Reflections on Assessment
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What do I see as the value of assessment?
• Builds on a practice we already have (self-examination and reflection with
goal to improve) and hopefully makes it more helpful and accurate.
• Uses student learning as the center, and makes us talk with one another (and
to ourselves) about what is important for students to learn. The assessment
loop immediately impacts our teaching....as we think about the learning
goals..... and then later when we get the results of the assessment.
• If done well, assessment helps us make good choices about our resources ---
particularly around time. That is, it should help us see what we do that is
working and what we might be able to stop doing because it doesn't work.
• Enables us to make a strong, evidence-based case to others that our
particular approach to education (that is quite expensive and labor
intensive) really works. Assessment helps us make the case for what we do
to Middle States, but also to prospective students and their parents as well as
(and this is increasingly important!) outside funders and our Boards of
Trustees.

What am I still trying to figure out:
• How do these departmental-level learning assessments relate to other ways
that we assess learning? How can we use them to articulate how we are
meeting our learning goals as an institution?
• How do we support assessment work on the part of faculty? How do we
create and sustain good partnerships between faculty, IR and the
administration? How do we construct the assessment process so that faculty
can focus their time on those activities where faculty expertise is best used?
How do we make it so that the extra work feels “worth it?”
• Where are we in building a culture of assessment? Feels like we have made
some progress, but is that because of indoctrination, or do people really feel
the value of using data to help make decisions?
• How is assessment related to resource allocation and is making that
connection helpful in thinking about its value?