

# CENTER FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

## Graduate Level Assessment Methods

Below are some examples of assessment methods that are commonly used to evaluate and measure student learning and the achievement of learning outcomes.

Method	Description	Examples	
<b>Direct Measures</b>	Students demonstrate their learning in a clear and compelling way and produce observable evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tests (in courses)</li> <li>• Papers</li> <li>• Projects</li> <li>• Laboratory notebooks</li> <li>• Performances</li> <li>• Oral presentations</li> <li>• Problem sets</li> <li>• Reports</li> <li>• Research project</li> <li>• Technical skills</li> <li>• Grant proposals</li> <li>• Teaching observation feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study analysis</li> <li>• Theses</li> <li>• Dissertation</li> <li>• Clinical experience</li> <li>• Internship supervisor ratings</li> <li>• Standardized instruments</li> <li>• Portfolios</li> <li>• Qualifying (Q) Exams</li> <li>• A-exams</li> <li>• B-exams</li> </ul>
<b>Indirect Measures</b>	Students express their perceptions and attitudes about their learning. These can give indications that students are learning, but do not generally indicate exactly what or how much.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TA course evaluations</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Self-reports</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• National surveys</li> <li>• Exit interviews</li> <li>• Outreach activities</li> <li>• Participation in committees or professional development programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job placement (initial and 5-10 year)</li> <li>• Program review data</li> <li>• Alumni surveys</li> <li>• Peer-reviewed publications</li> <li>• Publications (manuscripts, books)</li> <li>• Conference presentations</li> <li>• External fellowships/grants (# awarded)</li> </ul>

The information gathered from these measures is used to evaluate the degree to which the outcomes of the course are met, and to inform changes in the program. It is recommended that at least one direct and one indirect measure be used for each learning outcome.

### References:

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2007). Student learning assessment: Options and resources (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Retrieved from: [www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org).
- Suskie, L. (2009). Assessing student learning: A common sense guide (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- Wiggins, G. (1998). Educative assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

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