

General Standard 3 --- Assessment and Measurement

Assessment strategies are designed to evaluate student progress by reference to stated learning objectives; to measure the effectiveness of student learning; and to be integral to the learning process.

SPECIFIC REVIEW STANDARDS	POINTS	YES	NO	NOTES
<p>3.1 The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Alignment</p>	3			
<p>3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.</p>	3			
<p>3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation and are tied to the course grading policy.</p>	3			
<p>3.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced, varied, and appropriate to the student work being assessed.</p>	2			
<p>3.5 Students have multiple opportunities to measure their own learning progress.</p>	2			

General Standard 3: *Assessment is implemented in a manner that not only allows the instructor a broad perspective on the students' mastery of the content, but also allows students to measure their own learning throughout the course.*

ANNOTATIONS

Alignment: Course assessments (ways of confirming student mastery) are consistent with the course and module objectives of the course (see Standards 2.1 and 2.2) by measuring the accomplishment of those objectives. From the types of assessments chosen, it is clear that students can successfully complete the assessments if they have met the objectives stated in the course materials and learning activities. Note: At some institutions, learning objectives may be called learning outcomes.

Examples of learning objective-assessment alignment:

1. A problem analysis demonstrates critical thinking skills.
2. A multiple-choice quiz verifies vocabulary knowledge.
3. A composition shows writing skills.

Examples of lack of alignment between learning objectives and assessments:

1. The objective is to be able to "write a persuasive essay," but the assessment is a multiple-choice test.

A clear, written statement fully explains how the course grades are calculated. The points, percentages, and weights for each component of the course grade are clearly stated. The relationship(s) between points, percentages, weights, and letter grades are explained. The instructor's policy on late submissions is clearly stated.

Review the clarity of the explanation and presentation to the student, not the simplicity or complexity of a given grading system itself. Even a relatively complex grading system can be made easy to understand.

Students are provided with a clear and meaningful description of the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work and participation in the course. These criteria are stated up-front at the beginning of the course. The description and/or statement of criteria provide students with clear guidance on the instructor's expectations and on the required components of coursework and participation. The criteria give students the information they need to understand how a grade on an assignment or activity will be calculated.

As a reviewer, you will ascertain that the criteria used to evaluate students' performance align with the course objectives and contribute to students' future growth and improvement. Note, however, that as a reviewer you are not asked to look for and evaluate the instructor's specific feedback to students in Standard

Multiple assessment strategies are used in both the online and face-to-face settings, and they are appropriate to the student work being measured and the format in which they are used.

Assessments are varied in order to provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate mastery, and to accommodate multiple learning styles.

The assessments are appropriately sequenced so as to promote the learning process and to build on previously mastered knowledge and skills gained in this course and prerequisite courses. Assessments are paced to give students adequate time to achieve mastery and complete the work in a thoughtful manner.

Examples that meet the standard:

1. A series of assessments that progress from the definition of terms, to a short paper explaining the relationship between various theoretical concepts, to a term paper that includes the application of theoretical concepts and critical analysis of a journal article
2. Multiple types of assessment that enable the instructor to become familiar with an individual student's work and that discourage "proxy cheating" (someone other than the student completing and submitting work).
3. A series of assessments evenly paced every two weeks throughout the course

Students learn more effectively if they receive frequent, meaningful, and timely feedback. This feedback may come from the instructor directly, from assignments and assessments that have feedback built into them, or even from other students. Look for examples of self-check quizzes and activities, as well as other types of practice opportunities that provide timely feedback. These types of assignments should be voluntary or allow multiple attempts.

Examples:

1. Writing assignments that allow for the submission of a draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement

2. The objective is to "demonstrate discipline-specific information literacy," but the assessment is a Rubric-scored term paper; and students are not given any practice with information literacy skills on smaller assignments.

Some assessments may be geared toward meeting outcomes other than those stated in the course; for example, a course may have a writing component as part of a college-wide "Writing Across the Curriculum" requirement. In that case, the reviewer should suggest including in the course the objectives that reflect the college-wide requirement, if those objectives are not already included in the course.

Special situations: In some cases (check the Instructor Worksheet), the course objectives are institutionally mandated, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit objectives to assess and score Standard 3.1.

Look for some or all of the following:

1. A list of all activities, tests, etc., that will determine the student's final grade
 2. An explanation of the relationship between the final course letter grade and the student's accumulated points and/or percentages
 3. If points and percentages are used, an explanation of the relationship between the two
- 3.3. Your focus is the design of the course, not the delivery of the course.

Examples of what to look for:

1. Evidence that the instructor has stated the criteria for evaluation of students' papers and assignments, such as rubrics or a list of criteria with associated point values
2. A description of the how students' participation in discussions will be graded, including the number of required postings per week; the criteria for evaluating the originality and quality of students' comments and their responsiveness to classmates' comments; and grade credit students can expect for varying levels of performance

Examples that DO NOT meet the standard:

1. The assessments consist of only multiple-choice tests.
2. The first assessment requires students to locate research materials, while library research skills and methods are not covered until later in the course and are tied to the third assessment.
3. No assessments are administered during the first 12 weeks of the semester, with an essay, term paper, and final exam due during the 13th, 14th, and 15th weeks, respectively.
4. Discussion board posts are assessed on the basis of frequency or word count instead of on criteria related to the course objectives.

Circumstances affecting some graduate courses: The grade may be entirely based on a major assignment due at the end of the term. In this case, benchmarks for progress are provided during the term, with feedback from the instructor.

Examples of benchmark assignments might include submission of

1. A bibliography
 2. An outline or project plan
 3. A précis of the paper or project
 4. One or more preliminary drafts
2. Self-mastery tests that include informative feedback with each answer choice
 3. Interactive games and simulations that have feedback built in
 4. Self-scoring practice quizzes
 5. Practice written assignments
 6. Peer reviews
 7. Model papers or essays provided for students' viewing
 8. Sample answers or answer keys provided for students' viewing