

**ON STUDENTS AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING:  
SOME QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATIONS**

*Check the questions from the list below that suggest possible conversations and starting points for action for your department or college.*

| ✓ | <b>Questions for Potential Conversation or Action</b>   |
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|   | 1. Can a prospective parent or student find the words “student” and “learning” together in the same sentence anywhere in the viewbook, catalog, or other materials sent to potential students?  |
|   | 2. Do undergraduate students receive printed materials that contain explicit statements of institutional goals for student learning? For expected outcomes for their complete undergraduate (or graduate) education? For the general education program? The major? Each course in which they are registered? Do post-baccalaureate students receive comparable materials appropriate to the graduate degree program in which they are enrolled? |
|   | 3. Do any of the documents provided to enrolled students describe the value the college places on student learning across the entirety of their undergraduate (or graduate) education and each academic program and major? Do any explain the ways in which assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning process?  |
|   | 4. What required course or experience gives first year undergraduate students an understanding of the intended outcomes for their learning over the course of their entire undergraduate education, their learning in the core curriculum and their major, and an understanding of how learning obtained from the core curriculum is integrated with learning in the major?   |
|   | 5. What is being done to ensure that <i>transfer</i> students are expected to meet the institution’s stated goals for their learning (i.e., its anticipated learner outcomes) for students’ undergraduate education as a whole, and for their learning in the core curriculum and in the major?   |
|   | 6. In what ways are successive classes of students being educated about the need for them to be active partners with the faculty and academic administration in the assessment program at both the institutional and department/unit levels?  |
|   | 7. By what means are students helped to reach an understanding of: the importance of the institution’s goals for their learning and the college’s assessment program; how it is being carried out; the role of students in its success; and the usefulness of certain assessment activities and outcomes to them now as individual learners, and to future cohorts of students?   |

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|  | 8. How are students being actively engaged in the assessment program at both the institutional and departmental levels so that they participate in every phase from initial planning to offering suggestions for changes such as those the institution could make in learning resources, co-curricular activity, support services, at the institutional level and in the curriculum or modes and styles of instruction at the departmental/unit level that they think could help students learn more? |
|  | 9. Who is asking students directly what it would take for them to want to be involved in assessment efforts? Who is responsible for using their answers to create ways to interest and involve them in assessment activities?   |
|  | 10. What is being done and by whom to arouse student excitement about the potential benefits of assessment to future cohorts of students and to get them to take their own participation in the assessment program seriously?   |
|  | 11. What innovative ways are the Assessment Committee, academic officers, and department and program chairs using to involve students as well as faculty on teams to evaluate projects that can enhance students' learning and increase their first-hand knowledge and understanding of assessment efforts across campus?   |
|  | 12. What provisions are being made in the assessment program, and by whom, for students to become familiar with the faculty's goals, objectives, and expected outcomes for each academic program in which they are enrolled and for each course?  |
|  | 13. What is being done, and by whom, to make the findings from assessment activities useful to students interested in improving their learning as individuals?  |
|  | 14. What reporting mechanisms exist to provide students with timely feedback about the results of tests and surveys they have participated in? Where are these published so that students and faculty are aware of them?  |
|  | 15. What requirements provide students the opportunity to reflect upon the work they have produced over the course of their academic program, to put their thoughts into writing, and to include judgments about how their work does or does not demonstrate attainment of the faculty's expected outcomes?   |
|  | 16. What is being done and by whom to compare students' self-assessment of what they have learned with objective indicators of their performance and then to use the results of that comparison as the basis for introducing improvements?  |

From *Assessing Student Learning: Using the Commissions Levels of Implementation* by Cecilia L. Lopez, [http://www.ncahlc.org/download/Lopez\\_Levels\\_2000.pdf](http://www.ncahlc.org/download/Lopez_Levels_2000.pdf), retrieved 7/14/06). Also available at <http://www.uni.edu/assessment/QuestionsforConversations.shtml>