Section III. Measuring and Evaluating Student Learning

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Direct and Indirect Assessment Techniques

Direct Assessment Techniques

- Course assignments
- Special projects
- Essays
- Brief in-class writing assignments
- Course journals
- Double-entry journals
- Directed paraphrase
- Portfolios of work
- Examinations
- Standardized tests
- Pre- and post-tests
- Performance on licensure or professional exams
- National exams assessing subject matter knowledge
- Video and audiotape evaluations
- Oral presentations
- Field reports
- Exhibits
- Posters
- Performances

Indirect Assessment Techniques

- Student surveys
- Student interviews
- Focus group interviews
- Reflective essays written by students
- Process analysis essays
- Graduate follow-up surveys
- Alumni surveys
- Tracking alumni honors or achievements
- Student scholarly achievement
- Performance in graduate school
- Employer surveys
- Internship evaluations
- Job placement of graduating students
- Analysis of grade distribution
- Curriculum and syllabus analysis
Selecting Methods of Assessment

1. **Thinking critically and making judgments**  
(Developing arguments, reflecting, evaluating, assessing, judging)

   - Essay
   - Report
   - Journal
   - Letter of advice to . . . (about policies, issues involving course content . . .)
   - Present a case for an interest group
   - Prepare a committee briefing paper for a specific meeting
   - Book review (or article) for a particular journal
   - Write a newspaper article
   - Comment on an article’s theoretical perspective

2. **Solving problems and developing plans**  
(Identifying, posing, or defining problems; analyzing data; designing experiments; applying information)

   - Problem scenario
   - Group work
   - Work-based problem
   - Draft a research bid
   - Analyze a case
   - Conference paper

3. **Performing procedures and demonstrating techniques**  
(Computation, taking readings, using equipment, following procedures, following protocols, carrying out instructions)

   - Demonstration
   - Role play
   - Make a video (write script and produce/make video)
   - Produce a poster
   - Lab report
   - Prepare an illustrated manual on using pieces of equipment for specified audience
   - Critique of real or simulated professional practice

4. **Managing and developing oneself**  
(Working co-operatively, working independently, learning independently, being self-directed, managing tome or tasks, organizational skills)

   - Journal
   - Portfolio
   - Learning contract
   - Group work
5. **Accessing and managing information**  
(Researching, investigating, interpreting, organizing information, reviewing and paraphrasing information, collecting data, searching and managing information sources, observing and interpreting)

- Annotated bibliography  
- Course project  
- Research paper  
- Thesis  
- Applied task  
- Applied problem

6. **Demonstrating knowledge and understanding**  
(Recalling, describing, reporting, recounting, recognizing, identifying, relating and interrelating)

- Written examination  
- Oral examination  
- Essay  
- Report  
- Devise an encyclopedia entry  
- Write a response to a client’s question  
- Short answer responses on tests

7. **Designing, creating, performing**  
(Imagining, visualizing, designing, producing, creating, innovating, performing)

- Portfolio  
- Performance  
- Presentation  
- Response to a hypothetical  
- Assigned projects

8. **Communicating**  
(One and two-way communication, group communication, written and verbal communication, arguing, advocating, interviewing, negotiating, presenting)

- Written presentation (essay, report, reflective paper, etc.)  
- Oral presentation  
- Group work  
- Discussion/debate/role play  
- Video presentation  
- Critique of real or professional practice

“When choosing methods it is important to offer variety to learners in the way they demonstrate their learning, and to help them to develop a well-rounded set of abilities by the time they graduate.”

*Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development*
Opportunities for Measuring Student Learning Outcomes

- Assignments embedded in the course
  - Written or oral
  - Individual or group
  - Artifact or performance
- Mid-term and final examinations
- Capstone projects
- Thesis/dissertation
- Internships
Qualities of Effective Assessment Techniques

- Generative: provides useful information
- Productive: leads to improvement
- Varied
- Manageable
- Elegant
- Informed and thoughtful
- Continuous