Assessing Student Learning
Christopher Parker, Office of Assessment Services

Assessment methods can help you plan course requirements and clarify for you and your students what is expected of them and the progress they have made. It is also a mechanism for you to give feedback to students on their learning. Outside of the classroom, the university and accreditors often use assessment data for measuring the quality of a degree or program.

Key Takeaways
- The assessment process begins with clear and measurable student learning objectives/outcomes. Then, select assessment methods that directly align with the learning objectives and measures the same skill or knowledge.
- If course objectives and assessments are connected to program assessment, then the results from assessments can be used for overall program assessment. This decreases the assessment workload for your department and increases the value of the data used for program assessment.
- Rubrics provide a framework for consistent grading and help students understand how they will be assessed. Rubrics can be standardized, such as the AAC&U VALUE rubrics, or customized for a particular assessment.
- Assessment Services provides quality program assessment resources and expertise to the NIU community through outreach, consultations, and professional development.
- Assessment Services facilitates the collection, linking, and dissemination of assessment data and activities for use by the NIU community in continuous improvement efforts.

Next Steps
- Begin preparing or revise your syllabus by including clear learning objectives and aligning them with carefully planned assessments.
- Consider using shared rubrics for assessing skills that cross disciplines, such as writing ability or collaboration.

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Resources
- PowerPoint presentation: facdev.niu.edu/tei16assessment
- Office of Assessment Services: niu.edu/assessment/