

What Principles or Guidelines Should Direct PCC's Learning Assessment?

Example from Sinclair Community College

From <http://www.sinclair.edu/about/assessment/assessscc/principles/index.cfm>

Definition of Assessment:

"...a mindset that asks questions -- good questions, hard questions, legitimate questions -- about what and how much students are learning." - *Russell Edgerton*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SINCLAIR'S ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The following general principles were adopted by and have guided the efforts of the Assessment Committee of Student Learning and Development. Sinclair's Assessment Principles were derived from many sources including literature review and participation in various conferences on assessment.

1. The primary reason for assessment is to improve student learning and development.
2. The development of an effective, valid assessment program is a long term dynamic process.
3. Top priorities of the assessment program should be founded in the core goals of Sinclair's mission statement.
4. Assessment must involve a multi-method approach.
5. Assessment of student learning and development is a process that is separate from faculty evaluation.
6. The assessment program is most beneficial when used primarily for making internal decisions that seek to improve programs, instruction, and related services.
7. Assessment program initiatives must include training and related support for faculty and staff who are responsible for assessment activities.
8. Assessment results are not intended to be used punitively against students.
9. The assessment program will seek to use the most reliable, valid methods and instruments of assessment.
10. Assessment objectives/goals should be stated in terms of observable student outcomes, and are generally categorized into one of the following areas:
 - o Basic College Readiness
 - o General Education
 - o Major Areas of Study
 - o Career Preparation
 - o Personal Growth and Development
11. Assessment is never an end in itself, but only a means to an end. In education, the end is to benefit the student, and assessment is but one of many possible bases on which to make decisions regarding admissions, grades, remediation, intervention programs, policies, etc.
12. A comprehensive assessment program is an effective and efficient way to provide the database on which to build better instructional effectiveness for all concerned.