests to track. but what we often do is not always based on the purposes for the test, but on the needs of an organization

**CarleeK:** like the schools need to be performing at a certain level, such as how standardized tests are used for No Child Left Behind?

**MaryannDu:** kind of.

**MaryannDu:** I think there are many things going on.

**MaryannDu:** one is the inappropriate use of a test, or a group of tests for tracking students. or limiting what classes they should take.

**MaryannDu:** that is one thing

**MaryannDu:** another is the focus on the test so much

**MaryannDu:** the state tests are standards based, and are almost all minimum standards

**MaryannDu:** if schools focus on high levels of learning and make sure that they are teaching standards kids should do well.

**MaryannDu:** but many teach only the standards

**MaryannDu:** if a standard is that you can spell ing words, teachers may only teach that

**MaryannDu:** and not a set of spelling rules that includes that

**MaryannDu:** rule

**MaryannDu:** and schools are really hit hard by districts

**MaryannDu:** it is really tough out there

**MaryannDu:** how do you feel about the kinds of assessments you have had?

**KellyP:** I took the CSAPS all through school

**KellyP:** and I feel that they are not a good indication on how the kids are doing

**CarleeK:** I took the AIMS in Arizona--and they were really annoying haha

**KellyP:** I know that no one really tried on the tests, they just did them because they had to

**MaryannDu:** right

**MaryannDu:** lol

**MaryannDu:** right

**KellyP:** we didn't feel any reason to really study and try, so we didn't

**MaryannDu:** that is a big problem

**CarleeK:** and they were ridiculously easy

**KellyP:** and the schools get hit hard because of that

**KellyP:** I understand that now...

**MaryannDu:** and in a way you did not really need to study for them



**CarleeK:** they didn't test anything we hadn't learned since like middle school...I guess my school was fortunate to teach high levels and didn't focus on the standards

**MaryannDu:** they are achievement test so that they should be a natural thing to take

**MaryannDu:** right

**KellyP:** yeah, that's true, but you know what I mean. people speed through them just to get it over with

**MaryannDu:** they are min standards, so if you are being taught at higher levels, it should be fine

**MaryannDu:** right.

**MaryannDu:** and the focus is so negative

**CarleeK:** yeah. the teachers make it very aware they don't like the tests either

**KellyP:** exactly

**MaryannDu:** right

**MaryannDu:** where, it is one thing, then hey, be positive and take them

**MaryannDu:** they are a good indicator, even though some of the tests are pretty bad,

**MaryannDu:** the problem is not with the test alone, but the decisions made about kids based on the test

**MaryannDu:** in your education program do you have curriculum classes, and assessment classes?

**CarleeK:** I'm not in the school of ed so I'm not sure

**MaryannDu:** ok

**KellyP:** I am not either...hopefully I will be soon

**BJB2:** I think that we all need assessment in some form no matter what we're doing...

**MaryannDu:** here is a link to Bob Linn who is at cu. very very nice person

**MaryannDu:** <http://www.colorado.edu/education/faculty/robertlinn/>

**CarleeK:** thanks

**BJB2:** whether it's action research which is reflective of your practice as an educator...or whatever...

**MaryannDu:** he does a lot research on assessment and has written a lot

**BJB2:** or assessment of your goals and aspirations

**MaryannDu:** right

**MaryannDu:** assessment is an interesting topic

**BJB2** agrees

**CarleeK:** if teachers and educators are aware of the problems caused by assessment, are they doing anything to change them?

**MaryannDu:** I believe that it is all about what do we want students to do, then mapping out how to get students there, an assessment is a way to demonstrate something

**MaryannDu:** that is a big issue.

**MaryannDu:** yes and no

**MaryannDu:** teachers often do not have the skills or the time to really use assessment to guide instructional practice. it would be nice if there were someone in the school who bridged the distance from information from tests and instructional practices

**MaryannDu:** and there are many centers and people who have written on the issues

**MaryannDu:** but then there are others who create policy with limited information and then it goes around and around

**CarleeK:** hmm

**MaryannDu:** even classroom assessment

**MaryannDu:** how many tests have not really measured what the teacher taught

**MaryannDu:** the teacher lectured and the test asked you to synthesize

**MaryannDu:** you got facts and then had to explain a series of events

**MaryannDu:** so to me classroom assessment is the first thing then instructional practices follow - to get you to the goal

**MaryannDu:** so, what do you think about Tapped In?

**KellyP:** it is interesting

**CarleeK:** I think it's a really cool concept and resource for teachers

**MaryannDu:** yes.

**CarleeK:** how many members does it have?

**KellyP:** I think it could be very useful, but is not the most user friendly site I have used

**MaryannDu:** I would like to do a more formal discussion group on here

**MaryannDu:** BJ?? how many members??

**KellyP:** BJB-do we get e-mailed this transcript?

**BJB2:** Maryann leads this Classroom Assessment discussion every month...the next one will be March 12

**MaryannDu:** I think so. I do.

**BJB2:** there are approx 15,000 international members

**CarleeK:** wow, impressive

**KellyP:** yeah..wow

**MaryannDu:** it is a great space for discussion.

**MaryannDu:** I do have a few files posted about assessment

**MaryannDu:** some people have classes meet here, etc

**KellyP:** our class took a tour with BJ last week actually

**MaryannDu:** ok

**BJB2** nods

**MaryannDu:** I have often done web chats like this with classes I teach if the weather has been awful or I had to be away

**MaryannDu:** it was very fun

**CarleeK:** haha that's cool

**MaryannDu:** class goes soooo fast

**CarleeK:** I bet

**BJB2** agrees...cybertime is much faster than f2f

**KellyP:** well I think I am going to take off...bj do we get this transcript e-mailed to us?

**MaryannDu:** I like doing it. but it does seem like it is better to focus on something and really get deeper in the topic

**BJB2:** yes, Kelly. The script is automatically sent when you log out.

**MaryannDu:** ok

**KellyP:** great! thanks! bye

**BJB2** nods to Maryann. Someday!

**MaryannDu:** you're welcome. Thanks for stopping in!

**CarleeK:** thanks for leading this tonight Maryann

**MaryannDu:** no problem. drop in again!

**BJB2:** eventually people will 'get it' and start using the fantastic resources that Tapped In provides

**MaryannDu:** yes. it takes time

**BJB2** nods sadly

**MaryannDu:** and a willing to listen and think

**MaryannDu:** take care!

**MaryannDu:** lol

**CarleeK:** have a good evening you two

**BJB2** hugs goodnight...thanks, Maryann

**BJB2** waves goodnight to Carlee

**MaryannDu:** I am still working on bumping this up a level, just not quite there yet

**MaryannDu:** bye