

The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning

Redesigning Course Assessments

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1. Establish course goals

- state these clearly and succinctly near the beginning of your course outline
- include both broad statements of what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of the course. (See May, 1995 CACT Newsletter Teaching Tip Sheet.)
- review these with students at the outset of your class

2. Plan to include a range of different assessment tools in your course activities

- establish both "major" assessments and ongoing "course correction" assessments
- allow for multiple iterations of some assignments, so that students may receive response and then revise their work
- present students with opportunities to work together
- consider ways students can see the range of work produced in response to given assignments

3. Present students with standards of achievement for major assignments

- design rubrics for major assignments which include criteria to be evaluated and descriptors of levels of achievement
- whenever possible present students with examples of work which illustrate the range of standards

4. Design a "capstone" experience which gives students an opportunity to synthesize course content

- provide ways students can "go public" with a product which demonstrates their learning in the course
- consider requiring a final product which demonstrates application of course content in the wider world

5. Establish methods to include other evaluators in addition to yourself

- create means by which peers can participate in informal and formal evaluations
- build forms of student self evaluation into assessment design
- consider creating final "public" presentation in which others who are interested or have expertise can participate

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