Refreshing How We Are Assessing:

Creating Practical and Meaningful Assessments and Using Assessment to Enhance Student Learning

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1-3 pm

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Intended Outcomes

After this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe direct and indirect measures of student learning
- Create meaningful assessments aligned with student learning outcomes
- Discuss, with confidence, their assessment results
- Plan ways of using assessment to improve teaching and learning

From your Program Assessment Review (PAR) User Manual:

Assessment - systematic process of gathering and using appropriate information to refine programs and improve student learning.

Student learning objective – intended knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of the mind that students have and take with them when they complete a program of study. Student learning objectives exist at three levels (i.e., institutional, program, and course) and are interconnected.

Student learning outcome – observed knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of the mind that students have and take with them when they complete a program of study. Student learning outcomes exist at three levels (i.e., institutional, program, and course) and are interconnected.

SMART Goals – goals that incorporate Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-based criteria to help focus efforts and chances of achieving the goal.

Curriculum Mapping - the process of creating a synoptic view of the curriculum, documenting curricular opportunities that enable students to reach the program's learning goals. A curricular map shows where students are introduced to the program's central ideas, skills, and habits of mind, where those objectives are reinforced, and where students display mastery of these objectives.

Refresher: Some key terms

Acting on Assessment: Addressing lingering questions

How do I know my assessments are reliable or more simply, *am I really seeing learning (or lack of)?*

What are some ways to assess student learning in multi-section, multi-instructor courses?

More assessment humor

I measure how my students learn using_____.

Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle

Learning Goals

Students will make clear use of examples to support theses

Using Results

Conferences with students to discuss use of examples in earlier drafts compared to final papers

Learning Opportunities

Drafts of essays, peer editing workshops, final papers

Assessment

Grade essays using a rubric that evaluates student use of examples

A Reminder…

Assessment of student learning is deciding what we want our students to learn and making sure they learn it.

Curriculum and assessment planning is ensuring there are places in the curriculum where students learn what we want them to learn and that we have opportunities to determine the extent to which they learn it.

Student Learning Objectives

Students should know X or be able to do Y when they complete this course.

Critical to creating or selecting assessment tools is a solid understanding of the most important things you want students to learn. Learning goals that are:

Clear

Observable and measurable (Action Verbs)

Easily understood

Articulated

Aligning Outcomes

Program learning outcomes specify knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions students are expected to attain in an academic course of study.

Course learning outcomes refer to an intended effect of the course educational experience that has been stated in terms of specific, observable, and measurable student performance.

Aligning Goals and Assessment

Right tool for the objective

Right opportunity

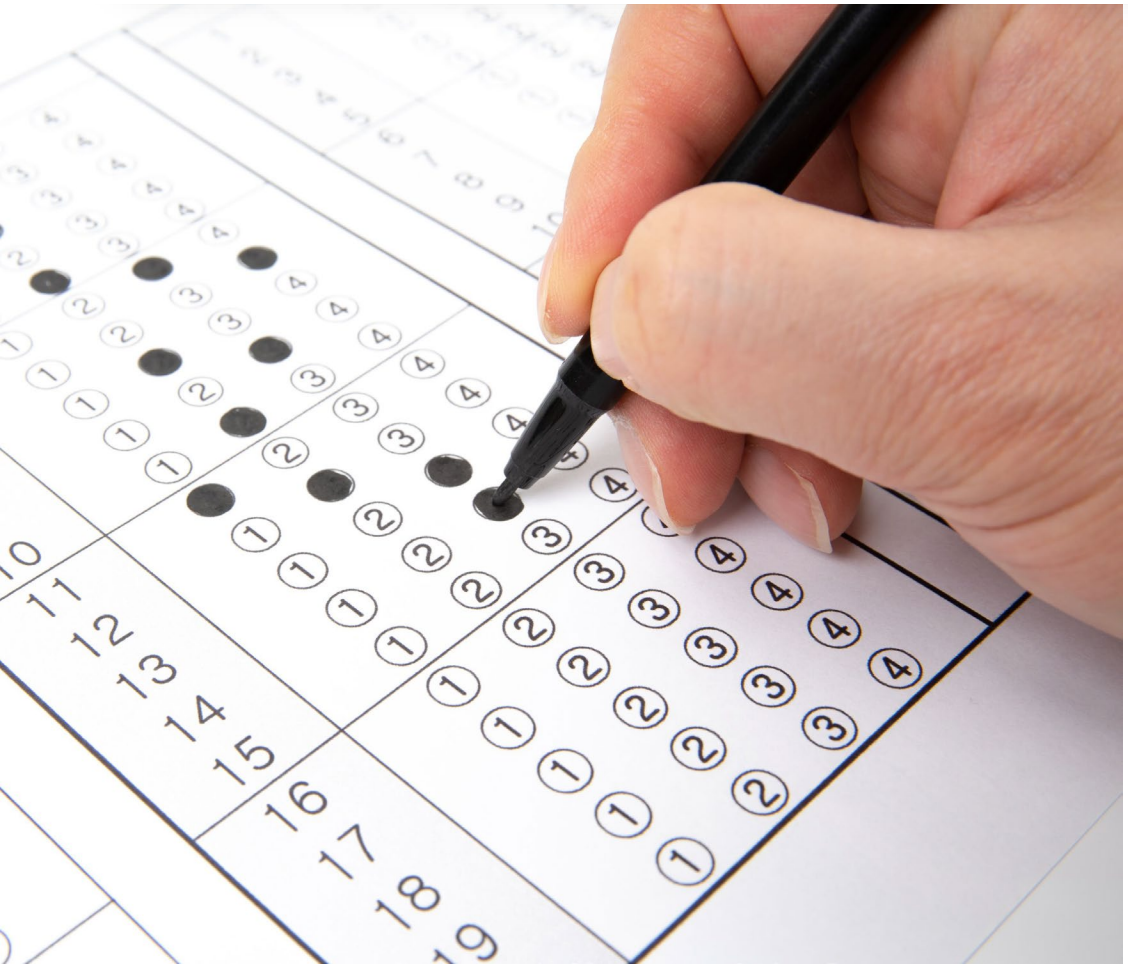
- Course (consult the curricular map)
- Experience
- Co-curricular

Right time

- Beginning understanding
- Advancing knowledge
- Mastery / proficiency

Considering Types of Evidence

Assessment at the Program Level



Course-embedded assignments

- Papers
- Tests
- Presentations
- Projects

Capstone experiences

Field experiences / clinical placements

Portfolios

Published tests

Exhibitions

Good assessment relies on multiple, diverse approaches

Assessing Student Learning

Formative (in process) or summative (endpoint)

Direct (tanglible / self-explanatory) or indirect evidence (implied)

Objective (“one right answer”) and subjective (judgments)

Embedded (in coursework) and add-on (beyond course requirements)

Local (internally developed) and published (external)

Quantitative and qualitative

Formal or informal

Individual or group

Direct Evidence

- Portfolios of student work
- Rubric (rating scale) scores for written work, oral presentations, or performances
- Scores on locally-designed multiple choice and/or essay tests, accompanied by test “blueprints” describing what the test assesses
- Score gains between entry and exit on published or local tests or writing samples
- Electronic discussion threads or journals
- Student reflections on what they have learned over the course of the program
- Student reflections on their values, attitudes and beliefs, if developing those are intended outcomes of the course or program

Direct evidence

What are students learning?

- What do they know?
- What can they do?

What is the extent of the learning?

How has learning changed?

What are the gaps in the learning?

To what extent are they meeting expected levels of performance (internal and external)?

Indirect Evidence

Grades (assignments, course grades)

Admission rates into graduate or professional programs

Job placement rates

Students ratings of their knowledge and skills and reflections of what they have learned in a course or over a program (course evaluations, exit interviews)

Alumni satisfaction with their learning experience (surveys, focus groups)

Percent of courses whose syllabi include a list of the major learning outcomes of the course (curriculum map)

Percent of courses whose syllabi state learning outcomes that include thinking skills (not just simple understanding of facts and principles)

Indirect evidence

- How are students doing?
- How do students or others perceive their learning?
- Are students satisfied with their experiences?
- What is impacting student learning?
- What happens to students after college?

Assessment Strategies to Consider

I want to assess…	Consider using…
Thinking and performance skills	Assignments that demonstrate the skills which are assessed using a rubric or scoring guide
Knowledge / conceptual understanding	Tests (multiple choice, short answer)
Attitudes, values, habits of mind	Reflective writing prompts
Overall picture of student learning	Culminating portfolio or project assessed using a rubric or scoring guide
Your students' performance compared to others	Published test or survey
Group work	Observation checklist

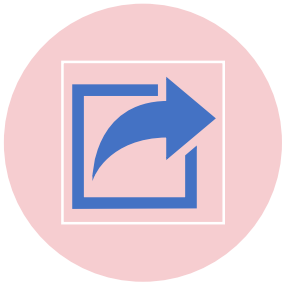
Your turn

In one minute, list the ways I could assess your knowledge of assessment of student learning. Label your approaches as direct or indirect evidence.

Discuss your ideas in small groups.

Use Assessment Results

Discuss



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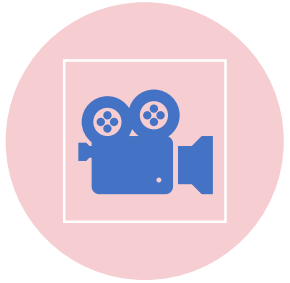


Showcase

Plan

Places to Discuss, Share and Showcase

Assessment committee meetings

Department / School meetings

Annual assessment events

Newsletters or e-blasts

Websites

Conferences

Address Disappointments

What results were expected?

Pleasant surprises

Unanticipated areas of “bad” results

Trends v. new findings

Where do we go from here?

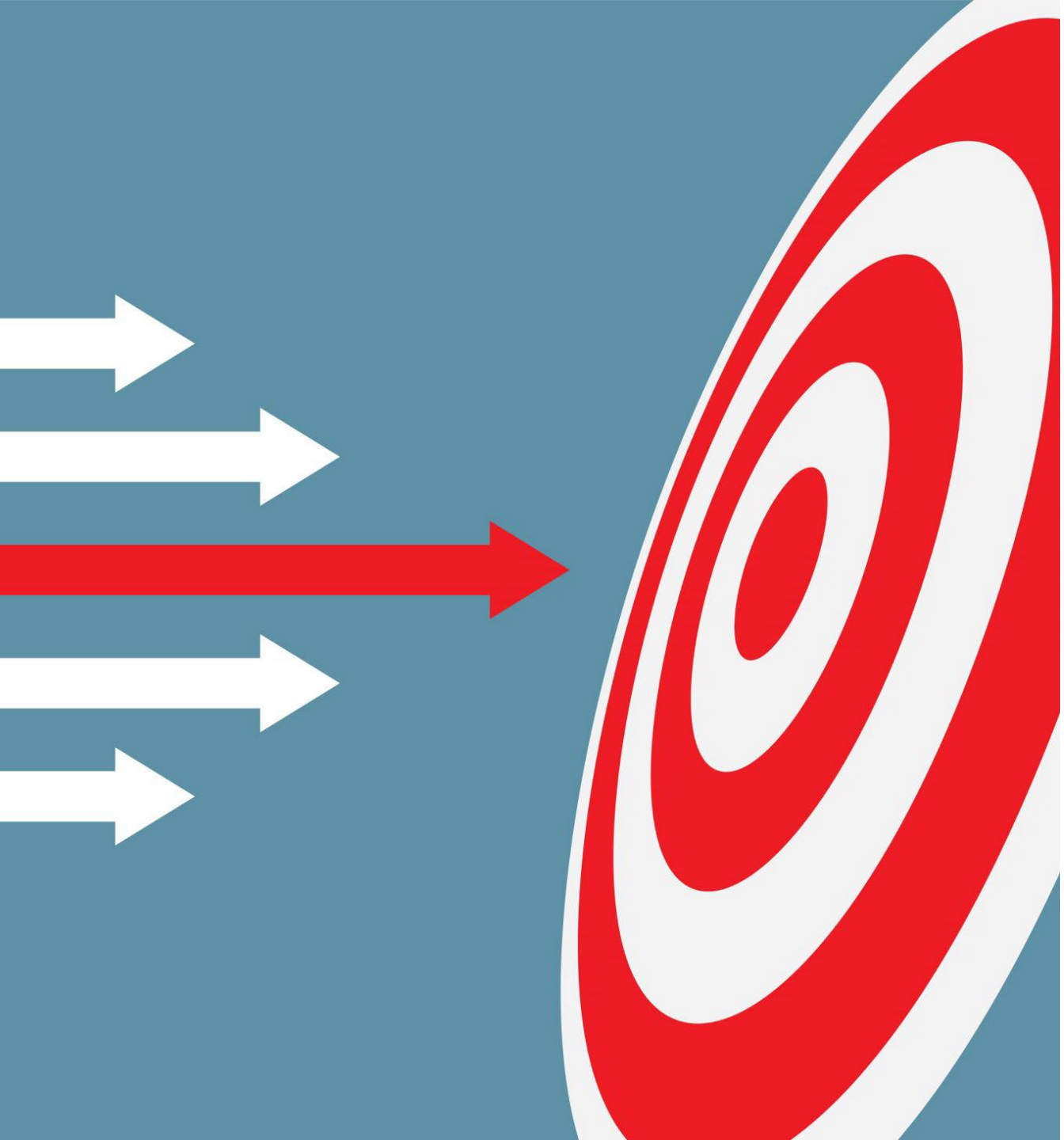
Improve Assessments

Poorly written and misinterpreted

Match key learning goals

Too difficult for most responsible students

Benefits worth time and money invested



Improve Learning Goals

Too many goals

Goals need to be clarified

Goals inappropriate or overly ambitious

Improve Curricula or Pedagogy

Does the curriculum adequately address each learning goal?

Are we using the right methods of instruction to maximize learning?

Are students being placed properly?

Improve Advisement & Support Services

- Tutoring
- Library services
- Academic advisement & counseling
- Technology infrastructure
- Co-curricular opportunities

Your turn

As you finalize your syllabus for a fall course(s), what is one change you are making as a result of assessment information from the last time you taught the course?

My example: I teach the advanced research seminar in the Ed.D. course. In fall 2021 students took their comprehensive exams and submitted the final course paper in December. Student papers were not fully developed so I moved the exams to the middle of the course and devoted more end of course time to developing the paper and students in the spring course had more fully developed final papers.

Questions