

ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

1. **SET REALISTIC GOALS** – goals are those things that the faculty expect students to accomplish as a result of taking the course. It is important that the goal be stated in such a way as to be measurable. Overblown rhetoric will make the assessment task much more difficult.
2. **EXPRESS GOALS IN TERMS OF STUDENT LEARNING** – the trend today is to emphasize what the student has learned or can do as a result of instruction. Although not a requirement, goals statements that begin with “the student” and then explain a specific and measurable outcome of student learning are very valuable.
3. **USE MULTIPLE MEASURES** – many types of measures could be used in assessment, including national tests, class tests, surveys of faculty and students, writing samples, portfolios, survey of employers. Using multiple measures will assure a more rounded picture of student progress.
4. **PROVIDE FOR A FEEDBACK LOOP** – all those teaching a particular course or group of students should receive and discuss the results gained from the multiple measures. They should also adopt strategies either to correct deficiencies or to improve the achievement of learning outcomes overall.
5. **SET A TIMETABLE THAT COVERS ALL THE GOALS OVER A REALISTIC SPAN OF TIME** – it is impossible to assess all of the goals in any one year given the constraints of time and money. The department should establish a plan that assesses only a portion of the goals each year, yet covers all of the goals within three to four years.
6. **AVOID USING ASSESSMENT FOR THE EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL FACULTY** – effective assessment is formative, not summative. Faculty develop a core set of learning outcomes that students should achieve and then design appropriate measures and criteria to assess whether students actually achieve these learning outcomes.