Part V: Recommendations for creating assessment plans

The first step for any academic area is to determine an assessment plan suitable for its students and classes. When devising a plan, consider the following questions:

- What are we going to do, and why are we going to do it?
- When will we administer the activity?
- How will we act on the information we gather?
- Is there a specific area in a given course/program where students always seem to struggle?
- What are successful students doing in class that unsuccessful students are not?
- Are students gaining sufficient content mastery?
- Are students stronger in one area than another?
- How do teaching techniques in the program affect student learning?
- Should changes be made in teaching techniques to promote optimal learning?
- Does the learning environment reflect the activities and goals for the course/program

After creating a plan, decide on the assessment tool to use. Assessment tools include, but are not limited to:

- Student surveys
- Comprehensive, instructor/department-designed final exam
- Standardized final exam for certain course or program
- Licensing/registration/certification exam results
- Matrix for assessment of student learning
- Pre- and post-tests
- Pre- and post-writing assignments
- Performance based assessments (activities such as lab competency, presentations, speeches, projects, etc.)
- Pre- and post-performance tests
- Common writing assignment
- Portfolio assessment
- Inventory of student learning (how available equipment or facilities affect student learning)

Once the assessment tool has been decided upon, it is time to determine who will participate in the assessment plan. For example:

- All or some students in specific sections of a course
- All students in a program
- All or selected faculty