

Assessment

1. I worked with Tad Pedigo and Christy Jacks for a couple of hours last week on the topic of portfolio as an assessment methodology. What I hope they will convey from my perspective is that in addition to having a wide range of potential uses and types that will require careful and thorough definition, as an accountability measure portfolio methodology has a number of challenges to face. Establishing strong reliability and validity evidence from rating scales applied to evaluate the work contained in the portfolio is quite challenging. At the same time the information that results from portfolios is typically found to be immensely reassuring and rewarding, particularly to those who prefer constructed responses as a quality of data.

As with all assessment procedures, portfolio development by students is driven on the front end by statements of learning outcomes provided by those responsible for judgment of results. All of that leads to a series of questions I have independent of assessment methods. Here are several:

- Will all students be expected to participate in General Education assessment? Or will a sampling strategy be used? If a sampling strategy is acceptable, how will students be enticed to participate in a “credible” way?
- Are we interested in some sort of cross-sectional design or do also want a longitudinal design?
- What types of data will faculty accept as credible evidence of student performance achievement? Will we use some national professional standards for guidance of development of measurement tools?
- Will constructed response be needed or will objective formats be acceptable? Or will there be desire for a mixture?

At this stage, I think it would be wise to return to the AAHE 9 principles of assessment and use it as a framework to help us articulate some answers to these questions.

2. I have attached a table that is a very simple, but often used, framework for planning assessment. I think we should use it to describe any models that we generate during our work at AAC&U. I sometimes insert additional columns for Responsibility of two types: (1) collecting the assessment results and (2) evaluating the results and suggesting action on results.

Program Objectives	Implementation Strategy	Assessment Methods	Timeline	Reports/ Feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What are the program objectives?</i> ▪ <i>What should your students know and be able to do?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How will the objectives be met?</i> ▪ <i>What program activities (curricular and co-curricular) help you meet each objective?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What assessment methods will you use to collect data?</i> ▪ <i>How will you interpret and evaluate the data?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>When will you measure?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Who needs to know the results?</i> ▪ <i>How can you convince them the objectives were met?</i> ▪ <i>How can you improve your program and your assessment process?</i>