



Student Assessment in Online Courses

Illinois Virtual Campus

Dr. Iris Stovall

istovall@uillinois.edu

Mr. Kevin Johnson

kejohns@uillinois.edu

Definition of Assessment

“Assessment is the process of evaluating student learning and development to improve learning, instruction, and program effectiveness.”

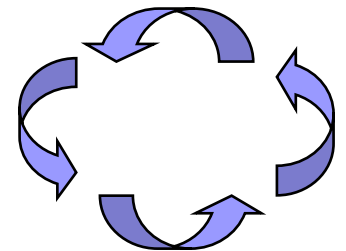
-- Janet Donald, Improving the Environment for Learning



Role of Assessment in the Instructional Design Process

Assessment is one of the key elements instructors need to consider when designing an online course.

- Learning Objectives
- Assessments**
- Learning Activities
- Interaction
- Technology
- Evaluation



Types of Assessments: Quizzes and Tests

Definition

- Quizzes and tests usually are short exercises that consists of questions students can answer simply – by choosing an option or filling in a word.



Types of Assessments: Quizzes and Tests

Reasons to use

- Assess Progress
- Encourage Progress
- Provide Instructor Feedback



Types of Assessments: Quizzes and Tests

When to use

- Before Instruction (Gatekeeper)
- During Instruction (Pointer, Coach)
- After Instruction



Types of Assessments: Quizzes and Tests

Advantages

- Tests cognition – application and synthesis
- Tests wide range of content
- Tests large number of students
- Can be repeated



Types of Assessments: Quizzes and Tests

Disadvantages

- ❑ Difficult to write items that assess higher-order thinking
- ❑ Feedback is usually minimal
- ❑ Usually not authentic
- ❑ Impersonal for student



Types of Assessments: Quizzes and Tests

Role of Technology

- Deliver, grade and analyze exams
- Record and report on achievement



Types of Assessments:

Online Discussions

Definition

- Online discussions consists of student writings (posts or messages) that can be private to a group as well as open to everyone in the course.



Types of Assessments: Online Discussions

Reasons to use

- Encourage interaction
- Assess critical thinking
- Assess collaborative learning
- Assess transformative learning



Types of Assessments: Online Discussions

Advantages

- Discussion posts indicate reflection
- Discussions create coalescence
- Discussion posts allow students to make inferences about how topic applies to their personal situation



Types of Assessments: Online Discussions

Disadvantages

- Grading is subjective
- Grading is time-consuming



Types of Assessments:

Online Discussions

Role of Technology

- Asynchronous, threaded, bulletin-boards
- Synchronous chat rooms
- E-mail



Types of Assessments: Online Discussions

Rubrics to grade discussions

- Example Rubric



Types of Assessments: Performance Based

Definition

- “Performance assessment is defined as the use of clearly defined criteria (rubric) to assess a student’s ability to APPLY the knowledge and/or skills he or she has learned in an observable and measurable demonstration”

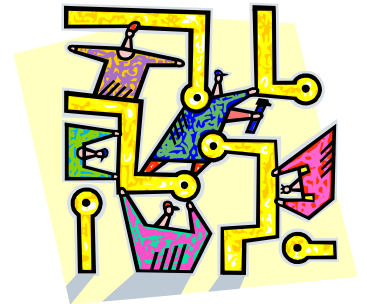
-- Heidi Schweizer, Designing and Teaching an On-Line Course



Types of Assessments: Performance Based

When to use

- Evaluate specific skills of students
- Broad picture of students' capabilities

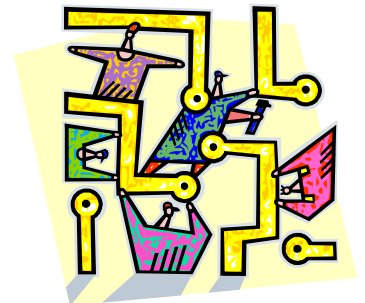


Types of Assessments:

Performance Based

Advantages

- Allows for comprehensive feedback
- Students can observe performance of classmates
- Connected to curriculum & content
- Provide opportunities for people who learn in different ways to demonstrate accomplishments





Types of Assessments: Performance Based

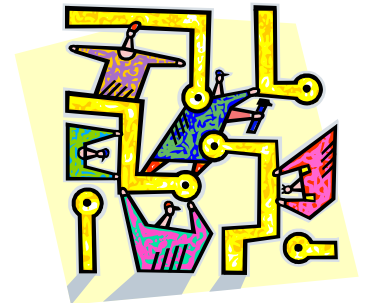
Disadvantages

- Labor intensive
- Reliability could be low
- Some activities are difficult to perform online

Types of Assessments: Performance Based

Role of Technology

- Manage group interaction
- Manage project submissions
- Multimedia allows multiple formats



Types of Assessments:

Performance Based

Examples

- In an instructional unit on drug abuse: A PowerPoint presentation that explains the harmful effects of drugs on the body (Visual/Spatial, musical (sound effects))
- In a science unit: A Flash animation that shows a volcanic eruption (visual, logical/mathematical)
- In a language arts program which stressed communication skills: A streamed video presentation that demonstrates the skills needed for public speaking (linguistic/ body-kinesthetic, interpersonal)



Issues in Online Assessment

- Validity – Do the assessments measure what they are supposed to?
- Security – Are assessment results (grades) secure so that they cannot be accessed by unauthorized persons
- Cheating – How do we know if the work was really completed by the student?



Bibliography

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