



Good Assignments Make Good Assessment

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STUDENT FOCUSED • LAND GRANT • RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

Good Assignments Make Good Assessment

Mission:

Advance a culture of learning improvement

Implement an outcomes-based and equity-minded approach to assessment

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Assessment:

Process of revealing what students know or are able to do

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Assumptions:

1. Course learning outcomes (CLOs) exist for your course(s).
2. CLOs are aligned with program learning outcomes (PLOs).

Assessment

[Learning Outcomes](#)

[Curriculum Maps](#)

[Assessment Plans](#)

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"Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate and high standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance."

Angelo, T.A. (1995). Reassessing and defining assessment. AAHE Bulletin, 48(3): 149.

Mission

The mission of the **Office of Assessment** is to *advance a culture of learning improvement* at NDSU.

How can we help?

- [I need help with developing program learning outcomes](#)
- [I need help with constructing a curriculum map](#)

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NDSU GELO:

Develop models to explain phenomena within the natural and physical worlds.

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What counts as an assignment?

1. Nearly all student tasks
2. Formative and summative:
 - Formative: during learning
 - Summative: after learning

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Why assignments?

1. More authentic than exams: emulate tasks commonly undertaken within a discipline.
2. Provide evidence for achievement of LOs.
3. Used in all learning environments.

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Good assignments:

1. Elicit an intended outcome.
2. Reflect learning outcomes at the course and program levels.

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“We all have these things that we’re subconsciously looking for when we grade assignments...that we’re regularly disappointed with. And then you get to poking around in your assignments and realize that nowhere in there do you ever really ask them to demonstrate those things.”

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Assignment template (Ewell 2013)

1. Central task
2. How task should be undertaken and the results communicated
3. How extensive or evidential the response should be

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Compare the substance of [argument X] with [argument Y] by means of a written essay [of Z length] that cites at least three examples of important ways in which the arguments differ.

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Compare the substance of [argument X] with [argument Y] by means of a written essay [of Z length] that cites at least three examples of important ways in which the arguments differ.

1. **Task**
2. How task should be undertaken and results communicated
3. How extensive or evidential the response should be

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Compare the substance of [argument X] with [argument Y] **by means of a written essay [of Z length]** that cites at least three examples of important ways in which the arguments differ.

1. Task
2. **How task should be undertaken and results communicated**
3. How extensive or evidential the response should be

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Compare the substance of [argument X] with [argument Y] by means of a written essay [of Z length] **that cites at least three examples of important ways in which the arguments differ.**

1. Task
2. How task should be undertaken and results communicated
3. **How extensive or evidential the response should be**

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Assessing assignments:

1. To what extent did students achieve an intended learning outcome?
2. What patterns (of success and difficulty) emerged from student work?

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Measures:

Checklist: list of required attributes or elements for an acceptable response

Rubric: description of performance levels for required attributes or elements

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Embedded or signature assignments

1. Yield information about achievement of CLOs and PLOs
2. Inform continuous improvement efforts at course and program level

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Next steps

Talk with an assessment colleague

Visit the NILOA Assignment Library

Join an assignment charrette

Attend assessment help hours



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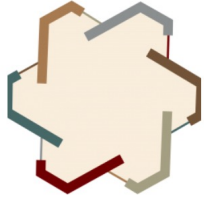
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Assignment Library

The materials in the Assignment Library underwent a three part review process. NILOA team members review the initial submission, then the assignment is peer-reviewed by faculty in an assignment charrette.



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Next steps

Join an assignment charrette:

- Small group meets to review and provide feedback on each other's assignment designs

Attend assessment help hours

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Learning outcome	Opportunities to learn	Assessment methods	Assessment measures
Identify a specific LO	Describe how students will learn through in-class and out-of-class activities	Describe how students will demonstrate their learning	Describe how student work will be evaluated to determine achievement of the LO

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Assessment matters!

1. Yields meaningful and actionable information about student learning.
2. Use to improve student learning.
3. Support program improvements.