

Assessment for Beginners

Jackquelyn Haws Veith

Patrick Henry College

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Session Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

- ✓ **See the “Big Picture” of assessment in institutional effectiveness**
- ✓ **Define essential assessment terms**
- ✓ **Relate learning outcomes to institutional mission statements**
- ✓ **Apply “Best Practices” in creating an assessment plan**

What is assessment?

A process that demonstrates

- 1) external accountability and**
- 2) internal self-improvement**

for all learning outcomes identified in mission statements and program objectives.

Example: academic performance, student leadership development, civic engagement

What is assessment?

- ✓ **Evaluating**
- ✓ **Planning**
- ✓ **Doing**
- ✓ **Reviewing**
- ✓ **Repeating**

Application

- **Student Learning Outcomes:**

How well are students learning (the goals we've set for them)?

learning outcomes

- **Institutional Effectiveness:**

How well is the institution achieving its mission and major institutional goals?

operational outcomes

Examples of Institutional Effectiveness

- **Student Learning (the heart of most mission statements)**
- **Other institutional goals:**
 - **Research and Scholarship**
 - **Community Involvement & Service**
 - **Supporting Spiritual Formation**
 - **Providing a Learning Environment that Develops Leadership, Spiritual and Social Maturity**
 - **Providing an Environment for Support Staff and Faculty to model Christian discipleship**

Mission/Program Statements

What are the learning outcomes expressed in your mission or program statements?

LEARNING OUTCOMES: statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand, and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning

Examples of Learning Outcomes

- **Students will actively contribute to civic decision-making in their communities.**
- **Students will model and reflect characteristics of spiritual discernment in secular environments.**

- **Students will make appropriate inferences and deductions from biological information.**
- **Students will write with clarity, unity, coherence, and correctness.**

Best Practices

- **NURTURE THE CULTURE**
 - Educate your staff.
 - Teach assessment vocabulary.
 - Model the process.
 - Start with clear, simple templates and procedures.
 - Be sensitive to peoples' time and responsibilities.

Essential Vocabulary

Assessment (definition, purpose)

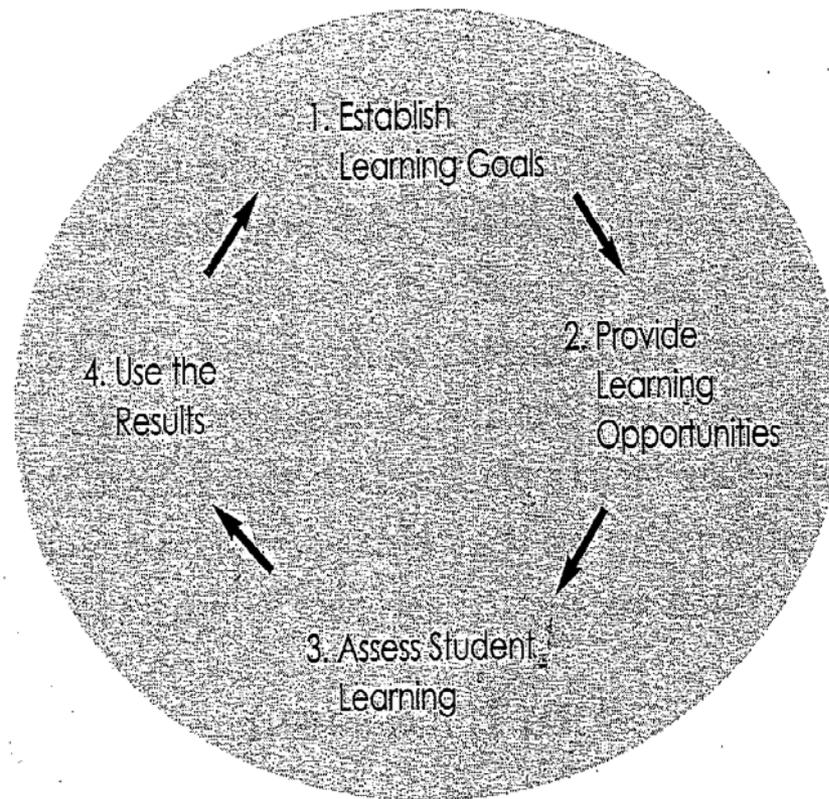
Direct/Indirect evidence

Cycles of Closing the Loop

Rubrics

Triangulation

Assessment as a four step continuous cycle



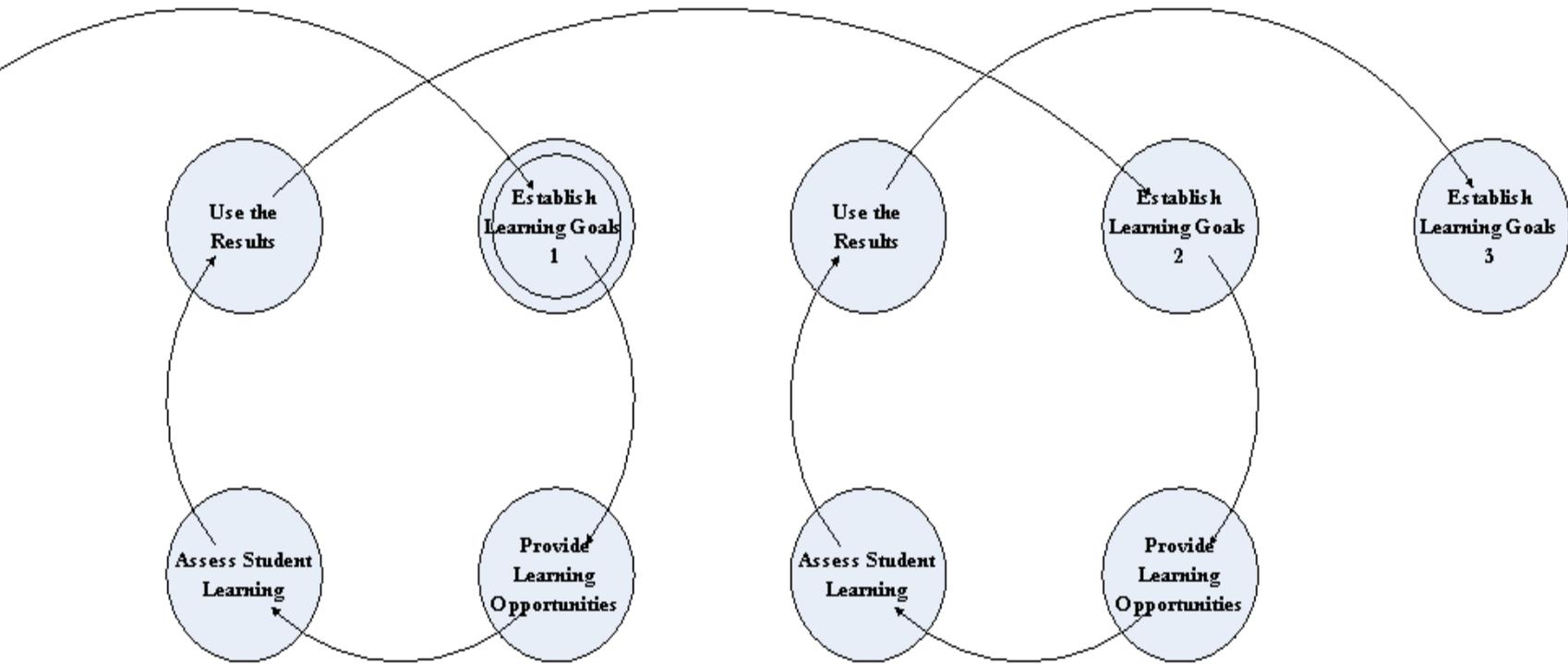
Learning Outcome Evidence

Direct	Indirect
Ratings or evaluations by field experience/internship supervisors	Job placement rates and starting salaries
Scores and pass rates on licensure/ certification exams that assess key learning outcomes (Major Field Tests, GRE, LSAT, Praxis, MAT, etc.)	Admission rates into graduate programs and graduation rates from those graduate programs
Embedded or capstone experiences <u>using a rubric</u>	Student/Alumni perceptions of career satisfaction
Portfolios	Student/Alumni satisfaction with learning
Written work scored <u>using a rubric</u>	Honors and awards earned by students and alumni

Learning Outcome Strategies

Direct	Indirect
Published tests (commercial)	Surveys
Internally-developed tests (with blueprint)	Interviews
Embedded assignments/ activities (rubrics)	Focus Groups
Portfolios	

Closing the Loop



Rubrics

- **Simple check lists: yes/no**
- **Descriptive check lists: below standard, standard, above standard**
- **Criterion matrix: description of performance for each level of performance**
- **Holistic: applies to a body of work (portfolio), not one item**

• GRADING RUBRIC FOR PHC HISTORY ESSAYS AND TAKE-HOME EXAMS

• Quality of the Essay's Content

possible points: 85 / earned points: _____

- (superb content earns 76.5-80 points; good content = 68-76.4 points; satisfactory but mediocre content = 59.5-67.9 points; weak but acceptable content = 51-59.4 points; content that does not meet acceptable college-level standards = 50.9 or fewer points)
- _____ the essay's explanations are okay but neither probing nor comprehensive; the analysis is satisfactory but not excellent
- _____ the essay's explanations are weak; the analysis is unsatisfactory
- _____ the essay should have focused more on responding to the assignment prompt
- _____ the essay does not answer the assigned question; it is not structured as an *answer*
- _____ the essay should contain less reporting on (or summarizing of) content we read or discussed it needs more analysis and explanation
- _____ the essay could have provided additional specific examples (and quotations are not necessarily examples)
- _____ the essay only said the obvious; it lacked insight and creativity; the essay is boring
- _____ the argumentation is unsubstantiated; assertions are unsupported by evidence
- _____ much of the argumentation is weak; your answers are not persuasive; if you were a lawyer and this essay was a courtroom trial, you would have lost the case
- _____ the argumentation displays logical gaps; instead of ABCDEF, the explanation reads like ACF or AD
- _____ weak argument organization; essay lacks logical flow or progression; paragraphs seem to be ordered haphazardly
- _____ the introductory paragraph is too long and/or it does not say anything of value; it reads like a warm-up exercise; it says things that are so obvious they need not be said
- _____ the concluding paragraph is fluff; it does not help answer the question; it says nothing of substance and/or only repeats things already stated in the essay

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- **Quality of Writing**

possible points: 12 / earned points: _____

- (superb writing earns 11-12 points; good writing earns 9-10.9 points; satisfactory but mediocre writing earns 7-8.9 points; weak but acceptable writing earns 5-6.9 points; writing that falls below acceptable college-level standards earns 4.9 or fewer points)

- _____ the essay contains numerous awkwardly worded sentences (NWW, which stands for **Not Worded Well**)
- _____ the essay contains malformed and unhealthy paragraphs; each paragraph must provide an answer to the assigned question (in other words, each paragraph must make an argument)
- _____ the introductory paragraph does not declare the essay's thesis
- _____ paragraphs lack clear/true topic sentences (NATTS, which stands for **Not a True Topic Sentence**)
- _____ paragraphs do not focus on one and only one argument
- _____ quotations are not introduced (or "framed") properly or they are punctuated incorrectly
- _____ quotations are incorrectly used to establish facts (QCEF, which stands for **Quotations Can't Establish Facts**)
- _____ the essay contains too many punctuation errors
- _____ commas are misused / overused / underused
- _____ dashes and semi-colons are overused or misused (or both)
- _____ overly long sentences compromise the essay's readability
- _____ contractions, colloquialisms, flowery prose, informalities, and first-person language are inappropriate in formal essays
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- **Compliance with Standard Writing Parameters**

- **possible points: 3 / earned points: _____**

- _____ grading rubric not stapled to the front of the submitted essay
- _____ Turabian guidelines are not followed
- _____ no title page with student name, date, course name, word count, and PHC mailbox number; bibliography unnecessary
- _____ the essay does not display page numbers
- _____ one-inch margins do not appear on all four sides of the text
- _____ a plain eleven- or twelve-point font face is not used
- _____ the text and footnotes do not appear in the same font face
- _____ the footnote font size cannot be larger than the text font size
- _____ the bottom-of-the-page footnotes are not formatted according to Turabian guidelines
- _____ the essay cannot have additional spaces (a.k.a. leading) between paragraphs
- _____ the paper needs to be clean and unwrinkled; the pages need to be stapled (i.e., no paperclips)

total points earned: _____ late penalty (see syllabus for details): _____

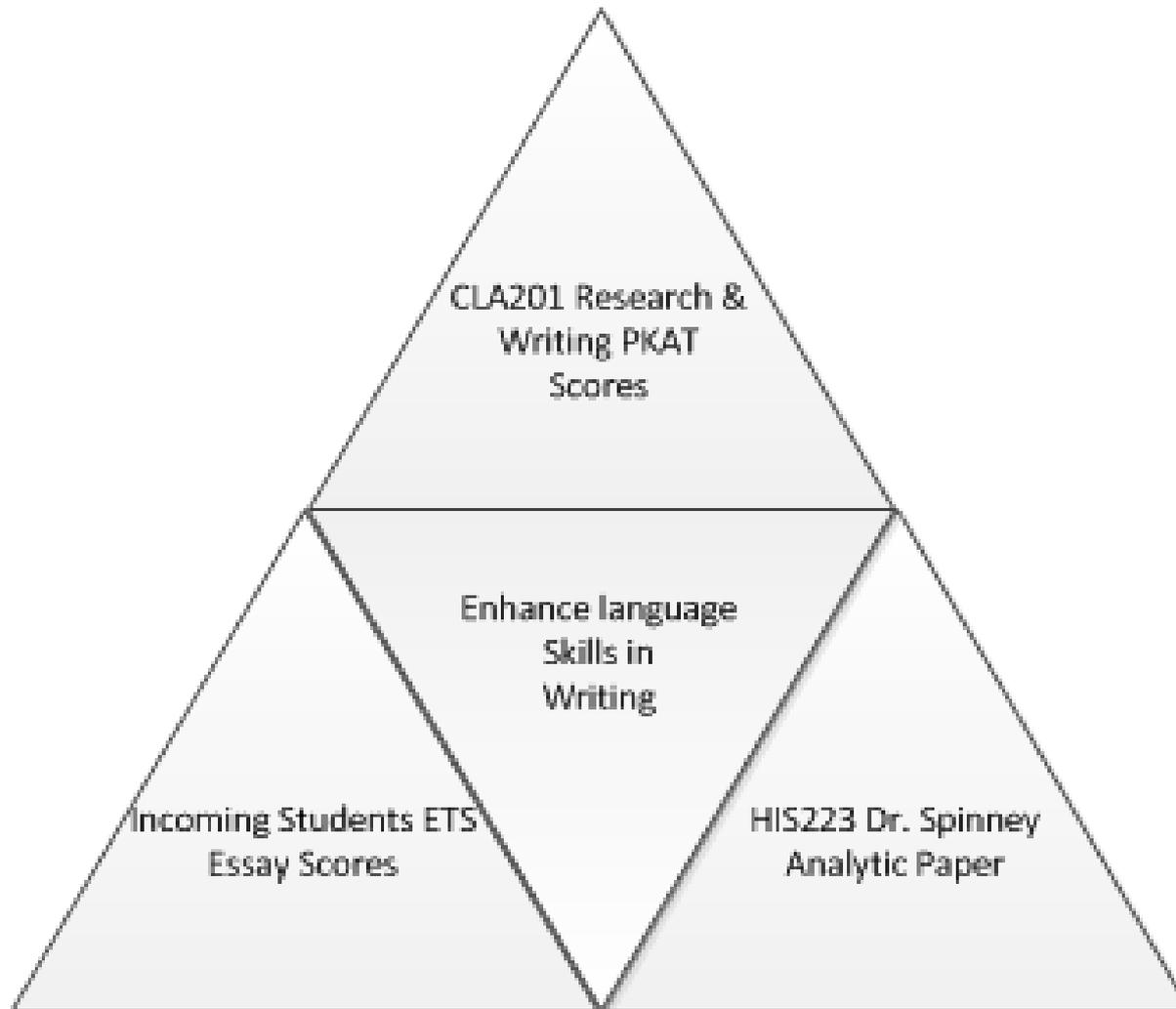
final grade: _____

Criterion-matrix

HIS383 Final exam question: Explain what it means to look at history from a Christian perspective

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT >90%	PROFICIENT 89%-70%	EMERGING <70%
Describe how a Christian examines history from a Christian perspective	Student proposes and defends a methodology for examining history from a Christian perspective, with clarity and originality, considering and even synthesizing a variety of ideas and material from other sources	Essay defends with clarity a methodology for examining history from a Christian perspective in a clear fashion, drawing on a minimum 1-2 outside sources' answers to this question	Muddled or non-existent explanation of how a historian examines history from a Christian perspective; no look to other answers to this question

Triangulation



Best Practices

- **DATA BEFORE DECISION-MAKING**
 - Articulate the information on which you base decisions.
- **DOCUMENT THE PROCESS**
 - Keep minutes of all meetings
 - Produce reports which include pertinent data.
 - Share reports with appropriate constituents.

Beginning Challenges

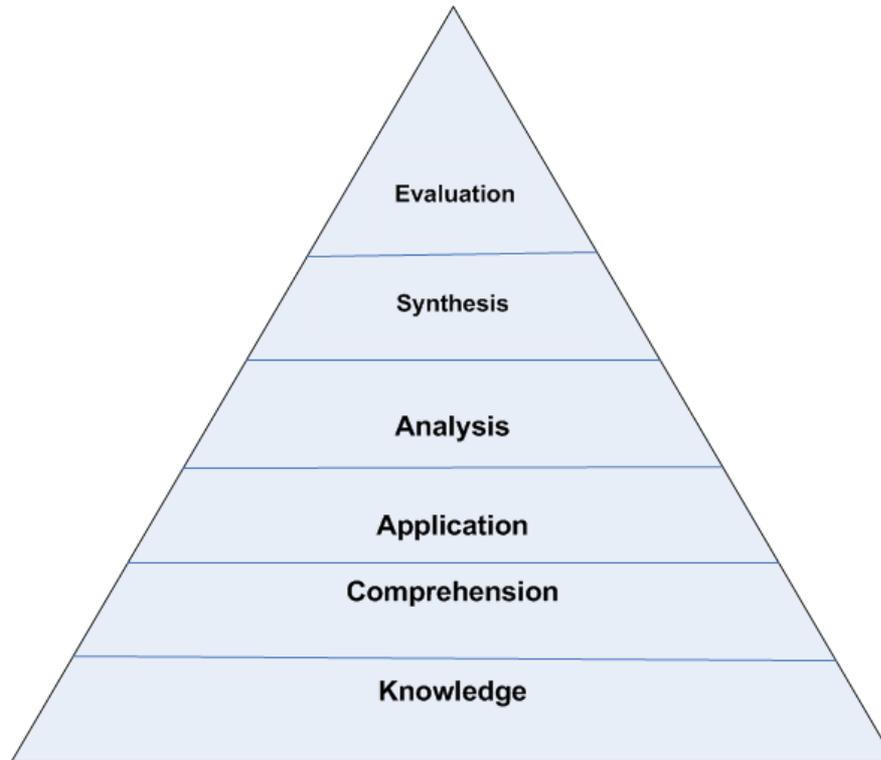
- **Development of learning outcomes**
- **Implementation of assessment plan**
- **Selection & implementation of measures**
 - **Commercial, standardized**
 - **Internally developed**
- **Details**
 - **Methodology**
 - **Feasibility/Funding**
 - **Program Diversity**

Pitfalls to avoid

- **Analysis Paralysis**
- **Inevitability Trap**
- **The More the Better**
- **Perfect Data Fallacy**
- **Upstream/Downstream Blame Game**
- **Gotcha**
- **I Taught it so They Learned It=I Did It so It's Done**
- **All Aboard**

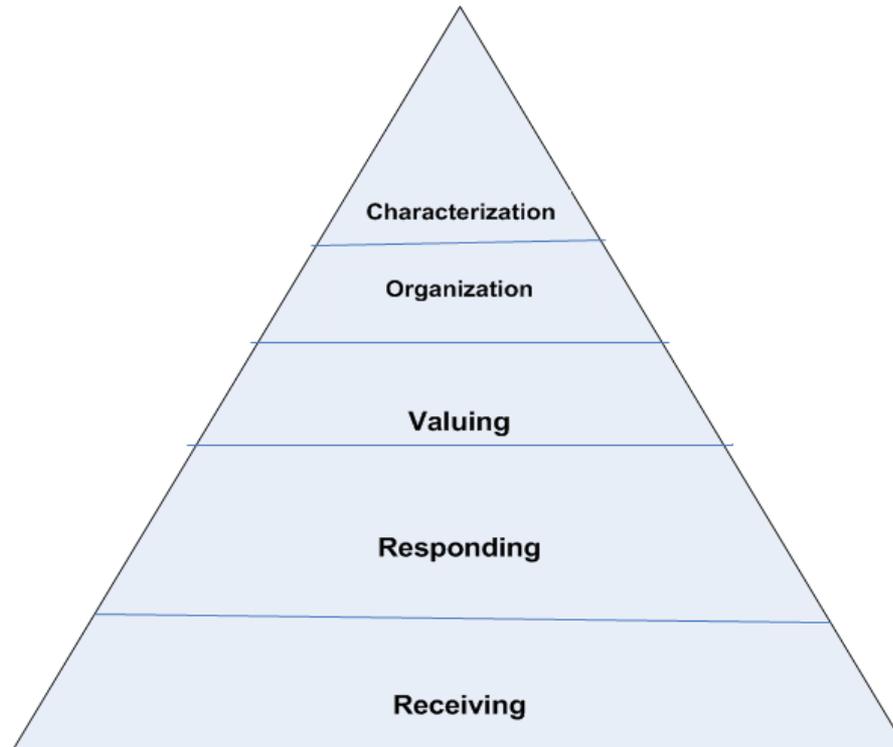
Learning Outcomes Framework

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) Cognitive Domain



Learning Outcomes Framework

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) Affective Domain



CLEAR AND
AND SIMPLE
CLEAR AND
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AND SIMPLE

ASSESSMENT

CLEAR **AND** SIMPLE

A Practical Guide for
Institutions, Departments,
and General Education

BARBARA E. WALVOORD

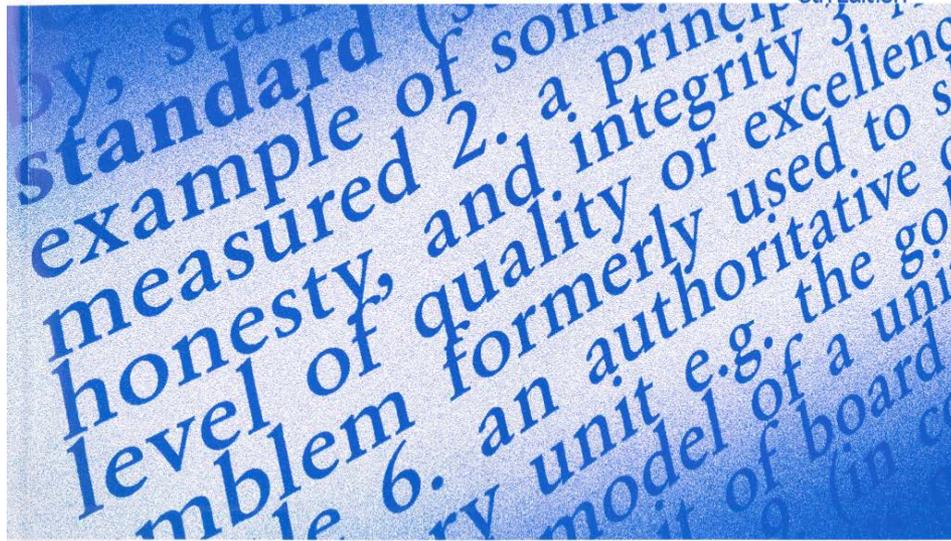
ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

a common sense guide

LINDA SUSKIE

CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education

8th Edition



Council for the Advancement
of Standards in Higher Education

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Thank you.

Questions?

jhveith@phc.edu