

Module 4: Using Assessment Data for Continuous Improvement

Key Takeaways:

- “Closing the loop” in the assessment process involves using assessment results as information to improve student learning.
- Well-designed assessments can minimize the amount of extra work for instructors by using many of the same measures we use to evaluate our students.
- Data from analysis of assessment measures must be interpreted rigorously to determine how well individual learning outcomes have been achieved, and to identify the factors that contribute to good vs. poor attainment of learning outcomes.
- Strategies to improve student learning should be based on sound interpretation of assessment results, and on the findings of educational research in our disciplines.
- Interpretation of assessment data and development of strategies to improve student learning should be approached with the same intellectual rigor and integrity we use in our academic scholarship and research.
- Assessment data from individual courses may be useful for program-level assessment or for other faculty teaching similar courses.
- The assessment process itself should be evaluated after each cycle with regard to good assessment practices, and updated as needed.

Application Questions:

- Do I have clear student learning outcomes for my course, and tools for evaluating student attainment of each outcome?
- Can the same tools I’m using to grade student work be used as effective assessment measures for individual student learning outcomes?
- Can I distinguish which factors explain good vs. poor achievement of learning outcomes in my class?
- What can I change in my teaching strategies to improve student learning next time I teach this course?
- How do the student learning outcomes for my course relate to the broader objectives of my course or program?
- With whom do I need to share my assessment results, and which of my colleagues could benefit from my findings?

