

Common Assessment Mistakes

1. Desired outcomes are bundled.
 - Graduates will be competitive in obtaining **employment in a field relevant to their major** and **admission to a graduate program**.
 - All outcomes should have a singular, assessable focus.
2. Incorrect measurement types.
 - The chosen assessment measure should be appropriate to measure the desired outcome. A survey cannot be used to collect data about a student's portfolio.
3. Only one measurement method is identified for a desired outcome.
 - Multiple measurements should be used for each outcome. Using more than one measurement will allow you to triangulate your results.
4. The outcome is not measurable.
 - If the outcome is not measurable, then this leaves room for judgment calls. There should be transparency in the outcome so you will know when the benchmark has been met.
5. The outcome is not student-centered.
 - All outcomes should focus on the student and not the faculty or program.
Example:
 - The program will include instruction on oral communication techniques. (program-centered)
 - Upon completion of the program, the student will develop the necessary oral communication skills. (student-centered)
6. Not allowing enough time for assessment.
 - In order for assessment to be effective and useful it should be planned and well-thought out.
7. Utilizing grades for assessment.
 - Grades and assessment are not synonymous. Grades do not provide meaningful data on what the student learned. Assessments provide specific data on the objectives that have been learned.
8. Failure to close the loop.
 - Assessment is not effective if data are not used for continuous improvement efforts. Faculty and staff should be given assessment findings to have conversations about what changes will occur as a result of the findings.