

## **ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION – What is the Difference?**

The primary objective for using the strategy or tool determines its purpose. Is the data to be gathered for assessment, evaluation or both?

**Assessment** is classroom research to provide useful feedback for the improvement of teaching and learning. Assessment is feedback from the student to the instructor about the student's learning.

**Evaluation** uses methods and measures to judge student learning and understanding of the material for purposes of grading and reporting. Evaluation is feedback from the instructor to the student about the student's learning.

### **CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT**

Classroom Assessment is the observation of students in the process of learning, the collection of frequent feedback on students' learning, and the design of modest classroom experiments that provide information on how students learn and how students respond to particular teaching approaches. Classroom assessment helps individual college teachers obtain **useful feedback on what, how much, and how well their students are learning**. Faculty can then use this information to refocus their teaching to help students make their learning more efficient and more effective.

**PURPOSE OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT: To improve student learning**

**CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT:**

**Learner-Centered:** Classroom Assessment focuses the primary attention of teachers and students on observing and improving learning, rather than on observing and improving teaching.

**Teacher-Directed:** Classroom Assessment respects the autonomy, academic freedom, and professional judgment of college faculty. The individual teacher decides what to assess, how to assess, and how to respond to the information gained through the assessment.

**Mutually Beneficial:** Classroom Assessment requires the active participation of students and faculty. When students participate more actively, and feel more confident that they can succeed, they are likely to do better in their course work. As teachers work closely with students to assess learning, they improve their teaching skills and gain new insights.

**Formative:** Classroom Assessment is formative rather than summative. Summative assessments include tests and other graded evaluations. Classroom Assessments, on the other hand, are almost never graded and are almost always anonymous. Their aim is to provide faculty with information on what, how much, and how well students are learning.

**Context-Specific:** Classroom Assessments need to respond to the particular needs and characteristics of the teachers, students, and disciplines to which they are applied. Being Context-Specific means: what works in one class will not necessarily work in another.

**Ongoing:** Classroom Assessment is an ongoing process, perhaps best thought of as the creation and maintenance of a classroom "feedback loop." Changes are made based on the classroom research results and student feedback.

**Builds on Good Teaching Practices:** Most college teachers already collect some feedback on their student' learning and use that feedback to inform their teaching. Classroom Assessment is an attempt to build on existing good practice by making it more systematic, more flexible, and more effective.

### **CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES (CATS):**

- **Climate Surveys** – Feedback of teaching/learning methods used, text, pace, format of class, etc.
- **Muddiest Point** - Discussion Board or individual student input for what is still unclear
- **Minute Paper** – What was most useful that you learned? What questions remain?
- **PreTest and PostTest** – Questions to show overview of course content; used for first day to show depth and breadth of topics covered and last day to show what learning has occurred
- **Embedded questions** – Questions embedded within the actual graded tests
- **Reflection Paper** – Student critical thought feedback over a learning unit, a learning experience, a field experience, etc.
- **Competency Checklists** – Skills and competencies checklist of ability
- **Group Informal Feedback on Teaching (GIFT)** – Anonymous survey asking for 1-2 instructor actions that help students learn and 1-2 instructor actions that hinder or interfere with learning
- **Self-Assessment Survey or Posting**
- **Student Portfolio of Work** – compilation of work, including drafts, over time to show growth and development of skills and knowledge
- **Classroom Feedback** – Takes many formats; analyzing papers, tests for item analysis for research
- **Analysis of Test Items** – Certain test questions are used for faculty feedback on concepts learned

**Making and documenting teaching improvements**, enhancements, revisions, and/or timing based on your assessment results and findings are a MUST---- this is the FEEDBACK LOOP to improve teaching and learning that is CRITICAL!!!

Contact your Department Assessment Advocate or the Assessment Committee Co-Chairs for more information. Check your Department Assessment Information and the Instructional Innovation website for further information, details, and assessment forms.

There is also **Program/Department/Institutional ASSESSMENT!!**

Remember **ASSESSMENT is NOT for EVALUATION!!!** Evaluation is SUMMATIVE RESULTS for the purpose of grading, appraising, judging, etc.

**EVALUATION:** Purpose is to “grade” or “appraise” or “judge” students or faculty/staff

- **Quizzes**
- **Exams**
- **Worksheets**
- **Clinical Evaluations**
- **Papers**
- **Projects: Group and Individual**
- **Skills and Competencies/Practical Exam**
- **Graded Assignments of all formats**

**Resources:**

The Art and Craft of College Teaching: A Guide for New Professors and Graduate Students, Robert Rotenberg, Active Learning Books, Chicago, IL, 2005.

An Assessment Framework For the Community College: Measuring Student Learning and Achievement as a Means of Demonstrating Institutional Effectiveness , The League for Innovation and QuestionMark, 2004.  
<http://www.league.org/publication/whitepapers/0804.html>

Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers, Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross, Jossey-Bass, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1993.