
Questions to Guide Your Assessment Planning



Creating assessments for your courses should be based on the learning goals. As you begin creating your assessments, ask yourself these questions:

- 1) Is the goal for students to learn basic or foundational facts and skills or to show deep understanding? Does my assessment match my response to this question?
- 2) Does the assessment match the course (unit, assignment) learning goal(s)?
- 3) Is the unit of instruction framed around an essential question? If so, is the assessment based on the essential question?
- 4) How will you prepare students to complete this assessment?
- 5) Will the assessment encourage students to use interdisciplinary skills?
- 6) What are my desired results of the assessment?
- 7) Have I created appropriate learning environments for this assessment?
- 8) Is it clear to students what you are measuring with this assessment?
- 9) Is engaging in this assessment task a worthwhile learning experience on its own?
- 10) Is the assessment engaging to all learners?
- 11) Is the assessment one I really want to review?
- 12) What will completing this assessment indicate to students about their learning?
- 13) What assumptions am I making about learner knowledge or performance with this assessment?
- 14) What type of feedback will I provide students about their progress towards the learning goals?
- 15) How will I ensure I am grading consistently across students? How can a rubric help me with this assessment?
- 16) Will this assessment help me to sharpen the focus of my instruction?

Finally, Wiggins and McTighe (2005) posit that when learners understand, they are able to

- Explain - provide accounts or utilize telling evidence to discuss phenomena, facts, or data; able to provide examples
- Interpret - provide meaning through personal, social, cultural, and historical contexts; provides meaning that is contextual and specific through story
- Apply - use and adapt knowledge in context specific ways
- Have perspective - “see the big picture”; take in multiple viewpoints
- Empathize - understand the feelings of another person; expresses critic to functions of -isms; provide responses that are not egocentric or ethnocentric
- Have self-knowledge - aware of what is not understood; reflective of perceptions, prejudices, etc. that affect learning

[Understanding by Design by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe](#)

Does the assessment capture student understanding?