

GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING ASSESSMENT



Considering Important Questions in Assessment:

Why are you doing assessment?

- ✓ You have to. Accreditation in higher education requires evidence. Departments now routinely face requirements for verifying that the institution can live up to its mission statement.
- ✓ You want to. Faculty recognize that sound assessment practices will provide appropriate feedback about the quality of the education they offer. The results can influence changes in curriculum practices and lead to improvement in student learning.

Who is the target of assessment?

- ✓ Students. We can assess the attitudes and performance of students at various stages throughout the curriculum and after graduation as alumni.
- ✓ Faculty. Faculty quality can be assessed through peer review, student evaluations, administrator critique, or external review.
- ✓ Program Quality. Although students provide the data source, the target for improvement will often be the program itself.

What is the quality of your assessment measures?

- ✓ Validity and reliability of the measure. The selected strategy needs to produce both a valid and reliable measure of learning.

How will you use the assessment results?

- ✓ Direct feedback to students/faculty. In most cases, the individuals who are being assessed can benefit from feedback on their performances. An assessment experience can highlight both strengths and areas of potential weakness, which can have an

impact on individual plans for improvement.

- ✓ Systematic feedback for program improvement. The results of assessment can be used by program faculty to determine strengths and weaknesses. Strengths can be used to enhance recruitment and procure resources. Weaknesses can be re-mediated once they have been recognized.
- ✓ Benchmarking for program comparison. In some institutions, programs may have to provide evidence of effectiveness for continued support. Clear indications of effectiveness may secure additional support funds.