



NMSU Doña Ana Community College

*“Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement.” (AAHE, 1992).*

## Definitions

### *Formative Assessment*

Assessment of student learning that provides information to a teacher, always for the purpose of improving instruction.

### *Summative Assessment*

Assessment of student learning that provides information about a student’s mastery of specified course or program concepts, often for the purposes of reporting.

## Fall Assessment Activities

Across-the-Curriculum General Education Assessment<sup>1</sup>. This semester faculty in each of the four credit-bearing divisions have received letters inviting them to participate in DACC’s assessment of the General Education Student Learning Outcomes. They are: communication, numeracy, critical thinking/problem solving, and ethics. Assessment subcommittees will assess the artifacts that are submitted using the DACC general education rubrics. Results will be available by the middle of Spring 2010 semester.

Program/Discipline Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes<sup>2</sup>. If you don’t know what your program’s assessment plan is, contact your department chair/program director – or go to the DACC Assessment Website ([http://dacc.nmsu.edu/fs/iep/assessment/plans\\_reports.shtm](http://dacc.nmsu.edu/fs/iep/assessment/plans_reports.shtm)) and click on your program. Each program should be assessing a couple of program-level student learning outcomes this academic year.

## Closing-The –Loop Activities

Peer-2-Peer Assignment Evaluation Project<sup>1</sup>. This semester 22 faculty are working in pairs to provide feedback on written assignment instructions, making changes in an effort to be more clear. Results from last semester’s Peer-2-Peer project suggest that student work is more on target with assignment instructions are clear. This project was created in response to the general education assessment conducted in the 2007/2008 academic year.

Critical Thinking Workshop at NMSU<sup>2</sup>. Several faculty representing all four credit-bearing divisions will attend a workshop at NMSU’s Teaching Academy on teaching critical thinking. Watch for a report on what they learn in the next newsletter. Participation in this workshop is a closing-the-loop activity in response to the results of the general education assessment conducted in the 2007/2008 academic year.

For other closing-the-loop activities, read through the program/discipline reports for the 2008/2009 academic year published on the DACC Assessment of Student Learning Website.

## Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

*(Astin, Banta, Cross, El-Khawwas, Ewell, Hutchings, et al., 2003):*

<http://www.buffalostate.edu/offices/assessment/aahe.htm>

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
2. Assessment is the most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.
3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic.
6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.
7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.
8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

## Upcoming New Mexico Higher Education Assessment and Retention Conference (NMHEAR)

Call for Proposals: Contact Susan Wood ([sandrusw@nmsu.edu](mailto:sandrusw@nmsu.edu)), or go to the NMHEAR Website ([www.nmsu.edu/NM-HEAR](http://www.nmsu.edu/NM-HEAR)) if you are interested in submitting a proposal for the 2010 NMHEAR Conference. It will be held at the Hotel Albuquerque February 25 and 26, 2010.