Assessment in the College Classroom

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What brings you here today..... Classroom, Course or Both?

- Why would you like to learn more about course/class assessment?
What are the Conditions of Excellence in Education?

- Student Involvement
- High Expectations
- Assessment & Feedback

Involvement in Learning, 1984

Assessment in the College Classroom
What are the Characteristics of Highly Respected Courses?

- Rapid/Immediate Feedback
- Detailed Feedback
- Frequent Evaluation

Why Do Course Assessment?

- Determine whether the learning outcomes are being met by measuring student performance
- Determine whether the overall course design and materials and procedures are efficient and effective
- Determine whether and how students’ attitudes toward the course and the discipline or field have changed
- Identify students for remediation and exemption

- Summative
  - May include more than one section of a course
  - Focused on pedagogy and curriculum

Session Outcomes

Participants will:

- Identify possible connections between course assessment and program assessment
- Align course outcomes with activities and assignments
- Identify at least 1 appropriate formative (classroom) assessment to use
- Identify summative (course) assessments
Rick Wormeli on Formative & Summative Assessment

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJxFXjfB_B4#t=12](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJxFXjfB_B4#t=12)

Assessment in the College Classroom
Steps of Assessment

1. Establish Learning Goals (Plan)
2. Provide Learning Opportunities (Act)
3. Assess Student Learning (Observe)
4. Use the results (Reflect)


Linda Suskie email on 4/4/2008 to the Assess listserve: “….understand that assessment is action research, not experimental research. While it is systematic, action research is context-specific, informal, and designed to inform individual practice. As such, it doesn't have the precision, rigor, or generalizability of experimental research.”

Assessment in the College Classroom
Key Issues

- Embedded vs. Add-on Assessment
- Value Added/Pre-Post Measures
- Direct vs. Indirect Evidence
- Authentic Assessment (Performance or Alternative Assessment)
Curriculum Map
Alignment: Program Assessment and Course Products

- Identifies where concepts are taught
- Highlights potential issues in the curriculum
- Identifies possible key courses that may have course products for assessment
Genetics

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Graduates will be able to:

1) Demonstrate a sound working knowledge of the principles of genetics

A) Describe the basic concepts in molecular, population, quantitative and evolutionary genetics

B) Describe how knowledge in genetics is based upon research and the interpretation of experimental results

C) Describe how model genetic systems are used to understand the biology of all organisms

2) Engage in scientific inquiry and apply technical, analytical and critical thinking skills to solving problems in genetics

A) Demonstrate the ability to solve genetics problems in the classroom or laboratory

B) Describe experimental systems used in genetics research.

C) Describe basic laboratory and computational techniques used in research areas such as transmission genetics, population genetics, cytogenetics and molecular genetics

D) Develop hypotheses related to a research project

E) Design experiments aimed at answering hypotheses or basic genetics questions

F) Demonstrate skill at collecting data and analyzing results

Assessment in the College Classroom
Course Map
Alignment: Course Outcomes & Activities/Assignments

- Identifies where/how concepts are taught
- Identifies where/how concepts are measured
- Highlights key course products for assessment

Assessment in the College Classroom
Exercise

Draft a Course Map (using Handout 1)

- Include course-level outcomes
- Pedagogy/Activities such as “Lecture”, “Case Studies”, and other in or out of class activities.
- Major assignments
Techniques: Adapt, not Adopt

- Add-on
- Embedded
Embedded Assessments
(Usually Course)

- Selected-Response
- Constructed-Response
- Product/Performance

Authentic Assessment Toolbox:
http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/whatisit.htm created by Jon Mueller, Professor of Psychology, North Central College, Naperville, IL

Assessment in the College Classroom
Selected-Response
Measuring Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills

Traditional Test Questions
- True/False
- Matching
- Multiple Choice

When used for Course Assessment
- Look for patterns in the answers
Constructed-Response

- Short-Answer Essay Questions
- Concept Maps
- Identifying Themes
- Making Predictions
- Summaries
- Explain Your Solution

Course Assessment: Checklist, Rubrics

http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/tasks.htm

Assessment in the College Classroom
Product/Performance

“...reveals their understanding of certain concepts and skills and/or their ability to apply, analyze, synthesize or evaluate those concepts and skills” *

- Research Paper
- Capstone Project
- Article Reviews
- Film Analysis
- Case Study
- Error Analysis
- Panel Discussion
- Fishbowl Discussion
- Oral Presentations

Course Assessment: Rubrics

* [http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/tasks.htm](http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/tasks.htm)
Rubric:
No Descriptors; Weighted

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Assessment in the College Classroom
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<td>Accurately identifies the problem/question and provides a brief summary.</td>
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<td>Examines evidence and questions the quality. Distinguishes between fact and opinion.</td>
<td>Merely repeats information provided. Does not justify position or distinguish between fact and opinion.</td>
<td>Does not identify or assess the quality of supporting evidence.</td>
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<td>Identifies and considers the influence of the context* on the issue</td>
<td>Accurately identifies and provides a well-developed explanation of contextual issues with a clear sense of scope.</td>
<td>Accurately identifies and provides an explanation of potential contextual issues.</td>
<td>Does not explain contextual issues; provides inaccurate information; or merely provides a list.</td>
<td>Does not identify or consider any contextual issues.</td>
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[Link to the full document](http://academic.pgcc.edu/~wpeirce/MCCCTR/Designingrubricsassessingthinking.html)

*Assessment in the College Classroom*
Data for Decisions
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Assessment in the College Classroom
Using a Rubric to Produce Both Grades and Assessment Data

**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA**

**PLIR 301-001: Theories of International Relations - Sec 1**
Professor: Robert Parrish
Teaching Assistant: Ingrid Khan

**Learning Outcomes**

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**Average Score**

| % Highly Competent | 14% | 14% | 29% | 57% | 43% | 29% |

**Input**

- **Rubric for Research Paper**
  - Not competent
  - Nearly competent
  - Competent
  - Highly competent

- Evidence of research
- Well-organized paper
- Logical arguments
- Logical organization

- Organized paper logically
- Demonstrated critical thinking
- Communicated findings

**Output**

- Grade for each student on assignment
- Assessment data by learning outcome
  - Strength (logical organization)
  - Weakness (posing research question)

(Fictitious example)
Decisions

What types of decisions might you make with this type of data?
What are Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS)?

- Use of small-scale data gathering techniques conducted continuously by teachers to determine what students are learning in a given class.

- Low Threshold Activities


Assessment in the College Classroom
What are the Characteristics of CATS?

- usually short, ungraded, and anonymous
- learner centered
- teacher directed
- mutually beneficial
- formative
- context-specific
- ongoing
Potential Impact of CATs

- Find out what and how your students are thinking
- Clarify your goals for your course or class session
- Obtain information for class session design
- Get feedback to make mid-course corrections
- Become exposed to how students learn your discipline and identify means to respond to different learning styles
- Increase active and cooperative learning
- Change the classroom norms for asking questions and admitting deficiencies in understanding
- Help students become self-aware of their learning
- Allow students to make mid-course corrections
- Push students to take their knowledge further
- Leave behind a trail of information that can be use for post-course improvement (for students and teacher)
What are the Working Assumptions of CATs?

- goals & objectives are explicit and public
- students need appropriate and focused feedback
- questions generated by faculty about own teaching
- doesn’t require specialized training
- collaboration enhances design & outcome
Five Dimensions of Learning

- Declarative Learning (What)
- Procedural Learning (How)
- Conditional Learning (When & Where)
- Reflective Learning (Why)
- Metacognitive Learning (How to Learn)


What is the Classroom Assessment Cycle?

CATs PIR
Plan Implement Respond

Assessment in the College Classroom
Common Problems

- Using only one CAT
- Only using a CAT once
- Not feeling free to adapt the CAT to fit your course
- Not helping the students see how the data are being used by you or can be used by them
- Not making some portion of feedback-type data public
- Over-complicating the data collection or summarization
Three Key Learning Principles

**Prior Knowledge**: Students construct new knowledge based on what they already know (or don’t know).

**Deep Foundational Knowledge**: Students need a deep knowledge base and conceptual frameworks.

**Metacognition**: Students must identify learning goals and monitor their progress toward them.

What are Some Important Tips for New Users?

- Target a few ideas only
- Limit time students have to respond
- Read a sample of responses but note all reviewed
- Use verbal feedback or visual summary
Some Good “CAT” Websites

http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/cat.html
http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/cats/
http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/Resources/class_assessment.asp
http://www.flaguide.org/cat/cat.php

Assessment in the College Classroom
Add-on Assessments
(Usually Classroom)

Using Handouts 2 & 3, identify at least 1 CAT you would use.

Prior Knowledge and Recall (1 of 10 categories of CATs)
- Background Knowledge Probe
- Application Cards
- Documented Problem Solutions
- Focus Listing
- Empty Outlines
- Memory Matrix
- Minute Paper
- Muddiest Point

What are the Characteristics of Highly Respected Courses?

- Rapid/Immediate Feedback
- Detailed Feedback
- Frequent Evaluation


Assessment in the College Classroom
Background Knowledge Probe

Classroom Assessment
a) Have never heard of this
b) Have heard of it, but don’t really know what it means
c) Have some idea what this means, but not too clear
d) Have a clear idea of what this means and can explain it

Teaching Goals Inventory
a) Have never heard of this
b) Have heard of it, but don’t really know what it means
c) Have some idea what this means, but not too clear
d) Have a clear idea of what this means and can explain it
Application Cards

- Students give one or more real-world applications for an important principle, generalization, theory, or procedure.

  1. (Business) Stephen Covey recommends “Win-win performance agreements”: give two specific applications, one related to current news and one related to your own life.

  2. (Law) Give a concrete example of the concept “due process.”

- The responses can be sorted as “unacceptable,” “marginal,” “adequate,” or “excellent.”
## Applications Card

**Directions:** Please take a moment to recall the ideas, techniques, and strategies we’ve discussed—and those you’ve thought up—to this point in the session. Quickly list as many possible applications as you can. Don’t censor yourself! These are merely possibilities. You can always evaluate the desirability and/or feasibility of these application ideas later.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interesting Ideas/Techniques from this Session</th>
<th>Some Possible Applications of those Ideas/Techniques to My Work</th>
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Assessment in the College Classroom
Focused Listing

**Purpose:** This tool helps determine what learners recall about a specific topic, including the concepts they associate with the central point. Working in pairs can help students build their knowledge base and clarify their understanding. This technique can be used before, during, or after a lesson.

**Steps:** Ask students to write the key word at the top of a page and within a set time limit (usually 2-3 minutes) to jot down related terms important to understanding that topic.
On the lines below, please list 5-7 words or short phrases that describe/define what the phrase “Classroom Assessment” means to you.

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

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________________________________

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Assessment in the College Classroom
Assessment of Focused Listing

- Compare students' lists with a master one you have generated, looking at both the quantity and quality of their responses.

- Categorize responses into "related" or "unrelated" or "appropriate" or "inappropriate" stacks.

- Consider compiling a master list and having students then sort them by categories.
Focused Listing
A Sample Response

Classroom Assessment is
- Learner-centered
- Teacher-directed
- Formative
- Context-specific
- Usually ungraded and anonymous
- Simple and quick to do
- Rooted in good practice
Memory Matrix

**FOCUS CONCEPTS: 5 Dimensions of Higher Learning**

Based on the definitions just presented, provide one specific example—relevant to the discipline you teach—of each of the 5 dimensions of higher learning.

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<th>DEFINITIONS In your own words</th>
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Assessment in the College Classroom
Minute Paper

Please answer each question in 1-2 sentences.

1. What was the most useful or meaningful thing you learned during this session?

2. What question(s) remain(s) upper-most in your mind as we end this session?
The Muddiest Point

What was the muddiest point in this session?
(In other words, what was least clear to you?)
Defining Features Matrix

Comparing Classroom Assessment & Institutional Assessment

Directions: Listed in the left-hand below are features we can use to define and distinguish different approaches to assessment in higher education. Place plus signs (+) in the columns next to features that generally characterize either Classroom or Institutional Assessment. Place minus signs (-) next to features which are not characteristic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINING FEATURES</th>
<th>Institutional Assessment</th>
<th>Classroom Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focused on Teaching &amp; Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Useful to Administrators &amp; External Audiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Designed &amp; Directed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized &amp; Validated Instruments Preferred</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Useful to Teachers and Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replicable &amp; Comparable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Purpose is to Improve Quality of Higher Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated Statistical Data Analysis Required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires Training in Research Methods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment in the College Classroom
Pro and Con Grid (CAT10)

Please list the advantages and disadvantages of using CATs in your instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of CATS</th>
<th>Disadvantages of CATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Assessment in the College Classroom
One Sentence Summary

Directions:
To create a one-sentence summary, 1st answer all of the questions below in relation to your topic. Then weave your separate answers into 1 (or 2) summary sentences.

Topic: ___________________________

Who?
Does/Did/Will Do What?
To/For Whom/What?
How?
When? Where?
Why?

Assessment in the College Classroom
Approximate Analogies

Directions:
Note the relationship between 2 underlined terms below. Fill in the blanks that follow to create an (approximately) analogy to the terms Teaching and Learning.

Teaching is to Learning (approximately) as ...._____________ is to _______________.

Assessment in the College Classroom
Directed Paraphrasing

Directions:
In no more than 1-2 concise sentences, define what learning is. Write a definition that will make sense to your colleagues. But try, at the same time, to go beyond the (ho-hum) obvious and give them something to think about.

Learning is...

_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________

Assessment in the College Classroom
Group Informal Feedback on Teaching (GIFT)

Directions
Please write brief, honest—and legible—answers to the questions below. (No names please.)

1. What are the 1 or 2 specific things your instructor does that help you learn in this course?

2. What are the 1 or 2 specific things your instructor does that hinder or interfere with your learning?

3. Please give your instructor 1 or 2 specific, practical suggestions on ways to help you improve your learning in this course.
Decisions

What types of decisions might you make with this type of data?
Resources

AACU Rubrics:  
http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index_p.cfm?CFID=37317515&CFTOKEN=54026278


Authentic Assessment Toolbox:  
http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/whatisit.htm  
created by Jon Mueller. Professor of Psychology, North Central College, Naperville, IL.


Office of Institutional Assessment and Studies, University of Virginia.  
http://avillage.web.virginia.edu/iaas/assess/tools/rubrics.shtm  
created by Schnyer, J., Myers, L., & Durocher, A. (retrieved 4/7/2014)

Many thanks for participating.