

Minutes of Deans' Council Meeting
April 18, 1989

Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Graduate School Conference Room (JH 3009-3010)
Present: Cicarelli, Conser, Countryman (for Yiannaki), Deeb, Gillis, Hotchkiss, Mapley, McBriarty, Richley, Ruggles, Sutton, Sweetkind, Yozwiak

I. Minutes of February 14, 1989, were approved as distributed.

II. Unfinished business

Problem: capturing students who evade remedial courses or register for but subsequently drop them. Advisors and registration personnel need to be watchful; advisors can monitor students who require an advisor's signature, but those who don't need a signature and apply to drop a remedial course can only be flagged by those who process add/drop slips. Provost Gillis will obtain printout of those who drop remedial courses. The School of Education will try to line up additional limited-service faculty for Fall, 1989, to enable the offering of additional sections of 510.

III. New business

A. Question: should equipment bought for a particular room or building be carried on the inventory of the department using it or on that of the place in which it is located (e.g., equipment situated in a room of Meshel Hall but used only by Engineering Technology)? There was consensus that such items should be listed on the inventory of the academic department utilizing it.

B. Problem: how to enforce the injunction against a student's registering for more than 25 quarter hours, particularly if the total of 26 or more is reached via the add process. Students who seek to register for more than 25 will be flagged at registration; they will be permitted to register for no more than the allowed number and advised that they must consult their deans for permission to exceed 25 before registration for the desired additional hours will be processed. This procedure is designed to avoid "shopping" students' tying up spaces in classes while they maximize their options. The anticipated elimination of the add/drop fee will probably encourage "shopping" and moving from section to section. Various approaches to handling the problem were discussed, but consensus appeared to be that each of these would create at least as many difficulties as it would solve.

IV. Announcements

A. Some minor shifts in August registration dates for various categories of registrants were announced, and revised schedules were distributed.

B. EARLY is proceeding nicely; parents have given excellent feedback.

- C. Provost Gillis is alerting North Central to our plans for going from a Master's highest to a doctoral-granting institution. Because of our entry's being via the consortial Ph.D. in Clinical Biomedical Sciences, our transition in status is expected to be smooth.
- D. Susan Khawaja would like the Advisors' Manual to contain a statement that her office should be notified if an international student is not full-time; advisors should indicate the justification (e.g., illness, difficulty with English) for the reduced load.
- E. During the recent Bethany Conference, some stress-producing elements within the University were identified, including perceived resistance to change, registration procedures, and lack of relaxation facilities.
- F. A "Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education" has been formulated by the Joint Committee on Testing Practices; a copy is attached to these minutes.
- G. Education, Engineering, and Management have indicated an interest in using the ETS Major Field Achievement Tests.
- H. Ruggles announced that he testified before the Ohio House Education Committee in support of H.B. 212, which would establish an alternative route for certification of secondary-school teachers.
- I. Enrollment for Spring, 1989, is virtually unchanged from that of Spring, 1988.
- J. Progress is being made, albeit slowly, on making the integrated ~~computer system~~ operative; PERMREC is complete.

STINKS?

K. A recent memo from the Associate Provost indicated that

- 1) YSU employees are not to be issued limited-service contracts for teaching during or at an hour in lieu of their lunch hour, and
- 2) departments are expected to adhere to the policy that specifies that only full-service faculty may offer conference courses.

The latter poses problems for one school; the policy base will be researched to determine whether deviations can be permitted in extraordinary circumstances.

V. Adjournment: 4:05 p.m.

Sally M. Hotchkiss

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Secretary pro tem

CODE OF FAIR TESTING PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

Prepared by the Joint Committee on Testing Practices

The Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education states the major obligations to test takers of professionals who develop or use educational tests. The Code is meant to apply broadly to the use of tests in education (admissions, educational assessment, educational diagnosis, and student placement). The Code is not designed to cover employment testing, licensure or certification testing, or other types of testing. Although the Code has relevance to many types of educational tests, it is directed primarily at professionally developed tests such as those sold by commercial test publishers or used in formally administered testing programs. The Code is not intended to

cover tests made by individual teachers for use in their own classrooms.

The Code addresses the roles of test developers and test users separately. Test users are people who select tests, commission test development services, or make decisions on the basis of test scores. Test developers are people who actually construct tests as well as those who set policies for particular testing programs. The roles may, of course, overlap as when a state education agency commissions test development services, sets policies that control the test development process, and makes decisions on the basis of the test scores.

The Code has been developed by the Joint Committee on Testing Practices, a cooperative effort of several professional organizations, that has as its aim the advancement, in the public interest, of the quality of testing practices. The Joint Committee was initiated by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education. In addition to these three groups, the American Association for Counseling and Development/Association for Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, and the American Speech-

Language-Hearing Association are now also sponsors of the Joint Committee.

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The Code presents standards for educational test developers and users in four areas:

- A. Developing/Selecting Tests
- B. Interpreting Scores
- C. Striving for Fairness
- D. Informing Test Takers

Organizations, institutions, and individual professionals who endorse the Code commit themselves to safeguarding the rights of test takers by following the principles listed. The Code is intended to be consistent with the relevant parts of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, NCME, 1985). However,

the Code differs from the Standards in both audience and purpose. The Code is meant to be understood by the general public; it is limited to educational tests; and the primary focus is on those issues that affect the proper use of tests. The Code is not meant to add new principles over and above those in the Standards or to change the meaning of the Standards. The goal is rather to represent the spirit of a selected portion of the Standards in a way that is meaningful to test takers and/or their parents or guardians. It is the hope of the Joint Committee that the Code will also be judged to be consistent with existing codes of conduct and standards of other professional groups who use educational tests.

A Developing/Selecting Appropriate Tests*

Test developers should provide the information that test users need to select appropriate tests.

Test users should select tests that meet the purpose for which they are to be used and that are appropriate for the intended test-taking populations.

Test Developers Should:

1. Define what each test measures and what the test should be used for. Describe the population(s) for which the test is appropriate.
2. Accurately represent the characteristics, usefulness, and limitations of tests for their intended purposes.
3. Explain relevant measurement concepts as necessary for clarity at the level of detail that is appropriate for the intended audience(s).
4. Describe the process of test development. Explain how the content and skills to be tested were selected.
5. Provide evidence that the test meets its intended purpose(s).
6. Provide either representative samples or complete copies of test questions, directions, answer sheets, manuals, and score reports to qualified users.
7. Indicate the nature of the evidence obtained concerning the appropriateness of each test for groups of different racial, ethnic, or linguistic backgrounds who are likely to be tested.
8. Identify and publish any specialized skills needed to administer each test and to interpret scores correctly.

Test Users Should:

1. First define the purpose for testing and the population to be tested. Then, select a test for that purpose and that population based on a thorough review of the available information.
2. Investigate potentially useful sources of information, in addition to test scores, to corroborate the information provided by tests.
3. Read the materials provided by test developers and avoid using tests for which unclear or incomplete information is provided.
4. Become familiar with how and when the test was developed and tried out.
5. Read independent evaluations of a test and of possible alternative measures. Look for evidence required to support the claims of test developers.
6. Examine specimen sets, disclosed tests or samples of questions, directions, answer sheets, manuals, and score reports before selecting a test.
7. Ascertain whether the test content and norms group(s) or comparison group(s) are appropriate for the intended test takers.
8. Select and use only those tests for which the skills needed to administer the test and interpret scores correctly are available.

*Many of the statements in the Code refer to the selection of existing tests. However, in customized testing programs test developers are engaged to construct new tests. In those situations, the

test development process should be designed to help ensure that the completed tests will be in compliance with the Code.

B Interpreting Scores

Test developers should help users interpret scores correctly.

Test Developers Should:

9. Provide timely and easily understood score reports that describe test performance clearly and accurately. Also explain the meaning and limitations of reported scores.
10. Describe the population(s) represented by any norms or comparison group(s), the dates the data were gathered, and the process used to select the samples of test takers.
11. Warn users to avoid specific, reasonably anticipated misuses of test scores.
12. Provide information that will help users follow reasonable procedures for setting passing scores when it is appropriate to use such scores with the test.
13. Provide information that will help users gather evidence to show that the test is meeting its intended purpose(s).

Test users should interpret scores correctly.

Test Users Should:

9. Obtain information about the scale used for reporting scores, the characteristics of any norms or comparison group(s), and the limitations of the scores.
10. Interpret scores taking into account any major differences between the norms or comparison groups and the actual test takers. Also take into account any differences in test administration practices or familiarity with the specific questions in the test.
11. Avoid using tests for purposes not specifically recommended by the test developer unless evidence is obtained to support the intended use.
12. Explain how any passing scores were set and gather evidence to support the appropriateness of the scores.
13. Obtain evidence to help show that the test is meeting its intended purpose(s).

C Striving for Fairness

Test developers should strive to make tests that are as fair as possible for test takers of different races, gender, ethnic backgrounds, or handicapping conditions.

Test Developers Should:

14. Review and revise test questions and related materials to avoid potentially insensitive content or language.
15. Investigate the performance of test takers of different races, gender, and ethnic backgrounds when samples of sufficient size are available. Enact procedures that help to ensure that differences in performance are related primarily to the skills under assessment rather than to irrelevant factors.
16. When feasible, make appropriately modified forms of tests or administration procedures available for test takers with handicapping conditions. Warn test users of potential problems in using standard norms with modified tests or administration procedures that result in non-comparable scores.

Test users should select tests that have been developed in ways that attempt to make them as fair as possible for test takers of different races, gender, ethnic backgrounds, or handicapping conditions.

Test Users Should:

14. Evaluate the procedures used by test developers to avoid potentially insensitive content or language.
15. Review the performance of test takers of different races, gender, and ethnic backgrounds when samples of sufficient size are available. Evaluate the extent to which performance differences may have been caused by inappropriate characteristics of the test.
16. When necessary and feasible, use appropriately modified forms of tests or administration procedures for test takers with handicapping conditions. Interpret standard norms with care in the light of the modifications that were made.

D Informing Test Takers

Under some circumstances, test developers have direct communication with test takers. Under other circumstances, test users communicate directly with test takers. Whichever group communicates directly with test takers should provide the information described below.

Test Developers or Test Users Should:

- 17. When a test is optional, provide test takers or their parents/guardians with information to help them judge whether the test should be taken, or if an available alternative to the test should be used.
- 18. Provide test takers the information they need to be familiar with the coverage of the test, the types of question formats, the directions, and appropriate test-taking strategies. Strive to make such information equally available to all test takers.

Under some circumstances, test developers have direct control of tests and test scores. Under other circumstances, test users have such control. Whichever group has direct control of tests and test scores should take the steps described below.

Test Developers or Test Users Should:

- 19. Provide test takers or their parents/guardians with information about rights test takers may have to obtain copies of tests and completed answer sheets, retake tests, have tests rescored, or cancel scores.
- 20. Tell test takers or their parents/guardians how long scores will be kept on file and indicate to whom and under what circumstances test scores will or will not be released.
- 21. Describe the procedures that test takers or their parents/guardians may use to register complaints and have problems resolved.



Note: The membership of the Working Group that developed the Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education and of the Joint Committee on Testing Practices that guided the Working Group was as follows:

Theodore P. Bartell
 John R. Bergan
 Esther E. Diamond
 Richard P. Duran
 Lorraine D. Eyde
 Raymond D. Fowler
 John J. Fremer
 (Co-chair, JCTP and Chair,
 Code Working Group)

Edmund W. Gordon
 Jo-Ida C. Hansen
 James B. Lingwall
 George F. Madaus
 (Co-chair, JCTP)
 Kevin L. Moreland
 Jo-Ellen V. Perez
 Robert J. Solomon
 John T. Stewart

Carol Kehr Tittle
 (Co-chair, JCTP)
 Nicholas A. Vacc
 Michael J. Zieky
 Debra Boltas and Wayne
 Camara of the American
 Psychological Association
 served as staff liaisons

Additional copies of the Code may be obtained from the National Council on Measurement in Education, 1230 Seventeenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Single copies are free.

