



The Advisor Advocate

Student Learning Assessment

Assessment aims to improve our work, to inform “key constituents,” to prove what is being accomplished, and to support further decision making within the university or for “external accountability” like the IUP’s accreditation (“[Assessment 101](#)”). Assessment is faculty-driven but does not need to be strenuous work; in fact, it all begins with the course work and evaluations that are already in the syllabus.

Step One: Student Learning Outcomes

The most important aspects of SLOs are that they are *clear* and *measurable*. They are different from course goals and descriptions, rather these statements should “describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that characterize a student as a result of taking a given course” (“Assessment Resources”).



Outcomes should:

- Use simple language
- Align with the program goals and objectives
- Demonstrate learning that is appropriate for the course
- Describe student learning in ways that suggest direct measures

Guiding Questions:
 What do I want students to learn?
 What should student be able to do after this course?
 Can I *observe* and *measure* the outcomes as they are stated?

Step Two: SLOs could be seen as a guarantee or promise of what students can expect to learn or be able to do after completing your course. To see if students are meeting those outcomes, a course should have at least one direct and one indirect assessment.

Check out IUP’s [Assessment Resources](#) page for details.

Direct Assessment

Clear examples of what students learn

- Exams, quizzes, classroom activities
- Writing or presentations scored on a rubric
- Culminating projects
- Pre- & Post-test evaluation

Indirect Assessment

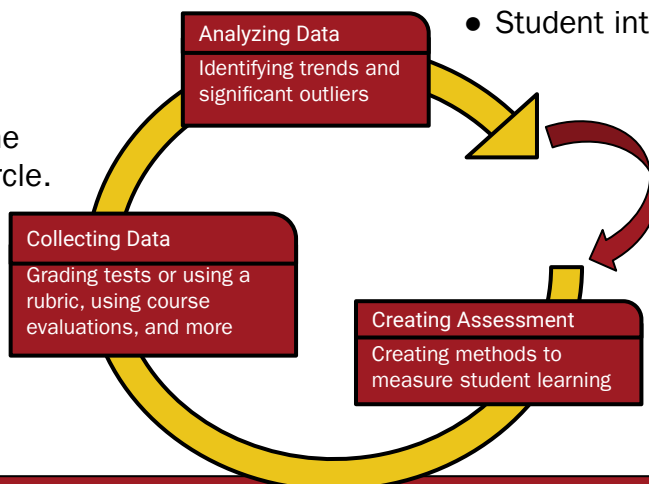
Shows “that learning took place but do[es] not show how or in what context”

- Individual course grades/GPA
- Course evaluations
- Awards and honors
- Student interviews

“Closing the Loop”

In assessment literature, the “loop” refers a feedback circle.

To be effective instructors need to bridge the gap between the data they have and the outcomes they want students to demonstrate.



Data should identify what works and what does not. Instructors close the loop by creating assessments that seek to close the gap.

Creating a holistic feedback loop makes assessment easier, more consistent and impactful. Assessment is a continuous project that improves our work with each loop.

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