ASSESSMENT METHODS

(Includes Direct and Indirect Methods of Assessment: both methods are valuable, and they should be blended in ways to demonstrate student learning at all levels.)

DIRECT METHODS: provide evidence that a student has command of a specific subject, content area, or skill, or that the student's work demonstrates a specific quality such as creativity, analysis, or synthesis.

1. **Capstone Course:** is a culminating program course generally in the students final semester of his/her program. Program and general/core education learning outcomes are assessed in the capstone course. Program capstone courses contain one or more of the following:

   - a culminating experience (field experience, clinical, internship course or a "senior" seminar)
   - a final project (often a written and oral presentation that applies a culmination of knowledge and skills from the program)
   - program exit exams and/or assessments (assesses content from all major and/or general courses)
   - program and/or college exit surveys
   - portfolio (program and/general educational outcomes assessment)

2. **Case Studies:** involve a systematic inquiry into a specific phenomenon, e.g. individual, event, program, or process. Data are collected via multiple methods often utilizing both qualitative and quantitative approaches.
3. **Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS):** are generally simple, non-graded, anonymous, in-class activities designed to give you and your students useful feedback on the teaching-learning process as it is happening. Data collected can be analyzed to assess student learning outcomes for a program.
4. **Collective Portfolios:** Faculty assemble samples of student work from various classes and use the "collective" to assess specific program learning outcomes. Portfolios can be assessed by using scoring rubrics; expectations should be clarified before portfolios are examined.
5. **Content Analysis:** is a procedure that categorizes the content of written documents. The analysis begins with identifying the unit of observation, such as a word, phrase, or concept, and then creating meaningful categories to which each item can be assigned. For example, a student's statement that "I learned that I could be comfortable with someone from another culture" could be assigned to the category of "Positive Statements about Diversity." The number of incidents that this type of response occurred can then be quantified and compared with neutral or negative responses addressing the same category.

6. **Embedded Assessment:** Assessment items, related to the program learning outcomes, are incorporated into existing evaluative instruments (e.g., exams, quizzes, assignments) already being administered in a course. Faculty score and grade the exams/assignments as usual and then examine embedded assessment that are linked to the program learning outcomes for analysis. The findings are then recorded as program learning outcomes assessment results.
7. **Entrance exams:** an exam generally given prior to admission for competitive admission or to determine course placement level, ability, or potential for successful program completion.
8. **Exit Exams**: an exam either purchased or designed by the program, to assess student achievement of all knowledge-based outcomes from all courses.
9. **Exit Projects**: a culminating project designed by the program to assist student achievement in all application-based outcomes from all courses and related labs.
10. **Locally developed tests:** Faculty develop tests that align with program learning outcomes. Performance expectations should be made explicit prior to obtaining results.
11. **Locally developed exams with objective questions:** Faculty create an objective exam that is aligned with program learning outcomes. Performance expectations should be made explicit prior to obtaining results.
12. **Program matrices/audits:** are used to summarize the relationship between program learning outcomes and courses, course assignments, or course syllabus learning outcomes to examine congruence and to ensure that all learning outcomes have been sufficiently structured into the curriculum.
13. **Observations:** including skill performance, presentations, demonstrations, or field work. Observations can be recorded as a narrative or in a highly structured format, such as a checklist, and they should be focused on specific program learning outcomes.
14. **Performances:** exhibits or shows that demonstrate achievement of program learning outcomes.
15. **Practicum, Clinical, or Internship**: is often a culminating field experience scheduled during the last term of a program that assesses the level of attainment of performance and knowledge based program learning outcomes.
16. **Primary Trait Analysis:** is a process of scoring student assignments by defining the primary traits that will be assessed, and then applying a scoring rubric for each trait.
17. **Pre- and post tests**: measure student learning received during a course or a program as a result of comparing what the student knew before the course or program and then after.
18. **Portfolio Assessment**: assignments are assembled in a portfolio to demonstrate competency or achievement of program and/or general education learning outcomes.
19. **Reflective Essays:** generally are brief (five to ten minute) essays on topics related to identified learning outcomes, although they may be longer when assigned as homework. Students are asked to reflect on a selected issue. Content analysis is used to analyze results.

20. **Scoring Rubrics:** can be used to holistically score any product or performance such as essays, portfolios, recitals, oral exams, research reports, etc. A detailed scoring rubric that delineates criteria used to discriminate among levels is developed and used for scoring. Generally two raters are used to review each product and a third rater is employed to resolve discrepancies.
21. **Standardized Achievement Tests:** Select standardized tests that are aligned to your specific program learning outcomes. Score, compile, and analyze data. Develop local norms to track achievement across time and use national norms to see how your students compare to those on other campuses. May be used to assess general education or specific subjects or disciplines.
22. **Standardized National or Professional Exams:** used to attain professional licensure, certification, or registration.
23. **Vendor certification exams:** are exams that are produced by companies to certify skill and/or product knowledge, .e.g. Microsoft certifications.

INDIRECT ASSESSMENT: Elements that involve data that are related to the act of learning, such as factors that predict or mediate learning or perceptions about learning, but that do not relate directly to the learning itself.

1. **Course evaluations**
2. **Enrollment, progression, and retention data**
3. E**xit Interviews:** Students leaving the university, generally graduating students are interviewed or surveyed to obtain feedback. Data obtained can address strengths and weaknesses of an institution or program and or to assess relevant concepts, theories or skills.
4. **Focus Groups**: are a series of carefully planned discussions among homogeneous groups of 6-10 respondents who are asked a carefully constructed series of open-ended questions about their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. The session is typically recorded and later the recording is transcribed for analysis. The data is studied for major issues and reoccurring themes along with representative comments.
5. **Graduate follow-up studies**
6. **Graduation, or "completion of goals" data**
7. **Interviews:** are conversations or direct questioning with an individual or group of people. The interviews can be conducted in person or on the telephone. The length of an interview can vary from 20 minutes to over an hour. Interviewers should be trained to follow agreed-upon procedures (protocols).
8. **Job placement rates**
9. **Institutional reports**
10. **Surveys** of alumni, students, or employers.
11. **Transcript Studies**. Transcripts are examined to see if students followed expected enrollment patterns or to examine specific research questions, such as exploring differences between transfer and freshmen enrolled students.