Evaluating learning: revisiting basics and struggling with issues

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Purpose of continuing professional education

Capabilities integrated with Wise Judgment through Performance

in “swamps of everyday practice”
Capability is . . . .

“having justified confidence in one’s ability to take appropriate and effective action to formulate and solve problems in familiar and unfamiliar changing settings.”

(Cairns, 2000)
Ask yourself . . .

WHY do you want to assess others’ learning?

What are two characteristics of effective assessment?

What two questions or issues do you have now about assessment?
Why evaluate learning?

SUMMATIVE
- Compare actual learner performance to instructional goals
- Determine learners’ competence, performance, and capability
- Help learners make decisions about their next actions
- Determine learners’ satisfaction
- Provide information for other stakeholders
Why evaluate learning?

FORMATIVE

- Determine learners’ prior knowledge
- Monitor learners’ ongoing progress
- Create learning opportunities
- Evaluate and improve instructional method

- Develop learners’ capability for self-assessment and self-monitoring
Authentic Assessment

✓ Valid and reliable
✓ Ongoing
✓ Instructive
✓ Multi-modal
✓ Communicative
✓ Comprehensive
✓ . . . yet feasible
Authentic assessment is .....

Valid and Reliable

- Measures what it is supposed to measure
- Measures consistently
- Recognizes own limitations

Allows for knowledge demonstration beyond its own pre-determined limits
Authentic assessment is ..... Ongoing

- Occurs frequently - aims for surprise
- Embedded throughout instruction process
- Engages learner in different ways:
  - recalling new information
  - making personal sense of it
  - connecting with prior knowledge
  - solving problems
  - critically questioning the knowledge
  - extending the knowledge
  - integrating knowledge into everyday embodied practice
Authentic assessment is ..... Instructive

- Contributes to learning -- helps learner stretch

- Recognizes how assessment shapes what is learned

- Aims to cultivate learner’s ability to self-assess
Authentic assessment is ..... Multi-modal

Humans and knowledge are too complex to be judged with one instrument!

- Aims to capture different expressions of learning
- Draws on multiple methods
- Engages learner through multiple modes
  - recalling, reflecting, solving, building, practicing
- Helps ensure redundancy and triangulation
Authentic assessment is ..... Communicative

- Criteria are clear and transparent
- Feedback is timely
- All results and rationale are clearly communicated
- Learner is involved: forming criteria, identifying indicators, responding to external assessment, providing self-assessment
Authentic assessment is ..... Comprehensive

- Provides information about learner’s knowing *that*
  knowing *how*
  knowing *in action*

- Incorporates multiple perspectives:
  - self, peer, expert
Authentic assessment is Comprehensive
.....yet Feasible

- Incorporates different purposes:
  - summative, formative
  - information for learner, for peers, for instructional design
  - develops learner’s self-assessment

...within constraints of available resources (time, people, knowledge), contexts, and community norms
But . . .

*what are your criteria?*
Ways to sample learners’ knowledge & skill

- Performance observation
- Growth plan, portfolio
- Interview
- Learner teaching others
- Peer ratings, narratives
- Artifacts of everyday work
- Other stakeholder reports

- Written test
- Problem analysis, solution
- Personal checklists
- Written reflection
- Presentation to peers (debate, panel, etc)
- Prepared product (solution, design, teaching tool, video, display, etc)
Traps of assessment

- Measuring what’s easiest to measure
  (What gets measured gets learned)
- Reductionism

- Underestimating the message embedded in the evaluation
Assess at different times

- **BEFORE**: prior knowledge
- **DURING**: learner’s responses, comprehension, application
- **IMMEDIATELY AFTER**: learner’s recall of knowledge, problem-solving using it
- **LONG TERM AFTER**: incorporation into everyday practice
Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window, but coaxed downstairs one step at a time.

Mark Twain
Assess different levels

Learning anti-racist perspectives

**Level 1**: Awareness, appreciation?

**Level 2**: Beginning vocabulary? Trying out strategies/concepts?

**Level 3**: Analyzing single texts using the concepts?

**Level 4**: Comparing different anti-racist perspectives?
What may be most important is not the judgment you make . . . .

but the question that you ask
Bloom’s Taxonomy

1: recalling (knowledge)
   - Describe, label, define, locate, list

2: connecting (comprehension)
   - Explain, give examples, summarize

3: projecting into practice (application)
   - Predict, relate, show, solve

4: analysing
   - Differentiate, classify, find issues, show causes, critique

5: problem-solving, extending, (synthesis)
   - Solve, design, extend, integrate

6: critically questioning (evaluation)
   - Compare, prioritize, draw conclusions, recommend and justify
Questions that engage

**RECALLING**
Which of the following is not a goal of harm reduction strategies?

a. Prevent transmission of HIV INFECTION.
b. Reduce social isolation.
c. Create a drug-free society.
d. Save lives.
e. Improve health and well-being of drug users.

**CONNECTING**
In providing harm reduction strategies, what are three goals you would like to achieve?

What are your feelings or toward Jane, a continuing user who comes for help?

Is there a needle exchange program in your community? Would you refer a patient to it?
Questions that engage

**PROJECTING INTO PRACTICE**

- What would you say to a student who claimed that race isn’t an issue in his school because everyone is treated equally?

- What would you do if a student turned her poster assignment into a celebration of White Power movements?

**ANALYZING**

- How would an “anti-racism” education program differ from “multiculturalism”?

- Why is Dangerous Minds considered a racist and classist film?
Questions that engage

PROBLEM-SOLVING

What harm reduction strategies would be appropriate for Paul?

a.********
b.********
c.********

EXTENDING

What three actions could you take now to improve your provision of harm reduction strategies?
Questions that engage

CRITICALLY QUESTIONING

What racism currently lurks in your courses?
(exclusive texts, perspectives, assignments, unsafe dialogue spaces)

ASSESSING INTEGRATION INTO PRACTICE

- Three anti-racist strategies I tried in this course . . .
- One anti-racist text I used with students . . .
- One issue I didn’t expect . . .
Questions that engage

PROJECTING INTO PRACTICE

ASSESSING INTEGRATION in PRACTICE
Examining our issues

- What is the *BEST* practice you have seen with respect to this issue?
- What is the *WORST* practice you have seen?
- Generate some *RECOMMENDATIONS*
Ask yourself . . .

What understandings were reinforced for you today?

What one new idea will you remember?

What one new practice might you look into?
What do we live for, if not to make the world less difficult for each other? -- George Elliott
And now here is my secret, a very simple secret; it is only with the heart that one sees rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye.

--Antoine de Saint-Exupery
Assessment in Distance Education . . .

Individual print modules

- Questions embedded throughout text
  - multiple choice, open-ended, answer guide

- Activity choices with submitted product
  - produce a practice guide (protocol summary)
  - produce a test for a peer
  - create behavioral indicators for personal action plan
  - list other performance indicators to track over time
Assessment in Distance Education . . .

Online (group) instruction

- Post case responses and analyses to group
- Assess peer’s analyses
- Formulate a problem or case for the group
- Develop with group specific indicators of best practice for the new knowledge
- Post video clip of own practice for peer (or other) to assess
- Share progress with group at 3- or 6-month intervals - through narrative or artifacts
Assessment in Distance Education . . .

Computer-based instruction

- Manipulate images on screen
- Arrange protocol steps in appropriate sequence
- Respond to video clip of patient or patient-pharmacist interaction
  - Multiple-choice case analysis questions
  - Written analysis (scoring guide provided, or web-board of collected responses)

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