

# A Short Guide to Assessing Student Learning in Your Program or Department

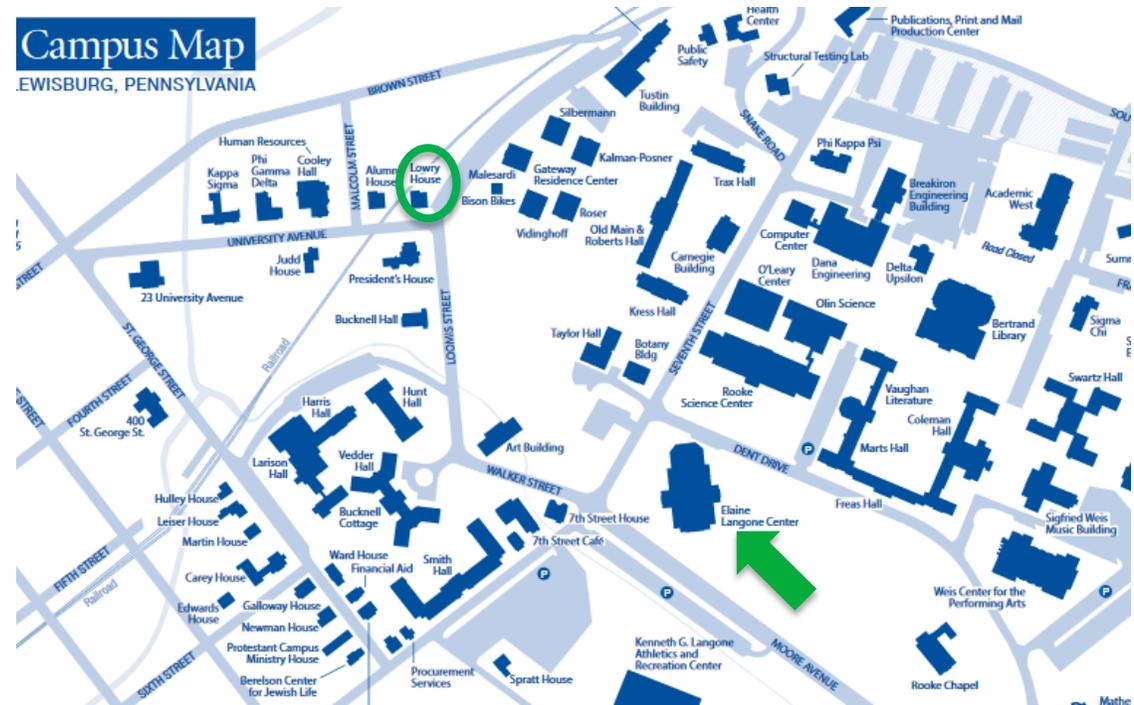


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# My role = to support all faculty and staff in their assessment activities

- Consultations
- Workshops
- Annual assessment reports
- Assessment grant proposals
- Assessment resources (Moodle site)
- *Assessment Lunches*



***Think of it as the beginning of a conversation...***

# Why assess student learning?

- Evidence that our students are learning and developing in and out of the classroom, consistent with Bucknell's mission and educational goals
- A mechanism for continued improvement of all facets of Bucknell education

Useful and meaningful

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Sustainable

# Assessment plan

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- **What** to assess?
  - **When** and **where** to assess it?
  - **How** to assess it?
- 
- *How to interpret and use the results?*
-



# What to assess?

## What to assess?

- Consider assessing 1-3 departmental student learning outcomes (SLOs) per academic year
- Focus on learning outcomes that are the current priority for the department, and that you & your colleagues want to examine more systematically (→ useful and meaningful)
- Set up a timeline to assess all departmental learning outcomes
- May be worthwhile to review the departmental learning outcomes and update/ revise them as needed (including how they map onto Bucknell's educational goals)



# **When and where to assess it?**



## When and where to assess it?

- Departmental curriculum map is your guide: Which courses are most relevant to the given learning outcome?

	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5	Learning Outcome 6
Course 1	X		X		X	X
Course 2	X	X		X	X	
Course 3	X				X	X
Course 4		X				X
Course 5		X		X	X	
...						



## When and where to assess it?

- Departmental curriculum map is your guide: Which courses are most relevant to the given learning outcome?

	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5	Learning Outcome 6
Course 1	X		Introduced		Introduced	X
Course 2	X	X		X	Reinforced	
Course 3	X				Reinforced	X
Course 4		X				X
Course 5		X		X	Mastered	
...						

## When and where to assess it?

- Assess student learning in both majors and non-majors
- Particularly important for courses that satisfy CCC requirements
- Highlights the broader role of the department in serving *all Bucknell students*, instead of serving exclusively the majors
- BUT you can keep track of the students' majors, and look at the assessment results separately for majors vs. non-majors to answer additional questions



# How to assess it?

## How to assess it?

- Typically, assessment is embedded in course assignments (→ sustainable)
- Overlaps with grading & feedback, except focused on a specific learning outcome
- Direct + indirect measures of student learning = full picture
- *Faculty are the experts and decide what measures work best*

# Direct vs. indirect measures of student learning

*A direct measure of student learning clearly demonstrates that a student has acquired specific knowledge, skill, or value (and can now show it in their work, performance, or behavior).*

- A student solves a calculus problem on an exam
- A student includes ethical analysis in their essay
- A student conducts a research project and presents a poster on it

# Direct vs. indirect measures of student learning

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- A student solves a calculus problem on an exam
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- A student conducts a research project and presents a poster on it

*An **indirect measure of student learning** only indirectly suggests that learning of specific knowledge, skill, or value took place. Instead, it measures a perception of learning, or the measure is broad and multi-faceted.*

- A student rates their own calculus proficiency on a survey question
- A student reflects on what they most enjoyed in a course, or what they found most challenging, and why
- A student's grade in a course that included a module on research and a research assignment (in addition to other modules)

# **Benefits of using an assessment rubric**

## Rubrics

- Make assessment easier and faster (after initial work of developing or adapting a rubric)
- Make assessment more accurate, unbiased, and consistent across reviewers and across courses
- Promote faculty discussion, collaboration, and adoption of shared expectations & practices



## A holistic rubric

A holistic rubric gives an overall assessment of the task.

It lists different **performance levels** (from poor to excellent) for the task.

It may also include **descriptions** of what each level looks like.

<i>Task:</i>		
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
<b>Below expectations</b>	<b>Met expectations</b>	<b>Exceeded expectations</b>
	Description of Level 2	

# Holistic rubric

# In-class reflective essays

Score	Holistic Description
4	<p>The author depicts the piece's purpose and/or audience with specificity/complexity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In detail, the author discusses an intended outcome(s) for the piece and/or assumptions he/she has made about the audience.</li><li>• Referring to specific moments in the piece as evidence, the author analyzes how the piece furthers a specific purpose and/or addresses an identifiable audience. The author's analysis of his/her own writing demonstrates rhetorical and metacognitive awareness.</li></ul>
3	<p>The author depicts the piece's purpose and/or audience with some degree of specificity/complexity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In some detail, the author discusses an intended outcome(s) for the piece and/or assumptions he/she has made about the audience.</li><li>• Referring more generally to the piece as evidence, the author analyzes how the piece furthers a specific purpose and/or addresses an identifiable audience. References to the selected piece may be somewhat awkward and mechanical, but they do demonstrate analysis.</li></ul>
2	<p>The author depicts the piece's purpose and/or audience in a fairly superficial and under-developed manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In a generic manner, the author states an intended outcome(s) for the piece and/or an assumption(s) he/she has made about the audience.</li><li>• The author attempts to make some connection(s) between the selected piece and the concept of purpose or audience.</li></ul>
1	<p>The author depicts the piece's purpose and/or audience in a superficial manner or not at all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The author may discuss his/her writing process or his/her reasons for selecting the piece, but he/she may not state intended outcomes for the piece or assumptions he/she has made about the audience.     -OR-</li><li>• The author fails to connect the selected piece with the concept of purpose or audience.     -OR-</li><li>• The author's response is off-topic and does not respond to the prompt.</li></ul>



# An analytic rubric

Task description

Levels of performance (3-5)

<i>Task:</i>			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Dimension 1</b>	Description of level 1 for dimension 1	Description of level 2 for dimension 1	Description of level 3 for dimension 1
<b>Dimension 2</b>	Description of level 1 for dimension 2	Description of level 2 for dimension 2	Etc.
<b>Dimension 3</b>	Etc.		

A list of dimensions (key aspects or elements of the task)





# **How to interpret and use the results?**



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- **Student-level criterion**: Based on the measure used, did the *individual student* attain a given learning outcome or not?
  - Example: At least 75% (3 out of 4 questions) on questions embedded in an exam; “met or exceeded expectations” on a rubric to assess an essay or presentation

# How to interpret and use the results?

- **Student-level criterion**: Based on the measure used, did the *individual student* attain a given learning outcome or not?
  - Example: At least 75% (3 out of 4 questions) on questions embedded in an exam; “met or exceeded expectations” on a rubric to assess an essay or presentation
- **Group-level threshold**: What *percentage of students* needs to attain the given learning outcome before we can claim a success? Or, to put it differently, what is the highest acceptable percentage of students *not* attaining the given learning outcome? (Mean or median group scores are less useful here because they hide the distribution of the scores.)
  - Example: At least 80% of students should meet or exceed expectations

# How to interpret and use the results?

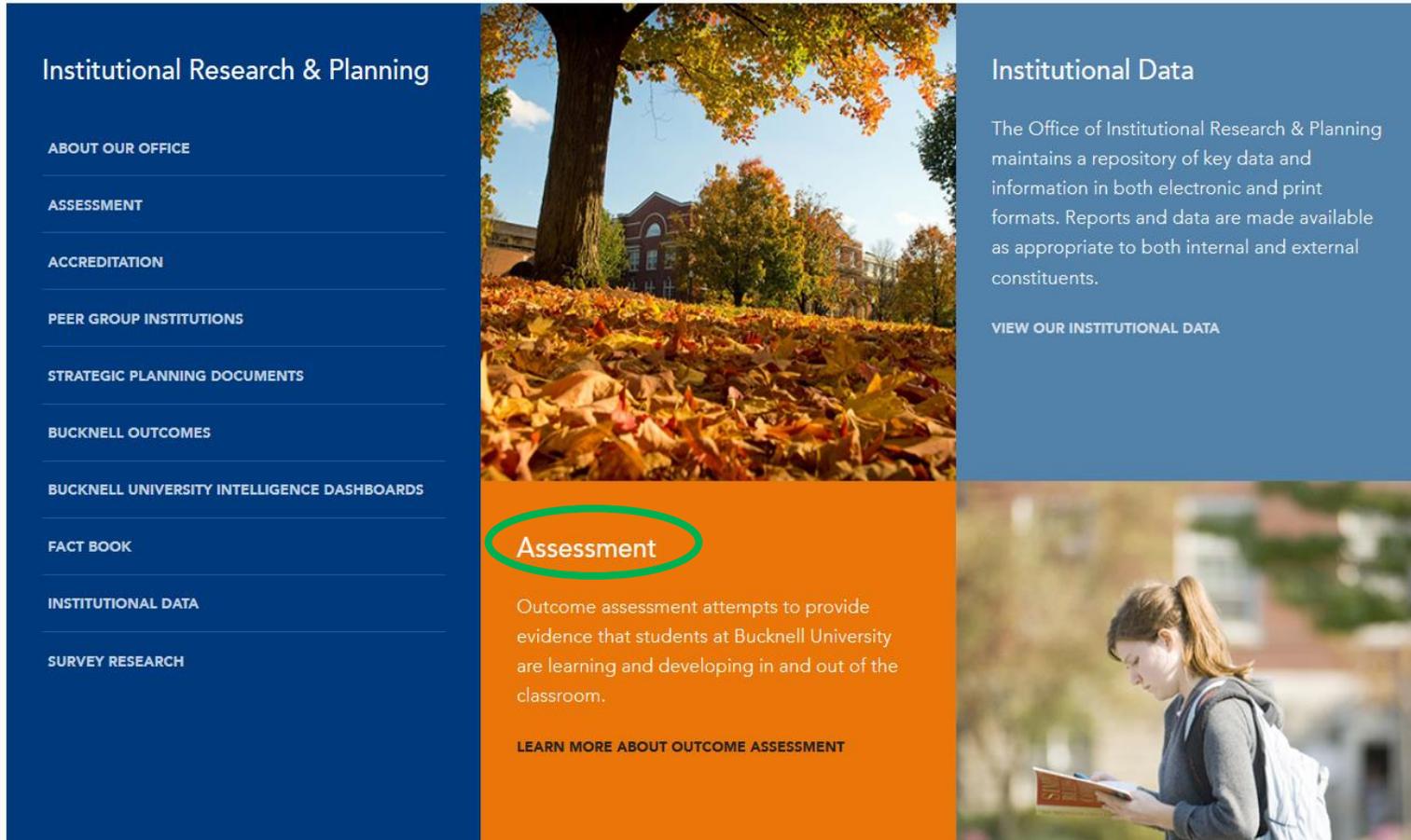
- A summary report/ memo (with a synthesis of results)
- Departmental meeting to share and discuss
- **Goal = to use the results to improve student learning**

# Assessment plan: Key recommendations

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- **What** to assess? Departmental learning goals (1-3 per year)  
Mapped onto Bucknell's educational goals
  - **When** and **where** to assess it? Curriculum map is a useful guide  
Assessment in majors and non-majors
  - **How** to assess it? Typically course-embedded assessment  
Direct measures first, then indirect measures  
Benefits of using an assessment rubric
- 
- *How to interpret and use the results?* *Student-level and group-level thresholds*  
*Summary report/memo and department discussion*  
*Use the results to improve student learning*
-

# More assessment resources on OIRP website



**Institutional Research & Planning**

- ABOUT OUR OFFICE
- ASSESSMENT**
- ACCREDITATION
- PEER GROUP INSTITUTIONS
- STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS
- BUCKNELL OUTCOMES
- BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY INTELLIGENCE DASHBOARDS
- FACT BOOK
- INSTITUTIONAL DATA
- SURVEY RESEARCH

**Institutional Data**

The Office of Institutional Research & Planning maintains a repository of key data and information in both electronic and print formats. Reports and data are made available as appropriate to both internal and external constituents.

[VIEW OUR INSTITUTIONAL DATA](#)

**Assessment**

Outcome assessment attempts to provide evidence that students at Bucknell University are learning and developing in and out of the classroom.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OUTCOME ASSESSMENT](#)

<http://www.bucknell.edu/InstitutionalResearch> (or search for “assessment” from the landing page)

# Assessment website

If your department or program learning outcomes have changed, please send me (Agnes) the revised version, or submit a web update request (<https://buapps.bucknell.edu/script/communications/forms/default.aspx?formid=15994>)

The screenshot shows a website layout with several sections:

- A message from Provost Altmann:** Includes a quote: "Assessment is a necessary and useful process in the day-to-day life of the University, and needs to be carried out regularly." and a link to "READ THE FULL MESSAGE FROM THE PROVOST".
- Assessment Resources at Bucknell:** A list of resources: Moodle site, Committee on Assessment, and External resources. A green arrow points to this section.
- Assessment Reports & Activities:** Text: "Explore recent reports and learn about assessment activities." and a link: "VIEW ASSESSMENT REPORTS & ACTIVITIES".
- Showcase of Student Learning:** Text: "Students graduate from Bucknell equipped for a lifetime of personal and professional success." and "Explore more projects below".
- Goals, Competencies and Expected Learning Outcomes:** A list of categories: Educational Goals, Strategic Goals, Core Curriculum Competencies, and Department and Program Learning Outcomes. The last item is highlighted with a green box.

<https://www.bucknell.edu/about-bucknell/institutional-research-and-planning/assessment>

# Assessment Resources Moodle site



- [Home](#)   [Dashboard](#)   [Events](#)   [My Courses](#)   [This course](#)
- [Bucknell University](#)   [MyBucknell](#)   [Library & IT](#)   [Digital Pedagogy & Scholarship](#)   [My Media](#)

[Home](#) > [Community Sites](#) > [Assessment](#) > [assessment\\_resources](#)

## Welcome to Assessment Resources



The purpose of this site is to support Bucknell faculty and staff in their planning and assessment efforts by providing them with resources related to assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness. The resources are organized by student skill or competency within general education; by academic discipline and department; and by non-academic department.

The site is maintained by the Office of Institutional Research & Planning. If you have any suggestions, or have a resource to add to the site, please contact Agnes Jasinska at [ajj006@bucknell.edu](mailto:ajj006@bucknell.edu). We want this site to be as useful to you as possible!

## Forms, Templates & Guides

- [Assessment Plan Guide - academic](#)
- [Assessment Report Evaluation Rubric](#)
- [Assessment Progress Report Template - academic dept \(spreadsheet\)](#)
- [Assessment Progress Report Template - administrative unit \(spreadsheet\)](#)
- [Assessment Grant Proposal Form 2017-2018](#)

Grant is awarded in 2 categories: (1) performing assessment (open to faculty), and (2) learning about assessment (open to faculty and staff). Grant proposals are reviewed on an ongoing basis. All faculty and staff under the Provost's Office are eligible to apply. See the proposal form for more information.

- [Campus Labs tutorials](#)
- [Assessment Lunches and Workshops - slides and handouts](#)

Assessment Lunches are an informal and friendly gathering of faculty and staff engaged in, or interested in learning more about, assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness. The goal is to exchange ideas, insights, and strategies about assessment and to learn from one another.

*All faculty and staff are welcome!* So bring a project you are working on to get the group's feedback, or come to learn about what your colleagues in other departments and offices are doing. Lunch is served.

**\*\*If you are willing to give a brief, informal talk to share an example of assessment work from your office or department, please contact Agnes Jasinska ([ajj006@bucknell.edu](mailto:ajj006@bucknell.edu)). We are always looking for guest presenters.\*\***

- [Assessment Reports](#)

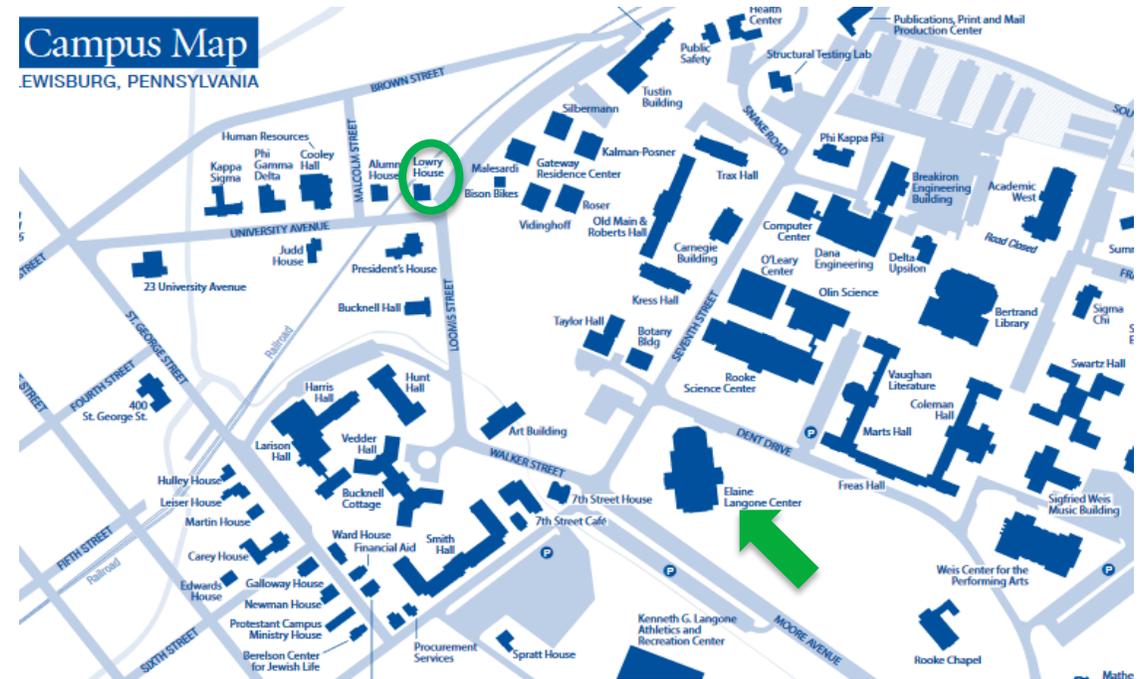
Assessment of Student Learning: General Resources

- ▼ [Home pages](#)
- ▼ [Current course](#)
  - ▼ [assessment\\_resources](#)
    - ▶ [Participants](#)
    - ▶ [Badges](#)
    - ▶ [Welcome to Assessment Resources](#)
    - ▶ [Meet the Committee on Assessment](#)
    - ▶ [Forms, Templates & Guides](#)
    - ▶ [Assessment of Student Learning: General Resources](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Student Skill/ Competency \(General Ed...](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Academic Discipline: ARTS & HUMAN...](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Academic Discipline: NATURAL SCIENCES...](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Academic Discipline: SOCIAL SCIENCES](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Academic Discipline: ENGINEERING](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Academic Discipline: MANAGEMENT](#)
    - ▶ [Resources by Non-Academic Department](#)
    - ▶ [Miscellaneous](#)
  - [Kaltura Media Gallery](#)
- ▶ [My courses](#)

<http://moodle.bucknell.edu/course/view.php?id=22627>

# Please email me if you would like to continue the conversation

- Consultations
- Workshops
- Annual assessment reports
- Assessment grant proposals
- Assessment resources (Moodle site)
- *Assessment Lunches*



*Thank you*