Assessment for Student Learning

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NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

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Learning Goals for Presentation

- Define assessment for student learning.

- Identify characteristics of assessment for student learning.

- Recognize assessment for student learning in practice.

- Describe steps for moving beyond the classroom with assessment for student learning.

- Apply steps for moving assessment for student learning beyond the classroom to your own program.

Redefining Assessment

The "A" word: What do you think about when you hear the word "assessment"?

Redefining Assessment

What Assessment is NOT

- Testing
- Evaluation
- Grading
- Research

Redefining Assessment

What Assessment IS

- The word "Assessment" comes from the Latin "assidere" which means "to sit beside."

- It's about "sitting beside" students and helping them to learn and succeed.

Assessment for Student Learning: It Begins in Your Classroom

Basic Principle of Assessment for Learning

All assessment should contribute to helping students to learn and succeed.

Assessment for Student Learning: It Begins in Your Classroom

A Model of Assessment for Student Learning

- Emphasizes authentic and complex tasks

- Has an appropriate balance of summative and formative assessment

- Offers extensive confidence-building opportunities and practice

- Rich in formal and informal feedback

- Develops student abilities to evaluate their own progress, direct their own learning

Summative and Formative Assessment: What's the Difference?

- Summative Assessment – Provides an evaluative summary of student learning

- Formative assessment – Provides feedback to improve student learning

Assessment for Student Learning in Practice

Using personal interest portfolios in Psychology

- Emphasizes authentic and complex tasks
- Rich in formal and informal feedback
- Develops student abilities to evaluate their own progress, direct their own learning

Assessment for Student Learning in Practice

Using "clickers" for peer instruction in Astronomy
- Offers extensive confidence-building opportunities and practice
- Rich in formal and informal feedback

Assessment for Student Learning in Practice

Using collaborative research and digital posters in Advanced Honors

- Emphasizes authentic and complex tasks

- Has an appropriate balance of summative and formative assessment

- Offers extensive confidence-building opportunities and practice

- Rich in formal and informal feedback
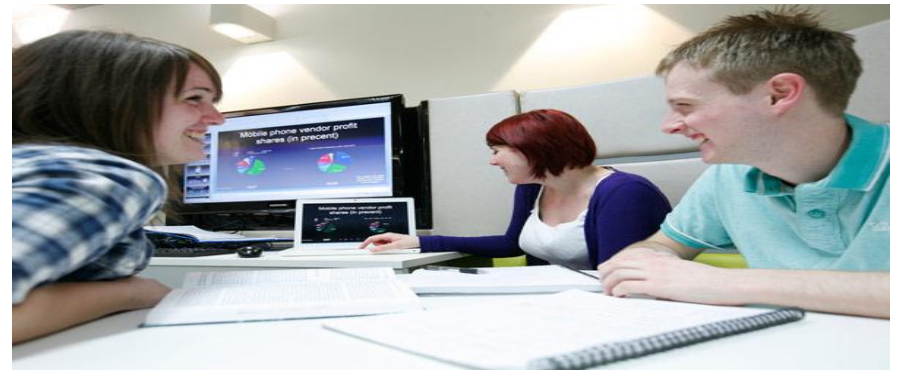
Moving Beyond the Classroom with Assessment for Student Learning

Step 1: Establish learning outcomes

Articulate program outcomes ("By the end of the program or course of study, students will be able to...)

Step 2: Create a curriculum map

Moving Beyond the Classroom…

Step 3: Collect information about student achievement of the learning outcomes

- Identify the questions the program wants to ask
- Choose an assignment or set of assignments that will best answer the questions you posed
- Decide who will analyze this work

Moving Beyond the Classroom…

Evaluating Student Classroom Work: Two Options
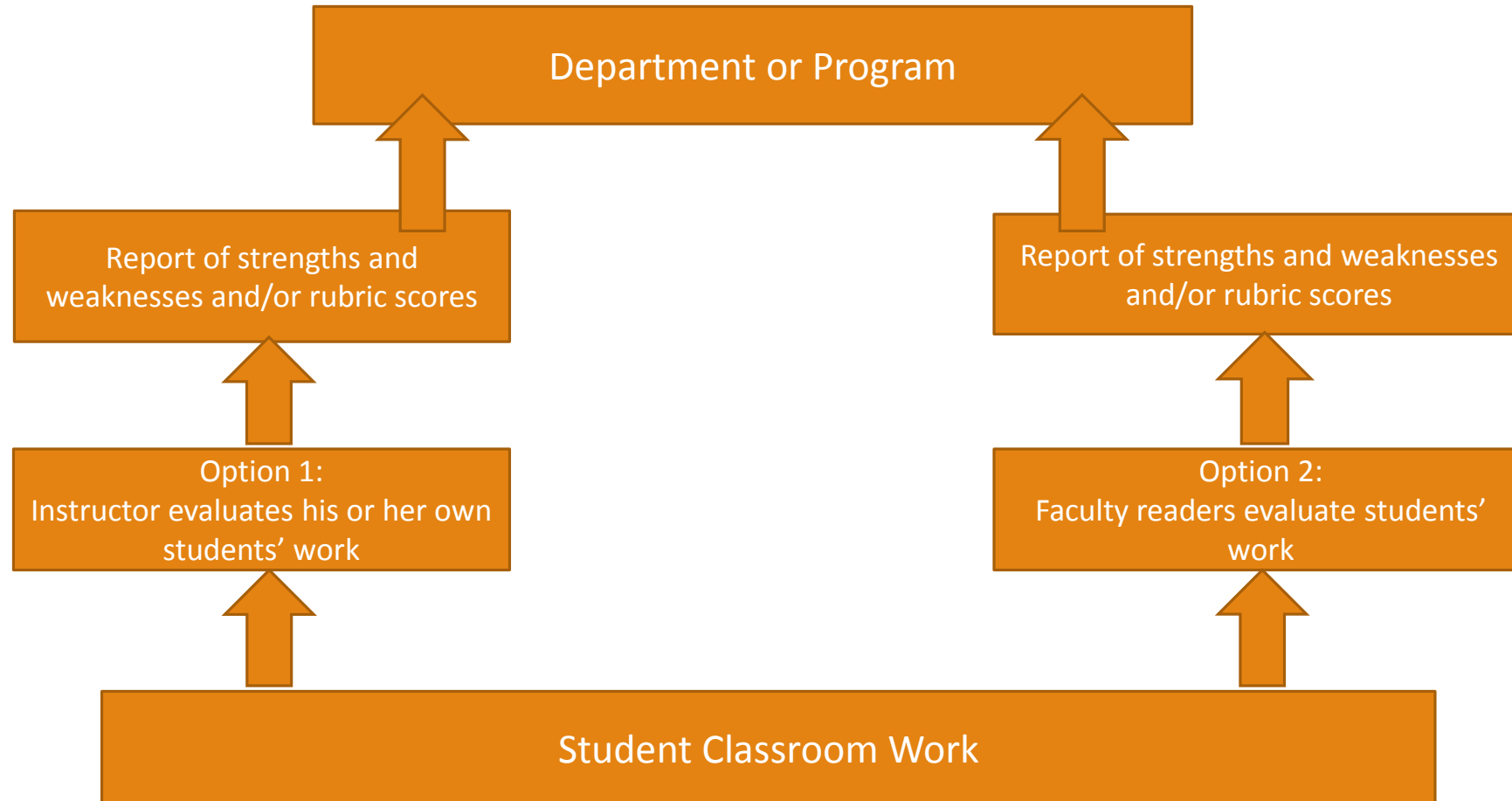
Moving Beyond the Classroom…

Step 4: Use the information for improvement

- Planning for faculty discussion
- The meeting
- Reporting classroom-based assessment

Moving Beyond the Classroom: BS Geographic Science and Community Planning (GSP) Example

Step 1: Establish learning outcomes

Oral Communication: GSP (Geospatial Sciences and Community Planning and Development Emphases) graduates will be able to professionally communicate synthesized knowledge, research, and designs through oral presentations to diverse audiences.

Moving Beyond the Classroom: BS Geographic Science and Community Planning (GSP) Example

Step 2: Create a curriculum map

Oral Communication (Community Planning and Development Emphasis):

GSP 303: Neighborhood Design Presentation Report

GSP 405C: Professional Site Plan Design Presentation

Moving Beyond the Classroom: BS Geographic Science and Community Planning (GSP) Example

Step 3: Collect information about student achievement of the learning outcomes

Oral Communication (Community Planning and Development Emphasis):

- All faculty members teaching courses with oral communication assessments (GSP 303 & GSP 395C) have agreed to collect and record annual data using a common rubric.

- One or more faculty members in addition to GSP 395C course instructors attend and complete rubric evaluations for capstone student oral presentations that take place at City Hall.

Moving Beyond the Classroom: BS Geographic Science and Community Planning (GSP) Example

Step 4: Use the information for improvement

Oral Communication: Summary of Findings

- Oral communication skills currently rank as **one of the most successful outcomes in GSP**.

- Capstone students demonstrated **high levels of proficiency in organization and flow, presentation visuals and slides, and evidence presented to support**. In some categories, students showed marked improvement from the final presentations in GSP 303.

- Students are **generally weak on producing effective introductions and conclusions and consistently omit source information/documentation**.

Moving Beyond the Classroom: BS Geographic Science and Community Planning (GSP) Example

Step 4: Use the information for improvement

Oral Communication:

- Faculty meet to discuss results during bi-weekly faculty meetings and bi-annual faculty retreats at the beginning of spring and fall semesters and consider if minimal changes are necessary to improve course pedagogy or lessons.

- Every three years faculty comprehensively review assessment finding to determine major changes that might involve the University Curriculum Committee.

Assessing As If Learning Matters Most

"To achieve transformation in higher learning, we must develop shared trust, a transformative vision of goals worth working toward, and shared language and concepts equal to the challenge. If we conduct our assessment projects **as if learning matters most**—and not just student learning but ours as well—then the distance between the means and the ends will be reduced and our chances for success increased."—Tom Angelo

Questions?

Contact Information

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Resources

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