Further information about EIL 460 at UIUC:

- This class is highly practical – students exit with skills at language test development and use.
- The course is conducted in English and test development projects (group and individual) are written in English, but they can focus on any target language.
- Test development projects feature test specifications (“specs”). A spec is a document from which many equivalent test items or tasks can be produced. Hence, the tests developed in this class are more than just a collection of test questions. They are generative models for future use by students after the class has ended. The course also features extensive readings about spec-driven test development, and the readings include further examples of test specs.
- Group-developed test specs will be collated into a packet. All members of the class will receive the entire packet; it forms a valuable study tool after the course has been completed.
- Other readings and course discussions feature elements of both theory and practice:
  - Critical analysis of issues in language test validity, classroom assessment versus large-scale assessment, and models of language ability.
  - Problems in ethics in language test development and score use.
  - Issues arising from the history and philosophy of language testing (in particular) and educational and psychological measurement (in general).
- The course can fulfill the State of Illinois K-12 endorsement requirement for ESL/bilingual teachers. However, the course is not solely aimed at that target student group. Rather, the class allows interaction among a very wide array of language educators, including U.S. K-12 teachers, teachers of that age range in other countries, and teachers of adults all over the world. Furthermore, as mentioned above, students can work on tests for target language(s) of their choosing.
- Students can critique tests with which they are familiar, in many ways. For example, a group-based test spec project may begin with a critical analysis of an existing test, and the group may seek to improve that test. A student may decide to do that approach for an individual project. Finally, at a periodic rate throughout the term, all students will select and critique an external testing company or agency website and present that critical analysis to the entire class.
- In summary, what will this course provide at its completion?
  - Individual written projects that focus on different aspects of language testing, and which the student can consult (later in a career) for matters both practical and theoretical
  - the spec packet – mentioned above – which is a track record of practical test development work in the course and a roadmap to do such work later in a teaching career
  - a set of course notes and readings that form the beginnings of a professional bookshelf on testing.